



The *Great* Canadian  
Catholic Hospital History Project

Documenting the legacy and contribution of the  
Congregations of Religious Women in Canada,  
their mission in health care, and the founding and operation of Catholic hospitals.

---



Projet de la *Grande* Histoire  
des hôpitaux catholiques au Canada

Retracer l'héritage et la contribution des  
congrégations de religieuses au Canada,  
leur mission en matière de soins de santé ainsi que la fondation et l'exploitation des hôpitaux catholiques.

---

**North to Share:  
The Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska  
and the Yukon Territory**

by  
**Sister Margaret Cantwell, S.S.A.**  
in collaboration with  
**Sister Mary George Edmond, S.S.**

Source: Courtesy of Russell Gibson and  
the Sisters of St. Ann

Copyright: © 1992 Sisters of St. Ann. Used with  
permission

Digitized: May 2015



# North to Share

The Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska and the Yukon Territory

Sister Margaret Cantwell, S.S.A.  
In collaboration with  
Sister Mary George Edmond, S.S.A.

With a foreword by the  
Honorable Walter J. Hickel



# North to Share

The Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska and the Yukon Territory

Sister Margaret Cantwell, S.S.A.  
In collaboration with  
Sister Mary George Edmond, S.S.A.

With a foreword by the  
Honorable Walter J. Hickel



### Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Cantwell, Margaret.  
North to share

Includes bibliographical references and index.  
ISBN 0-9696563-0-0

1. Sisters of Saint Anne--Alaska--History.  
2. Sisters of Saint Anne--Yukon Territory--  
History. I. Edmond, Mary George. II. Sisters  
of Saint Anne. III. Title.  
EX4486.4.Z5U63 1992 271'.97 C92-091723-2

Published by: Sisters of St. Ann  
Direct inquiries to: 1550 Begbie Street  
Victoria  
British Columbia, Canada, V8R 1K8

Copyright © Sisters of St. Ann

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any manner or stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or otherwise copied for public or private use without the prior written permission of the publisher, except by reviewers who may for purpose of reviewing this book quote brief passages to be printed in a newspaper or magazine.

Printed in Canada

Cover: *"This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes."* Psalm 118

From a symbolic oil painting, *Calling*, by the author.



# Preface

---

Diversity of character and variety of sharing marked a group of women, who, bringing their gifts and limitations, went North to live among people themselves diverse and varied. United in a strong community bondedness, the Sisters of Saint Ann were women who impacted the evolving story of Alaska and the Yukon Territory.

The unified effort of the sisters reflected the contributions of each woman. For it was through particular women that the Sisters of Saint Ann gave of themselves and their resources to the North. Chronicled here is the story of farm girls who founded hospitals, poets who mined nuggets in their minds, down-to-earth teachers challenged by the dance of Northern Lights.

Firsthand experience has helped in the telling of the story of how, when, where, and why the Sisters of Saint Ann went North to share. The author has lived in Alaska or been closely associated with Alaska for forty years; she has researched, assessed, and interviewed. This book is the result of lived and researched experiences.

Previous research for the Archdiocese of Anchorage gave the author resource material familiar to her as the present project began. This material came from the State Archives in Juneau, Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus (Spokane, Washington), British Columbia Archives in Victoria, and others. A summer of research at the Mother House Archives in Montreal (Lachine) was spent in reading French and English original documents: journals, house chronicles, council reports, letters, school and hospital records. Documents and other papers in the Provincial House Archives (Victoria, B.C.) were also studied. Collated questionnaires, returned by more than eighty of the women who had shared and served in the North, added more documentation.

In all this research, Sister Mary George Edmond (Lucienne Babin) collaborated. She guided the project, assessed progressive versions of the text, verified statistics, and typed the manuscript. Interviews gave many sisters additional chances to speak for themselves in this story. Finally, the support of other co-workers and friends eager to see this volume in print testifies to the mark the Sisters of Saint Ann have left on the people of the North.

Each story of where the sisters served is told—not completely (for that is impossible), but globally—in each chapter arranged according to the chronological order of foundation. The exception is that of Holy Cross, which, because of its link to the ongoing story, fills two chapters of this historical record. Early accounts are based almost exclusively on original journals kept by individual sisters as they journeyed to their missions, or pioneered in remote places. House diaries (known as chronicles), selected correspondence, and Acts of Council of the major deliberative bodies of the Congregation also are sources used by the author. Excerpts from French journals, house diaries, and letters pertinent to this account have been either translated or paraphrased.

Although this is the story of actual women, whose boots were muddied by Alaskan “break-up” or Klondike sludge, this is also a tribute to one woman



present in the North only in spirit. That woman, inspiring and protecting, is the foundress of the Sisters of Saint Ann, Mother Mary Ann (Marie Esther Blondin), whose life was marked by great vision, courage, and adaptability.

Leaven, when its work is done, is no longer distinguishable; it has shared itself. Welcome then to this story of women. It is a woman-wise story of leavening, of reaching out and letting go, of recognizing times and needs, of lighting fires and emptying the ashes.

Sister Margaret Cantwell, S.S.A.



# Acknowledgements

---

Many acknowledgements are owed numerous supporters of this book:

Sister Kathleen Cyr, S.S.A., Provincial Superior (1980 to 1986), Saint Joseph's Province, Victoria, B.C., mandated and encouraged the project.

Sister Frieda Raab, S.S.A., Provincial Superior (1986 to 1992), continued her predecessor's support.

Dr. Louis L. Renner, S.J., author and historian, of Fairbanks, Alaska, gave constructive criticism and assisted with Jesuit documentation.

Dr. Patricia Roy, history professor, University of Victoria, Victoria, B.C., evaluated and gave additional directives with regard to the Dawson story.

Dr. Wendy Arundale, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, was helpful in identifying archival photographs.

Anna Z. Wenzel, R.N., Juneau, retired Regional Nursing Supervisor, State of Alaska, sought out and critiqued materials for Juneau and Douglas.

Charles J. Keim, former Professor of Journalism, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, contributed critical reading and advice.

George W. Sundborg, editor and author, provided enlightened observations and undertook a careful reading of the manuscript.

The Honorable Walter J. Hickel, Governor of the State of Alaska, and former Secretary of the Interior, wrote the foreword.

Robert K. Betz, Fairbanks, now deceased, gave pictures taken by Kenneth Stone in the 1960s and photostated the manuscript.

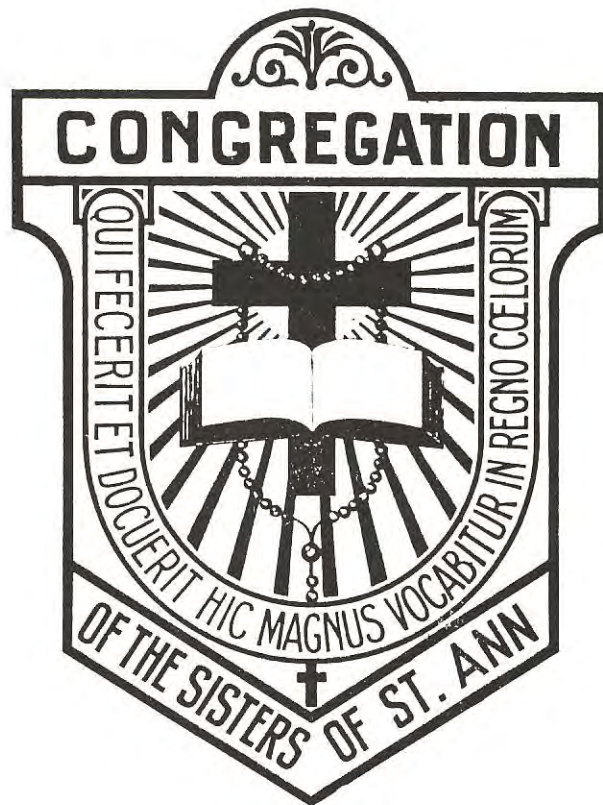
Jacqueline Gresko, History Department, Douglas College, New Westminster, B.C., offered historical critiques.

Ann Koch posed thoughtful questions the answers to which made of this manuscript a more understandable exposition. Ann entered the final text into the computer.

Finally, and this acknowledgement should be printed in gold, Sister Thelma Boutin, S.S.A., archivist in Victoria, provided abundant time, materials, encouragement, and prayer.

To the above and to all the Sisters of Saint Ann who, in any way, supported the writing of this book and looked forward to having it in hand, thank you.







# Foreword

---

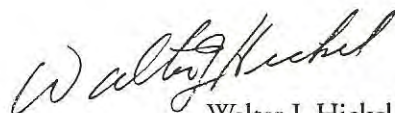
When Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867 by the United States, few people recognized the region's potential. Certainly those who rushed for gold and, later, oil helped us to understand Alaska's economic wealth. But in a greater sense, Alaska's greatest richness was, and is, as a place to live and build communities. Life is harder here, but the men and women are freer. No one lives in Alaska who is not a volunteer. Whatever treasures lie under the ground or back in the hills have been overshadowed by the opulence of the people's spirit.

Alaska attracts many kinds of people. In the beginning it was the Natives who settled the land. They were followed by the trappers, fur merchants and prospectors. As more pioneers came to Alaska, communities began to appear on the frontier. With the establishment of communities, there arose the need for human services. To meet these needs, a different breed of pioneer came to the North.

In acknowledgement of the requirements for community services, the Bishop of Victoria, Charles John Seghers, established a mission in Juneau. To do this, he sent Father John Althoff to Southeastern Alaska. In 1886 the bishop also sent three Sisters of Saint Ann to Juneau. From this small outpost on the Alaskan coast, the Sisters of Saint Ann ventured farther into the wilderness. They traveled up the Yukon River to Holy Cross and Nulato. In 1898 they went to Dawson. They worked as teachers, nurses, and counselors. Ever-surfacings needs called on their generosity.

These deeds are well documented in the following pages, but, just as important, a story of the human spirit is told. Rarely armed with more than their faith in God and people, the Sisters of Saint Ann brought compassion to the North. Unlike the early settlers, who clashed with the inherently commiserate Native cultures, the Sisters of Saint Ann helped to educate the Natives and other residents about each other. They helped to bring understanding to the frontier. At the same time the Sisters endured the same hardships as the other peoples of the North. With dedication and love, these brave servants of God persevered in their service to Alaska. Using their hearts and minds, they overcame obstacles and touched others with love. Theirs is a tale rich in the human equation.

This is a book that all interested people should read because it tells of a segment of Alaska's history that is often overlooked in favor of the more colorful aspects. Although the history of the Sisters of Saint Ann is of a different nature than the more colorful parts, it is inexorably connected to them. Within these pages are valuable lessons for the students of history. These stories teach the importance of people in the shaping of events—of people who came "North to Share." The story of the Sisters of Saint Ann is an inspiration to us all.



Walter J. Hickel  
Governor of the State of Alaska







## Dedication

To Venerable Marie Anne Blondin (Mother Mary Ann) and to the peoples of the North with whom the Sisters of Saint Ann shared their lives



## Legend for Photographs on Page 8

Sisters Mary Edward of Jesus, Aza, Rose of the Child Jesus, Joanne, and fur-clad students send Christmas wishes from Holy Cross.

Sister Mary Epiphane (L.) and two other sisters in a picnic at Dawson.

A happy group on an outing by dog sled follows a mission trail.

Sisters Mary Henrietta of Jesus and Mary Lucita enjoy Skagway sunshine from the doorway of the sanatorium

### Mother Mary Ann

*This portrait was painted by artist Arthur H. Carey in 1880, 10 years before the foundress's death (1890).*

Photo: Courtesy of Sr. Gertrude Scott

Sister Mary Thomasina stands in the school yard.

Sister Clarence Marie visits with friends at Nulato.

Sister Mary Perpetual Help with a group of the Children of Mary sodalists on the church steps.

Sister Mary Jules of the Sacred Heart smiles at the gift from the Yukon River.



# Table of Contents

	Page
Preface .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	v
Foreword .....	vii
Dedication .....	ix
Thematic Introduction .....	1
Chapter	
1. A Call to Alaska: Juneau and Douglas .....	13
2. A Call to Far Reaches:	
Holy Cross, Akulurak, St. Mary's .....	53
3. A Yukon Territory Saga:	
Dawson and Whitehorse .....	79
4. A Realization and New Calls:	
Nulato and Fairbanks .....	107
5. A Continued Growth: Holy Cross .....	137
6. A New Effort in Southeastern Alaska:	
Skagway and Sitka .....	175
7. An Educational Experiment:	
Glennallen and the Copper River .....	203
8. Another Call for Women:	
Urban and Rural Ministries .....	229
Sisters of Saint Ann—Alphabetical Listing .....	244
Sisters of Saint Ann Listed According to Mission	
Akulurak .....	251
Anchorage .....	251
Chefornak/Nightmute .....	251
Dawson .....	251
Douglas Island .....	252
Fairbanks .....	253
Galena .....	253
Glennallen .....	253
Holy Cross .....	253
Juneau .....	254
Kanakanak .....	256
Mountain Village/Pilot Station .....	256
Nulato .....	256
St. Mary's .....	256
Sitka .....	256
Skagway .....	256
Whitehorse .....	257
Sisters of Saint Ann Buried in the North .....	257



Notes	
Chapter 1 .....	258
Chapter 2 .....	266
Chapter 3 .....	272
Chapter 4 .....	276
Chapter 5 .....	279
Chapter 6 .....	280
Chapter 7 .....	283
Chapter 8 .....	286
Bibliography .....	288
Biographies .....	293
Index .....	295

# Thematic Introduction

---

## Outline

The Lands and the Peoples  
Alaska  
The Yukon Territory  
History of Alaska  
History of the Yukon Territory  
The Sisters of Saint Ann  
Vatican Council II  
The Society of Jesus  
The Oblates of Mary Immaculate  
Usages

## The Lands and the Peoples

The story presented by North to Share ranges over a vast part of the 591,004\* square miles of the immense majesty that is Alaska. In addition, the book sweeps through vistas of the Klondike region, centrally located in the magnificence of the Yukon Territory. The book also plummets through time, spanning more than a century. Within the confines of this work, limited by the pages as to detail and anecdote, the author, much as a raven, an eagle, or a hawk, must skim over these lands, noting only the highlights prominent during the time and space covered, coming to rest only where homing instincts draw one to stay a while.

To an author-in-flight, the amazing topography of Alaska and the Yukon Territory is rivalled by the energies, peoples and struggles that match the magnitude of the lands. Even a global look, however, differentiates between the Canadian-flag-flying Yukon Territory and the American-flag-flying State of Alaska. Each land is boldly and bravely unique. A panoramic view of the principal regions and diverse Native peoples that traditionally have inhabited them is startling in scope and suggestive of sagas.

\**Alaska*, Oct. 1983, p. 36.



## Alaska

<u>Region</u>	<u>Peoples</u>
<p>Southeastern (forest, islands, glaciers, mountains, bays, ocean tides, rain)</p>	<p>Indian Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian (mariners, carvers of totem poles and dishes, makers of boats, warriors, dancers, fishermen, builders, singers and story-tellers)</p>
<p>Southcentral (forest, islands, glaciers, mountains, valleys, rivers, inlets, tidal flats)</p>	<p>Indian Athabaskan: Tanaina, Ahtna, Eyak (hunters, story-tellers, dancers, fishermen, singers) Eskimo/Aleut Sugpiaq: Koniag, Chugach, Eyak * (sea hunters, fishermen, story-tellers, dancers, singers)</p>
<p>Southwestern (tundra, mountains, volcanos, islands, rock, lakes)</p>	<p>Eskimo Central Yup'ik (sea hunters, fishermen, dancers, makers of grass baskets, singers, story-tellers)</p>
<p>Aleutian Islands (fog, storms, marine life)</p>	<p>Aleut (sea hunters, fishermen, dancers, makers of grass baskets, singers, story-tellers)</p>
<p>Central Interior (mountains, taiga, valleys, lakes, rivers, temperature extremes, muskeg bogs)</p>	<p>Indian Athabaskan: Ingalik (Deg Hit'an), Tanana, Koyukon (Ten'ah), Kutchin (hunters, fishermen, trappers, traders, basket-makers, dog team mushers, mask-makers, fur and skin workers, story-tellers, dancers, singers)</p>
<p>Northern (mountains, plains, tundra, hills, rivers, pack ice, off-shore ice, midnight sun, winter darkness)</p>	<p>Eskimo Inupiat (ice hunters, whalers, ivory carvers, fur and skin workers, mask-makers, dancers, singers, story-tellers, skills at individual sports)</p>
<p>Northwestern (mountains, bays, islands, hills, rivers, tidal flats)</p>	<p>Eskimo Inupiat (pelagic hunters, traders, ivory carvers, dog team mushers, individual sports, singers, dancers, story-tellers)</p>

---

\* Eyak people are part of the Athabaskan group, but have been almost totally absorbed into the Southcentral Eskimo/Aleut group.

Lael Morgan, *Alaska Native Peoples*, *Alaska Geographic Quarterly*,

Vol. 6, No. 3, The Alaska Geographic Society, Anchorage, 1979, p. 175.



## The Yukon Territory

<u>Region</u>	<u>Peoples</u>
Southern and Middle (mountains, lakes, rivers, woods)	Indian Athabaskan: Northern and Southern Tutchone, Kaska, Tagish, Hun (traders, guides, fishermen, trappers, story-tellers, singers, carvers, dancers) Inland Tlingit (guides, fishermen, traders, story-tellers, singers, carvers, dancers, weavers)
Northern (tundra, rivers, hills, extreme temperatures)	Indian Athabaskan: Vuntut-gwitch'in (traders, hunters, dancers, trappers, story-tellers, singers)

### Sources:

- Dorothy Jean Ray, *Alaska Native Peoples*, The First People, p. 24.
- Also compiled from maps and other materials prepared by Michael E. Krauss and Irene Reed of the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.
- Also from *Alaska Regional Profiles, Yukon Region*, prepared by Lidia L. Selkregg et al.
- Alaska Native Population Trends and Vital Statistics 1950-1985, G. W. Rogers, 1971, p. 245. (Prepared for the State of Alaska, Jay S. Hammond, Governor)
- Clara Schinkel, Council of Yukon Indians, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. (Yukon information is according to language divisions.)

## History of Alaska

In both Alaska and the Yukon Territory, the Native peoples had skillfully adapted to the exigencies of the climate, terrain, and available resources. Seasonal camps were set up as the people harvested in innovative ways the meat, fish or other sea foods, berries, medicinal plants, and materials for crafts that supplied the utensils and dishes needed, or the ornamentation and entertainment of the people in various groups. Carving, decorative clothing, tattooing, basketry, song, dance and story-telling were well-developed arts. The familiar long-handled drum with a stretched membrane beat out a steady rhythm of life.

There were clashes with the environment when tragedy took the life of a hunter fallen from an ice floe. There were clashes in the early days between different Native groups. There were good time get-togethers, such as potlatches with ceremonial distribution of gifts during a time of feasting. There were eerie times when the shaman, or medicine man, through his powerful gifts brought the spirit world close. Family units were bonded, elders were respected, men and women followed traditional roles in life and the role models were well exemplified. The Native people had been in the North for centuries, had made it their home, had progressively discovered the Creator's



endowments hidden therein. Hospitality and sharing, values basic to a Northern way of life, were honored. Situated in the northwestern part of North America, the lands of these northern Native peoples were far removed from the beats of other “drums”: the roll and clack of trains sweeping westward, of transportation and communication advances that eventually would bring ever-increasing numbers of non-Natives to the North, to the Quiet Lands. The values of those who would come would clash frequently with those long a part of the North.

Ivan Petroff, a special agent for the U.S. Government Census Department, after a two-year effort, estimated Alaska’s total population in 1880 (about the time that this book begins) at:

Non-Native	430 (a disputed number)
Creole (mixed Russian and Native)	1,756
Native:	
Eskimo	17,617
Aleut	2,145
Indian	11,478

Of the Indian group, 6,763 were Tlingit and 788 were Haida. The Tsimshian group in Southeastern Alaska migrated from Canada to Annette Island in 1887 to a location that became known as Metlakatla. In 1890 that group numbered 823.

Vitus Bering, a Dane in the Russian navy, sailed from Siberia and the Kamchatka Peninsula in 1741, reached Alaska and claimed it for Russia. This placed the life-styles of the Native peoples, as it were, on a conveyor belt carrying them from long-standing traditional ways into a future at variance with the past. Changes were to be cruelly abrupt at times.

After a number of trading excursions had proved successful, the first Russian colony was founded on Kodiak Island in 1784. Other Russian settlements slowly began to fringe the southeastern, southcentral and southwestern coasts of Alaska. Through the years, the principal waterways leading from the coast saw Russian influence penetrate the Alaskan interior. Alaska became more and more accustomed to the sound of the Russian word and song, the sight of Russian ships and crosses, the feel of Russian might. Owing to these first sustained, ongoing contacts with non-Natives, the cultural riches innate to Alaska itself diminished. Economic, political and social differences became more and more apparent as the conveyor belt of change moved on into the future.

Sporadically, explorers from France, Spain or England touched the coasts of Alaska; the “Boston Men” and other whalers and sealers increased their contacts with Alaska. Frequently, the non-Native visitors brought communicable diseases, liquor, and violence.

World events conspired in the 19th century to move Russia to dispossess itself of Alaska. In 1867, for \$7,200,000, through the efforts of the American Secretary of State, William H. Seward, the United States bought Alaska (Russian America) from the Czarist government. The contemptuous names, “Seward’s Folly,” or “Seward’s Icebox,” describe the ridicule levelled at the Secretary of State about the acquired northern outpost. Alaska was considered as an embarrassment, as a huge ice floe marooned on the front lawn of the White House. The United States, knowing little about Alaska, reneged



on most of its responsibilities toward the purchased land. Having to do something, however, about the government of the people now under its care, Washington set up Alaska as a military district under the army. When this device failed, a customs district under the navy was put in place, but proved as dismal.

Many pioneers who had gone North after the purchase had seen Alaska's potential, needs, and riches, and had been conquered by its spectacular spell. The energy and vision of these pioneers made up for the weak commitment from Washington. People new to the North realized the Great Land had a destiny of major importance. After years of litigation, "An Act Providing a Civil Government for Alaska" was signed in 1884 and a governor was appointed. Alaska later achieved territorial status and finally statehood. During these years of Alaska's striving for just recognition, in trickles or waves non-Native people flowed North. Gold rushes; quest for furs, fish, or lumber; trading companies or individual enterprises; escapes to a new life; freedom from social restrictions, or the appeal of a wilderness existence drew diverse people to the Northlands.

Native peoples, foreseeing doomed extinction of their traditional way of life, banded together politically. With fraternal sympathy from non-Natives, gifted leaders among the Native peoples brought about more and more recognition of their aboriginal rights. In Alaska, these efforts culminated in 1971 with the historic "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act." Thirteen Native corporations, based on geographic traditions, were formed to administer, invest, and share dividends from money and land allocated as justly fitting to the Alaskan Native peoples. Having the land meant rootedness and belonging, survival and the wherewithal to give wings to a future.

Native elders, graced with wise statesmanship, today recall what was, assess what is, advise about what they feel the future holds. North to Share offers a story of some of the happenings coincidental with advances in government, in social changes, in what the elders may have seen, been a part of, and now muse about and weigh.

## History of the Yukon Territory

Indian peoples of the Yukon Territory have noted strong pulls of change from their traditional ways of life. Influxes of strangers have brought sickness, unfamiliar political and social structures and strictures.

The Chilkats, a branch of the Tlingit nation, commanded the high peaks at the head of Lynn Canal, the extreme northern part of Southeastern Alaska. Situated as they were, the Chilkats controlled trade with the Inland Tlingit and the other Native groups in the Yukon Territory. Traders from inland areas met in the Stewart River area to exchange goods and news. Overland explorers, seeking the illusive Northwest Passage of the North American continent, pushed westward through Canada, branched upward through the northern reaches. Trade routes, opened by the explorers or initiated by the "coureurs du bois" themselves, brought even to the Arctic coast non-Native commodities in exchange for furs.

In 1843, Fort Selkirk was built where the Pelly and Yukon Rivers joined. Britain still held sway in Canada and the British flag topped the trading center. The first contingents of those who came for furs were emissaries of the Hudson's Bay Company. Following close behind were Anglican missionaries,



braving the extreme cold of long winters to extend Christianity. The representatives of the Church of England were soon joined in missionary presence by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a Roman Catholic group of religious priests and brothers.

After the Dominion of Canada was formed in 1867, the Yukon region was administered as part of the vast reaches of the Canadian North, known collectively as the Northwest Territories. The North West Mounted Police, frequently traveling by dog team, kept good order throughout the North. When Klondike gold was discovered in 1896, a great rush of people poured into that region. Keeping good order demanded the establishment of territorial boundaries to ensure proper recording of mining claims and to enforce Canadian laws. The Yukon Territory came into being as its own entity.

Through the years, the Yukon Territory and Alaska have enjoyed friendship, known constant interaction, solved problems by establishing international conferences and partnerships. The Alcan (Alaska-Canada)—now known as the Alaska—Highway, built during World War II, brings people to and from Alaska via breathtaking scenes of the Yukon Territory. Years of sharing life with non-Natives have modified the way of life Natives knew before explorer, trader, missionary, and miner snowshoed on the Yukon trails. Elders in the Yukon Territory, musing about what they have heard, seen, experienced, join with the elders in Alaska to ponder the challenges of change.

People from the pinnacles of age can look, as part of that change, upon the coming of the Roman Catholic Church to Alaska and the Yukon Territory. The Church brought “new life” offered in the style of the 19th century and according to the best human insights it had at the time about the philosophy of meeting other cultures and evangelizing them. In the forefront of that effort by the Church in Alaska and the Yukon Territory was an active religious Congregation, the Sisters of Saint Ann, a group of women religious who went North to share.

### The Sisters of Saint Ann

In contradistinction to those women religious known as cloistered contemplatives, the Sisters of Saint Ann belong to an active Congregation. As active women religious, the sisters were called to share their talents and gifts with other people. This sharing was accomplished through apostolates: teaching, caring for the sick, helping the aged, and similar good works consistent with Gospel teachings and collectively called “Works of Charity.” As women, the sisters brought their qualities of personhood. Generally these qualities were those of home-making, mothering, supporting, loving, enduring. As religious, the sisters were motivated by spiritual values, had an urgency to share these values with others, and were committed to community life and the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

The Congregation, French Canadian in origin, attracted numerous French-Canadian women to its ranks. As the Congregation, formed to teach in rural areas, was, in fact, providing education amid farm lands and small settlements, many of the candidates to the Congregation came from such roots. Unexposed to anything other than French-Canadian culture and apprehensive of “outsiders,” the young women experienced something of a culture shock when Irish or American candidates proved to be equally good and holy



women. This was further accentuated when, for this French-Canadian Congregation, a whole region soon emerged in British Columbia, where various races, nationalities, languages, and creeds were apparent, but where the Church could express itself as being truly catholic, truly universal, for all people. To some, used to homogeneity, this western heterogeneity was looked at askance. Soon, however, they came to realize that heterogeneity brought a richness homogeneity never knew.

Differences between French Canada and British Columbia brought about different ministries. It was in the West that the sisters first began sharing their lives with the Indian people—at Fort Victoria, at Cowichan, at St. Mary's on the Fraser River. It was in the West that hospital work began for the Sisters of Saint Ann. When English language boarding-schools were started, continued use of the French language by some sisters was seen as out of place. There was pain for the French-Canadian sisters as they relinquished, first, their familiar culture, and then their language. For some, the pain was too much, the need not seen. This intra-Congregational clash was eased with tolerance and trust. The East versus West conflict, somewhat similar to the Native and non-Native stresses, has resulted in better understanding of each other.

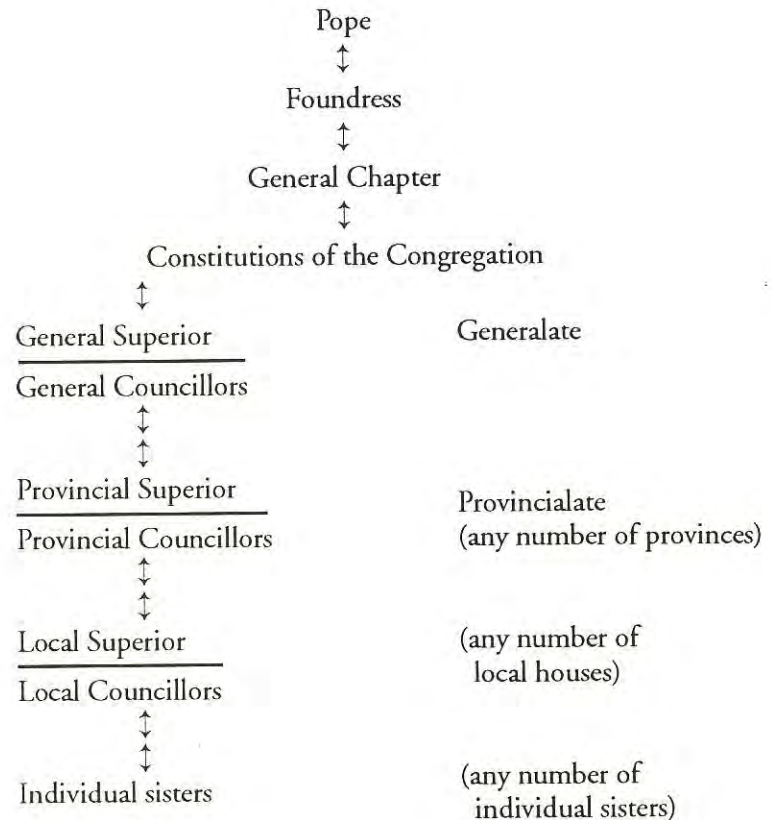
At the Mother House, in the heart of French-Canadian culture at Lachine, the young sisters received their formation as religious and as educators, the aged were cared for, and the general business of the Congregation was handled. When enough stability and ministries evolved in distant locales, a structure, called a province, was formed. Therein the schools and convents formed a close-knit, supportive unit. Usually sisters stayed within the same province most of their religious life, but changes could be made. Hence it was that French-Canadian sisters left the East and became a part of the western province comprising British Columbia, the Yukon Territory and Alaska.

Within each province as well as within each convent, one of the sisters was charged with seeing that the province or house functioned well and that the needs of the sisters were met as much as possible. The sister in charge was called the superior and much deference was shown her. Elections and appointments of all superiors were for a limited time, usually three or six years.

The Congregation was organized in such a way that everyone shared in its life and growth. The highest authority in the Congregation was called the General Chapter, a formal gathering of delegated sisters to study the faithfulness of the Congregation to its particular call. The Congregation was pontifical, in that it was directly responsible to Rome. The Congregation was charismatic, in that it strove to live out the spiritual and apostolic ideals of the foundress.

When sisters were available, the Congregation accepted requests to send sisters to fill educational or other needs. Thus, new local houses and provinces were formed. The sisters respected the directives of the bishop of the area.

## *Hierarchical Structure of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann*



The active women religious to be met in North to Share received a two-year novitiate formation during which characters were studied, the principal facets of religious life were learned, prayers were memorized, basics of the spiritual life were explained and practiced. Commitment to Christ was made “visible” by the adoption of a religious name and a religious dress, or “holy habit.” The novitiate program helped prepare the women to live the evangelical counsels: detachment from and sharing of material goods; love for everyone, but no one exclusively; obedience to the Will of God. In the Congregation, these counsels were linked with community living. As “sisters,” the women religious held all things in common, worked for the good of all.

When the novitiate was completed, education and training continued while the sisters began sharing their lives in the ministries of the Congregation. In pre-Vatican II days, trying to teach, nurse, or to minister in any way conflicted with fixed schedules, brought interruptions, and limited contacts. Those to whom and with whom the sisters ministered accommodated themselves to the sisters’ horarium, often with great inconvenience.



A typical day was structured something like this:

4:50 a.m.	Rising and short prayers offering the day
5:20	Prayer together
5:30	Meditation together
6:00	Holy Mass
7:00	Breakfast
7:30	Chores
8:00	School, or other services
10:00	Spiritual Reading, if not at school or otherwise involved
11:30	Examination of Conscience Angelus Meal prayers Dinner
4:30	Spiritual Reading Rosary
5:00	Study
6:30	Supper, with accompanying prayers and reading
7:00	Recreation together
8:00	Night prayer and preparation for meditation Solemn silence, not to be broken except for serious reasons
9:00	Retiring

Currently, the sisters now adapt to the exigencies of ministry and the convenience and comfort of the people involved.

Pre-Vatican contemplative-type rulings mandated silence which the sisters faithfully observed. They tried to maintain a recollected attitude and had exacting rules for etiquette, modest religious behavior and the wearing of the religious habit: a long black serge dress, a short pelerin (scapular), a white starched linen wimple around the face, a black veil, a large wooden rosary with a medal of Saint Ann, and a silver pectoral cross. Besides the daily emphasis on spiritual and Congregational values, the sisters were obligated to weekly confessions, monthly and yearly retreats.

When some women wished to become Sisters of St. Ann, but not classroom teachers, a supportive, or coadjutrix, group was formed to help provide auxiliary services in the houses and missions of the Congregation. The religious habit, especially the headdress, of the coadjutrix sisters, was different from that of the teaching sisters. Several coadjutrix sisters expended themselves in the North.

Tensions in the lives of active women religious often came about because their rules and regulations, their dress derived from older, monastic, cloistered, contemplative traditions in the Church. Until the late 1960s, active women religious struggled to yoke the active and monastic traditions together, thus shouldering—not without stress—a cross that was not meant to be, but that had evolved. North to Share, as its pages are read, will reveal some of these tensions that the Sisters of Saint Ann, struggling pioneers of the North, coped with, succumbed to, or wisely relinquished.

Each sister now assumes more ongoing personal responsibility for faithfulness to her religious commitment. She, in prayer and consultation, seeks the evolving expression of the Will of God as her life unfolds. For the Sisters of



Saint Ann, that Will is evidenced by a sense of peace when personal honesty, the charism of the Congregation, and the approval of Congregational authority come together. It is a living of personal poverty of spirit, of embracing love—but remaining detached and free—and of enlightened obedience. These are tensions in religious life today.

Increasingly, sisters are not asked to fill mandatory institutional slots. Pursuing the Will of God, therefore, demands finely honed spirituality, dialogue, faith-sharing, availability, risk, and understanding of Gospel values, insertion into the local Church. Consequently, more than ever before, religious life offers personal challenge. Cries throughout the world demand responsible hearing, personal involvement. The sister is helped in her response by Congregational structural changes: a diversified novitiate, grass-root input, province-wide meetings, continuing formation, delegated authority.

Each sister now arranges her daily schedule with an awareness of the rhythms in her spiritual, ministerial, physical and psychological needs. Her own horarium now includes a flowing of what was previously rigid into fluid choices. Interior silence, eschatological witness, human and Christian values continue to help sisters live out their ever-pervasive primary goal: the Glory of God and the good of all people.

## Vatican Council II

Pope John XXIII sensed the Spirit's probing question: "Is the Church responding fully to the needs of the People of God today?" Calling upon Church leaders worldwide to meet on October 11, 1962, in Rome at the Vatican, he set in motion stirrings, examinations, discussions and decisions to update the Church and to strive for Christian unity. The gathering, Vatican Council II (successor to Vatican Council I held from December 1869 to October 1870), produced much development and change. Vatican Council II, after its closure in the fall of 1964, led to subsequent conferences that continued to bring to the fore new sensitive understandings about the roles of women religious. To stay within the parameters of North to Share, women religious engaged in active apostolates, or ministries, came into special focus. The tension of active versus cloistered was admitted. Experimental changes were permitted. Through the years, some of these experiments were discarded, or found to be but first steps in a process. Other experiments proved more immediately fruitful.

Freedoms from monastic and cloistered traditions untied hands, as it were, to let the sisters reach out more directly into the lives of people. Dress became less important than before. Baptism regained preeminence in a person's call to follow Christ. Before long, baptismal names, rather than religious names, were in use. Sisters shortened their dresses to be more like those of other women. Rosaries went into pockets; crosses were smaller; veils became shoulder length, then optional.

Differences in life-style reflected changed emphases. Some of those changes in life-style are evident in this book: photographs of sisters who no longer wear religious clothing, the usage of family names rather than religious names, the emergence of individual ministries, the colorful new ways by which women religious are sharing in the world of today. But the centuries-old basic ideal of religious life remains: following Christ.



## The Society of Jesus

The Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska cooperated with men religious of the Society of Jesus, commonly known as Jesuits, or even as SJs. Their primary purpose was to be of special service to the pope, to respond to whatever mission in the Church called for special help. This responsibility quickly became that of scholarship: teaching, publishing, researching. The Jesuits early in their history entered into mission activity. Years of religious and secular study characterize their training. Both Jesuit priests and brothers vow themselves to poverty, chastity, and obedience. Jesuits are governed by a General Superior in Rome, by provincial and local (or area) superiors. At the time North to Share introduces the Jesuits, they were manning outposts in the Rocky Mountain Missions.

## The Oblates of Mary Immaculate

In the Yukon Territory, the Oblate priests and brothers were co-workers with the Sisters of Saint Ann. The official name of the Oblates, or OMIs, was that of Missionary Oblates of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary. These male religious were organized with general, provincial and local structures. Oblates were in the forefront of providing educational opportunities for the Indian groups of the West. Oblates were also prime missionaries of the Canadian North.

## Usages

This introduction to North to Share, finally, must note some word usages. Spellings of Russian and Native names of places and people have been let go and the accepted standard English version used instead. Vancouver's Island, known as such in the 19th century, is referred to simply as Vancouver Island. The word Native is used to mean all aboriginal people. When specific peoples are referred to, then Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut is used. *Non-Natives* means all non-aboriginal peoples who had any interaction with the North.

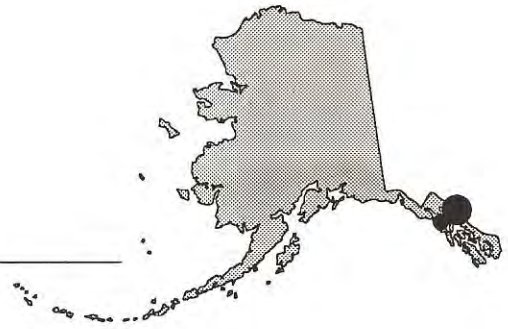
The Sisters of Saint Ann use the spelling Anne in the East. It has not been the usage in the West and so is not spelled that way in North to Share, a distinctly western contribution to the general history of the Congregation. Lastly, some of the names of religious, after having been introduced, are shortened in subsequent references. For complete religious and family names, places and times of service, end-of-the-book tabulations have been provided.

The chapter maps give the approximate location of the principal mission by means of a large circle. If the chapter also tells the story of another mission effort, that location is indicated by a small circle.





## A Call to Alaska: Juneau and Douglas



**O**n a dark, rainy night in Southeastern Alaska, a volley of loud, harsh voices erupted from a saloon in the rough mining town of Douglas on Gastineau Channel. The rising clamor was climaxed by shots. A man leaving a neighboring saloon felt the impact of a bullet, stumbled and fell.

Suddenly the disturbance was over. Attention centered on a man who lay dead inside the saloon, but even more on the wounded man on the road. His condition dictated hospitalization. Waves of consternation ebbed into relief as concerned bystanders realized that across the channel in Juneau was a hospital recently opened by Catholic sisters. The contingent readied a makeshift stretcher, improvised protection against the rain, commandeered a boat and set out through the rain, mud and lantern-lit darkness of an October night in 1886.

As the boat docked at the pioneer town of Juneau, one of the group hurried ahead to awaken the doctor and alert the hospital personnel. Soon breathless from the uphill race, he struggled past stumps, trash piles, mud, and puddles. The priest, hearing the slap of quick steps as they neared his shack, awakened. The runner's excited voice gave the message.

Nearby, in the unfinished church being used for temporary sleeping quarters, the sisters also heard. Almost immediately one was at the church door. Holding her mantle about her and carrying a lantern, she crossed the yard to the frame structure being renovated as a hospital. She fired up embers in the stove, placed a kettle of water over the hottest part, and lit other lanterns. As she opened drafts to feed the fire, she could hear the men carrying the stretcher. The doctor arrived and the sister-nurse hurried in. Finally the stretcher carriers bearing the injured groaning man struggled through the hospital doorway. Rain blew in, drenched clothes dripped, and boots spread rivulets into criss-crossed tracks as the men eased the patient onto an examining table.

While the doctor and the sister-nurse attended the suffering man, the stretcher carriers moved back along the wall and watched. The men were conscious of the crackling fire, the steaming kettle, the trips back and forth from patient to stove, the transportation of the man to an alcove bed, the skill of the doctor, and the efficiency of the sisters. "Who are these newly arrived sisters?" thought the men. "Where do they come from? Why are they here?"

Of all places on earth, Juneau with its storms, winds, darkness, and mining-camp life seemed uninviting. Yet, the sisters, who were becoming part of the camp and accepting the rain as well as the rare days of sunlit glacial beauty, were here. Just as the ice cap beyond Juneau intimated still unseen phases of



the North, the sisters were beginning to share in a North still locked, for them, in the ice cap of the unknown.

\* \* \* \* \*

The snow and ice of Alaska and the Yukon Territory are spectacular backdrops for the lived experiences of women religious, the Sisters of Saint Ann, who brought commitment and their personal touch in the molding of the North. Today, where the sisters once relieved suffering, taught children, sheltered the young and old, and witnessed to hope, there remain few visible signs of their efforts. But the story needs to be told of the optimism, daring, and confidence in God that energized the Sisters of Saint Ann, involved with the development of Church and society in the North.

Culturally and geographically, it was a long way from the placid farms of Vaudreuil, Quebec, where in 1850, the Sisters of Saint Ann were founded, to the blue-crevassed glaciers, slough-laced tundra, and gold-fevered camps of Alaska and the Yukon Territory. However, more than two hundred Sisters of Saint Ann have packed their trunks, said their goodbyes, boarded steamers, trains, or planes, and left for the North from Montreal, Quebec, or Victoria, British Columbia. Named after Saint Ann, whom Christian tradition honors as the mother of the Virgin Mary, and founded for the purpose of teaching unlettered youth in French Canadian villages, the Sisters of Saint Ann were privileged to become the initial group of sisters in Alaska and the Yukon Territory. With Jesuits, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and the diocesan priests, the Sisters of Saint Ann were pioneers in the evangelization of the North.

Gigantic initial moves preceded the expansion of the young Congregation to the North. In late 1857 all thirty-eight sisters responded to the invitation of Bishop Modeste Demers to send members to the Hudson's Bay Company outpost, Fort Victoria, on Vancouver Island, just off the west coast of Canada. In the company of the bishop, four sisters and another woman left Quebec and arrived at Fort Victoria on 5 June 1858. To reach it, they had traveled down the Atlantic coast from Montreal, crossed the Isthmus of Panama, and sailed up the west coast of the continent, for their trip predated the Panama Canal and the transcontinental trains.<sup>1</sup>

During the sisters' long voyage to Fort Victoria, rapid changes had occurred in the Pacific Northwest<sup>2</sup> because of the discovery of gold along the rivers and streams of British Columbia. These precious finds had brought an influx of people to the region, and led miners ever on, on through the Fraser Canyon into the Stikine River area. Eventually, the quest for gold would lead farther north to Juneau and the Klondike. On arriving at Fort Victoria, the sisters modified their original intent of teaching local Indian children and agreed to open a school to serve the total population. This first school, the forerunner of St. Ann's Academy, attracted students whose parents had migrated from such cosmopolitan areas as Hawaii, Asia, and Europe. Many of the students boarded with the sisters.<sup>3</sup> Among the boarders were some from Alaska.

The first Alaskan boarder, Christine Spiritana, came from Sitka in 1869, two years after the American flag replaced that of Russia. Other Alaskan students followed, and in 1904 students from the Yukon Territory also began to enroll. Some sixty girls from the North registered at St. Ann's, Victoria, prior to 1920.<sup>4</sup> These boarders helped make the Sisters of Saint Ann known all along the west coast of North America from San Francisco to Nome. The

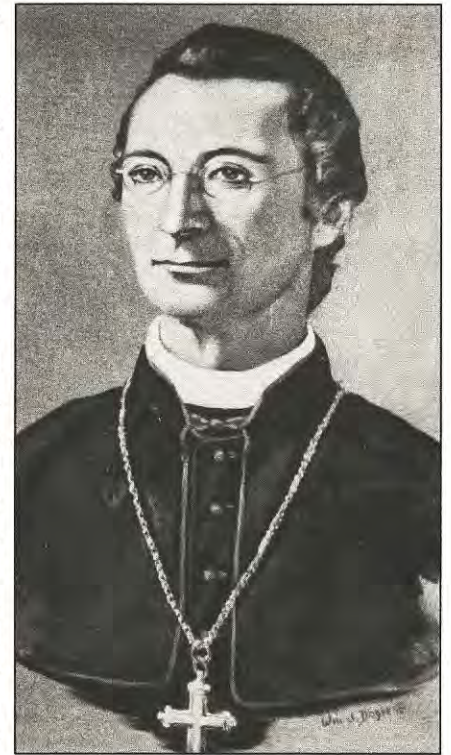


acceptance of students from the North provided friends and acquaintances for the sisters when they became part of the North.

In 1873, this bonding with the North became even more apparent, when the priest-chaplain at St. Ann's Academy, Father Charles John Seghers, was ordained Bishop of Vancouver Island on 29 June. As his jurisdiction included all of Alaska, he soon began a series of trips there. Before and after these trips, he sought the prayers of the sisters, informed them of his projects, and showed them his mementos.<sup>5</sup> That same year, a two-month voyage by a U.S. government cutter brought Bishop Seghers to the Alaskan coastal settlements of Sitka, Kodiak, and Unalaska, where he observed that the Russian Orthodox Church, which had been rooted there for more than a century, was well established. The United States had purchased Alaska from Russia only six years before the bishop's trip north. During the Russian possession of Alaska, 1741 to 1867, Catholic priests had not been welcomed. Bishop Seghers faced the problem of bringing the Catholic faith to the North, acclimating it to the needs of the people, and planting it firmly. A second trip to Alaska brought Bishop Seghers to an outpost where he felt the Catholic faith could grow. He and Father Joseph Mandart, a diocesan priest-companion, voyaged to Unalaska and Unalakleet in western Alaska, portaged to the Yukon River, and reached the village of Nulato in the summer of 1877. The Nulato Indians won the bishop's heart and he determined to establish a permanent mission there, Our Lady of the Snows. On his return to Victoria, news awaited him that Rome had appointed him Archbishop of Portland, Oregon. The appointment cut him off from further evangelization in the North.

Before ending his Victoria mandate, Bishop Seghers made a third trip just across the Alaskan border to Wrangell, a mining settlement that then had the largest white population in Alaska.<sup>6</sup> The Bishop brought with him a recently ordained Dutch priest, Father John Althoff. Bishop Seghers' stay in Wrangell was long enough for him to realize that many of the Indians were linguistically related to the Indians of Vancouver Island. Just as the peoples of southeastern Alaska and of coastal British Columbia have similarities in their dependence on the sea and in their distinctive North Pacific art, so, too, have these Natives linguistic likenesses. The Tlingits and Haidas that the bishop met in Wrangell recognized matrilineal descent from two lines, the Raven and the Wolf/Eagle. The symbols of the raven, wolf, and eagle were known to the bishop for they were in use on Vancouver Island as well. Bishop Seghers, because of his relationships and interaction with the Indians in British Columbia, felt at ease with the Natives in Wrangell. Finding he could communicate with them, he gave some religious instruction. A little church, dedicated to Saint Rose of Lima, was built. The bishop returned to Victoria, set his other affairs in order, and left for Portland. Although he deeply regretted leaving Alaska to his successor in Victoria, Bishop Seghers rejoiced that there was in Wrangell a visible presence of the Catholic Church.<sup>7</sup>

The sisters in Victoria became less conscious of Alaska as a mission area after Bishop Seghers' departure for Portland. However, the sisters at the Mother House in Lachine, Quebec, received firsthand accounts of the North. In September 1878, Bishop Isidore Clut, O.M.I, Auxiliary to the bishop of the Athabasca-Mackenzie District, spoke to the assembled sisters about the distant missions of the Canadian North and Alaska. The bishop had traveled the great length of the Yukon River with traders. In 1883, Archbishop Seghers, on his way to Rome, stopped at Lachine<sup>8</sup> and talked with the sisters



*Archbishop Charles John Seghers, from a portrait painted by Dr. William J. Doyle. The original painting was presented by the artist to the Archdiocese of Anchorage. (SPA)*





*Father John Althoff was helper, friend of, and adviser to the Sisters of Saint Ann in Juneau. A large framed picture of Father Althoff was hung in a prominent place in the main parlor of the hospital so that no one would forget his service to Juneau and to the Sisters of Saint Ann. (SPA)*

*Sister Mary Zenon (Emma Fontaine) is the foundress of the Alaska mission work of the Sisters of Saint Ann. (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: Duclos, Dawson)



about his missionary efforts in Alaska. Dressed in his fur parka, hood, boots and leggings, he told story after story of his adventures. Holding a long stick, which he used while traveling in the North, the bishop performed some of the Native dances he had observed and sang the chants he had learned from the people. He asked for fervent prayers that Pope Leo XIII would allow him to resume the vacant See of Victoria,<sup>9</sup> so that he could return to the missions of Alaska.

The listening sisters and pupils were moved to pray for a people who could elicit such manifest love. Sitting among the sisters, no doubt, was the foundress, Mother Mary Ann (Esther Blondin), whom Bishop Ignace Bourget of Montreal had removed from leadership roles because of misunderstandings. She had volunteered, in 1858, for the distant missions of Vancouver Island, but had been rebuffed—all part of the shadow that obscured her presence and official influence in the Congregation. It is certain, nevertheless, that her prayers sustained her missionary daughters in the West. Whether or not Mother Mary Ann, in 1883, had intimations that her Congregation would follow Archbishop Seghers to the North, one cannot know.

Despite the visits of Bishop Clut and Archbishop Seghers to Lachine, Mother Mary Anastasia, General Superior, and her Council unanimously “. . . decided to refuse a request . . .”<sup>10</sup> made in 1884, for sisters for Wrangell. Father John J. Jonckau, administrator of the Diocese of Victoria, wrote that Father Althoff was experiencing difficulties and that the presence of sisters could bolster the faltering mission. But the Sisters of Saint Ann were involved in rapid foundations elsewhere and could not assume one in a totally new environment, despite reports that Southeastern Alaska seemed little different from adjoining British Columbia.

On receiving the negative answer from Lachine, Father Jonckau recalled Father Althoff from Wrangell to serve at Nanaimo on Vancouver Island with but intermittent visits to Wrangell and other Southeastern Alaska camps. With his neighboring missionaries, the Sisters of Saint Ann at Cowichan, Father Althoff occasionally shared stories of his Alaskan experiences. He described the glories of glaciers, bays, fjords, streams, shadowed and sunlit mountains, and forested green-blue islands. The land might resemble British Columbia, yet Alaska held a spell and a call of its own. Father Althoff talked of Wrangell and of Silverbow Basin, a mining camp farther north, where in 1882 he had offered Mass and baptized infants. In 1880, George Pilz, a mining engineer in Sitka, but looking for better prospects, had been intrigued by what Kowee, chief of the Auke Native group, said and showed him. Pilz sent Richard Harris and Joe Juneau to further investigate the Auke chief's information about gold.<sup>11</sup> This led to the founding of the settlement known by successive names, including Pilzburg, Harrisburg, and, finally, Juneau. No further mining importance seems given to Kowee. The Natives appeared immune to the fever for gold that struck others. Kowee and his group did not become avid prospectors and miners.

As the priest spoke of Juneau, no one present thought that some day Southeastern Alaska would be as familiar to Sister Mary Zenon, superior of the sisters at Cowichan, as it was to the exuberant missionary. She and Father Althoff were to be the Catholic pioneer missionaries of the Silverbow. Sister



Mary Zenon founded the apostolate of the Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska. Father Althoff became the pastor of the mining settlement he praised.

In 1885, when Mother Mary Anastasia visited the sisters in British Columbia, she joined in greeting Archbishop Seghers, transferred from Portland, and once again head of the See of Victoria. The archbishop shared with her his plans for a continuing missionary endeavor in Alaska. To her surprise, the previous refusal of the Congregation to send sisters to Wrangell held for Father Jonckau then, and for Archbishop Seghers now, an underlying message: the Congregation would at some other time accept some other place in Alaska. Mother Anastasia and her Lachine Council had had no such intention.<sup>12</sup> However, faced with the archbishop's confidence and contagious zeal for the North, Mother Anastasia finally agreed to a northern venture into Southeastern Alaska. Thus, the Sisters of Saint Ann began their move to the north with scarcely an official acceptance.

In September 1885, Archbishop Seghers sailed north to determine how best to use the promised sisters. At Wrangell, he was saddened by the deterioration of what had started well. At Sitka, where former Russian occupancy was still strongly noticeable, American vitality and enterprise were catching hold. The Presbyterian Church was much in evidence. Archbishop Seghers felt there was also room for the Catholic Church. Confidently he announced the arrival of the Sisters of Charity (a term commonly used for all sisters) and the opening of a Catholic school. People heard the news with interest and debated the possibilities of success. The first group of the Sisters of Saint Ann seemed destined for Sitka.<sup>13</sup>

As the archbishop continued his trip through Southeastern Alaska waters, the steamer entered Gastineau Channel. Excited talk about recurring gold strikes and successful mining was overheard. Sitka had shown potential, but, to the archbishop, Juneau seemed more challenging. Men bustled along the shoreline. Small boats were moored here and there, while other craft jockeyed about, ready to tie up wherever an anchorage appeared possible. Crooked paths snaked through a directionless, ramshackle town that seemed to have been splattered rather than settled. The town, clinging precariously to a mountainside, was reflected in the channel. The audacity and vitality of Juneau appealed to the archbishop, who noted that buildings seemed to have tumbled pell-mell from the skies.<sup>14</sup> Opposite Juneau, forested Douglas Island, eighteen miles long, was shadowed by the rising slopes of the peaks against which Juneau pressed. Mines were also opening on Douglas Island.

Excitement, friendliness, and hope characterized encounters of the archbishop as he left the boat and walked along the rough planks forming token sidewalks over Juneau's mud. Father Althoff, the archbishop recalled, had enjoyed his brief 1882 Juneau experience. Father Althoff would return to Juneau! To help confirm the archbishop's decision, some of the miners he approached remembered Father Althoff, nicknamed by them "The Miner's Friend." Likewise, the archbishop sensed that leaving a priest alone in this rough settlement, removed from supporting resources, would not be a good idea. With sisters, a team could be formed. So decided the archbishop and so he planned all the way back to Victoria. Juneau would have priority over Sitka.

The dawn that had seemed rosy for Sitka, the former capital of Russian America and then the capital of Alaska, dimmed into the gray of a mist-cov-



ered project. Mother Anastasia, who agreed with the prelate that Juneau seemed more propitious for a Catholic enterprise, assured the archbishop of sisters for Juneau. Also following with interest the possibility of an Alaskan mission was the western Provincial Superior, then called Mother Vicar, Sister Mary Anne of Jesus. She seconded decisions taken by Mother Anastasia who, besides agreeing to accept Juneau, had chosen the superior, Sister Mary Zenon, to collaborate with Father Althoff. The Mother Vicar submitted the name and proposal of the Juneau mission to the General Council in Lachine which approved the nomination and the northern venture.

Father Althoff arrived in Juneau on 30 November 1885, and wrote specifics to Mother Anastasia<sup>15</sup> while she was still in the West. He selected and began clearing Block 25 of the township and put up an initial building that would serve as temporary church and living quarters. Although education was the sisters' primary apostolate, Father reasoned that a hospital<sup>16</sup> must be established before any mention was made of a school. In Juneau there were, as yet, no Catholic families with school-aged children. For the most part, miners following the gold rushes in the Northwest were single Caucasian males, who had left home for the pursuance of a dream, an adventure, a fortune. Those miners who were married waited until financial stability assured them of support for their families before sending for them. An estimated 1,900 non-Natives lived in Southeastern Alaska in 1885, but school-aged children were few. As the American Congress had allocated \$25,000.00 for education in Alaska, the Catholic Church could apply for a grant, if and when a school opened for both Indian and non-Indian children.<sup>17</sup>

Many Indians of the Tlingit and Haida groups were either Orthodox, having remained faithful to the teachings of the Russian priests, or Presbyterian, becoming so through the zeal, enlightened concern, and loving care of early Presbyterian missionary efforts in Alaska. Numerous Natives, though, still clung to their traditional faith and adhered to their customs and beliefs in varying degrees.

Hospital ministry for the Sisters of Saint Ann in the West had begun when the doors of St. Joseph's Hospital, Victoria, opened in 1876.<sup>18</sup> With the news that the Juneau mission, 900 miles up the coast, would require a hospital, Sister Mary Zenon studied techniques in use at St. Joseph's and consulted with sisters involved in medical ministries. Realizing her responsibilities as head of the proposed hospital, she gathered lists of what would be needed, what could be brought, and what she should strive for as hospital ministry got underway in Juneau. Her faith carried her with trust into this unfamiliar field of service, although her years in orphanages/boarding schools had given her some experience in caring for the sick. She was accustomed, too, to visiting the sick in nearby homes. Yet Sister Zenon knew that the Juneau challenge was not so much a daring call to her personally as to the Congregation.

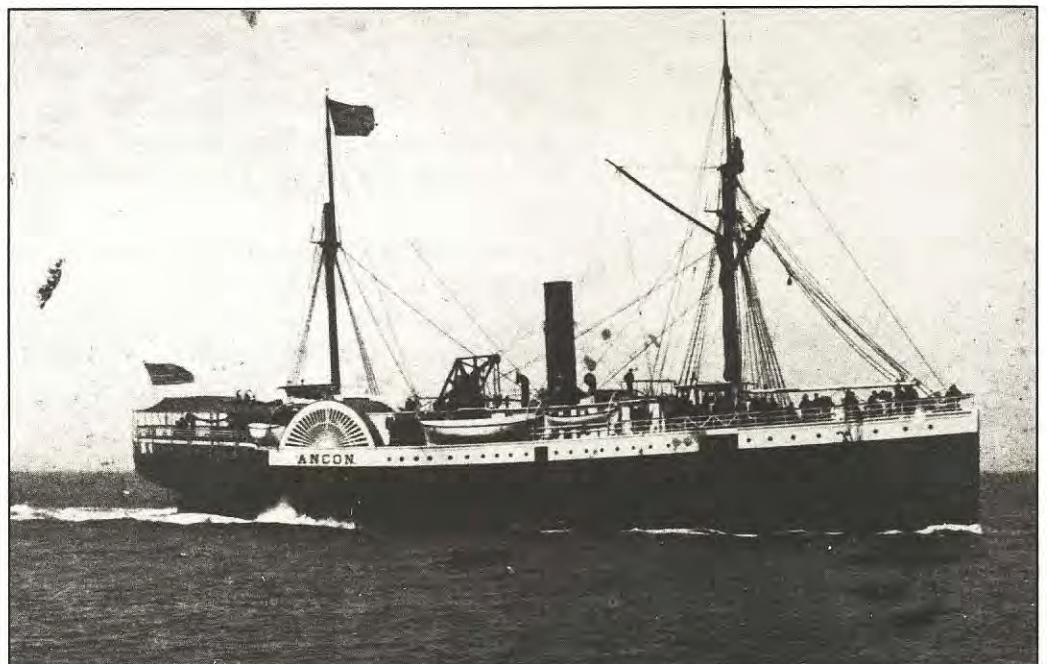
In the 19th century, opening a hospital was easier than it is today with current regulations, inspections, and credential requirements. To respond to pioneer pleas elsewhere in the United States and Canada, various people, many of whom were church men and women, had brought medical care to places where such voids pleaded to be filled. Numerous sisterhoods, the Sisters of Charity of Providence (founded in Montreal in 1843) being one which Sister Zenon had heard of, were establishing hospitals in Canada and



the United States. The “plus factor” for the sisters was that they went as a group, not as individuals, thus ensuring cohesiveness, staff, and minimal financial worry. Sister Zenon looked forward to knowing what kind of group she would be in and to hearing who her companions would be. Their personal qualities would be assets in the setting up of the hospital.

She was pleased to learn then of the appointment of Sisters Mary Bonsecours and Victor. Sister Mary Bonsecours had had experience in caring for the sick and the disturbed,<sup>19</sup> and Sister Mary Victor could assure good functioning of other aspects of hospital care, the cooking and laundry. The three pioneering women packed trunks and crates with supplies for the hospital and convent, said their goodbyes, and prepared themselves to leave by ship whenever the departure for the North could be arranged. While they waited for travel time to arrive, the sisters were visited by a Juneau businessman. Having heard about the rough life of miners in the outpost to which they were going, the sisters did not expect to meet such a polite, well-groomed gentleman. Learning of the imminent arrival of the sisters for the future hospital, he had rearranged his trip in order to meet them. Answering many questions, he made recommendations and talked about the struggles of the people of the North. Before leaving for Seattle, he offered to arrange for six hospital beds to be shipped to Juneau at his expense.<sup>20</sup>

At length, on the night of Tuesday, 7 September 1886, two days ahead of a scheduled departure, the *Ancon*, whose captain, James Carroll, was a friend and benefactor of the sisters, sailed for the North. The sisters were conscious as they boarded the ship that they were the first Sisters of Saint Ann to be sent to Alaska. Emotional farewells marked the announcement of imminent departure. To ask for safety for the travelers, the Victoria sisters prayed the *Ave Maris Stella*, *Hail, Star of the Sea*, an intercessory hymn for safe travel, every morning.<sup>21</sup> As the boat moved steadily northward, the three pioneers for Alaska recalled Archbishop Seghers’ and Father Althoff’s descriptions. Glaciers, modified by sun and cloud, changed their shades of blue from palest azure to deep



*Sisters Mary Zenon, Bonsecours and Victor sailed north in 1886 to Juneau on this side-wheeler, the Ancon. (BCA)*  
(Photo credit: British Columbia Archives and Records Service, Catalogue No. 48294)



indigo. Ice masses detached themselves and slipped with a spray of fine, snow-like powder into the surging green of the sea. After righting themselves, the icebergs drifted away with majesty. Forested mountains rumbled and echoed when calving of the glaciers continued. The successive cleavages in the glacier walls of ice were awesome.<sup>22</sup>

Deluges of rain soaked the decks as the *Ancon* approached Juneau, where the ship docked about 10:00 P.M. on 11 September 1886. Having left Victoria ahead of schedule, the boat arrived prematurely in Juneau. Father Althoff was still trying to clear his quarters and prepare for the sisters.<sup>23</sup> On hearing the unexpected boat whistle reverberating against the rain-drenched mountains, Father Althoff was at first incredulous. Realizing that the sisters would be among the debarking passengers, he grabbed his personal effects and dropped them inside a shack near his unfinished church. Lantern in hand, he rushed to the dock. Despite the rain and the advanced time of arrival, two parishioners, Marion Murphy and her brother, Augustus, joined Father Althoff in greeting the sisters.<sup>24</sup> A pattern of arriving before their house was ready, traced out in the 1886 introduction to Alaska, became an almost constant factor in the saga of the developing ministries of the Sisters of Saint Ann in the North.

The rain-drenched meeting at the dock, although happy, was brief. A stop at the Murphy home, where refreshments and a gift of blankets awaited the sisters, was a heartwarming welcome. Then came a midnight walk to the cabin that was to be the sisters' home. Getting there entailed an upward climb past stumps and brush. Slippery planks laid end to end formed a trail, difficult to stay on despite the light of the bobbing lantern. The starched white wimples around the sisters' faces grew limp in the rain. The black serge of capes and trailing robes grew wetter and heavier. Boots would have been preferable to the rubbers that endeavored to protect the sisters' good traveling shoes. However, humor and elatedness at being in Juneau assisted the women, who finally arrived breathless and rain-soaked, at the door Father Althoff opened wide for them.

After installing the three sisters as best he could, Father Althoff left them. His own night proved cold for someone had rifled his belongings and taken his blanket while he was at the dock. Before the exhausted sisters were settled, Saturday night had crept into Sunday morning. One sister used the cot left by Father Althoff and the others shared the mattress on the floor. Sleep barely touched their eyes, for the sisters were filled with excitement, anxiety, and curiosity.

As soon as daylight came, the three were up, eager to acquaint themselves with their new surroundings. Their first surprise was to note that the interior walls were lined with newspapers.<sup>25</sup> Their second surprise was to observe from their window any number of crooked stovepipes protruding with no sense of order from every building within view.<sup>26</sup> The lean-to was also studied, as well as the half-story above.

While they were still inspecting their home, Father Althoff, bringing water, bread and meat, knocked at the door. Leaving the food on a table, he invited the newcomers to visit the church. Still unfinished, it had neither foundations nor ceiling. Unbleached cotton served as wall covering. Homemade, unvarnished pews waited for a congregation. When Father Althoff offered Mass that morning, a Native woman was the only worshipper other than the



women religious. After leaving the church, the priest and sisters walked back across the yard to share breakfast together, a meal limited as to cutlery, dishes and food. Father Althoff cut the meat with his penknife. The talk, though, was unlimited. The priest spoke of Juneau and its possibilities, of what he had learned since his arrival, of the cry for medical help, of the cooperation he expected from the doctors in town and from the people as a whole. He was eloquent, too, in describing the future of Juneau and the expansion of facilities that would be required.

Shortly after breakfast, baggage began to arrive. When the hospital beds were delivered, the sisters felt that their ministry could begin. The night of arrival, 11 September 1886, was considered the foundation date of St. Ann's Hospital, the first hospital in Alaska under American rule, though the building was far from ready to serve as a hospital. The sisters held discussions with Father Althoff, debated measurements, and considered ways and means. It was decided that while the heaviest work of transforming the structure into a hospital and convent was in progress, the sisters would sleep in the unfinished church. Transforming the cabin into a hospital led to weeks of labor, with Father Althoff doing most of the work himself. He partitioned the garret into quarters for the sisters, set up the six hospital beds in the main part of the building, framed an area for a pharmacy, made part of the open area into a private room, cleared ground, and constructed temporary furniture.<sup>27</sup> He was the good provider. The sisters had brought relatively little. Father Althoff furnished all their food and gave Sister Mary Zenon \$200.00 to purchase whatever she believed was required for hospital equipment.

With the tact of a true man of God, Father Althoff prepared the way for the sisters, went on errands, arranged contracts, yet always let Sister Zenon be the acknowledged head of the hospital.<sup>28</sup> Sister Zenon, who had shown timidity in previous assignments, exhibited latent gifts of organization and leadership because of the trust Father Althoff placed in her. Under his wise direction, she accepted more and more responsibility for decision-making. Letters from Sister Zenon to her superiors attest to her increasing ability to plan and carry out her intuitive vision of what should and could be done.

Sister Zenon's gift for remembering faces and names won hearts and helped with public relations.<sup>29</sup> Friendly to all, sister gained the confidence of the Juneau people. Worried miners handed her their pokes of gold dust and nuggets for safekeeping. To further protect the miners' gold, Sister Zenon prevailed upon a Juneau businessman, Bernard M. Behrends, to open Alaska's first bank.<sup>30</sup> As a show of support, sister stood by the bank door on opening day and was the first depositor.

When the indigent spoke to Sister Zenon of their troubles, she found help. For men whose prospecting had been disappointing, she obtained fares that they might return home to their families.<sup>31</sup> Some of the miners came to her assistance by sinking a well for the hospital, and then clearing the ground and planting a garden. With meager finances, the hospital had to be as self-supporting as possible. From Captain Carroll she received a milk cow which she staked out by the hospital. Two hens and a rooster began providing for patients' special diets. In time, a few apple trees sent struggling roots into the hospital grounds. Although Southeastern Alaska benefits from a warm ocean current, the land is buffeted by rain and winter storms of blizzard-like proportions. Cows, hens, and apple trees, not indigenous to Alaska, were



adversely affected by Juneau's darkness, chilling dampness and glacier-born winds.

The superior-foundress shared in the nursing responsibilities<sup>32</sup> with Sister Mary Bonsecours, who was 52 when she accepted the call to be a Juneau pioneer. Sister Zenon was 36 and Sister Victor, 47. Ever devoted to the sick, the poor, and the orphaned, Sister Mary Bonsecours had a natural attraction for hospital ministry. She contributed whole-heartedly to the establishment of the hospital and industriously prepared bandages, sheets, and towels for her nursing services. In Juneau only until December 1887,<sup>33</sup> she returned in September 1889 for another few years of northern effort.

Sister Mary Bonsecours' qualities helped develop a good relationship with the doctors. Hugh G. Wyman, M.D., physician for the Alaska Mill and Mining Company, was a loyal friend of the sisters for twenty years. A young Canadian, James K. Simpson, M.D., helped St. Ann's Hospital perform its pioneering services. These doctors shared their medical knowledge with Sisters Mary Bonsecours and Zenon.

Sister Victor aided the nursing services by managing the kitchen, laundry, and garden. She also kept spirits joyous, even when worrisome privations threatened discouragement and heavy squalls of rain and wind swept off Taku Glacier. The hospital, not too solidly constructed, would shake at violent Taku blasts. Once, when such a wind blew, Sisters Victor and Zenon were standing by the hot stove. Both heavy women would have fallen had they not reached out desperately and grabbed each other to stabilize themselves.<sup>34</sup>

Although many items were still lacking, on 26 September 1886 the hospital received an early patient, Daniel Foster. He remained hospitalized only a short time before he died.<sup>35</sup> Another patient, Captain Frank Mehrwalt (Meerwaldt) of the *Lucy*, was admitted on 17 October 1886 and remained about three months.<sup>36</sup> He had been shot in the shoulder during a brawl in the Music Hall, a popular dancing and drinking place on Douglas Island.

Deeming it necessary to involve the people of Juneau with the effective functioning of the hospital, Sister Mary Zenon solicited collaborators who helped found the St. Ann's Hospital Society in the fall of 1886.<sup>37</sup> Early bylaws drawn up at St. Ann's later became the foundation of bylaws adopted by the Territory of Alaska and subsequently by the State of Alaska. St. Ann's Hospital Society drew up the following bylaws:

1. The object of this society shall be mutual relief and gratuitous charity.
2. All persons in good health, without distinction of age, sex, creed, or color, may become members of this society.
3. The benefits of this society are gratuitous admission into the hospital and while there, medicines and medical attendance free of charge.
4. The monthly subscription is one dollar, payable in advance, to the collector of the society.
5. All benefits and privileges of the society will be forfeited after a lapse of three months without payment.
6. Patients desiring private room and special attendance will be furnished the same at \$2.50 per day and upward.
7. The surplus fund of the society will be devoted to the gratuitous treatment of patients devoid of means.
8. Patients will be admitted only upon the certificate of the attending



physician. No admission will be given to such as are affected with contagious or infectious diseases.

9. Convalescents and patients subject to incurable diseases shall in each case abide [by] the decision of the attending physician.
10. Any person may have the attendance in the hospital of their [sic] own medical attendant at their own cost.

Sisters of St. Ann

Dr. Wyman and Dr. Simpson, attending physicians

John Timmins, authorized collector.

In accord with the hospital bylaws, mining companies in Juneau and on Douglas Island had their men contribute \$1.00 a month in order to qualify for free treatment at St. Ann's Hospital. The doctor in attendance received a one-fifth stipend for his professional services. Regulations ordering the day-to-day business in the hospital were aimed mostly at proper conduct of the patients.<sup>38</sup>

Prior to 1886, hospitals had received some attention in Alaska. Recommendations had been sent in 1806 to Alexander Baranof, manager for the Russian American Company, that the rainy, damp colonies be provided with medical services and hospitals. Two hospitals had subsequently been built, a ten-bed one on Kodiak Island in 1818 and a twenty-bed one at Sitka (New Archangel). In 1820 the Russian American Company assigned a physician to Alaska. Apprentices trained by the physician to help care for the sick were usually young Creoles (people of mixed Russian and Native descent). They were soon recognized as competent health aides, called "feldshers." Their invaluable help extended health care throughout Russian America.<sup>39</sup>

The Sitka hospital was enlarged in the 1830s to a twenty-four-bed hospital for men and a four-bed unit for women. Another enlargement of the men's hospital to forty beds in the 1840s proving inadequate, the medical service was transferred to a larger building. Besides this, a special hospital located twelve miles south of Sitka used natural hot springs for the treatment of skin diseases.<sup>40</sup> Hospitals were also located during the Russian period at Unalaska and Atka in the Aleutian Islands, at St. Michael on the west coast of Alaska, and at Kenai in the Southcentral region.

After the purchase of Alaska by the United States in 1867, medical care in Alaska deteriorated. Russian physicians and many of their apprentices left the Great Land. During the ten years that Alaska, as a military district, was governed by the United States Army, some army doctors provided services in makeshift hospitals, or in the old Russian hospital at Sitka. When the navy succeeded the army in attempting to administer Alaska, effort was made to shore up and reopen the aged Russian hospital (which for a while had been used as a stable). Once in good shape, the building was given to the Presbyterian mission for a school.<sup>41</sup> However, from their ships navy physicians continued to serve the people of Alaska in inadequate but important ways.

The Organic Act of 1884, which provided a limited, crippled government for Alaska, brought the issue of health care of the Natives before the American conscience. In his 1886 Annual Report, Governor Alfred P. Swineford, appointed governor in 1885, appealed to the United States government to open a hospital for the care and treatment of the Native people. Subsequent governors made similar urgent requests, often citing the inroads of contagious diseases upon the Natives, who had no built-in immunity to sicknesses



communicated by non-Natives. The pleas seemed to remain unheard.<sup>42</sup> During this time of government neglect, missionary doctors and nurses from several church denominations attempted to do for the people what organized government agencies were failing to provide. When St. Ann's Hospital opened in Juneau, there was concern for the miners, who suffered especially from accidents. There was concern, too, for the Native people of the area, part of the reason for the wording of Section #2 of the hospital bylaws: "... without distinction of age, sex, creed, or color. . . ."

Juneau quickly changed from a primitive camp of miners, transients, and local Indians to a city of standard proprieties. Sister Zenon noted the steady transition, and even before the end of 1886 began planning improvements at the hospital. Takus from the glacier howled, rain drenched the city, Gold Creek changed into a torrent, mud lurked at the doorstep, and the first winter abounded with loneliness. Sister Zenon felt reassured, however, by the good will of the people of Juneau toward St. Ann's.<sup>43</sup> As spring arrived and she saw great icebergs from Stephen's Passage and nearby fjords drifting in the channel, she knew there were no tasks too huge for God to move ahead or set in motion. Alaska was truly a great land for great dreams—St. Ann's Hospital should expand, it could, and it would!

To obtain sufficient funds for hospital development, friends<sup>44</sup> suggested that the sisters visit the Alaska-Juneau Gold Mines and the tremendous Treadwell Mines on Douglas Island. The trip to Douglas gave the sisters a chance to see the famous island operation. When a site claimed by Pierre Erussard ("French Pete") proved too difficult for him to mine without heavy machinery, it was sold to a promoter, John Treadwell. Able to obtain the capital and necessary equipment, Treadwell began a profitable enterprise. In 1889, Treadwell sold his interests in his company. Expansion at the mining site continued until there were four mines: the Treadwell, the 700, the Mexican, and the Ready Bullion. Low-grade ore, produced in great quantities, kept five stamp mills operating. Thus the mines provided year-round employment and a steady financial base for Douglas Island.<sup>45</sup> The idea of sisters going to the mines to beg was not unusual, for begging, as a way of alerting people to a need and of providing a way to share, had time-honored usage in the Church. But for those who begged, doing it was always difficult. At each mine and stamp mill, the sisters would introduce themselves, explain the project and the urgency. Someone accompanying them would "pass a hat" and the proceeds would be put into a carrying bag. The mine supervisors allowed the begging to proceed. Some miners responded, others did not. During these excursions the sisters saw the Treadwell operations, the dangerous pits, the potential for accidents, the hazards to which the miners were exposed. Those begging heard at close hand the deafening noise of the stamp mills and felt pity for any worker exposed to such an environment.

From Douglas Island, the sisters looked across at Juneau where they could see their small hospital with its lean-to, the nearby church, and the scattered shacks and cabins familiar to them. They also saw signs of permanent construction and stable growth. Thoughts of a new hospital gave impetus to continue begging.<sup>46</sup> After experiencing more rebuffs and some encouragement, the sisters counted the results: \$900.00.<sup>47</sup> Hope for a new hospital soared! With the prospect of still other funds from a November bazaar<sup>48</sup> to benefit St. Ann's, Sister Zenon contracted, in August 1887, for a twelve-bed





hospital with running water and a wood stove in every room.<sup>49</sup> In June of the following year, the new two-story hospital opened.

When Father Althoff was stationed in Wrangell, he contracted a severe quinsy throat that confined him to his cabin. His friend Henry, a black man, missed seeing him around the settlement and sought him out. Finding the priest ill in his cabin, the compassionate man nursed him back to health. Afterward, Henry followed the elusive gold trail from Wrangell to Juneau. One windy, rainy day in September 1887, Henry came to the hospital. Sick with pneumonia, he stood uncertainly in the doorway. Father Althoff recognized his loyal friend, saw him sway, and caught him before he fell. A bed was prepared and Father Althoff ministered to him. Although the sisters did their utmost, Henry died three days later. St. Ann's special patient, Henry, was buried in Father Althoff's own black suit.<sup>50</sup>

Three particular Indian patients are mentioned early in the case histories of St. Ann's Hospital. A former student of the Wrangell Residential School, a man of about twenty, had a finger amputated. An Indian woman, Fannie, who had injured her foot while she was tobogganing, was treated. Another Indian woman died of intestinal inflammation despite medical help. Besides serving the Indians in the hospital, the sisters ministered to them in their homes. Sister Zenon writing to Mother Anastasia said, "There are many Indian people here, but it is hard to reach them or to draw them to our Faith." A postscript reads, "I have just baptized a dying Indian woman. This is the second I have baptized since the beginning of the year."<sup>51</sup> Dying people could be baptized as the possibility of a repudiation was improbable. Neither did dying people require long instructions in the practice of the faith, such as Friday abstinence from meat, fasting from midnight to receive Holy Communion, Latin services.

*Sister Mary Zenon stands among patients at St. Ann's Hospital around 1888. (SPA)*



Another death in Juneau was long remembered by the sisters. The mother of Marion and Augustus Murphy realized her life was drawing to an end. She felt peaceful knowing of the presence of the sisters in Juneau. After she had prepared all that she thought would be needed to lay her out, old Mrs. Murphy requested the sisters to do that charity for her after her death. Love and admiration for this valiant pioneer woman prompted the sisters to agree to her request. The woman died at her home during a raging winter storm. When a messenger came to alert the sisters, he thoughtfully brought along gumboots for them to wear as they set out through the storm to attend to this work of mercy. The snowstorm lasted all through the next few days, delaying the burial until the weather cleared. After the church service, the coffin was strapped to a rough sled and drawn through the gray-skyed, slushy town to the cemetery plot.<sup>52</sup> Thus, besides caring for the sick, the sisters were at times called upon to help bury the dead. St. Ann's Hospital and the nursing sisters had become more and more a part of the fabric of life in Juneau.

In the fall of 1886, patients being few and education being the prime apostolate of the Congregation, Sister Zenon felt that a good beginning in school work could be made. The first public school had opened on 1 June 1885<sup>53</sup> with the Catholic parishioner, Marion Murphy, as teacher. For Sister Zenon's project, Father Althoff agreed to let the church serve as classroom. St. Ann's School opened with a registration of four pupils and Sister Zenon as teacher on 3 November 1886. According to the chronicles kept by the Juneau sisters, this enrollment grew slowly to twenty-two, but regular students were few.

The little unfinished church became a classroom during school hours by the expedient of drawing a curtain between the sanctuary and nave. The teacher's desk was set in front of this curtain and no student ventured into the sanctuary, even on rainy days when recess was held indoors.<sup>54</sup> Conscious of her limitations in English because of her French-Canadian background, Sister Zenon asked her superiors in Victoria and Lachine to send a teacher whose first language was English. She noted that some of the young women arriving in Juneau had been convent-educated in places other than Alaska and knew what to expect in a school conducted by sisters. Sister Zenon wanted St. Ann's School to be no exception.<sup>55</sup>

The sight of Indian children coming to the classroom was a delight for Sister Zenon, as it recalled her Cowichan days and the Indian people she had served and loved. Happy to share when festivities were offered, the Juneau Indian children came, but went away again, for as yet there was no compulsory school law in Alaska. Attracting the Indian children was based on spiritual reasons, of course, but also on the desire to share in the government grant.

The General Agent for Education in Alaska was the gifted Presbyterian churchman, Dr. Sheldon Jackson. With scant federal funds, he had recourse to churches, encouraging the opening of church schools to provide more Alaskan children with an education. By the winter of 1887-1888, a few public schools were functioning in small Southeastern Alaska settlements such as Wrangell, in addition to ones in the larger centers of Sitka and Juneau. Both Sitka and Juneau also had schools for Natives. In addition, the Orthodox Church had a school in Sitka, the Society of Friends was essaying a school on Douglas Island, the Presbyterians were established at Hoonah, and there was a Swedish mission in Yakutat.<sup>56</sup> Reverend William Duncan, recently moved



with his Anglican congregation from British Columbia into Alaska, had a school on Annette Island. The Roman Catholic school, founded by Sister Zenon in Juneau, fitted into this fragile school system, a system established with slender funds, but much good will.

Fluctuations in attendance among both Native and non-Native students were not only disconcerting, but also threatening to proper school order. Seeking a way to remedy the problem, Sister Zenon thought that boarders would assure a steady and increased enrollment. Children from Douglas Island might become boarders and avoid ferry crossings twice a day. Families in outlying areas might wish a boarding school situation for their girls. Therefore, the sisters made room for a few boarders. One of them, Annie Fontaine, the niece of an exemplary Indian woman, registered on 6 September 1887. Two orphaned children, Katie and Maggie, eight and two respectively, were adopted by the sisters when their Indian mother died. Katie had an artificial eye replacing the natural one she had lost in an accident. Little Maggie was full of scrofula and cried without respite. Other needy children spoke to the sisters' hearts.

By the end of 1887, the sisters were caring for five destitute children. An extant letter<sup>57</sup> offers insights into the efforts these women religious were making for children requiring security and help. Vacated living space in the original hospital already provided some lodging and schooling. New quarters, the letter said, would soon be available to house fifteen children. Government help in caring for the children would be appreciated. There seems to be no surviving answer to this interesting letter. Whether or not any financial aid ever came to assist with the care of any of the children, outreach to educating children continued. That commitment blossomed when in a few years a spacious (for those days) building opened next to the hospital. St. Ann's Academy, as the Juneau boarding school was called, was hardly on a scale with the imposing academies in British Columbia. Nevertheless, a familiar ministry of the Sisters of Saint Ann had been successfully rooted in Alaska. In both British Columbia and Alaska, distances and fewness of schools persuaded families to place their children in boarding school situations.

In answer to Sister Zenon's request for a qualified teacher for Juneau, the Congregation sent Sister Mary Peter, versed in French, English, and music. For \$50.00, a piano was bought from the Murphys. As soon as sister began giving piano lessons, the school enrollment shot upward.<sup>58</sup> Under

*St. Ann's School, pictured here, shows 34 students—a good mixture of boys and girls of various ages. The picture predates the 1896 boarding school structure. (BCA)*

(Photo credit: British Columbia Archives and Records Service, Catalogue No. 21842)





Sister Peter, who taught for nineteen years in Juneau, both the day school and boarding school flourished.

Sister Mary Theodore, a gifted writer, had come with Sister Peter. Besides keeping account books and other records for the hospital, Sister Theodore, during her one year in Juneau, noted pioneering details that her facile pen preserved. Writing to the Foundress of the Congregation, Mother Mary Ann, Sister Theodore observed that although the hope of establishing schools had been present in the Congregation as early as in 1850, no one had ever thought that, in 1886, the Sisters of St. Ann would be in Alaska.<sup>59</sup>

Continuing finds of gold and successful operations at the Alaska-Juneau mine and at Treadwell were still drawing miners, businessmen, and other workers North. Families arrived on incoming ships. In 1890, half of the total population (1,253) was non-Native (671). Juneau possessed several general merchandise stores, three hotels, three churches, and an assortment of specialty businesses: photography, confectionery, millinery. There was a newspaper, the Catholic hospital and school, two public schools, and a number of homes. Although an act of Congress forbade the importation of liquor, saloons were supplied by two local breweries.<sup>60</sup> Despite some discouraging evidences of growth, good things were happening. Sister Zenon looked about her and decided what should be done in an expanding, changing Juneau.

Governor Swineford, in his 1887 report to the Secretary of the Interior wrote:

*At Juneau the Catholics have a school of their own, which is conducted by a couple of good Sisters of Charity, and which, for reasons that ought never to have existed, has, or did have, a larger attendance than both the Public Schools combined. I hear the school highly spoken of, and have every reason to believe that it is destined to become a very important factor in promoting the educational welfare of the Territory.<sup>61</sup>*

The lengthy government report decried the lack of federal aid for Alaska, but showed appreciation for the good being done despite the neglect. Faced often with bigotry, prejudice, and suspicion, the sisters relished the commendation about the school.

When the original hospital became St. Ann's School, a few more non-Native children came, but full-time Indian students were still hard to attract. Some went to the public school for Natives. The chronicles of June 1889 mention six boarders, six

music students, and fifteen regular students in the day school.<sup>62</sup> Within a decade the school enrollment, which included young women taking music lessons, grew to 156.<sup>63</sup>

The boarders followed classes at the day school and had a thorough train-

*The first three buildings of the Catholic complex in Juneau had various uses. The 1885 church, when finished, was the first Catholic school. The 1886 hospital at the corner of Fifth and Harris later became the school. The 1888 hospital was used in after years for parish meetings, clubs, and even rented out for lodgings. (SPA)*





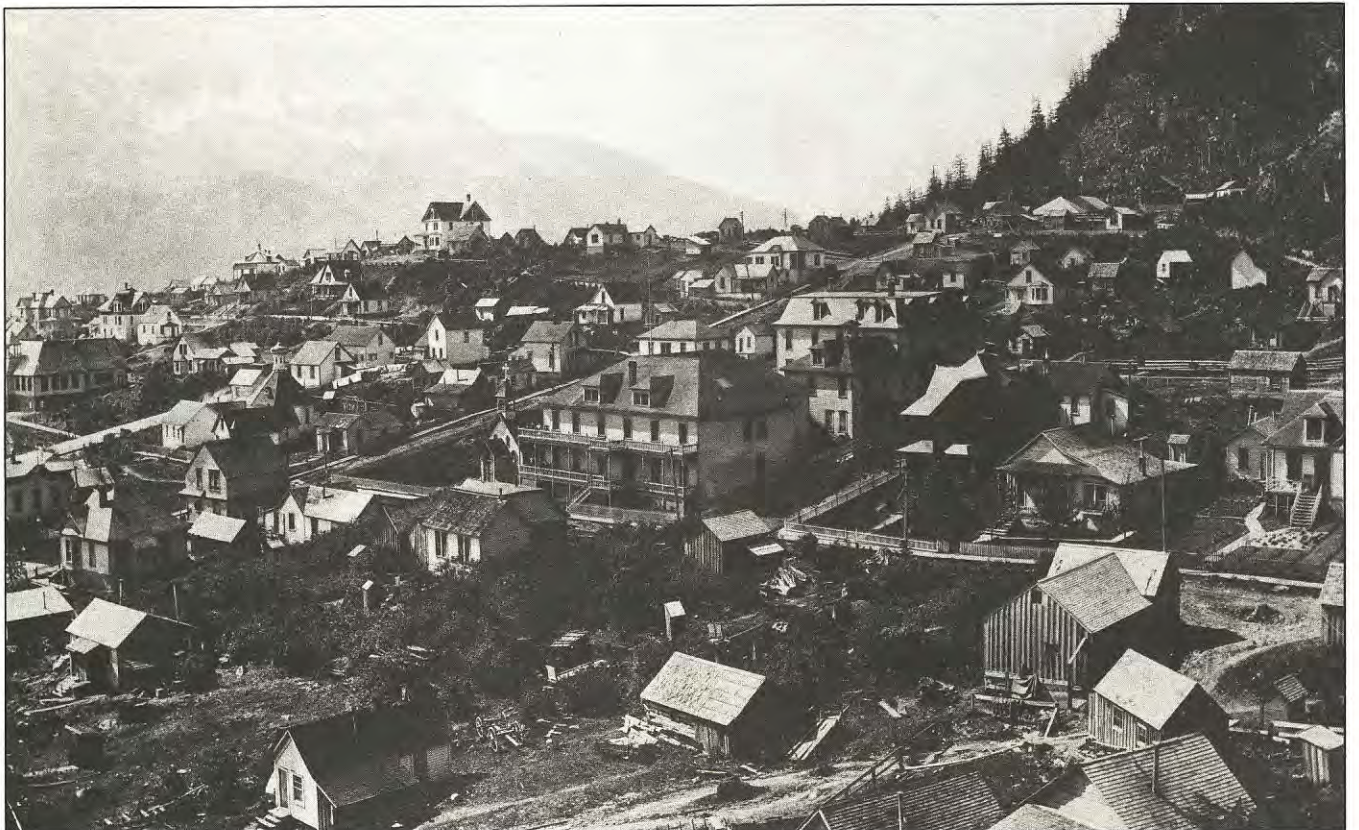


*Sister Mary Peter and her class pose for a school picture in Juneau, 1897. Big hats were in style. (Photo credit: Alaska Historical Library) (Courtesy of Anna Z. Wenzel and Marge Tillotson)*

*Music students at St. Ann's School display a variety of instruments. The picture is dated 1905. (SPA)*



*St. Ann's Hospital (with porches) and St. Ann's School are centrally located in this 1902 photo. The overcast sky is typical of Juneau. Despite this, a patient sits in a rocking chair on the second floor. A group is on the first floor porch. The Russian Orthodox church, with its distinctive roof and dome, is to the left of the photo. (SPA)*





ing in all household duties, especially in cooking and sewing. Music and fancy work were encouraged. Boarders mentioned in early records were from Douglas, Wrangell and Skagway. At the turn of the century, the boarding school, St. Ann's Academy, begun in 1896, at Sixth and Harris Streets, was an imposing landmark in Juneau. The prospectus for the boarding school gave the following information:

## Saint Ann's Academy

Juneau, Alaska

Select Boarding School for Girls

conducted by the Sisters of St. Ann

*It is situated in the progressive city of Juneau. Its location is high and healthy. Classrooms, dormitory, etc., [are] thoroughly lighted, heated and ventilated. The curriculum comprises all the branches of a good English education, with music and fancy work: also a thorough training in all household duties, cooking and sewing included.*

*Board and tuition \$14 per month; washing \$2 per month; music \$5 per month.*

*At the same cost, parents or guardians are allowed the privilege of keeping students at the Academy during the summer vacation months.*

*For particulars, address*

*SISTER SUPERIOR*



*Writing on the photograph identifies the school, church and hospital. A group of children and at least two teachers stand in the yard. Other people are on the hospital steps and the second floor porch.*

(Photo credit: British Columbia Archives and Records Service, Catalogue No. 21843)

Two boarders who enrolled in 1907 were Margaret and Edythe Jarmy. Later they both entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Saint Ann, Victoria, B.C. Edythe, realizing convent life was not for her, left the novitiate. Margaret Jarmy took her first vows in 1911. She is remembered as the first vocation to the Congregation from Alaska. Besides the boarding school students, the sisters cared for even younger children. An attestation of this is a legal paper of November 1895 in which Emma Fontaine, family name of Sister Zenon, petitioned for the adoption of an infant girl born on 17 October. The adoption meant that the Sisters of St. Ann would become responsible for the child.<sup>64</sup>

After establishing St. Ann's Hospital, St. Ann's School and St. Ann's Academy, Sister Zenon saw another need. The people of Douglas Island in the twin settlements of Treadwell and Douglas lacked local medical care and educational opportunities. In 1895, Sister Zenon sailed to Victoria to plead for sisters to open a school in Douglas. Two sisters were named, Sisters Mary Frances and Febronia.<sup>65</sup> Overjoyed, Sister Zenon returned North. It was decided that the newly appointed sisters would travel to Douglas each Monday morning and return to St. Ann's, Juneau, after school on Friday. Their school was a former boardinghouse, The Bear's Nest, a long, low building on the beach. Thus, the women religious who had



*St. Ann's School, Douglas (1909), with an unidentified man on the steps, is shown here. Interesting expressions are captured on the children's faces as play time is given up for picture taking. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Andrews-Evans)

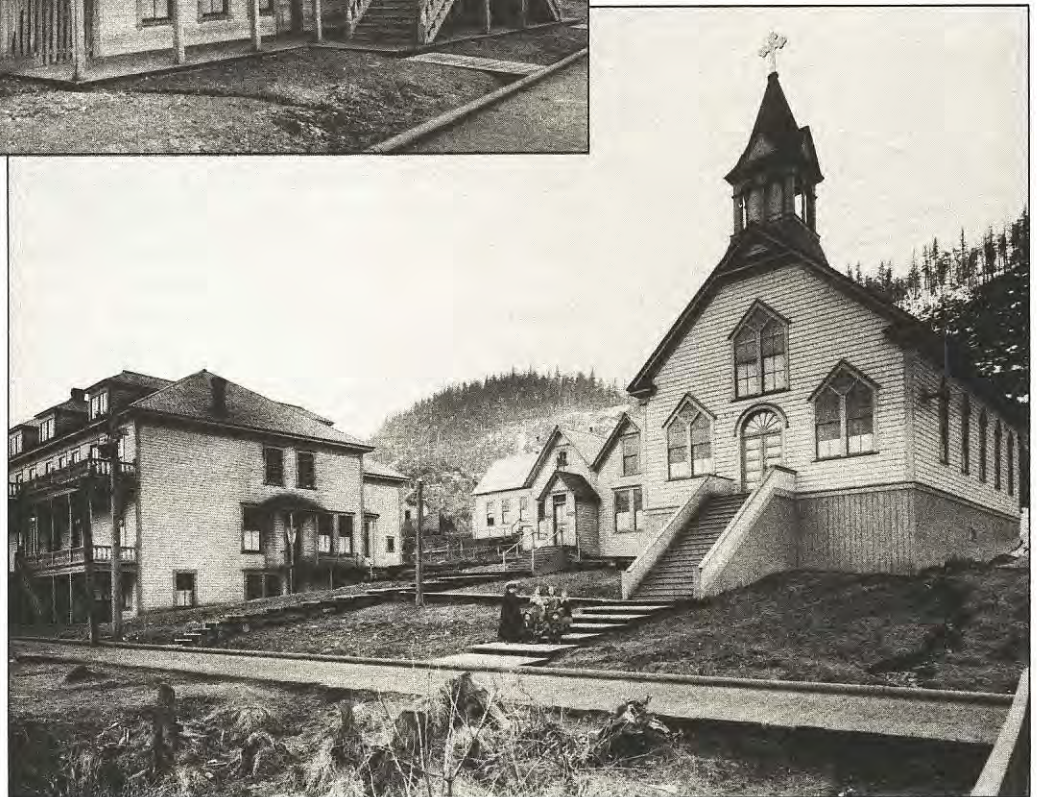


*St. Ann's Hospital (Douglas), in this picture, has half a dozen young visitors. The annex, built in 1905, housed the chapel. (SMA)*

(Photo credit: E. Andrews, Douglas, Alaska)

*St. Ann's Hospital (Douglas), with extensions; St. Ann's Parochial School (far back with open window); the twin-gabled rectory/club room; and Our Lady of the Mines Church gave an air of stability. (SMA)*

(Photo credit: E. Andrews, Douglas, Alaska)





come to Juneau nine years previously extended their foundation in the Gastineau Channel area.

During the summer of 1896, a church and a new school were built at Douglas on a hillside above the tracks and midway between the old Bear's Nest and a sawmill.<sup>66</sup> The structures rose simultaneously with the Juneau development of the 1897 Harris Street wing of St. Ann's Hospital. When the two-classroom school opened in Douglas in October 1896, the teaching sisters were Sister Mary Bruno, (Sister Zenon's blood-sister) and Sister Mary Rita. The sisters lived in an attic space above the school. Fifty children were enrolled.

Only a few months after the opening of classes, the sisters contracted for construction of a hospital in Douglas to be operated under arrangement with the Treadwell Mining Company. The large number of miners at Treadwell resulted in a proportionate number of accident cases. Transporting the injured men to Juneau caused unnecessary pain and complications. The 2 1/2 story, fifty-bed Douglas hospital, which was also called St. Ann's Hospital, averaged about twenty-five patients a day. Sister Mary Roch, superior, and Sister Bruno cared for the patients that first year. The sisters had the assistance of a male nurse.<sup>67</sup> Only after 1913 were a few rooms in an annex set aside for women patients. Separating women patients from the main part of the hospital, almost as if grudging women a place there, seems strange today, but was an acceptable and expected custom then. Most women stayed home for the birth of their children and took care of their own and their children's medical needs. Doctors paid home visits at that time more often than they do today.

The mid-1890s, besides marking the development of the Douglas apostolate and the coming of electricity to Juneau (1895), saw a step forward in the growth of the Catholic Church in Alaska. In 1894, Rome, recognizing that the time had come for a decision-maker and leader in Alaska concerning Church matters, designated the District of Alaska as a Prefecture Apostolic (a first step in structural organization within the Church) and offered the title and role of Prefect Apostolic to Father Althoff. He declined the honor in favor of a priest of the Jesuit Order whose members were by then serving in Northern Alaska.<sup>68</sup> Authorities, consequently, appointed Father Pascal Tosi, S.J., Prefect Apostolic. Father Althoff accepted his bishop's invitation to return to the Victoria diocese. Another Jesuit priest, Father John B. René, became pastor of Juneau. Thus began long years of Jesuit service in Juneau. Just three years later, in 1897, Father René succeeded Father Tosi to the role of Prefect Apostolic. Impressed by the civic activities centering in Juneau, Father René chose that city as the logical administrative site for the Catholic Church in Alaska. He was confirmed in his decision when Juneau became the capital of Alaska in 1900.

Another Jesuit, Father Peter C. Bougis, became pastor of the Douglas church, Our Lady of the Mines. The title inspired Sister Bruno to ask one of the artists in the Congregation, Sister Mary Helen of the Cross, to paint a large canvas carrying out the theme of Our Lady of the Mines. In the resultant painting, Saint Ann holds on her knees the standing figure of the Child Mary. The Child extends a small hand toward a kneeling miner dressed in his work clothes and with a Davey lamp on his cap. In the background are faces of the miner's family. The painting, *Our Lady of the Mines*, also called



*Saint Ann Among the Miners*, occupied a place of honor above the main altar in the Douglas chapel.

Both in Juneau and Douglas, the sisters assisted miners in various ways, especially those who were settling into other occupations or who were aging. Cases of mental disturbances were sometimes apparent. Recognizing the lack of care in Alaska for mental patients, Sister Zenon wished to add a wing for such help at St. Ann's Hospital, Juneau. Concern for mental patients was not limited to Sister Zenon, although perhaps her position as hospital administrator accentuated her awareness. Governor James Sheakley, appointed in 1893, had asked, among other items in his annual reports, for provision for the care of the insane. In 1904, a contract was to be initiated with Morning-side Sanitarium in Portland, Oregon, to accept and treat Alaska's insane. In 1905, the U.S. Congress was to pass the Nelson Act, creating an Alaska fund out of liquor and trade licenses, 5 percent of which would be set aside for the care of the insane. The policy of removing people far from home and family was strongly criticized through the years. The Organic Act of 1912 would forbid changes in the 1905 act and further frustrate those who wanted Alaska to have its own facilities for the care of the insane.<sup>69</sup> Such Alaskan facilities were achieved in the mid- 1950s. Ahead of time in her insistence on local care for the mentally ill, Sister Zenon so angered Father René that, to the surprise of the Juneau-Douglas sisters, he requested that she be removed from Juneau.<sup>70</sup> The pioneer sister left the scene of her foundations in 1898, but was reassigned to Juneau in 1909. Even though the wing for the mental hospital did not materialize, this perceptive woman of vision, on her return to Juneau, continued to foresee needs and bring solutions.

In 1909, Sister Zenon bought a small hospital from Doctor Simpson, and



*The altar piece, Our Lady of the Mines or Saint Ann Among the Miners, was painted at the Mother House by Sister Mary Helen of the Cross. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Sr. Aline Desjardins, S.S.A.)

*The chapel at St. Ann's Hospital, Douglas, was graced by the painting, Our Lady of the Mines, above the altar. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Unknown)



leased the building through the years.<sup>71</sup> The property was put to varied uses, among them as a chicken farm for St. Ann's Hospital and finally, as a playground for neighboring children. Sister also designed improvements for St. Ann's Hospital. Plans that crystallized in 1912 were approved in 1913 and implemented throughout 1913-1914. An exchange of properties within Block 25 between the hospital and the parish was agreed upon. The old rectory that had stood by the boarding school was razed to allow space for the hospital extension on Sixth Street.<sup>72</sup>

In 1904, Father Edward H. Brown, S.J., had built a new church and rectory. The Juneau church, The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, bore the name which honors Mary as the daughter of Saint Ann. After Father Brown's departure in 1914, Father Aloysius J. Roccati, S.J., continued the building program on Block 25. When the new hospital facilities opened on Sixth Street, the old hospital at Fifth and Harris housed St. Ann's School, which, in 1915 became a parochial school. Until then St. Ann's School had belonged to the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Ann. Aware of the many children attending the school and sensitive to the fact that the parish should assume responsibilities as it matured, parishioners agreed to take over the finances and major decisions regarding the school.<sup>73</sup> The parish benefitted in that it had more input into the staffing and educational policies of the school. At the same time, the sisters were relieved of a growing burden. The name, St. Ann's, stayed with the school and the sisters continued to teach. The parish replaced the old building with a new three-story structure, dedicated in 1919, housing both the school and the parish hall.

Sister Mary Hilda, superior at St. Ann's Hospital in Douglas since 1912, furthered the trend for expansion there. In 1915, it seemed urgent to build again. Plans were actualized and a new wing, acclaimed as the best hospital facility on the West coast, opened in February, 1916. A debt of \$30,000.00 was incurred. St. Ann's Avenue in Douglas was dominated by the imposing hospital with the school, rectory, and church resting in its shadow. But, at the peak of this Golden Age for the Church in Douglas, disaster struck the local people.

In April 1917, waters from Gastineau Channel broke through a wall of the underwater Treadwell Mines, causing a calamitous cave-in. No lives were lost, but the flooded mines could not be reopened. The flooding resulted in the almost total shutdown of the Treadwell Company. Unemployment forced miners and their families to move away. Both St. Ann's School and St. Ann's Hospital were faced with closure. World War I, from its beginning, had drawn men to leave for military duty. In 1917, the number quitting the Gastineau Channel area increased as the United States entered the war and the Treadwell Mines shut down.

Since 1901, when the Douglas Public School had opened, St. Ann's School had faced enrollment difficulties and, as at Juneau, the sisters had invited boarders. Local critics had thought that the 1916 enlargement of the Douglas hospital had been uncalled for. These voices were particularly loud in retrospect, when the mine failed. The hospital considered opening its facilities to adult boarders. However, before that possibility could be acted upon, the 1918 Spanish influenza epidemic struck the area. Both Natives and non-Natives were victims of the death-dealing illness and hospital rooms were in capacity use. Expansion had readied the hospitals in Douglas and Juneau to fight the epidemic. Expense, strain, and worry were balanced by the presence



*The complex of Catholic buildings in Douglas appears in the foreground in this 1910 picture. Prominent are the church, school (école), and hospital with the recently added annex (maison neuve). (SPA)*

*(Photo credit: E. Andrews, Douglas, Alaska)*



*Friends of St. Ann's Hospital, Juneau, have brought infants, toddlers and other young children (many of them presumably born at St. Ann's) to help celebrate Hospital Day, 1924, the first such celebration in Juneau. The group is posed before the main entrance of the 1914 wing, which fronted on Sixth Street. (SPA)*

*(Photo credit: W. P. Co.)*



of hospitals equipped to receive the victims of the epidemic.

Because Juneau was first to be affected by the epidemic, several of the Douglas sisters crossed the channel to help at St. Ann's Hospital. In the effort, they, themselves, fell victim to the influenza toll. In weakened condition, they went back to Douglas to assist as best they could when the epidemic raged on the island. Four doctors came from Seattle to help. After the epidemic abated, the health of the sisters was seriously undermined, and the hospital budget was in disarray.

Afterward, despite ingenious expedients by Sister Mary Hilda and the other sisters, no possibility of maintaining the Douglas hospital could be found. The death knell for the hospital came when the prospect of turning the empty hospital into a rest home for aging Alaskans failed and the Douglas

mayor declared the building no longer tax-exempt. Church and Congregation authorities considered the feasibility of dismantling the school and hospital and moving the facilities to Ketchikan, south of Juneau.<sup>74</sup> Such a proposal was presented, but voted down by the major superiors of the Congregation.<sup>75</sup> Following that decision, the sisters in Juneau bought desired hospital and school equipment from the Douglas institutions.<sup>76</sup> Other items were stored while awaiting possible purchasers. Victoria requested the chapel furnishings, but St. Ann's Hospital, Juneau, claimed *Our Lady of the Mines*. The Theodore (Tague) Doogan family, living in Douglas, was asked to move into the caretaker's house and assume responsibility for the

*Standing by the side door of Saint Ann's Hospital, Douglas, are (l. to r.) Sisters Mary Georgie, Theophile of Rome, Margaret of the Sacred Heart, Madeleine of Calvary, Hilda, Itha. (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: Unknown)



empty buildings.

In August 1920, the Douglas sisters, accompanied by eight children, left for Victoria. Two of the sisters who had shared their lives with the people of Douglas, had died: Sister Zenobia in 1917, and Sister Malachy in early 1920. Both sisters were buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Juneau. When Sister Zenobia was called on to go North, she replied: "If I can render service, I am ready at once." That service lasted a brief two months. After one year of teaching, Sister Malachy had succumbed following an operation.

Eventually St. Ann's Hospital, Douglas, was sold for \$1,000.00. A month after the sale, on 10 October 1926, a fire which swept through the island burned the structure and the former school.

Despite the closing of the Douglas facilities, concern continued for its people. Sisters from Juneau went every Sunday to teach children lessons in religion. In pleasant weather a fishing vessel, the *Teddy*, and in heavier weather a sturdier boat, the *Thane*, transported passengers. The Doogan family



always had the church open and warm when the sisters arrived. Three of the Doogan daughters became Sisters of Saint Ann: Ann Marie (Sister Mary Joseph Raphael), Marjorie (Sister Mary Kevin), and Theresa (Sister Miriam Jude). Also closely connected with the sisters was the Thomas Cashen family. In 1920, a daughter, Frances (Sister Mary Philippa), went with the Douglas sisters when they left for Victoria. Frances attended commercial classes at St. Ann's Academy, Victoria. The four women religious from Douglas Island served later in Alaska in various missions.

Besides the short travels to Douglas for religious education,<sup>77</sup> the Juneau sisters went by ferry on longer visits to southeastern settlements during the summers for the same purpose: to bring the message of faith in word and song to places where children had but little opportunity to hear that message. Sometimes the sisters were asked to see to sacramental preparation in the parishes and missions being established among the island and coastal communities. Previous communications with the pastors or visiting priests of the evolving parishes settled questions about the time and duration of the teaching experience, the living quarters, and the priorities of the summer parish program. Two by two, the sisters departed from St. Ann's Hospital with suitcases or boxes holding such items as catechisms, crayons, activity papers, charts, gummed stars, small pictures of religious subjects, colorful rosaries, and a few beribboned medals.

The sisters shared what they had but gained much from the people they met. Fishing and lumbering had been mainly responsible for the growth of population centers such as Hoonah, Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, and Ketchikan. Mountains and forests were lushly green; glaciers clung to coastal mountains and calved their bergs, sometimes even as the ferries passed. There were few priests serving amid the glories of Southeastern Alaska. The Jesuit Order had divided Alaska, for purposes of deploying priests, into two regions, the southern and the northern. As the northern seemed more adventurous and demanding, many Jesuits opted for what appeared more challenging. Other Jesuits, though, also responding to a call to expend themselves generously in the North, were building up in quiet ways the Church of Southeastern and Southcentral Alaska.

The shortage of priests, always felt in the Juneau region, was immensely alleviated by the coming of sisters for summer sessions. The sisters sent surges of energy through the lifelines of faith uniting a far-flung population. In sharing of themselves, the sisters brought renewal, hope, and parish excitement as they lived with families, shared their stories, met adults. After the sessions in the summer settings, the sisters themselves felt enriched spiritually and psychologically.

To spread the Catholic Faith and share in the life of the people in Juneau itself, the sisters relied on efforts made in the hospital and in the school. Visits to city families were infrequent. Hospital priorities and school tasks kept the sisters' days filled, even brimming over into the night. Juneau was concerned with quality professional dedication and the sisters strove to assure it. However, over the years the staff suffered from the Congregation's inability to supply qualified English-speaking teachers. Lay teachers supplemented the staff at school. Having another religious group assume responsibility for the school was discussed in writing, but this change did not take place. In 1919, a high school opened at St. Ann's with the appointment of a high school





*Most Reverend Joseph Raphael Crimont, S.J., D.D., Vicar Apostolic of Alaska, is photographed in July 1917 after his consecration as bishop in Seattle, Washington.*

(Photo credit: Frank H. Nowell, Seattle, Washington). (SPA)

teacher, Sister Mary Stella, a specialist in algebra and Latin and a capable teacher of literature, grammar, composition, and other academic subjects, as well as of moral formation. Replaced by Sister Mary Ethelind in 1921, Sister Stella returned to Juneau in 1926. Sister Ethelind's gift for drama, choreography, and dramatic presentations called forth creative and artistic responses from her pupils. The 1928 registration list of sixty-seven students at St. Ann's mentions that eight were in the high school. As the parochial school could offer only limited high school subjects, several students opted for the public high school where classes in vocational and commercial courses could be had. However, a small group remained faithful to St. Ann's. Some public school students came to St. Ann's for such courses as Latin. In 1936, Sister Mary Loyola phased out the high school department.<sup>78</sup>

Solicitude at this time by the sisters for the ongoing religious formation of older students encouraged several, including William Crisman, Margaret Kirk, Virginia Metzgar, Mary Thibodeau, and Marie Dimond, to become members of various religious congregations. John E. Gurr and William T. McIntyre became Jesuit priests. The latter, as a boy, had spent much of his free time around the hospital.

Another Jesuit, Father Bernard R. Hubbard of Santa Clara University, often visited St. Ann's Hospital. In 1927, he was invited to give an eight-day retreat to the sisters;<sup>79</sup> subsequently he made St. Ann's a planning place for his scientific expeditions. With his companions known as the Hubbard Gang, he helped with hospital chores.<sup>80</sup> He gave the sisters and the school children fishing and boating excursions. The sisters in Juneau heard of his adventures on glaciers or in volcanic regions long before his audiences elsewhere. Reference to the Sisters of St. Ann in lectures about his Alaskan experiences awakened interest in religious life in the North.

Father Hubbard also brought live publicity and patronage to the Shrine of Saint Terese. Located twenty-three miles north of Juneau, the shrine, begun in 1931, was the inspiration of Bishop Joseph Raphael Crimont, S.J., first Catholic bishop of Alaska, who had made Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, the Patroness of Alaska.

In 1904, as a young priest, Father Crimont succeeded Father René as Prefect Apostolic. In 1917, Rome elevated the Prefecture of Alaska to a Vicariate. Father Crimont was consecrated Bishop of Alaska in Seattle and given the title Vicar Apostolic. Sharing in the bishop's inspiration, Father William G. Levasseur, S.J., pastor at Juneau, brought the bishop's dream to reality. From the government, Father Levasseur obtained ten acres of land fronting scenic Lynn Canal and including a small island just offshore. He planned several buildings for the shrine. Part of the clearing of land, construction, and road-making was done by unemployed men hit by the Great Depression. Parish priests in Juneau, receiving requests for assistance, directed men to the shrine where they could find living quarters and a chance to earn a few dollars. The sisters in Juneau furthered the project in whatever way



*At the Shrine of St. Terese, under construction in the 1930s, concerned enterprisers have a discussion. (l. to r.) Father Bernard Hubbard, S.J., Father William LeVasseur, S.J., Mr. Joe Brown, Mr. Henry Meyer, builder. The log lodge is immediately behind them.*

(Photo credit: Sister Mary Ethel collection)



they could, even by carrying stones for the front exterior of the Norman-style chapel.<sup>81</sup>

The shrine, with its log structures on the mainland and its stone chapel on the island, became a popular goal for parish excursions. Bishop Crimont saw it also as a suitable place for training lay catechists who could be invaluable auxiliaries of the Church in out-of-the-way settlements. He asked that Sister Mary Gabriella, then nursing at St. Ann's, initiate this new ministry in Alaska.<sup>82</sup> The Congregation deemed that in justice to the patients, a nursing sister could not be spared. Nurse shortages were frequent at the hospital because of the difficulty in staffing an American hospital with nurses from Canada. American nurses, finding Juneau too distant from their homes in the States, often stayed at St. Ann's but a short time.

In spite of discouraging news coming via radio, letter, or visitors through the Depression years, a new phase of hospital construction was begun. Under the administration of Sister Mary Alfreda (1931 to 1935), the boarding school unit was demolished to make room for an addition to the hospital.<sup>83</sup> Workers, whether transients or permanent residents of Juneau, were numerous in these economically difficult years. Noise, debris, and rearrangements during construction were necessary inconveniences borne by the patients, nurses, and other medical staff, as well as by neighbors.

In 1933, Sister Mary Ethel began her twenty-one-year apostolate as a cheery, dedicated teacher. Sister Joseph de Marie, who arrived with Sister Mary Ethel, was receptionist and bursar at the hospital, and teacher of music and penmanship at the school. Both sisters were also engaged in conducting Sunday religious education classes at Douglas or during extended summer sessions.<sup>84</sup> These sisters retained grateful memories of Alaska. In her classroom work elsewhere, Sister Ethel's future geography, history, science, and art classes were especially enlivened by her years of personal involvement with



*In this 1951 photograph, the stone chapel on Shrine Island shows to the left. The group around the statue of St. Theresa includes (l. to r.) Sister Mary Beatrice; relatives and friends of the five Sullivan brothers who died together in World War II; Sister Mary Henrietta of Jesus; Father Frank Moore (holding the statue of Our Lady of Fatima, then on tour throughout the Territory of Alaska); Father Robert Whelan, S.J.; Father Leo Sweeney. The statue of St. Theresa was donated by Lena Bez (Mrs. Nicholas Bez).*

(Photo credit: Sister Mary Ethel collection)

*The 1944 school picnic at Evergreen Bowl saw Sister Mary Ethel scooping out ice cream for her class. The boy sitting is identified as Tony Steele. Albert Shaw is the tallest lad. Sydney Smith is facing front with a cone. Patricia Sweeney is in line and is draped with a shawl. Arlene Godkin stands near Sister Ethel.*

(Photo credit: Sister Mary Ethel collection)





Alaska.

In May 1936, thoughts went back fifty years to the pioneering days in Juneau. Teachers added a golden jubilee celebration to graduation festivities. In September, the hospital commemorated its half century of service. Visitors traveled from Victoria and Skagway to attend the jubilee. On September 8th, a Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated by three Jesuit priests, Fathers LeVasseur, Edward C. Budde and Hubbard. Bishop Crimont being ill, was unable to attend. A program that highlighted the fifty-year mark included tributes from Mayor Isadore Goldstein, Mrs. George Forest (Lola) Alexander, Mr. John F. Mullen, Mrs. Charles Percival (Crystal Snow) Jenne, Mrs. Louis H. Metzgar, Mrs. A. J. Goodman, Mrs. Trevor (Carol Berry) Davis, Eileen and Colleen Hellan, Sylvia Anderson and Betty Goodman. Gratitude was expressed for all the doctors, nurses, and other staff members who had collaborated with the Sisters of St. Ann.

World War II cast its shadow on the end of the 1930s. Jubilee glory fast



*The group of students that celebrated 50 years of ministry by the Sisters of Saint Ann in Juneau is pictured here. The three graduates are holding floral sprays. BACK ROW: Jack Pasquan, Lawrence Swanson, William Goodman, Robert Thibodeau, James Terrel (Post), Wendell Schneider, Jack Lennon, Peter Schneider, Harley Turner, Francis Doogan, William Geddes, Theodore Smith, Kenneth Kearney, Robert Pasquan, ?, Charles Kimbrough. THIRD ROW: Jack Harrington, Albert Shaw, George Shaw, Francis Smith, Charles Markle, Nathan Skinner, Kenny Thibodeau, Emmanuel Suarez, Wesley Stabler, Harold Michaelson, James Westly (Chenard), Francis McDermott. SECOND ROW: Frank Cashen, Merritt Monagle, Minard Mill, Philip Forrest, Joseph Michaelson, Eileen Hellan (Ryan), Juanita Clarito, Caroline McAllister, Elizabeth Goodman, Dolores Smith, Marjorie Doogan, Colleen Hellan (Ryan), Sylvia Anderson, Cecilia Thibodeau, William Baman, John Doogan, Harry Cashen. FIRST ROW: Mary Thibodeau, Arleen Godkin, Beverly Stone, Patricia McAlister, Dorothy Thibodeau, Eileen McDermott, Helen Stone, Dessa Schneider, Elaine Martinson, Dorothea Johnson, Ann Marie Doogan, Patricia Gullufsen, Kathleen McAlister, Theresa Doogan, Elizabeth Koby, Rosemary Doogan, Barbara Chadwick, Joanne Monagle, Elaine Soflka.*

(Photo credit: Winter & Pond, Western Engraving and Colortype Co. The Seattle Engraving Co., Seattle, Washington)



faded as war clouds rolled up Gastineau Channel bringing darker days to Juneau than any rain clouds ever had. In 1941, during the worsening Japan-United States crisis, Sister Mary Alena arrived to share in the nursing ministry of the hospital. Sister Alena, who had been in charge of the operating rooms at St. Joseph's Hospital, Victoria, brought experience essential to the development of the Juneau hospital. Only a few months after her arrival, the United States Navy was attacked at Pearl Harbor.

Alaska became a strategic place. Armed forces sent to Juneau encamped outside the city. As the camp had only a small sick bay, soldiers were brought to St. Ann's Hospital for treatment. A large contingent had received typhus vaccine before leaving boot camp. As a possible result of this injection, a number of the soldiers transferred to Juneau came down with hepatitis. Through the loss of personnel to the war effort, the hospital had no laboratory or X-ray technician. With the help of Sister Mary Angelus, a teacher who had a degree in chemistry, Sister Alena made the necessary tests. Army doctors who had training in laboratory science offered assistance whenever possible. Army doctors performed surgeries at the hospital. Their knowledge, as well as their demand for what was newest and best, resulted in an upgrading of materials and instruments in surgery, laboratory, and X-ray units.

As a precaution, the Army set up an emergency hospital at the base of the mountain. Everything needed for two surgery units was kept there. These supplies were available when the hospital ran short. Many a night, Sister Alena was driven out to the emergency hospital by one of the soldiers to get medication that was missing in the hospital supplies. Blackouts made these drives hazardous.<sup>85</sup>

When the lights went on again after the war, Sister Alena liked to recall that the switching on of the case room light often alerted Doctor William Whitehead who lived across the narrow street from the hospital. He would open his window and call, "Am I needed?" If the answer was affirmative, he was soon by the patient's side. In this way, Dr. Whitehead often ended up with a majority of cases.<sup>86</sup>

Doctor Whitehead was one of the newer attendant physicians beginning to replace the medical doctors who had been serving at St. Ann's Hospital: Harry Carlos DeVighne, L. P. Dawes, Lillian Irwin, W. E. Bergman, William Hammond, S. R. Wagoner, J. L. Tam, R. Irvine Bentley, W. G. Casseles, Robert M. Coffey, William J. Pigg, J. A. F. McAuliffe, Walter Wooten Council, and Leonard O. Sloane.

Bishop Joseph Raphael Crimont, at the age of eighty-eight, worn out by forty-one years of Church leadership, died on 20 May 1945 at St. Ann's Hospital. In his later years, he had lived at the hospital where he was assisted by the sisters and staff. Sister Mary Gabriella, knowledgeable in French, assisted the bishop with correspondence to his French-speaking benefactors and friends. These were many, for Bishop Crimont had been born in France, studied there, and maintained ties with family and friends back home. He also had French-Canadian correspondents. Through his letters, the bishop raised funds for Alaskan church needs.

Bishop Walter J. Fitzgerald, S.J., coadjutor bishop of Juneau, succeeded Bishop Crimont. Because Bishop Crimont had found mission tours too demanding in his last years, Bishop Fitzgerald bore the burden of the travel. Through the war years, he had devoted himself to the military outposts on



the Aleutian Islands. These extensive travels, compounded by other efforts to conserve the strength of Bishop Crimont, led to his own exhaustion. Hospitalized in Seattle, he died there on 19 July 1947.

In 1948, Bishop Francis Doyle Gleeson, S.J., became Vicar Apostolic of Alaska. The vastness of the Vicariate, all of the 591,004 square miles of Alaska, administered from Juneau, caused him to actualize the plan of his predecessor to have a resident bishop in Fairbanks. Thus, Bishop Gleeson took up residency in Fairbanks, which became the center for the Vicariate. In July 1951, Juneau became the Ecclesiastical See for Southeastern and South-central Alaska, comprising the Diocese of Juneau. In October 1951, Father Dermot O'Flanagan was installed as the first Bishop of Juneau. Witnessing the crowds attending the celebrations and farewell liturgies at the Juneau church, the sisters contrasted the situation with what Sister Zenon in the 1880s had reported about the few worshippers in Father Althoff's small unfinished church.

Travelers on a long journey to Alaska missions farther north often stopped



*A group of school children (May 1947) with Sisters Mary Ethel, Marcellus, and Ethelbert, along with Fathers Clifford Allbutt, S.J.; Leo Sweeney; Robert L. Whelan, S.J. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Unknown)



in Juneau at St. Ann's. The steamer would blow its whistle announcing its arrival. Passengers on deck would be awed at the sight of Juneau adhering with tenacity to the bit of level ground by the shore and the steep slopes behind. There would be anxious moments of searching for a familiar face and the excitement of recognition followed by an exodus down the gang-plank, warm embraces, and the bundling of luggage and passengers into a waiting car.

The exhilaration of the encounter blotted out further impressions of Juneau, except, perhaps, for the swinging doors of the Red Dog Saloon and the steep pitch of the streets. With admiration, visitors viewed St. Ann's Hospital. Usually the hospital entrance quickly filled with welcoming sisters in the white of their nurses' uniforms or the black of the religious habit. After a visit, tours were organized to see the Governor's House, St. Terese's Shrine, Mendenhall Glacier or the Basin Road. The glacier, one of the largest in Southeastern Alaska, spread its blue and white ice fantasy about four miles from Juneau. Slowly, but steadily, receding, its gradual withdrawal back into the mountains was leaving conspicuous moraines and trim lines where younger trees, lighter green than the old forest around them, marked the edges. Just as the road to Mendenhall Glacier recalled Alaska's past, so did the Basin Road, reminiscent of the era of the Silverbow mining excitement. Juneau's origin was also evident with the sight of the Alaska-Juneau Mine on the slope of the mountain and the sound and sight of cascading Gold Creek within the city itself. During those tours in and around Juneau, an accommodating bear might amble across a road. Drivers, usually local priests, were generous with their afternoons or evenings, and with offers to take travelers to connecting boats or planes.

Some of the sisters, as travelers recalled their stay in Juneau, were well-remembered. One such was Sister Mary Edward of Jesus, who arrived in Juneau in 1914 and nursed in the hospital until 1932. At that time she transferred farther north to Dawson, Yukon Territory, but was again in Juneau from 1935 to 1941. Of French-Canadian background, she retained a blend

*At Mendenhall Glacier in 1955 are Sisters Mary Itha, Henrietta of Jesus, Ida of the Eucharist, Rose Eva, Rose of the Child Jesus, Clarita. This was a Sunday recreational outing—a place of beauty, quiet and Alaskan grandeur.*

(Photo credit: Sr. M. Clarita collection)



*The sisters celebrated the Golden Jubilee of religious profession for Sister Mary Modeste in 1951. The jubilarian is in the wheelchair.*

(Photo Credit: Sr. M. Clarita Collection)



*The nursing sisters had just begun to dress in white when this picture was taken (early 1940s) of Sisters Mary Modeste and Edward of Jesus with nurses identified as the Moran girls.*

(Photo credit: Sr. M. Ethel collection)



of French and English accents and a mixture of words that amused her hearers. One of her periodic patients had been Bishop Crimont, needing medical attention and rest after his long tours of the Alaska interior.

Other women, too, formed a kaleidoscope of characters and gifts. Sister Mary Modeste was anesthetist<sup>87</sup> for many years. Devoted and available to all during her years (1923-1952) in Juneau, she was characterized by the men patients as a good sport. In aging, she became confined to a wheel chair, but rolled herself around to visit people. Sister Modeste was assisted when another anesthetist, Sister Mary Fintan, arrived for two years of service. In coming, Sister Fintan renewed her acquaintance with a nurse friend, Mae Godkin, with whom she had studied in Victoria. Praise for Mae was voiced by the sisters who recognized in their co-worker skills that complemented the sisters' own ministries.

Sister Mary Faustina was an operating room nurse. The study of hospital organization and management keenly interested her and she perceived the necessity for continued updating. Under Sister Faustina's direction, improved lighting was installed in the operating rooms. She had been one of the first to consider a change from the traditional religious habit to a more sterile and lightweight uniform for wear in the stress of the operating rooms.

After a fund-matching Hill-Burton grant to the hospital was assured in 1953, construction of a five-story, reinforced concrete wing began, capitalizing on limited space and the slope of the hill. The construction ran parallel to the 1916 wing and enclosed the hospital courtyard. During this time of major advances, Sister Mary Henrietta of Jesus was superior.<sup>88</sup> Having to concentrate primarily on the business of construction, she was grateful that hospital functions were carried on by efficient, dedicated, and dependable staff members.

In 1954, this new wing of St. Ann's Hospital was dedicated. Included among those taking part in the dedication ceremonies were the Bishop of Juneau, Bishop Dermot O'Flanagan; Acting Governor, Waino Hendrickson;



*Sister Mary Itha stitches hospital linens in the sewing room at St. Ann's Hospital, around 1960. (SPA)*



*Head Operating Room Nurse, Mrs. Bennett, and Sister Mary Faustina work at the sterilizer in this photograph taken during the early 1960s. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Unknown)



*The church, rectory and school (three levels) are on Fifth Street. The 1914 and 1933 hospital wings front Sixth Street. The 1954 concrete wing extends from the 1914 wing. The sisters' quarters and laundry abut from the 1933 wing. An apple tree is in the courtyard. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Unknown)





At in-service evenings of medical discussions, Juneau doctors often met guest lecturers in the sisters' community room, St. Ann's Hospital. Juneau and University of Washington doctors conferred on medical advances and treatment of particular cases. Shown here in a 1962 meeting are (l. to r.) Kay Clawson, M.D., visiting lecturer from the University of Washington Hospital; Henry Wilde, M.D.; Robert R. Smalley, M.D.; C. C. Carter, M.D.; Henry I. Akiyama, M.D.; J.D. Riederer, M.D.; Joseph O. Rude, M.D.; Doctor O'Brien, Department of Health and Welfare; J.K. Lesh, M.D.; Kenneth Moss, M.D. Some doctors remained in Juneau several years. C.C. Carter, M.D.; Joseph O. Rude, M.D.; William M. Whitehead, M.D.; John Clements, M.D.; William Blanton, M.D., were well known.



Other doctors stayed one or two years, left, and sometimes returned. J. W. Gibson, M.D.; and Grace Field, M.D., served in Juneau in 1919 and in later years. Juneau welcomed Henry Wilde, M.D., and Homer Ray, M.D., in the 1950s. During 1960, J. K. Lesh, M.D.; R. R. Smalley, M.D.; Kenneth Moss, M.D.; and Edwin O. Wicks, M.D., began ministering to the people of Juneau. H. I. Akiyama, M.D., opened his practice in Juneau in 1961, the same year that J. D. Riederer, M.D., and W. S. Totten, M.D., chose Juneau for the performance of their medical skills. (SPA)  
(Photo credit: Unknown)



Sister Mary Laurena welcomes members of St. Ann's Hospital Guild in this 1958 photograph. Front row, (l. to r.) Mrs. Joseph O. Rude, Sr. M. Laurena, Mrs. George Sundborg, Mrs. Thomas Harrison. Back row: Mrs. Joseph MacLean, Mrs. John Clements, Mrs. C. L. Anderson, Mrs. G. E. Mitchell, Mrs. Don Cornell, Mrs. William M. Whitehead, Mrs. Henry J. Burness, Mrs. Henry Camarot, Mrs. Robert Barry, Mrs. John Kay, Mrs. Waino E. Hendrickson, Mrs. John Daugherty. (SPA)  
(Photo credit: Alexander)



Mayor, Bert F. McDowell; Commissioner of Health, Earl C. Albrecht, M.D.; President of the Hospital Advisory Board, B. Fred Dunn, M.D.; and President of the Medical Staff, William Blanton, M.D.

From 1956 to 1959, Sister Mary Laurena, administrator, continued modernizing the hospital and kept it a vital part of the life of Juneau. Sister welcomed the aging Father Hubbard, now partially paralyzed, but still able to return to Juneau and visit some of his old haunts.

Long territorial and congressional discussion led, in 1958, to the admission of Alaska as the 49th state. On 3 January 1959 at 9:03 A.M., statehood officially came to Alaska as President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the formal proclamation in Washington, D.C. Shortly afterwards, Governor William A. Egan, Alaska's first elected governor (all others having been appointed), took his oath of office. Unfortunately, the morning ceremonies were followed by his emergency admission to St. Ann's Hospital. As Governor Egan's condition deteriorated, he was flown to Virginia Mason Hospital in Seattle, where special surgery succeeded, at length, in allowing him to return to his gubernatorial duties.

The governor's wife, Neva Egan, found in the Governor's House a stored away oil painting of the signing of the Treaty of Purchase of Alaska from Russia by the United States. After the painting had been cleaned, she hung it in a place of honor. Shortly afterward, she acquired the actual table shown in the painting.<sup>89</sup> These reminders of Alaska's past were treasured by her. As Alaska developed, "Seward's Folly" became "Seward's Glory." Neva Egan's pride in what pertained to Alaska was typical of the feeling most Alaskans felt for the Great Land, where, since 1917, Seward's Day (March 31), the date of the signing of the treaty, and Alaska Day (October 18), when the American flag first flew over Sitka, were celebrated. That yearning for remembrance seemed also to have been apparent in the choice of the territorial—and now the state—flower: the forget-me-not.

The theme of unforgettable memories was prominent in 1961 when the 75th anniversary of the founding of St. Ann's Hospital and School was commemorated with a dramatic pageant written by Sr. M. Dorothea, S.S.A., and presented under the direction of Mrs. Don Craddick at the Twentieth Century Theatre on 17 May.

On 27 March 1964, the young state, especially the Southcentral coastal region, was hit by an earthquake measuring 8.5 on the Richter scale. St. Ann's Hospital sent emergency hospital supplies into the severely hit region. The Good Friday earthquake and subsequent tidal wave claimed 114 lives in Alaska. Through concerned assistance, St. Ann's Hospital sought to prevent more victims from perishing.

Although St. Ann's had moved from being a frontier hospital of pioneer days, Sister Luca (administrator from 1959 to 1965) recognized that demanding challenges still existed. Looking back helped her to move ahead, as difficulties required the courage to try innovative solutions. The Medical Staff, led by Robert Smalley, M.D., and the Advisory Board, with John Durney as president, were supportive. Sister Luca became president of the newly formed Alaska Hospital Association,<sup>90</sup> served on the Board of the Association of Eleven Western States, and was editor of the AHA newsletter, *Northern Care*. She set up a medical library as a memorial to William Blanton, M.D., and John Clements, M.D. Seeing the good accomplished by St. Ann's





*Sister Mary Luca looks up from her work in the administrator's office at the hospital.*

Hospital Guild, organized in 1933, Sister Luca inaugurated another auxiliary group in 1962,<sup>91</sup> the Grey Ladies. Other hospitals had similar auxiliaries, known sometimes by their characteristic apron or smock as the "Candy-strippers," or the "Pink Ladies." Functions included wheeling magazine carts to patient rooms, making toiletries available to patients, putting together favors for holiday meal trays, talking with patients, or managing hospital gift shops. These volunteer services, through their multifaceted enterprises, helped with patient care and eased the financial strain on hospitals. St. Ann's Guild had been especially supportive with silver teas and fashion shows highlighting National Hospital Week each year in May.

Auxiliaries were needed. Monetarily the hospital was facing an unstable future. Much effort went into streamlining the budget and finding additional income. On the one hand, the hospital rented out suites to the Alaska Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Mental Health and to the U.S. Public Health Service, Division of Indian Affairs. On the other hand, doctors' clinics opening in Juneau diverted funds from the hospital. Increased air service to the Lower 48 allowed potential patients to seek specialists and hospital care elsewhere. These factors, as well as the ever increasing salary demands, and the continued cost-of-living upcurve caused the administration to assess the ability of St. Ann's Hospital to survive.

In 1965, shortly after Sister Mary Angelus began her administration, the Sisters of Saint Ann Provincial Council (Victoria) and the General Council (Lachine) notified her that St. Ann's Hospital would close. Chief among the reasons given were the difficulty of staffing an American hospital with Canadian trained and/or Canadian sisters and the reality that exploding medical technology was becoming too formidable for the Juneau hospital. The decision of the Congregation was conveyed to the mayor by Sister Angelus. There were ". . . no dramatics, no histrionics—just a plain statement of fact."<sup>92</sup> Three months later came the announcement that the parish school would also lose the sisters when the hospital closed. Teachers prepared parishioners to take over religious education classes and other youth activities.<sup>93</sup>

To facilitate the transfer of hospital care to the city, the Greater Juneau Borough organized a Board of Management for the hospital. Sister Angelus was elected chairperson of the board. An architect was consulted and the selection of a site for a new hospital was initiated. An administrator prepared the staff for the eventual change of management at St. Ann's Hospital,<sup>94</sup> and the opening of the new facility, Bartlett Memorial Hospital.

Why did not the Sisters of Saint Ann in Juneau more visibly share their lives with the Native people? Three reasons can be given: confinement of the sisters, government paternalism, and church differences. The sisters by their very life-style stayed rather closely confined to sharing within the walls of the hospital, school and parish church. Sisters seldom visited elsewhere. The government, through various agencies, slowly responded to the health and educational concerns of the Natives. In many places, under Sheldon Jackson, education and health care were both provided by the same person—the teacher. Juneau, even in the 1880s, had a public school for Natives, as well as one for non-Natives. Health care in Juneau evolved into a small government-run hospital in 1915 which was exclusively for Natives. This Native hospital was expanded in 1950 to a 50-bed one. When it closed in 1958, St. Ann's Hospital contracted to provide hospital care for the Natives. The strongest



denominations in the early days of Juneau were the Presbyterian and the Orthodox, with Native representations in both. In later years, outreach to the Filipino people (attracted to Alaska by the fisheries), as well as occasional contact with Natives at St. Ann's Hospital or the parochial school, stretched the Juneau sisters' ministerial capabilities to the limit.

One last vibrant answer could be given to the above question. The sisters were actively involved with Native groups in other parts of Alaska. The stories of that sharing will follow in subsequent chapters. Meanwhile, the buildings left behind in Juneau remained as a visible record of a long era of commitment to Natives and non-Natives alike.

On 4 July 1968, after eighty-two years of sharing their lives and resources with the people of Juneau and the region of Southeastern Alaska, the Sisters of Saint Ann withdrew. Negotiations regarding the empty hospital building<sup>95</sup> began with the Diocese of Juneau after newly appointed Bishop Francis T. Hurley expressed interest. On 1 September 1971, the diocese took over the structurally sound vacant hospital. Sensitive that the Sisters of Saint Ann would like to see the building continue to serve the sick and the needy, Bishop Hurley allowed more and more of the former hospital space to be used for the disadvantaged.<sup>96</sup>

After a bond issue was voted to permit the hospital to be used for a nursing home, the 1913-1914 wing was torn down and replaced with a two-story structure. The 1954 wing was remodeled. On 29 October 1977, Hurley, now Archbishop of Anchorage,<sup>97</sup> dedicated St. Ann's Nursing Home. The home was operated by the Diocese of Juneau, and was licensed for forty-five residents. Bishop Michael H. Kenny, ordained Bishop of Juneau in 1979, continued the policy initiated by Archbishop Hurley.

\* \* \* \* \*

Colors symbolize particular missions in the North. Blue typifies Juneau.

Blue is for glacial crevasses, blue streams, blue skies. Pale blue is for the little forget-me-not; deep blue for the Alaska flag and midnight skies.

Blue is a cool color; coolness is associated with Juneau. Blue is a primary color; the foundation at Juneau was a primary one for the Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska.

Rain-filled clouds bring many blue days to Juneau people longing for the sun. Miners, missionaries, and pioneers reported how Mendenhall Glacier and Mendenhall Lake reflected the serene blue of the skies.

Finally, the patronal name of the first Catholic church in Juneau suggests Mary's mantle of blue over a city that grew in the blue shadows of Mount Juneau and Mount Roberts.



# Time Line for Chapter One

1741	Russia discovers Alaska		
1784	First permanent Russian settlement in Alaska		
1798	Russian America Company		
1800	Sitka established by Russians		
1818	Hospitals in Sitka and Kodiak		
1820	First permanent physician		
		1843	Pacific Northwest organized as Vicariate-Apostolic
		1846	Diocese of Vancouver Island
		1850	Sisters of Saint Ann founded
		1858	SSAs arrive in Victoria, B.C.
1867	Purchase of Alaska by U.S.		
		1873	Seghers' first trip to Alaska
1880	Gold discovered in Juneau		
1884	1st Organic Act (civil government in Alaska) General Agent Sheldon Jackson Bureau of Education handles teaching and health care for Natives		
1885	First public school in Juneau	1885	Fr. Althoff arrives in Juneau
1886	Friends' Society establishes a day school in Douglas, plans enlargement	1886	SSAs arrive in Juneau St. Ann's Hospital (Sept.) St. Ann's School (Nov.)
		1886	Death of Archbishop Seghers
		1887-1888	Boarding school initiated New 2-story hospital opened
		1894	Alaska becomes Prefecture Apostolic
1895	Electricity in Juneau	1895	SSAs open school in Douglas
		1896	New St. Ann's School, Douglas Boarding school building in Juneau
		1897	St. Ann's Hospital, Douglas Proposed mental wing, Juneau Building 40' x 70' replaces first hospital, Juneau
		1898	SSAs in Yukon Territory
1900	Juneau becomes capital of Ak. Smallpox epidemic		
1905	Limited territorial status		
1912	2nd Organic Act (Territory of Alaska)		
1913	1st Territorial Legislature: franchise to women, compulsory education act, territorial health structure		
1915	Government constructs 25-bed Native hospital in Juneau	1914	Additional hospital structure, 40' X 110', on Sixth St., Juneau
1916	Native Medical Service set up	1915	St. Ann's School, Juneau, becomes parochial school
1917	U.S. enters World War I	1916	New wings, Douglas and Juneau hospitals
		1917	Treadwell disaster Alaska becomes Vicariate-Apostolic Crimont becomes Bishop of Alaska
1918	Spanish influenza epidemic	1918	New parochial school building in Juneau
		1919	Dedication of new St. Ann's School, Juneau
		1920	SSAs leave Douglas
		1923	Hospital in Ketchikan (Srs. of St. Joseph of Newark)



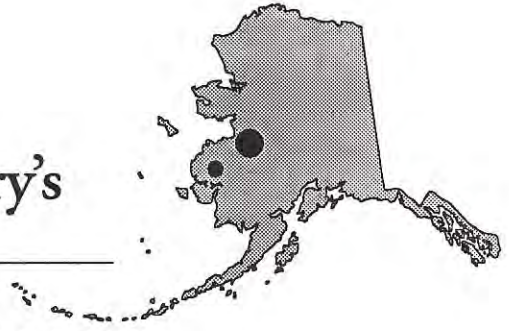
- |      |   |      |  |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1924 | Some Alaskan Natives acquire citizenship  |      |  |
| 1931 | Bureau of Indian Affairs takes over administration of schools and hospitals for Alaskan Natives |      |  |
| 1941 | U.S. enters World War II  |      |  |
|      |   | 1951 | Diocese of Juneau is formed                                |
|      |   | 1954 | New surgical wing, Juneau                                  |
| 1956 | Alaska Constitution adopted   |      |  |
| 1958 | 50-bed Native hospital in Juneau closed   |      |  |
|      | Statehood wins majority vote  |      |  |
| 1959 | Statehood made official   |      |  |
|      |   | 1962 | Vatican Council II opens in Rome                           |
| 1964 | Major earthquake and tidal wave   |      |  |
| 1968 | Oil discovered on Arctic Slope  | 1968 | SSAs leave St. Ann's Hospital and St. Ann's School, Juneau |
|      |   | 1971 | Diocese of Juneau takes over empty hospital building       |
| 1971 | Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act   | 1977 | St. Ann's Nursing Home (diocesan) opens in Juneau          |







## A Call to Far Reaches: Holy Cross, Akulurak, St. Mary's



In September 1889, frost came early to Koserefski, the site of Holy Cross Mission. Tree stumps, pathways through brush, a cleared space for a little garden were all signs of a year's activity along the wooded banks of the Yukon River.

Sister Mary Joseph's chapped hands hovered over a lone purple and yellow pansy whitened by the early frost. Sister's fingers clamped around the icy stem as she bent and snapped the flower. Straightening, she brushed a tear from an eye brimming with disappointment. She had hoped to save the pansy for something special, but now its delicate beauty was gone.

Sister Joseph looked down at the flower in her hand. Her gaze fell on her heavy shoes, on the mending in her apron, on the woolen shawl wrapped around her. Her cross, shining in the morning sun, glinted as she moved. Then she smiled. Her eyes had caught the footprints patterning the ground not far from where she stood. Footprints around the log house—of the other sisters, of the Jesuit missionaries, of the Native people from the village, of little Anutka, and of the school children—were important, not the wilted pansy.

\* \* \* \* \*

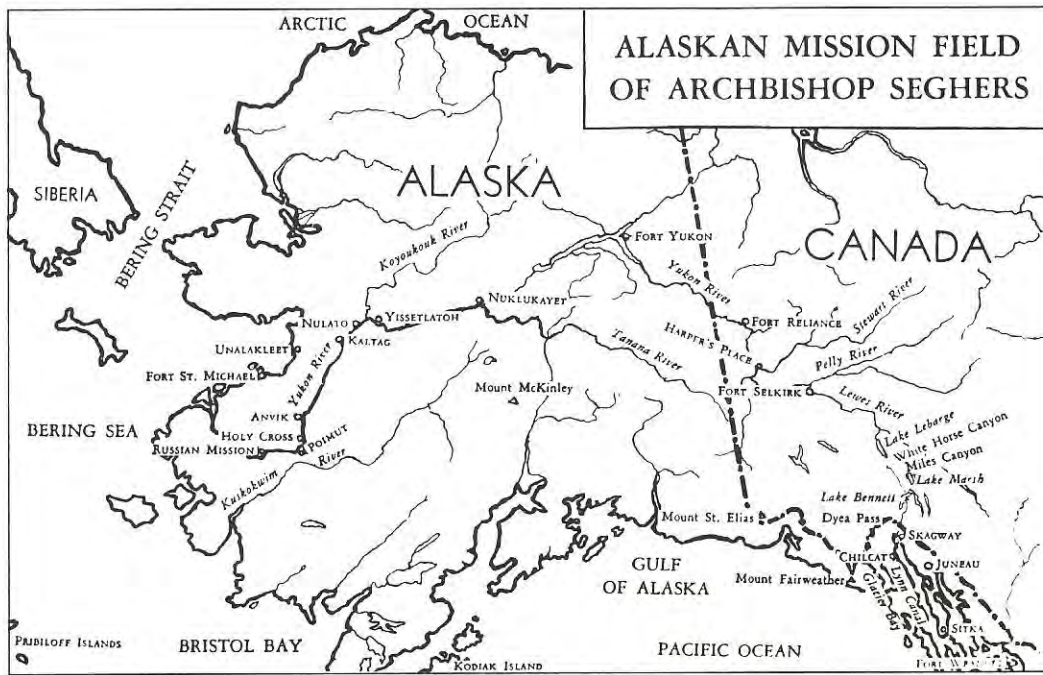
### Holy Cross, Part I -- 1888 to 1900

Archbishop Seghers' trip of 1877 to 1878 to the Middle Yukon<sup>1</sup> had convinced him that the first permanent Catholic mission on the Yukon River should be at Nulato and should be called Our Lady of the Snows. During his travels that memorable winter and spring, he had encountered Native people from Koserefski, Paimiut and the Copper River area who were trading near Tanana. Impressed by the people, the archbishop, therefore, planned to establish, in addition to Nulato, a second mission to be called Mission of the Holy Cross.

In 1885, upon his return from Portland to his former See in Victoria, Archbishop Seghers had arranged that Father Althoff and the Sisters of Saint Ann be sent to the people of Juneau. The archbishop, wishing to revisit Nulato, sought help from the Jesuits of the Rocky Mountain Missions. Father Joseph M. Cataldo<sup>2</sup> assigned Fathers Pascal Tosi and Aloysius Robaut to accompany and collaborate with the archbishop in establishing his missions in the Far North. A layman, Francis Fuller, who had associated himself with the Rocky Mountain Missions, asked to go along as "brother." Against the advice of the Jesuits, Archbishop Seghers accepted Fuller's offer. Departure of the group bound for the Far North was set for mid-July 1886.<sup>3</sup>

Before leaving Victoria, Archbishop Seghers and the two Jesuits offered Masses at St. Ann's Academy chapel, asked for prayers, and reiterated concern





for the people of the North.<sup>4</sup> The archbishop's expressed wish was that, after he had opened the way to the Far North, others would follow.<sup>5</sup> In September 1886, three Sisters of Saint Ann would follow northward to assist Father Althoff.

After visiting Father Althoff in Juneau, Archbishop Seghers and his party continued up Lynn Canal, ascended the Chilkoot Pass and proceeded to the Stewart River region.

(Permission for use: St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, NJ)



*Father John J. Jonckau had the cares of the Victoria diocese in the absence of Bishop Seghers. His words: "Ten thousand thanks and more!" are echoed by many sisters who look back with gratitude on years of sharing in the North. (SPA)*

From some Indians returning from a trading trip, the archbishop heard that Reverend Octavius Parker, an Episcopalian missionary, planned to arrive at Nulato in the spring. Determined to be there before him, the archbishop left the two Jesuits to reconnoiter the Stewart River area while he and Fuller pushed on to Nulato. The Jesuits had remonstrated with the archbishop. They were uneasy about his safety because Fuller was manifesting ill-temper and mental instability. Their apprehension was justified when, on 28 November 1886,<sup>6</sup> at Yissetlatoh, or Wolfhead Point, a day's journey from Nulato, Fuller shot the archbishop through the heart. Fuller went on to Nulato and informed the Indians of the deed. Saddened, the Indians went for the body.

To quote author and historian, Ted C. Hinckley:

*The awful solitude of the Great Land's mid-continent interior affected men in unpredictable ways. In some instances it caused grizzled miners to become altruistic and even chivalrous. At other times the lack of a pay streak and the lonely, moor-like terrain blanketed by the prolonged Arctic night might snap a weak mind. Temporary madness in Alaska's gigantic Yukon Valley proved as dangerous as temperatures of 60 below zero. The good Roman Catholic Archbishop Charles J. Seghers wanted only to bring a message of love to the people of Central Alaska. He never knew why his wilderness companion suddenly became his killer.<sup>7</sup>*

Not until June 1887, did Fathers Tosi and Robaut learn of Archbishop Seghers' tragic death. The priests hurried to St. Michael, where the Nulato Indians had brought the body of the archbishop. Francis Fuller, too, was in St. Michael. Taken from there to Sitka for trial, he was fined \$1,000.00 and sentenced to ten years of hard labor. Father Tosi left St. Michael for Victoria to announce the tragedy. Father Robaut went part way up the Yukon River, stopping, because of the approach of winter, at Anvik, an Indian settlement, to await further developments.<sup>8</sup> News of the archbishop's death shocked the Northwest. The Victoria diocese and Father John J. Jonckau, its administrator,<sup>9</sup> considered the murdered Archbishop Seghers a martyr of the North.



After Father Cataldo heard of the archbishop's tragic death, and of the northern experiences of Fathers Tosi and Robaut, he and his consultors discerned that the Jesuits should continue the evangelization of the North. Chosen to return to Alaska with Father Tosi, who was named superior of the Alaska Jesuits, were Father Aloysius Ragaru, and Brother Carmelo Giordano.<sup>10</sup>

Father Tosi consulted with Father Jonckau about the plans for the North. Both priests, seeking volunteers to continue in the far reaches of Alaska what Archbishop Seghers had begun, went to speak with the Sisters of Saint Ann. Every sister, it seemed, wanted to go. Although a final decision was not possible for the summer of 1887, Father Jonckau hoped that sisters would join the Jesuits in the Far North in 1888.<sup>11</sup>

Correspondence between Father Jonckau and Mother Mary Anastasia, General Superior, relative to such a mission venture, began crossing the continent. Father Jonckau's letters were strong and urgent: ". . . send two sisters to the Yukon!" In his letters, he mentioned that in 1886 the Victoria clergy had not supported the idea of sending sisters to Juneau. He continued to urge that now it was imperative that sisters go to the Far North. He suggested that perhaps Juneau could release one sister.

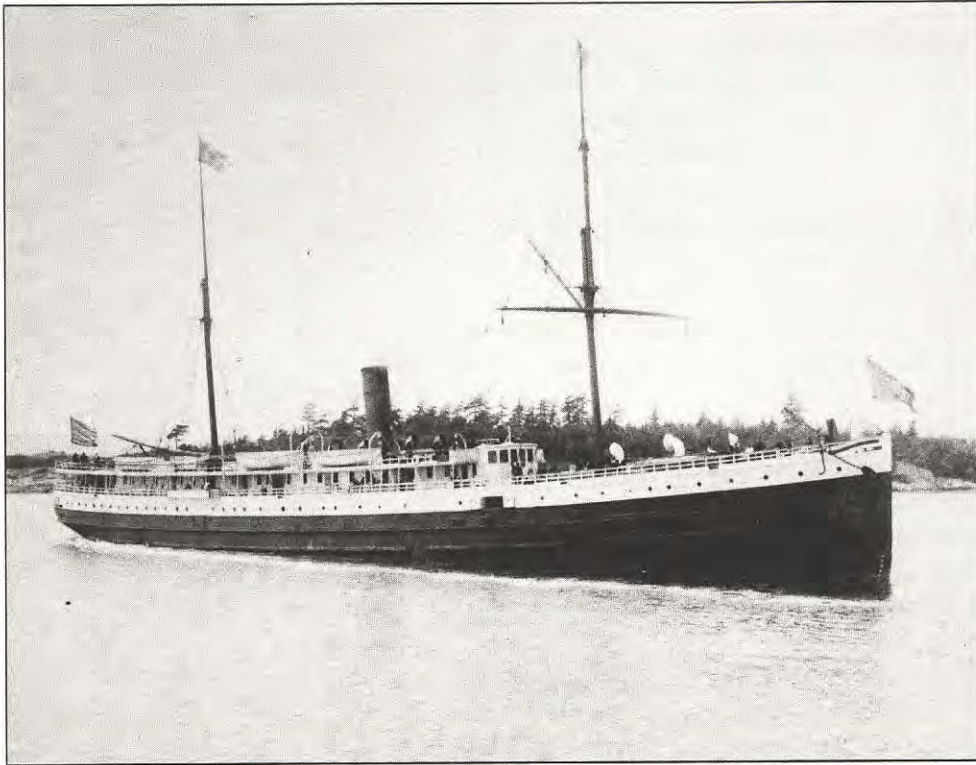
Although the sisters in the West favored assisting Nulato, they had no one to send. Through their council,<sup>12</sup> they petitioned the major superiors at the Mother House, Lachine, for more sisters. The answer was a firm, "No!" Reasons given were expansion in Eastern Canada and the United States, the severity of the weather in the Far North, and the few available details of what life would be like there for the sisters.

Bitter letters were written by a disappointed Father Jonckau who decided to send Sister Mary Anne of Jesus, the Mother Vicar, to the Mother House to plead personally. As a last desperate appeal, he wrote to Bishop Edward Fabre of Montreal asking him to urge the Sisters of Saint Ann to accept the missions of the Far North. Bishop Fabre's advice to Mother Anastasia was that such a foundation seemed to be God's Will.<sup>13</sup> Hearing this advice, the general superior hesitated no longer. She telegraphed Father Jonckau, "The missions of Alaska on the Yukon are accepted." A quick reply read, "Ten million thanks and more!"<sup>14</sup>

Time for preparation was short. The voyage to the mouth of the Yukon River was not to be direct from Victoria, but by a steamer sailing from San Francisco through the Aleutian Islands. Already it was well into April and the boat by which San Francisco could be reached was due to leave Victoria at the end of the month. Much had to be done quickly. Chosen for the North were Sister Mary Stephen, 44, then at Saint Mary's Indian Mission on the Fraser River; Sister Mary Zephyrin, 34, in the remote Cariboo District at St. Joseph's Indian Mission; and Sister Mary Pauline, 30, an assistant in the kitchen at St. Joseph's Hospital.

Sister Zephyrin, asked to leave her mission with all possible speed, was unable to reach Victoria soon enough. Three days before the departure for the Far North, a telegram from the Mother House instructed Sister Mary Joseph Calasancius, 28, to replace Sister Zephyrin. Sister Joseph Calasancius, originally from Belgium, was assisting at St. Joseph's Hospital in Victoria.





*Sisters Mary Stephen, Joseph Calasanctius and Pauline sailed from Victoria to San Francisco on the SS Mexico, shown here near the Victoria harbor. (BCA)*  
 (Photo Credit: British Columbia Archives and Records Service, Catalogue No. 242)

Departure day, 28 April 1888, was a solemn one.<sup>15</sup> At the Mass offered by Father Jonckau, the northern missionaries were given places of honor. Afterward, Father Jonckau preceded the sisters to the dock, blessed them as they embarked, and watched until their ship<sup>16</sup> was out of sight. Only one month later, he was found dead in his room.<sup>17</sup> It seemed that the Victoria administrator, in his effort to care for the Victoria diocese and to obtain sisters for the Yukon River apostolate, had given his all.

On 1 May 1888, after entering the Port of San Francisco, the travelers

went by carriage to the convent of the Sisters of Mercy where Mother Russell and Sister Mary Angela gave them hospitality. The North-bound sisters were brought to the Alaska Commercial Company to learn details of their voyage. They also met Father Gaspar Genna, S.J., and Brother John B. Rosati, S.J., with whom they were to travel. A gift of \$1,000.00 received from Father Jonckau allowed the sisters to purchase items they foresaw would be useful. Gifts were also received from the Sisters of Mercy, former students of Victoria, especially Miss Frances Meyers, and other benefactors.

On 13 May 1888, on board the *St. Paul*, the North-bound group left San Francisco for Unalaska, more than 2,000 miles away. Although most of the twelve-day voyage north was one of the calmest ever for the *St. Paul*, a violent storm rocked the ship on the last night. Sister Joseph admitted that she and Sister Pauline who shared a cabin prayed as never before.<sup>18</sup> Believing that the ship was sinking as water poured into her cabin, Sister Stephen called Father Genna for a last absolution. In trying to comply with her request, the priest was almost swept overboard. Providentially, the storm abated and in the morning light of 24 May 1888, the grateful sisters saw the peaks of Unalaska.

After disembarking, the voyagers were advised that they would have to wait in Unalaska at least a month while the *St. Paul* visited trading outposts on the islands. The Alaska Commercial Company accommodated the missionaries by placing one of its houses at their disposal. Meals were taken in the company's mess hall half a mile away from the house. Rudolph Neumann, the company agent, arranged that the sisters study Russian while they were awaiting the return of the *St. Paul*. Even though it was the season of almost perpetual daylight in northern regions, stormy weather, such as the Aleutians know, darkened many of the waiting days. Darkness in nature symbolized pangs of loneliness and uncertainty regarding the future.



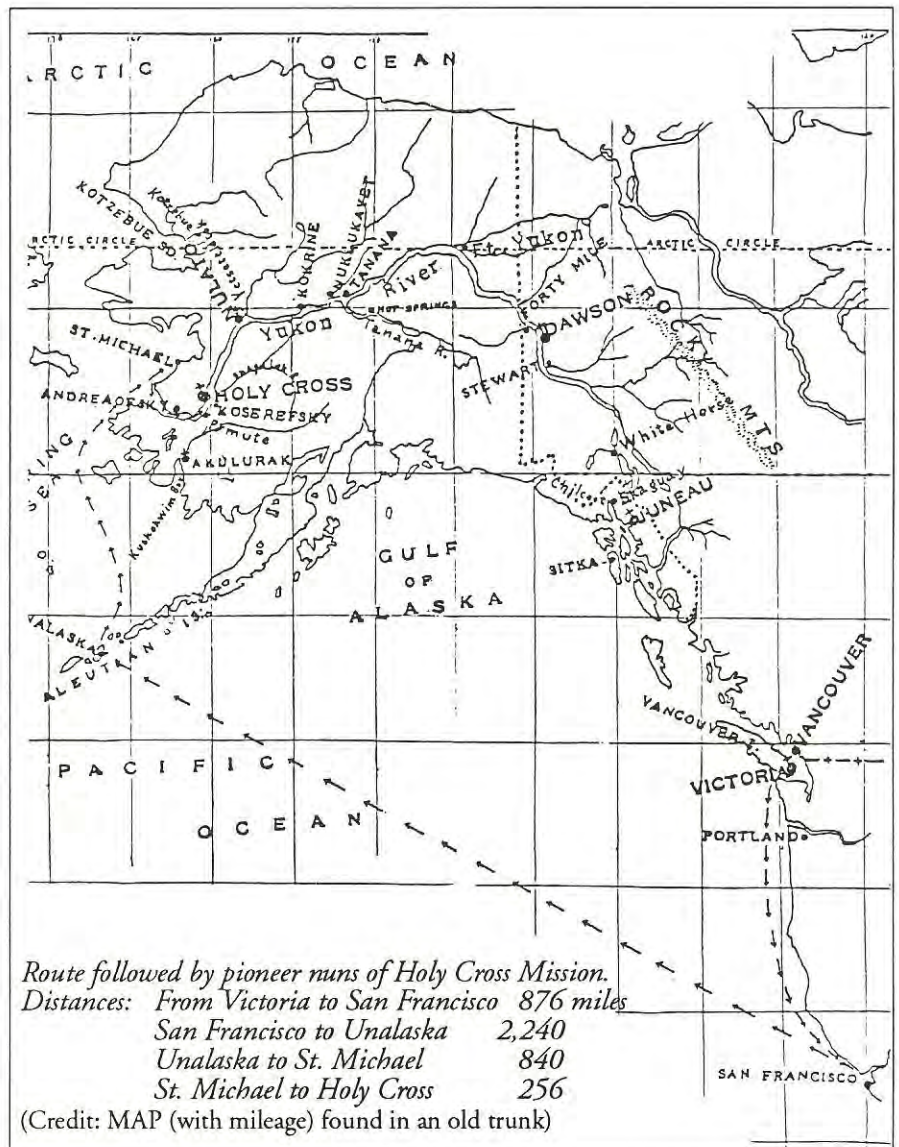
Finally, on 20 June 1888, the Jesuits and sisters reboarded the *St. Paul*. The ship tarried at the Pribilofs where the cries of thousands of seals could be heard. Ice and driftwood impeded the ship's progress as she neared St. Michael. Prevented by shallow water from getting close to shore, the vessel dropped anchor on the morning of 27 June. A small craft<sup>19</sup> came to take off passengers and freight. Clearly distinguishable, as the boat approached, was Father Tosi. His surprise at seeing the sisters was great. "You have come too soon," he exclaimed, "but you are welcome!"<sup>20</sup>

Henry Neumann, brother of the agent in Unalaska, offered the sisters a room in his house during their stay in St. Michael. One of their first acts was to visit the grave of Archbishop Seghers.<sup>21</sup> While doing so, they were attacked by swarms of mosquitoes.<sup>22</sup> Despite this Alaska torment, the sisters were joyous at having reached mainland Alaska.

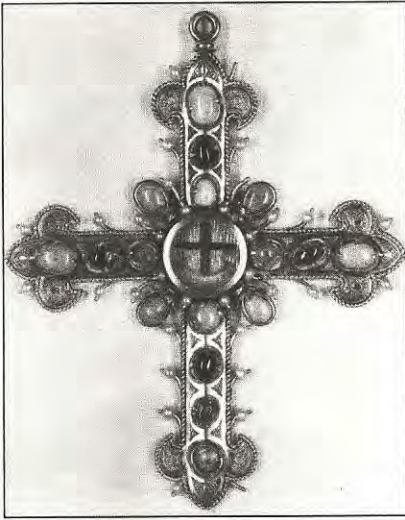
They soon learned from Father Tosi that instead of going to Nulato, they would staff the Mission of the Holy Cross, newly opening at Koserefski. Father Robaut, already planning for the mission, was in charge.<sup>23</sup> The sisters hurried to write to Victoria about this change of destination to a place that they had not heard of until then. Archbishop Seghers had chosen the name, Holy Cross, for the second foundation of the Far North. For that mission, Bishop Louis Lootens of Idaho, who was in retirement in Victoria, had given his large pectoral cross containing a relic of the True Cross.

While waiting for the river steamboat to be repaired and readied, the sisters began learning about Koserefski, the Russian name for an Athabaskan village some 279 miles upriver. The people were called Ingaliks by the Yup'ik Eskimos to the south. The village, on the left bank of the Yukon River, was between two rivers. One, the Innoko, gave access into the interior and to other small villages. The mission site, however, was not at Koserefski village, but about three miles below it on the right side of the Yukon. The priests had not learned just when Koserefski had come to be, but they had heard something about the mission site.

While the sisters sewed on a tent that would be their first home at Holy Cross, they listened to Father Tosi's story of the Ingalik people. With the







Seghers' expedition carried North this pectoral cross of Bishop L. Lootens. Contained at the center of the pectoral cross is a relic of the True Cross. (SPA)  
 (Photo credit: Bruce R. Gordon, Alaska Photographers, Fairbanks)

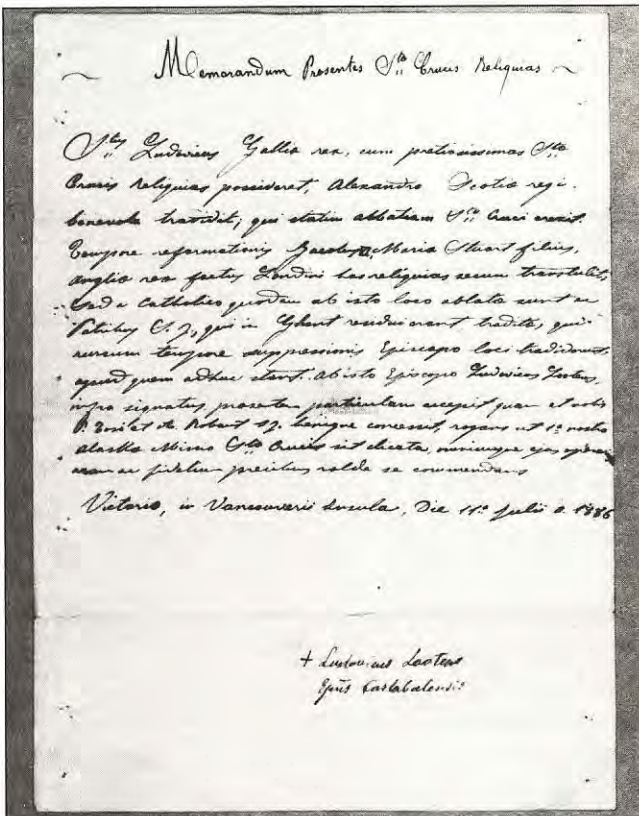
gradual expansion of the Russian fur trade into the southwestern part of mainland Alaska, some trade goods, such as tobacco and Oriental tea, had filtered into the Ingalik region, exciting a desire for further exchanges. This was relatively easy to do, for the Ingalik territory abutted on the south near the portage of the two great waterways of the southwest: the Kuskokwim and the Yukon. Russian explorers had canvassed the Ingalik region seeking for the best route to and from the major trading stations, typically a redoubt, or fort.

One of these explorers was a Russian Creole, Andrei Glazunov. One winter he set out over the ice northeasterly from St. Michael, moved inland and reached the Yukon. Traveling downriver, he had come upon Anilukhtakpak in February 1834. He estimated that there were then about 700 people and that it appeared to be a gathering place for Ingalik and Yup'ik Eskimo trading.<sup>24</sup> Anilukhtakpak was mentioned again by another Russian explorer, Lieutenant Lavrentiy Alekseyevich Zagoskin, who described it as the lowest of the Athabascan villages on the Yukon.<sup>25</sup>

Among the Yup'ik Eskimo villages below Anilukhtakpak was Ikogmiut, which had become a base for Russian trade and the spread of the Russian Orthodox faith among the Yup'ik and Ingalik. Baptisms had occurred and a church, the Elevation of the Holy Cross, built. Much of the success of the Russian effort, the sisters were told, was due to the reputation of a wise and holy priest, Father Iakov Netsvetov. Eventually the Russian mission at Ikogmiut was entrusted to a student of his, of Aleut extraction, Father Zakharii Bel'kov, who became even more well-known and respected than his teacher and mentor had been.<sup>26</sup> Until the purchase of Alaska by the United States in 1867, interaction of the Natives with the Russians increased.

Two years after the purchase, an American river steamboat, the *Yukon*, in 1869 ascended the Yukon River from St. Michael to Fort Yukon. This first riverboat run initiated an era of several riverboats each summer ascending and descending the great river. They brought American army explorers, miners, government agents, traders and trading goods. As steamboats required stoking furnaces with wood, captains of the boats asked the villagers to have piles of wood along the river bank. When the boats stopped, exchanges occurred and sometimes contagious diseases for which the Natives had no immunity spread among the people. Father Tosi, who had received some medical training, had already found his knowledge useful in helping the Natives combat sickness. He related that survivors of diseases were often so weakened that they were unable to hunt, fish, or provide for their families. This brought impoverishment and starvation and could decimate villages.

The 1880 census-taker, Ivan Petroff, reaching Anilukhtakpak, found only a small village of about thir-



Document regarding the cross given to Archbishop Seghers by Bishop Lootens, 11 July 1885. (SPA)  
 (Photo credit: Bruce R. Gordon, Alaska Photographers, Fairbanks)



ty Eskimo people, who called their community Askhomute.<sup>27</sup> That same year, an American explorer, Edward Nelson, commented on settlements in the Innoko-Yukon area. He noted Askhomute, but made no mention of a village of Koserefski.

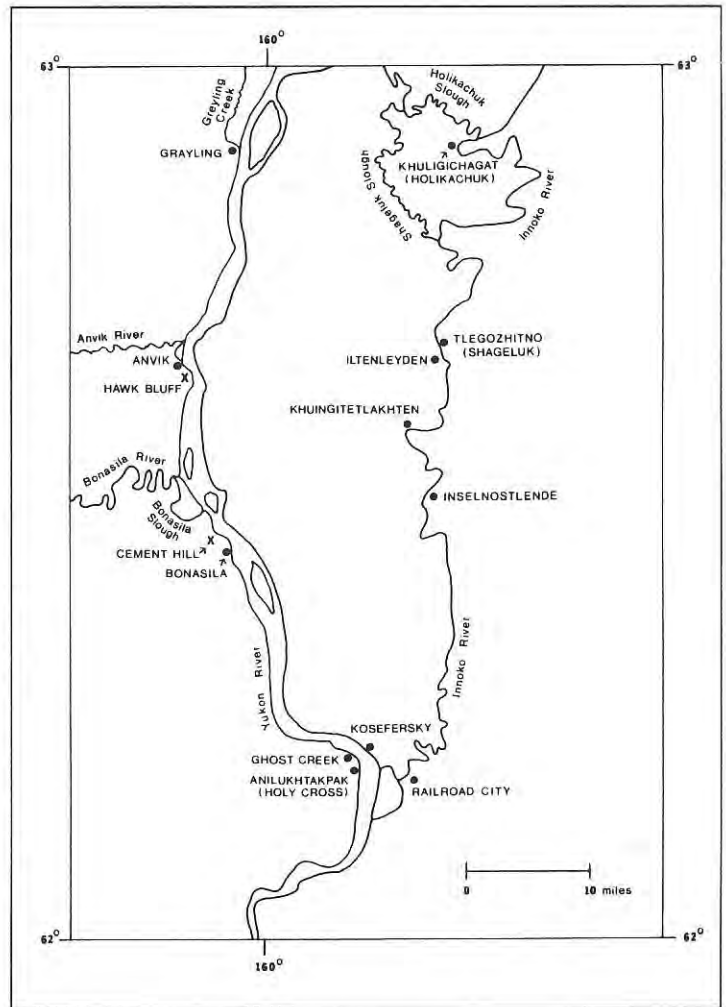
Fewer and fewer people seem to have lived at Askhomute. When Father Robaut, during the winter of 1887-1888 was in the lower Innoko area, he visited a camp called deloiced (Deloycheet). No Askhomute village was at the former great gathering place of Anilukhtapak. Early in the winter, he lived for a while at Anvik, about forty miles upriver. Father Robaut was treated hospitably by both the Anvik Native people and the newly arrived Episcopalian priests, the Reverend Octavius Parker and the Reverend John W. Chapman. Not wishing to interfere with the church being organized there, Father Robaut visited other settlements and moved to the village of Koserefski. He continued to familiarize himself with the people and the area, initiating contacts with thirteen Ingalik groups. Father Tosi told the sisters that in December 1887 Father Robaut had baptized some children in a place called Shageluk. In March, near Holikachuk, other children had been baptized, their parents not objecting.<sup>28</sup> These encouragements in his ministry made him aware of the possibilities for a Catholic mission effort centered in the Koserefski regions, and his choice for a site fell on the now almost abandoned site of old Anilukhtapak.

Father Tosi, besides giving the sisters facts about the new mission and its people, wrote to Governor Swineford about the plans for the proposed school, where Native children would be housed and educated. He described Koserefski village and listed several points favoring the establishment of a school in the area.

*... the place has a population of about 250 people, who are stationary. In its vicinity, up and down the river, are nine other villages, the most distant of which can be reached in a single day's journey, when the traveling is good in the winter. In addition to this are two large villages about three days' journey south from Kosoriffsky. In all these villages the people evince a good disposition, and are endowed with a kindlier nature than one might expect. They are a stationary and not a roving people, for the reason that they can get all the fish they require the year round right at their very doors.<sup>30</sup>*

In addition, Father Tosi outlined the proposed curriculum.

*This will be the first industrial boarding school on the Yukon, or, for that matter, north or west of Sitka. Of course the buildings are not very commodious to start with, but next year we will have much better accommodations; the present buildings were erected this summer, and it was not intended to make the school a large one in the beginning, as the sisters will need a year or so to become acclimated and properly fitted for the work they have undertaken. The boys will be instructed in reading and writing—English—carpentry, blacksmithing, gardening, and in all occupations*



*Map of the lower-middle Yukon and lower Innoko rivers.*  
(VanStone, Fieldiana Anthropology, Vol. 71, p. 77)<sup>29</sup>  
(Permission for use)



*most practical and useful for the country in which they live. The girls, on the other hand, besides being taught to speak, read, and write in English, will be trained in house-keeping, sewing, knitting, and other things most useful to the wife and mother of a family.*

*As I have said, we do not expect to receive a very large number of children at the start, but in a short time will have as many as we can support. The children are numerous and well disposed; they will readily learn to speak good English as they have in their own language all the hard English sounds, such as th, hard and soft, tr, ing, etc. I would especially ask, through your kindness, a recommendation for an annual allowance of \$135 per capita for this school, which is located on the bank of the Yukon River. . . .<sup>31</sup>*

Busy with learning the history of the country, observing life around them, tent sewing, trying out the few Russian words they knew, meeting a few other travelers, the sisters received indelible impressions of the Eskimo people of the coast. The sisters admired the ivory carvings and watched dances made especially unforgettable by the sight of masks, the sound of drums, the allegorical swayings of the dancers. The meaning of the dances, the stories that the songs and gestures told were unknown and, therefore, unappreciated by the sisters, as perhaps, by most other observers. Later, at Holy Cross, the sisters allowed evenings of Native dancing occasionally. But the students, probably homesick after this reminder of their previous home life, were listless for days afterward. Mistaking this as fatigue, Native dancing was eventually discouraged.

At the end of July, Henry Neumann enrolled his three-year-old daughter, Anutka (little Anna) as the first student for the sisters' school. By this time the Alaskan Jesuits had gone from St. Michael, except Father Tosi, who had remained to supervise the loading of mission freight. Finally, on 27 August, the riverboat was ready and the three sisters, little Anutka, and Father Tosi boarded for Holy Cross. The only other passengers proved to be the Russian priest headed for his mission at Ikogmiut and a young Russian deacon, destined to open a school at the village of Koserefski. There was some tension on the boat, in those days when ecumenism was at a low ebb, as centuries-old prejudice raised Catholic-Orthodox suspicions and the belittling of each other's efforts.

The laboring old *Yukon*, after leaving St. Michael, entered the Yukon delta and chose the channel favorable for the upstream trip. Father Tosi pointed out various geographical features of the flat, treeless coastal land, home to the Yup'ik Eskimos. He talked about the Jesuit effort of trying to reach people inhabiting this vast region: groups that wandered seasonally to various camps, difficulties of traveling in the tundra terrain, interminably winding sloughs, language barriers. As the boat moved upriver, eight lonely villages of five or six sunken houses were counted. These communities, looking poor and desolate, were marked by tents, poles with supplies on top, and low caches. When the boat stopped by a village, the Natives offered fish for sale. At one settlement, while the captain took on wood, the sisters went ashore. Timidly, they looked around. Just as warily the Native people eyed these women whose religious garb, especially the headdress, roused wonder. There was some gesticulating by which the sisters came to realize that the Natives were puzzled by the lack of visible ears on them. Nevertheless, with true northern hospitality, the villagers set aside their personal uneasiness and offered gifts of dried fish and ripe berries which the sisters accepted gratefully.<sup>32</sup>



Their river travel gradually brought the boat into Ingalik territory. The boundary between the Indian and Eskimo lands slipped by unnoticed sometime in the night or early morning of their eighth day of travel. About 5:00 A.M., on 4 September 1888, the mission site was reached. Set in its amphitheater of hills, the grey, rainy, pre-dawn site of "Koserefski" was never to be forgotten. A few Native men, standing along the embankment, seemed to be waiting, as though at the edge of an era. When they acquiesced to help with the unloading, a symbolic moment appeared to have been reached, a moment of welcoming, of wanting to be actively a part of the mission intrusion and what it would mean in their lives. Father Robaut was late in meeting the boat. His planned gun salute was canceled<sup>33</sup> because he was offering Mass when the boat docked. Afterward, he hurried to the mooring, welcomed everyone, and led the sisters and their small charge, Anutka, to his shelter. Wet ground and tangled brush hampered the sisters on the walk to his dwelling, which consisted of four posts covered with slabs of wood and lined with cotton material. Brother Rosati, who had prepared camp coffee, was waiting at the doorway.

On reaching the dwelling, the sisters kissed the ground of the mission field they had at last reached. After a breakfast of hardtack and coffee, Sister Stephen and little Anutka began unpacking boxes arriving from the boat; Brother Rosati helped unload and transport the freight; and Sisters Pauline and Joseph took over the cooking. Father Tosi specified the manner in which the sisters were to prepare a pot of boiled flour for the noon meal of the Native helpers.

Before going for more supplies, Father Tosi chose a level spot, laid down floorboards, and erected the sisters' tent. When a hunter came by with geese, the Jesuits traded some of the incoming provisions for a few fowl. These the sisters prepared for supper. For tables, washboards were set on boxes, and then covered with sheeting; for chairs, blocks of wood sufficed. As darkness settled in, the sisters arranged bedding in their tent. Before they settled down, Father Tosi brought extra blankets. September nights, the sisters soon discovered, were chilly.

During those first days at Holy Cross, unrelenting chores continued for all the missionaries and a number of Native men. The exigencies of preparing for winter left scant opportunity to sit and talk; knowledge of the country, its language and the people came at unscheduled times and in informal ways. Immediate attention had to be given to storing provisions, finishing a log cabin begun by Father Robaut, gathering and drying moss to chink the logs, cooking, and sewing. Sister Pauline made baking-powder biscuits twice a day. It was impossible to bake loaves of bread in the mission's little stove, which had for its stovepipe a collection of salvaged tin cans carefully fitted together.

Sister Stephen uncrated the sewing machine she had brought. The dampness of the nights persuaded her to make red flannel nightgowns. In between sewing periods, her tired, cold and aching fingers plucked wild geese and ducks. Later, the sewing machine hummed again, and within a few days there were down pillows. On 8 September 1888, the sisters moved into the first log cabin at Holy Cross Mission. The cabin had been intended for the Jesuits, but was hastily finished and given to the sisters for their temporary use. Five inches of snow fell on 17 September.



The cabin consisted of a single large room with three beds at one end. At the foot of one bed stood a stove, a box for kitchen utensils and tableware, and a pantry which had been arranged by standing empty cases on end. Another bed leaned against a small altar opposite a carpenter's bench complete with tools and shavings. Against the third bed was the woodbox. Filling the woodbox and carrying water became every day necessities. Whenever Father Robaut saw a sister carrying a bucket of water from the creek to the cabin, he left his own task and took over the heavy chore. Often he piled kindling or split wood near the cabin. In ways like these, he and the other Jesuits tried to ease the sisters' introduction to life in the North.

A month later, the sisters rejoiced as they moved into the two-story log cabin, their convent and school. The Jesuits also rejoiced to have the smaller cabin, because tents were almost useless as protection from the October cold. According to Sister Stephen, the new log cabin, now the home she was glad to have, was not as good as the barns she had known as a child in Quebec. Sister Joseph exulted, "For my part, I was absolutely joyful over it; everything we saw, and had, was the fulfillment of what I had hoped for when I left Belgium."<sup>34</sup> That departure had been prompted by hearing a missionary from the Pacific Northwest speak of his work and that of the Sisters of Saint Ann.

The lower story of the sisters' cabin was divided into chapel, classroom, community room, and kitchen; the upper story or garret, which served as sleeping quarters, remained unpartitioned for years. In the beginning, the cabin windows had cotton cloth for windowpanes. During the winter cold, the openings were boarded over as tightly as possible. Sleep was disturbed by sounds like gunshots as the green wood of unseasoned logs dried and cracked. This drying process continued for about three years. A flour paste used to attach San Francisco newspapers to the inner walls for added insulation and neatness attracted mice or shrews from the fields. When the rodents appeared, it did not take the sisters long to replace the pasted newspapers with lengths of cotton fabric.

The roof consisted of rough boards covered with strips of birch bark and a foot of packed earth. Occasionally a south wind blew, turning any snow on the roof into slush. Water, seeping through the sod, birch bark and wood, trickled down upon the garret floor. Sometimes umbrellas sufficed to protect the bedding; at other times beds were moved downstairs. Supplies, especially flour, were endangered when water dripped to the lower floor. At such times, all extra blankets were thrown around the flour sacks as protection. "Better to have wet blankets than to see the precious flour ruined!" advised Sister Stephen.

The secret of preventing such trouble was to keep snow from accumulating on the roof. Therefore, besides gathering wood for a couple of hours, the sisters began a new daily snow removal chore unless the cold was extreme. Ladders were climbed and long-handled brooms were wielded. By about 3:00 P.M., daylight was gone, the cold was intense, and everyone was obliged to go indoors.

Sister Joseph, who, besides her educational and pedagogical courses in Bruges, had studied basic training in first-aid, dispensed the scant dozen bottles of medication and treated the crushed fingers, bruised legs and sprains of the Natives who assisted around the mission. They were good workers, but unused to the mission-supplied tools. For serious injuries, such as broken





bones, Father Tosi was called upon for advice and assistance. He was the official “physician in charge,” as medical and educational needs went together in Sheldon Jackson’s efforts for Alaska. Mothers also came with children having sore eyes, earaches, or scrofula. For working at the mission, the Indian men seemed satisfied with their pay: boiled flour sweetened with molasses, and two pieces of bread. Seeing their satisfaction, sister wondered if they had sufficient food at home, especially as their bread was often kept for the children.

The Native peoples of Alaska experienced many physical hazards, which they seemed to accept as part of life. Open fires caused burns and smoke irritation, especially of the eyes. Activities required for obtaining food were dangerous. Drowning, frost bite, the freezing of extremities, attacks by wild animals were common. As food was scarce in the late winter and early spring, malnutrition or worse could result. Snowblindness was a problem. Hordes of biting insects attacked in the summer. Crowded homes and villages spread disease and germs bringing colds, ear infections, pneumonia and the like. Boils, open sores on the skin, head and body lice afflicted almost everyone. Contaminated food brought stomach and intestinal sicknesses. Arthritis, congenital disorders, blindness, deafness, crippling ailments were some of the other health needs the Native peoples tried to cope with, usually by seeking help from the shaman (medicine man) or by resorting to their own knowledge and use of traditional remedies of the land. The Russian era had brought new health problems, some of which, by the time the sisters arrived in Holy Cross, were more than a century old. Violence, cruelty, alcohol, tobacco, and infectious diseases (smallpox, syphilis, influenza, measles) had become adversaries in the Native peoples’ struggle for survival. Weakened Natives fell easily to a major killer, tuberculosis.<sup>35</sup>

Being able to adapt to the available Alaskan food was most essential to the well-being of the sisters. Months were characterized by the principal food provided by hunting or fishing. The main foods at Holy Cross as the year

*This early picture of Holy Cross Mission shows a group of men and boys by the Jesuit House, grass growing through the slats on the roof of the church, and a group of sisters and girls by the Sisters’ House and school. Although the photograph is dated 1888, it was taken some time later, probably in the early 1890s, by which time the buildings, fences and early garden (partly visible near the rail fence) would have had time for attention and labor. (SMA)*



unrolled were geese, ducks, spruce hens, rabbits, “lush” a type of cod, and dried fish prepared with a white sauce.

The people at Koserefski were described by Father Robaut as honest, peaceable, hospitable and willing to learn. These Ingaliks, because of their proximity to the Eskimos, had been influenced by them in many ways, including dress. Taller than the Eskimos, they wore their long black hair in two tresses, usually ornamented. Clothes could be of beaver skin, fish skin, marten, squirrel or rabbit skins. The people were light on their feet, of happy disposition, fond of song and dance. They carved dishes and other household utensils, used various clays for colors, and made willow roots and bark into useful items. Their homes followed much the same style as those of the Eskimos. Summer homes were usually hastily put together for a season’s duration, but winter homes were substantial with a kashim, a gathering place for sweat ceremonies, traditional dances and community feasts.<sup>36</sup>

Besides making do with the local food and the harsh lodging, the sisters shared another hardship of Alaskan living—lice. Easily catching them from visitors, the sisters every day examined themselves and their clothing to pick out the lice. By changing clothes, they were able to keep their beds free. There were also struggles to keep Anutka free. When other boarders came, the fight was long and hard. Two little girls who arrived to stay were asked to change their clothes and were given two sets of mission clothing. After a bath in the wash tub and an intensive combing, the children looked very different than they did when they first arrived. The children felt strange, too. Strangeness was compounded when their Native names, long and unpronounceable for the most part by the sisters, were set aside and Christian names given. The children’s experiences were ordeals equated with coming to live in the sisters’ school. Although the sisters won the battle with lice, they lost the children when their parents came for them. Language difficulties limited the sisters’ explanations and the parents’ reasons for withdrawing their children from the school. Signs and actions, however, said much. Although the sisters realized the need for tact and patience, their lack of understanding of the deep meanings attached to Native dress and names caused unintentional hurt. Losing the two little girls, when motives had been good, was an unexpected sorrow.

Other disappointments followed. A Native man brought his seven-year-old daughter and marked the doorpost to show that he would leave her until she reached that height. When an eleven-year-old joined her, the younger one caught the older girl’s spirit of dissatisfaction. Both girls left. The sisters prayed that God would send them other pupils who would stay. The local Native people remained aloof to invitations to attend the sisters’ school. Among the several reasons for the reluctance was the hostility of the Orthodox deacon trying to maintain his school at Koserefski.

But the sisters had help. Archbishop Seghers had baptized Andrew Antoska, a Nulato Indian boy who lived with the Jesuits. The boy became an invaluable interpreter. Nulato also provided the sisters with a helper, a woman named Emma Beaudoin who also had known Archbishop Seghers. Father Tosi had lived with John Beaudoin in Nulato and had brought little Mary Beaudoin to school in Victoria. From John and Emma the sisters received their first parkas, mukluks, and fur travel robe. When John decided to go out of Alaska on business, he brought Emma to the sisters. After



waiting in vain for his return, Emma became resigned to the finality of her husband's departure and accepted the sisters' invitation to stay with them. A competent hunter, an expert at curing skins, sewing furs, and making mukluks for winter footwear, Emma influenced many. She taught all these skills until her death in the great epidemic of influenza and measles in 1900.

Other assistance came to Holy Cross in mid-October when Father Tosi found two unlucky prospectors trudging along the river on their way to Andreafski on the lower Yukon. Seeing the men poorly dressed for winter, half-starved and weak from traveling, the priest invited them to stay at Holy Cross. As both prospectors were carpenters, their capable hands turned out furniture for school, chapel, and living quarters. To her joy, Sister Stephen, an Irish Canadian, helped the Irish prospector return to the practice of his Faith.

In after years it was noticed that for most who went to Alaska, the first year took a toll on their strength. As the pioneer sisters' first winter set in, they were tried by many health problems. Sister Joseph strained her back as she dislodged driftwood from the snow and ice. All work for her being impossible for some days, she chose to make her annual eight-day retreat. Her garret room proved an ideal spot for prayer. When the sun shone on two feet of freshly fallen snow, she was awed by the inspiring beauty of the northern landscape. No sooner had Sister Joseph's back recovered than Sister Stephen, suffering from rheumatism and stomach trouble, became bedridden for several weeks. She longed for potatoes, but the few on hand were being saved for planting.

The sisters intensified their prayers that the Koserefski people would accept the school. Their house journal indicates that on 21 December 1888, at about 4:00 A.M., the sisters were awakened by a shuffling noise outdoors. A bit fearful, Sister Joseph opened the door a crack. Barely discernible in the dark were eleven fur-dressed children huddled by the frosted door frame. Parents were crunching the snow as they patrolled around the cabin prepared to guard their children, if need be, from any harm the foreign women might do to them. With heart beating fast, sister invited the children into the cabin, lighted the lanterns, and poked up the fire. School began! When daylight finally came, about 10:30, the parents, anxious about the safety of their children, were observed still keeping vigil outdoors.

Sister Joseph discovered Archbishop Seghers' earlier observation: the Indians possessed perfect rhythm, true voices, and retentive memories.<sup>37</sup> Anything Sister Joseph sang, the children repeated. She improvised songs, alphabet chants and phonic drills to keep their interest. A cup of warming tea also helped. In subsequent days, the delighted teacher taught action songs with health lessons built into them. English and Latin hymns were learned with equal ease, for language made no difference to her imitators. Although the sisters had been studying the Koserefski language under Father Robaut's tutelage, they still had difficulty communicating with the people. However, one lesson Sister Joseph gradually impressed upon her pupils was that they should come at a more reasonable hour than 4:00 A.M. Little by little, the parents stayed away.

When the children arrived on Christmas Day for school, Sister Joseph was unperturbed—these little ones were her Christmas gift! They were impressed by the Christmas celebration: the altar decorations of paper crosses, the



nativity scene, the music, the Mass. Sister recognized powerful teaching possibilities as she noted her pupils' awed reaction to the festive signs. All these were media that future teachers used to enhance messages and give outlet to the Native zest for celebration. Before the children went home, Sister Joseph showed her delighted learners how to crack their gifts of unshelled nuts to extract the kernel. In years to come, Holy Cross would see spectacular shrines, and decorations: evergreen festoons, streamers, candles, and flowers.

Native dances in the village kept the pupils away from school for several days. However by 9 January 1889, thirty-one pupils were enrolled. Both boys and girls wore parkas and had long hair. The girls, who readily learned knitting, were able to make colorful bands which became serviceable belts tied around their parkas. The many parkas caused an unpleasant odor in the unventilated classroom. The sisters, unaccustomed as they were to the earthy smell of clothing and of furs retaining smells of smoke and fish, were sometimes nauseated by the strong odors, yet they tried to show only kindness and understanding. For the day students, the sisters did not make the mistake they had made with boarders. No exchanges of clothing, no interference in Native ways! Despite these heroic efforts, calumnies and belittling stories were spread by unfriendly people to discredit the sisters and their school.<sup>38</sup>

In an attempt to overcome enmity, Sisters Pauline and Joseph decided to walk across the river to the village where the Orthodox deacon who seemed to cause them trouble had his rival school. The chief was unprepared for their request to visit his house. Nevertheless, he took them to his underground dwelling in which there were several women and babies. The only opening in this room with its multi-usage ledges on the sides was a square hole in the roof through which light came in and smoke from fires on the floor went out. The sisters left after a short visit and almost immediately met the deacon. As Anutka was tired, they asked if he could arrange a dog sled ride to take them home. Competently he did so. The excited dogs, nine or ten of them, would have taken off before the passengers were settled and secure had it not been for fifteen men holding the sled back. A boy ran ahead when the team took off, while a man stood behind on the runners.<sup>39</sup> While racing along, every dog had its tail in the air. The sisters expressed enjoyment and gratitude to all, especially the deacon, for their first dog sled ride. They did not see or hear much of the deacon again as his school closed and he left Koserefski.

Attendance at even the sisters' school fell off as March ended. While the days lengthened, the girls stayed in the village to weave mats; the boys accompanied the men on hunts for caribou, moose, and bear. These were important elements of the children's education for life. Sister Joseph switched from teaching academic basics to the fine art of making Brussels lace to be sent on one of the summer boats to Victoria. There it would be raffled or sold, and the proceeds help supply provisions for Holy Cross.

On 17 May 1889, the ice broke on the Yukon. In wonder, the sisters watched as the river level swiftly rose, and as enormous cakes of ice wedged themselves, piled on one another, then split apart. Sometimes huge chunks of ice carrying uprooted trees plowed into the embankment near the mission. Borne along on the river currents, the ice floes moved quickly out and downstream toward the distant sea. With the passage of the ice, the river became open to navigation. Along with the breakup came mosquitoes. Smudges



from tree fungi or long green grass helped keep the mosquitoes away. For sleeping comfort, the sisters devised wooden frames with cheesecloth hanging from them. The cheesecloth was edged with cotton or calico to be securely tucked under mattresses. Smaller nets to cover heads became necessary for any outdoor work.

Anticipation about the summer and the plans for the future mounted as May gave way to June. A whole year had passed since the sisters had received news from the Congregation, home, or the world “outside.” Sister Stephen decided to take Anutka to St. Michael to visit her parents. Hopefully a new group of sisters would arrive. Preparations were many—from new dresses for Anutka to the making of surprises for the expected sisters.

After Sister Stephen and Anutka left for St. Michael, Sisters Josephine and Pauline decided to plant a garden such as Father Tosi had grown in Nulato. Seed potatoes, carefully saved through the winter, were prepared and packets of seeds laid ready. Sister Pauline had had extensive experience on her family farm in Quebec and Sister Joseph had an agricultural degree. Confident of success, but lacking gardening tools, they made rakes by hammering nails into boards. When these proved useless, the undeterred gardeners resorted to tearing at the matted soil with their hands. Bear dung was fertilizer. The Natives became interested spectators, for the idea of planting a potato eye or a seed and expecting something in return was novel to them. At the end of the season, the potatoes yielded threefold and one lone pansy survived. The experimental garden showed that Koserefski soil and summer temperatures favored gardening. The next year the mission successfully grew more of its food. Alaskan gardens flourished under the prolonged daylight of the North. Holy Cross became an agricultural showpiece with acres of vegetables under cultivation.

Sister Stephen returned from the coast with Anutka and two more children as boarders. There were no other sisters with her,<sup>40</sup> nor was there the expected mail. Great was the sense of loneliness! However, the arrival of ten children from Nulato to live with the sisters and the arrival of other boarders left little opportunity to dwell on disappointments.

With twenty-seven boarders, the focus of Holy Cross Mission changed. Sister Joseph went with the children to gather coarse sedge to dry and use for straw. When the children showed her their cuts from tugging at the sharp blades, she in turn showed them her own bleeding hands. Sisters Stephen and Pauline spent days and nights making mattresses and bedding. The sewing machine hummed with the making of clothes for the newcomers. Old garments were burned. Bathing and combing times were frequent. The number of children required that the school building be modified—extensions and partitions were soon built. The Koserefski language fell into abeyance, for the students now included Eskimo children, those of the Nulato region, and others with differing languages. English became the common language for all.

After the marathon chores of ensuring comfort and space for the varied boarders, sickness again threatened to break the physical strength and moral courage of the sisters. From a cot in the kitchen, Sister Pauline directed the children as best she could in spite of their mutual limited vocabulary. Sister Stephen, unable to continue working, fell exhausted into her bed. Sister Joseph struggled with teaching and caring for the boarders. When Father William H. Judge, S.J., came to the mission in the summer of 1890, his



comment was, “The three sisters are worth only half a one!”<sup>41</sup> In devising ways to lighten their workload, he began by improving the water situation. Through pipes and barrels leading from a river channel that did not freeze, he supplied water for the kitchen. Sometimes small fires along the piping system kept the water from freezing. Later other Jesuits devised a hand pump and even a water wheel to bring water to mission reservoirs—tanks discarded by a river steamer.

Letters finally came in the summer of 1890. The first letter was hand carried to Holy Cross by an inspector of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Eagerly the sisters opened the missive, only to be saddened as it announced the death of Mother Mary Ann, the foundress of the Sisters of Saint Ann. This sorrow was surpassed by a greater direct tragedy for the mission. The river boat, carrying provisions for the year, sank with all its cargo. Some of the sacks of flour retrieved from the river were found to have cores of flour untouched by the water. But bread was scarce that year. Fortunately the harvest from the garden was better than ever. Despite this, every child came down with scurvy. As an aftermath, they had difficulty walking. Massaging helped to some extent, but not enough. Ingenious Father Judge invented a system of Turkish baths to supplement the massaging.<sup>42</sup> When all the children were well and walking again, they were struck with erysipelas. That long hard year of trial and sickness was graced when thirty-four children were baptized on Christmas Day 1890.

Holy Cross Mission was not the only place to be visited by hunger and sickness. The villages along the Yukon and the Kuskokwim Rivers were also severely affected. When a priest went to visit a sick man, the latter cried out, “It’s not confession I want, it’s bread!” Hunger and sickness brought the Demientieff family from the Kuskokwim to the Yukon.<sup>43</sup> In 1892, Ivan, the oldest boy, bundled his young brother, Petruska, and his sister, Tatiana, into a dog sled and set out for Holy Cross. When he arrived, he could only plead, “Take care of us, Father, and I will work for you!” After Ivan regained his strength, he returned to the Kuskokwim for other members of his family. The Demientieffs became loyal helpers at the mission. Ivan, who was an exceptional hunter, single-handedly killed three bears one morning. Over the years he won the nickname, Cap, because of his versatility and skill with the mission boats: the *Saint Michael*, the *Saint Joseph*, the *Tosi*, the *Little Flower*, and others.

Tatiana Demientieff spent many years at the mission, first as a boarder and then as an assistant teacher. Gifted in music and needlework, she learned to play the organ, sewed for the sisters and girls, and taught catechism and other classes. Her record of thirty-one years of volunteer service has never been surpassed.

She wanted to become a sister, but that aspiration failed. People seemed to realize that Tatiana was already using her gifts admirably in the mission setting at Holy Cross. She loved Alaska and, as a sister, there was no guarantee that she would be able to return to Alaska after her religious formation. The Congregation recognized her forceful character and, perhaps, hesitated on that account. She had been in Lachine as a young girl and had become known there very well as one who loved freedom, the outdoors, independence. Restraint would have caused her to pine. Concerned kindness was, therefore, another reason that Tatiana seemed suited to remain as she was in



her single state as a dedicated lay woman. No other sisterhood appealed to Tatiana, who often expressed her love for the Sisters of Saint Ann. Wishing, though, to be especially dedicated to God, she took a vow of celibacy under the direction of Bishop Crimont.<sup>44</sup>

New missionaries arrived in 1891: Sister Mary Zephyrin, 36, who had originally been appointed as one of the 1888 pioneer group; Sister Mary Prudence, 27; and Sister Mary Angilbert, 22. The next year, 1892, three more helpers arrived: Sister

Mary Winifred, 26, teacher; Sister Mary John Damascene, 29, nurse; and Sister Mary Antonia of Jesus, 22, teacher and musician. These young sisters brought renewed energy to Holy Cross. That summer, Sister Mary Joseph Calasactius left for surgery in San Francisco.

During that same summer, two sisters accompanied by some of the older girls, traveled upriver to Nulato. The Holy Cross pupils, dressed in becoming clothes, created a sensation all along the river. The veneer of sophistication was thin, but these models of Holy Cross education conducted themselves with quiet good manners, and displayed their knowledge of English. Twenty new children came to Holy Cross as a result of this tour.

Despite the tour's good effects, the clothing problem continued to cause pain and misunderstanding. Most of the children who came to board arrived with garments made from squirrel skins. At the school, this parka was exchanged for the cotton, woolen, or flannelette of the mission. The children received a bundle of clean clothes every week, a novelty for them. Newcomers received the clean clothes joyfully, but refused to give up the soiled ones, which the children equated with their very identity. Sometimes the clean ones went on top of the soiled, or the soiled ones were hidden away. Surrendering their clothes from home, clothes that they had arrived with, brought howls of protest from new students for a month or so. The sisters believed that cleanliness and the battle with lice, which often came with newcomers and could easily infest the whole group, demanded constant and scrupulous vigilance.

After a year of rest and recuperation—and waiting for a ship headed North—Sister Joseph returned to Holy Cross in the summer of 1893, accompanied by Sister Mary Benedict, 44, and Sister Mary Eloise, 21. Not long after her arrival, Sister Benedict was given Archbishop Seghers' old parka



*Four unidentified sisters appear in this picture along with the students at the mission. The girl with an asterisk above her is Lizzie Seraphine. Tatiana Demientieff stands next to the sisters in the doorway. The squared logs, used in the construction of the early buildings, are evident. Most of the girls wear dresses with a plaid pattern and the boys—besides sporting ties—are topped with caps. (SPA)*





*Six sisters appear in this picture taken by the house for the sisters and girls at Holy Cross Mission. The sisters are identified (l. to r.) as: Sisters Mary Prudence, Stephen (wearing a cape), Benedict, Winifred, John Damascene, Pauline. The probable date of the picture is 1893. (SMA)*



*Sister Mary Stephen poses in her winter outfit which she took back East in 1896 when she visited the Mother House. In this studio portrait, the warm furs seem out of place. The style of hood later was modified and the coat became a cape. (SPA)*

to wear<sup>45</sup> when she went to the garden with the boys to harvest turnips. She prayed with the archbishop in mind many times that day for the garden had not done well. The turnips were dwarfed, and the potatoes were as small as hen's eggs! Gardening was not Sister Benedict's specialty. She rendered service best in her role as nurse, both at the mission and in the village.<sup>46</sup>

In the winter of 1893 to 1894, Father Tosi went to Rome to report about the Alaska missions. The Holy Father, Leo XIII, wanted to know the names of all the sisters at Holy Cross, what they ate, and what they drank. "They eat the fish and drink the water of the Yukon," replied

Father Tosi. The Pontiff gave the Prefect Apostolic a large beautiful medal for each of the missionaries. "Tell your sisters," he said, "that the heart of the Pope is with them in their pains, their difficulties, their labors."<sup>47</sup>

The boarding school at Holy Cross Mission had caused the day school for the Koserefski people, those living across the river and those beginning to live close by, to wane. In 1893, Sister Antonia sought to revitalize the day school for the Koserefski children. Classes were short and tea and bread were served. About fifteen children came, some with great opposition from their parents.<sup>48</sup> To help right misconceptions, two school girls, fluent in the Koserefski language, went to the village periodically to help instruct the people. This effort led to twenty-seven baptisms. In 1894, Father Tosi confirmed forty-two Native people, including Emma, the special helper from Nulato.

In 1896, Sister Eloise, whose life in Alaska had aggravated her tendency to consumption, became seriously ill with the disease, rampant in Alaska. Sister Stephen and Tatiana Demientieff accompanied her on the long journey back to Quebec. Unexpectedly, as the three Northern travelers neared Lachine, they met sisters on the Quebec train. Their joy in the reunion brought tears to other passengers. The Mother House welcomed the Alaskans, who were bombarded with questions about the North. Knowing of the poverty of Holy Cross, the General Superior helped Sister Stephen organize a begging trip to nearby French-Canadian villages where the Sisters of Saint Ann were known. As other sisters were in the United States in French-speaking parishes in New England, Sister Stephen also went there and spoke in the schools where the sisters taught. Dressed in her parka and other furs, she described the mission, the glories of Alaska, the qualities of the people. Charmed parishioners organized still more opportunities for informative lectures. Contributors, wishing to provide necessities for the missions, responded generously to her amazing tales of long winters, northern lights, fur-hooded children and inventive adults who had learned to cope with the North. While she talked, her radiant face revealed how much she and the other women religious who had gone North to share were enriched and fulfilled by what Alaska and its people were giving them.





*Holy Cross shows additional buildings, a modified church with a steeple, and a cluster of cabins and tents. What appears to be a stairway to heaven is presumably an area cleared and arranged with cold beds for starting garden plants.*

*A light snow seems to have fallen recently. The Sisters' House faces Walker Slough and the Yukon River. The church building also faced that way subsequently. The picture may have been taken around 1900.*

(Photo credit: Hegg, Negative. No. 914, Special Collections Division, U. of Wash. Libraries)

In 1897, Sister Stephen, returning to the Yukon River, brought two new companions, Sister Mary Pudentienne, 28, and Sister Mary of the Passion, both of whom were eager to be a part of the grandeur of the North.

## Akulurak—1894 to 1898

The school at Holy Cross,<sup>49</sup> which was mainly serving Indian children in predominantly Indian country, prompted the Jesuits to intensify their plans for a similar boarding school deep in Eskimo territory. This would keep the Eskimo children closer to home. Father Tosi consulted with Fathers Francis Barnum, S.J., and Joseph Treca, S.J., who were struggling unsuccessfully to provide a viable school at Tununak. After discernment, attempts, and disappointing developments, the Jesuits transferred an unfinished building from Kanilik to the banks of the Akulurak River.<sup>50</sup> Once the move was completed, other construction was started at the Akulurak site, where the Jesuits established themselves and began talking to their Yup'ik Eskimo neighbors about the proposed school.

In 1893, Sister Zephyrin was named superior of the community of sisters assigned to Akulurak: Sisters Pauline, Prudence, and Benedict. However, because their house at Akulurak was not ready, the four sisters remained at Holy Cross for that year. With the help of Tatiana and the priests, the sisters destined for Akulurak studied the language of the Akulurak area. Sister Benedict prayed for the ability for herself and her companions to learn the Native languages so as to communicate better with the people as quickly as possible.

On 8 September 1894, the four sisters left with Father Aloysius Robaut, Brother John Negro, S.J., and two Holy Cross girls, Germaine and Matilda. They boarded a heavily laden barge which was towed as far as the Andraefsky



*This undated picture is marked "Old Akulurak." The log building to the left has a cross at the front end of the roof. The barrenness of the land contrasts with the wooded hills of Holy Cross. A wind seems to be blowing across the Akulurak flats. (SPA)*



River by the *Yukon*. From the Andraefsky, the Jesuits poled the barge along the Yukon River until they reached the mouth of the Akulurak. As the river had some sixty bends and many sandbars, the hazardous journey was filled with scares and wearisome stoppages. On the evening of 15 September, the long voyage from Holy Cross to St. Joseph's Mission, Akulurak, happily ended. After the passengers were welcomed, the freight, consisting of sled dogs, sacks of peas, lumber, and other items, was unloaded. Brother James Twohig, S.J., had built a fire in the sisters' house—the one transplanted from Kanilik. The house, which was 50 feet by 24 feet, had only a small section finished. A large part of the building was windowless. So strong were the Akulurak winds, at times blowing for three days without stopping, that whatever chinking was stuffed between the logs was soon blown out. The wind at Akulurak had no barrier to break its force. All around the mission site

stretched a vast plain, the tundra, with no mountains, hills or trees. The mission was in the center of five Eskimo

villages, all within a radius of two or three miles. Seventeen other villages were on

the missionary itinerary of the priest at Akulurak. The Eskimos, the sisters soon found,

were intelligent, gentle and hospitable. Each village

lived as a loving family, for everything was held more or less in common.

Provisions of fish or other items were kept in caches

from which anyone helped himself as personal shortages

occurred. During the winter, the Eskimos lived in semi-subter-

ranean houses; in the summer, people traveled quite far to camp along

the seacoast and rivers where fish were abundant.

dant.

On 11 December the sisters opened a day school for the children and adults of the nearby villages.<sup>51</sup> The schooling for the adults was unusual and is stressed because of the precedent set by the sisters and the eagerness of the adult Eskimo community to learn. Having kept up the language studies started at Holy Cross the previous year, the sisters knew enough of the local language to teach the people. Prayers and some of the catechism were in language booklets prepared by the Jesuits, who continued to share their own ongoing knowledge as much as they could. The nuances of the language, when the sisters taught, may have been missed at times and unclear messages given. But pantomime and pictures helped bridge vocabulary and grammar lapses.

Classes lasted about two hours a session, during which Sister Benedict helped bring variety by playing on the harmonium. Before people left to face the wind and cold of Akulurak on the trip home, boiled flour, tea and bread were served. The sisters wondered for a while if that was why the Natives came to class, but the attentiveness during the sessions and the increased



attendance at church helped disprove the motive. Classes continued all winter and all seemed well, but when spring came to Akulurak, the villagers, to the sisters' surprise, moved away because of discontent and suspicion.

That disapproval came because the sisters, again by their desire for cleanliness, had inadvertently offended many Eskimo parents. The usual attire for the girls when they came to Akulurak was a parka and fur trousers. These articles, thought the sisters, were dirty and ragged. Repeating what had happened at Holy Cross, and not knowing how else to handle this situation, the sisters gave the children baths and dressed them in mission clothes. The sisters were happy about the results, but the children and parents were not. Other anti-cultural conflicts arose. The sisters dissuaded the girls from such things as nose pendants and tattoos. When these interdictions were observed, and changes were occurring, medicine men (shamans) spread fear among the people. Maintaining outward politeness and not wishing to create a fuss, the village people from nearby quietly left Akulurak in the spring for their summer camps and did not return.

By then there were thirty boarders from other villages at Akulurak. On some of these the sisters were able to make lasting impressions. With effort, the boarders learned to speak English, read, write, and count. The first Eskimo boarder, a girl named Marie, became especially attached to the sisters. She and another girl, Annie, eventually asked to go to Holy Cross.

Accompanied by some of the boarders, Sister Prudence visited an empty Eskimo village. She was surprised and discomfited at the poverty of the homes and, not understanding the significance, was uneasy when she found many wooden masks carved, painted and decorated like heads of animals. Sister also visited the cemetery, where wooden boxes rested on the ground. These coffins were only about three feet long, for the bodies of the dead were bent into a position to fit the boxes. Through the many apertures, decomposing bodies could be seen. Above some of the graves were replicas of canoes, birds or small animals. At one side, four crosses marked the graves of three children and a baptized man the priests had buried. The silence of the cemetery matched the silence of the village.

Sometimes, while the boarders were on outings, they would spot small animals and chase them with delight. With minimal places to hide, geese, cranes, ducks and rabbits were easy prey on the tundra. The meat and soup diet at Akulurak thus came quite readily, but dietary deficiencies were felt.

Lack of vegetables brought scurvy to three of the sisters. Sister Mary Zephyrin, suffering from scurvy, lost all her teeth. Sister Pauline said she was tempted to eat moss. A garden yielded five or six inches of cabbage and turnip leaves. Seed potatoes did not even rot, for just below the surface soil the ground was permanently frozen. Food seemed no problem for the Eskimos, though, who obtained seal meat and seal oil at the coast and knew where to pick plentiful supplies of blueberries and yellow salmon berries.

At Akulurak, nature offered striking phenomena. Northern lights were visible over a wide expanse of the flat land. The sisters frequently left their beds to contemplate the dancing, colorful lights. During times of heavy humidity or fog, mirages occurred. People saw forests and mountains where none existed. Another strange feature at Akulurak was the way ordinary conversation would echo, principally when rain was imminent but no storm had as yet broken.



Although temperatures at Akulurak did not have the extremes of Holy Cross cold, there was more snow. Winter winds lifted the snow suddenly and cleared the ground in a whirlwind blizzard that blotted out objects close at hand. No one dared to go outside during these storms. A rope, helping the boys travel safely to and from school, stretched from the Jesuit house to the sisters' building. For the Eskimos, winter had its own beliefs. Playing with dolls was forbidden as such playing would keep summer from coming. Popular belief also prohibited making snowballs when snow was falling, or the snow would continue all winter. Anyone responsible for doing the above things, the people believed, would die in a few days.

Two of the older girls at Akulurak chewed tobacco from habit. The sisters appeared not to notice. The girls' brothers brought them their "chew" which was discreetly enjoyed. Renouncing the tobacco was too great a sacrifice to ask of the girls. They had, however, been obliged to remove their nose pendants: three beads on a string, part of each girl's trousseau. Since the hole in the nose remained after the pendant was removed, the girls nonchalantly slipped their sewing needle into it or even their knitting needle, for convenience. By doing so, the girls maintained the holes until a time when the pendants could be reinserted.

Pupils in 1896 numbered only a few boarders, ten girls and nine boys, and two day students. Although there was no serious talk as yet of closing St. Joseph's Mission, needs elsewhere suggested sharing the sisters with other missions.<sup>52</sup> Avid gold miners were having an impact on Alaska, especially along the Yukon River. In particular, Forty Mile, on the Upper Yukon, was considered an important place for the Church to establish itself. Sisters were being invited, for a hospital was in demand. The flow of miners into Alaska had given additional prominence to Unalaska. A hospital there would be good. Father Tosi communicated his ideas and wishes to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, General Superior, in 1894. He stated that should he accept these

Form 1  
 Co.'s Patent IN FOLD, Canada, Nov. 14th, 1903; U.S., May 27th, 1904.  
 To open, tear off the colored label at perforated mark

**The Great North Western Telegraph Company, of Canada.**  
 OPERATING THE LINES OF THE MONTREAL, BOSTON AND NAUFRON TELEGRAPH COMPANIES

This Company transmits and delivers messages only on conditions limiting its liability, which have been assented to by the sender of the following message.  
 Errors can be corrected and sent only by repeating a message back to the sending station for comparison, and the Company will not be held liable for errors or delays in transmission or delivery of uncorrected messages, beyond the amount of tolls paid thereon, nor in any case where the claim is not presented in writing within sixty days after sending the message.  
 This is an uncorrected message, and is delivered by the request of sender, under the conditions named above.  
 H. F. DWIGHT, President and General Manager.

Money orders by telegraph between principal telegraph offices in Canada and the United States.

**TELEGRAM**

To *Rev. Mother General  
 Superior of St. Ann's  
 Superior, Alaska*

No. \_\_\_\_\_ Check *61 Paid*

Rec'n. No. FROM SENT BY REC'D BY TIME  
*Mo. Ak. R.S. 4.30 pm.*

From *San Francisco Calif. August 10<sup>th</sup> 1896*

*As requested by Father Tosi would strongly urge the sending of sisters if any way possible the facilities provided by him would not be obtainable by another season owing to the tender of of the business of education to take all available sisters holding classes until next Monday unless loss of any benefit are willing to do as please answer promptly.*  
*Abelard Commercial Co.*

5MA

Form 1  
 Co.'s Patent IN FOLD, Canada, Nov. 14th, 1903; U.S., May 27th, 1904.  
 To open, tear off the colored label at perforated mark

**The Great North Western Telegraph Company, of Canada.**  
 OPERATING THE LINES OF THE MONTREAL, BOSTON AND NAUFRON TELEGRAPH COMPANIES

This Company transmits and delivers messages only on conditions limiting its liability, which have been assented to by the sender of the following message.  
 Errors can be corrected and sent only by repeating a message back to the sending station for comparison, and the Company will not be held liable for errors or delays in transmission or delivery of uncorrected messages, beyond the amount of tolls paid thereon, nor in any case where the claim is not presented in writing within sixty days after sending the message.  
 This is an uncorrected message, and is delivered by the request of sender, under the conditions named above.  
 H. F. DWIGHT, President and General Manager.

Money orders by telegraph between principal telegraph offices in Canada and the United States.

**TELEGRAM**

To *Rev. Superior General  
 St. Ann's  
 Superior, Alaska*

No. \_\_\_\_\_ Check *53 pd*  
*1 extra*

Rec'n. No. FROM SENT BY REC'D BY TIME

From *San Francisco Calif. S. Aug 8 1896*

*We must take St Michael this year cannot take sisters from other houses must have three sisters by November 9th will leave San Francisco again 15<sup>th</sup> a good house will be ready for them there is a doctor Nelson at the post do not disappoint me reply to Alaska Commercial Co San Francisco*  
*Sig. J. Tosi Alaska*

5MA



posts, he wanted women ready for hospital work.<sup>53</sup> By 1895 no decision had been reached regarding sisters for either Forty Mile or Unalaska. St. Michael, too, was now under consideration.<sup>54</sup> The Alaska Commercial Company at St. Michael seconded Father Tosi's plans for a school there. Urgent letters<sup>55</sup> and telegrams went to Lachine.

No sisters went to St. Michael in 1896, but in 1897, Sister Stephen, returning to Alaska after her trip east, was named superior at St. Michael, which was to have a hospital.<sup>56</sup> Almost simultaneously with the decision to open St. Michael came the news of a tremendous gold strike in the Klondike. With new needs developing, Father René, recently appointed Prefect Apostolic, and then visiting the Holy Cross and Akulurak regions, asked Sister Stephen to accept being superior at Dawson. He had decided that St. Michael would not open as planned. In the Jesuit's mind, priority had to be given to Dawson, where great numbers of miners were congregating and a typhoid epidemic was making inroads. Father René was responding to Father Judge, ministering in Dawson and begging for the help of sisters. Sister Stephen, after talking the matter over with Sisters Benedict and Pauline, who were to have gone to St. Michael with her, remained adamant in refusing the superiorship at Dawson.<sup>57</sup>

Although the Jesuits then chose Sister Prudence to be the superior of the Dawson group, the sisters, in a display of feminine solidarity, opted for Sister Zephyrin. Father René subsequently announced what the sisters had been fearing: Akulurak would close its doors in the summer of 1898.

There was a deep feeling in the sisters' hearts that both Akulurak and St. Michael were being sacrificed for Dawson. The Sisters of Saint Ann grieved at abandoning the coast and their Eskimo apostolate.

Previous to the discussion about Dawson, Sister Zephyrin had been reassigned from Akulurak to Holy Cross. After the announcement that Akulurak was closing, she decided to remain at Akulurak until the end. Sister Benedict became the interim superior of the group starting for Dawson. Sister Stephen, freed of the superiorship, agreed to be part of a later group for Dawson. Accompanied by Sister John Damascene, who had come with Father René from Holy Cross to replace the two named for St. Michael, Sister Stephen hurried to Holy Cross to begin preparations for the long trip upriver to Dawson. Sisters Pauline and Benedict went to St. Michael to recover whatever school and hospital supplies the sisters had stored there in anticipation of the opening of that mission. Both sisters then went on up to Holy Cross. Sisters Zephyrin, Pudentienne, and Prudence remained in Akulurak to care for the few remaining children.

No incoming boarders arrived that winter. In the spring of 1898 the children were sent home early enough to join their families in the seal hunt. Knowing that the school was closing, the sisters had encouraged the children to be teachers of the Faith in their own families and villages.

St. Joseph's Mission at Akulurak remained closed for seven years until Father Joseph R. Crimont succeeded Father René and asked the sisters to return. Father Crimont was able to obtain the services of the Ursulines in 1905.<sup>58</sup> Those sisters, under Mother Amadeus, reopened Akulurak and succeeded with the people with whom the Sisters of Saint Ann had earlier shared their lives. Under the Ursulines, the school prospered.



Around 1950, when the Akulurak buildings required replacement, Bishop Francis D. Gleeson decided to rebuild the mission at a different site. Akulurak, by then called St. Mary's, was moved to the Andreafsky River. Sisters went from Holy Cross to be present for the blessing of the new buildings once the relocation of the Akulurak mission was completed. Some twenty years later, in 1974, the Akulurak apostolate of the Sisters of Saint Ann reawakened when Sister Agnes Marie was missioned to St. Mary's to satisfy her desire to be with the Eskimo people in Alaska through direct classroom teaching.<sup>59</sup>

At St. Mary's the Ursulines shared their community life with Sister Agnes, who taught religion, mathematics, and typing at the school. When St. Mary's introduced a Vocational Business Program, Sister Agnes taught that course while keeping the job of bookkeeper she had been asked to undertake. In 1980, Sister Agnes Marie introduced computer programming to her students. Before returning in 1982 to ministries among the Sisters of Saint Ann, she ensured that her responsibilities would be carried on by other personnel at St. Mary's.

The concern of Sister Agnes for the mission was not unusual. Through the years, Holy Cross Mission and Akulurak had maintained a reciprocal

*St. Mary's Mission, showing the fish cannery facilities in the foreground.*  
(Photo credit: Ken Stone) (Courtesy of Bob Betz, Fairbanks)





attachment for each other. Holy Cross garden produce, especially potatoes, was exchanged for Akulurak salmon every summer that the *St. Patrick* mission boat came up the Yukon from the coast.

In 1988, Sister Jeannette LaRose resumed contacts with people Sister Agnes had taught at St. Mary's. The mission school by then had closed. As pastoral minister, Sister Jeannette worked with the administrator, Deacon Patrick Beans, Sr., in his efforts for the parish. There was no resident priest. Eucharistic ministers and other people involved with various aspects of current Church ministry assisted in the life of the Church. Sister Jeannette took part in parish activities, encouraged lay participation in ministries, and shared in the life of the village, technically a "city."

Sister Kateri Mitchell, another Sister of Saint Ann, was also based at St. Mary's in 1988. Her ministry, however, allowed her only infrequent stays there, for she was a "listening ear" for Bishop Michael J. Kaniecki, S.J. At his request, she traveled extensively throughout rural Alaska as she made herself familiar with needs and personnel resources. Sister Kateri was especially astute in voicing the wishes of the Native people because she understood well the roots of their Native cultures. As Coordinator of Rural Ministries, Sister Kateri brought her own sensitivity as a Mohawk woman to her role.

In 1991, Sister Jeannette moved to Mountain Village where she continued pastoral ministry, dividing her time between there and Pilot Station. Sister Kateri set up her own central office at St. Mary's, where intensive workshops in Native Ministry Training were being held. Both Sisters Jeannette and Kateri realized the ongoing importance of continued ministry in the development of educated, faith-filled communities. Such had been the dream of women religious who had gone North<sup>60</sup> in 1888. Such was still the dream.

\* \* \* \* \*

Red, the symbolic color of the early missions of the Far North, is for Archbishop Seghers who gave his life's blood for Alaska. Red is for the glow of innumerable campfires the Jesuit missionaries struggled with on their indefatigable travels to isolated villages and camps. Red is for the dancing flares of the Northern Lights, unforgettable extravaganza over Akulurak. Red is for the salmon, beautiful in shades from red-gold to red-brown, as strips and slabs dry over poles or drip oil into smoking smudges. Red is for the bravery of Fathers Tosi and Robaut, for Father Jonckau's ardor for the North, for the sisters' courage. Red is for berries ripening on the tundra. Red is for the holy cross, for Holy Cross. Red is for Love.



*Sister Kateri Mitchell*

*Sister Agnes Marie taught at St. Mary's from 1974 to 1982. With her in this December 1978 picture is Sister Eileen Kelly, Provincial Superior, visiting from Victoria. (SPA) (Photo credit: R. K. Smith, O.S.A.)*





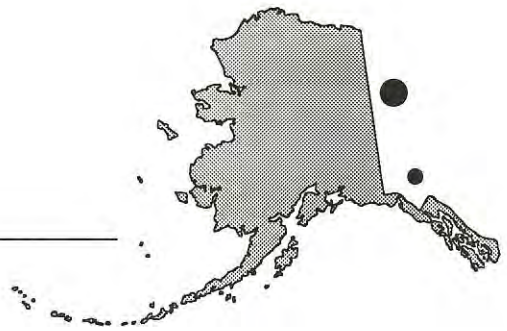
## Time Line for Chapter 2

- |      |   |           |  |
|------|---|-----------|--|
| 1834 | Glazunov at Anilukhtapak  |           |  |
| 1836 | Ikogmiut mission and trading post                               |           |  |
| 1843 |   | 1843      | Church organization of the Pacific Northwest   |
| 1844 | Zagoskin at Anilukhtapak<br>Russian Orthodox baptisms           |           |  |
| 1846 |   | 1846      | Diocese of Vancouver I. (Victoria)   |
| 1850 |   | 1850      | Sisters of Saint Ann founded in Quebec   |
| 1851 | Russian Orthodox church in Ikogmiut consecrated                 | 1858      | Sisters of Saint Ann in Victoria   |
| 1867 | Purchase of Alaska by U.S.                                      | 1873      | 1st trip of Bishop Seghers to Alaska   |
| 1869 | River steamboat, the <i>Yukon</i> begins an era of river travel | 1877-1878 | Bishop Seghers in Nulato   |
| 1880 | Nelson at Askhomute   |           |  |
| 1883 | Ingaliks from Shageluk baptized at Anvik by Russian Orthodox    |           |  |
| 1884 | Organic Act, educational grant                                  | 1885      | Archbishop Seghers in Juneau<br>Father Althoff appointed to Juneau   |
|      |   | 1886      | Sisters of Saint Ann in Juneau<br>Jesuits accompany Archbishop Seghers to Alaska and into Yukon Territory<br>Archbishop Seghers killed near Nulato   |
|      |   | 1887      | Jesuits learn of archbishop's death<br>(summer) Father Tosi to Victoria with news<br>(summer) Father Robaut in St. Michael area<br>(winter) Father Tosi in Nulato<br>(winter) Father Robaut in Anvik, Koserefski and Yukon R.-Innoko R. area<br>Father Jonckau's efforts for Far North |
|      |   | 1888      | Sisters of Saint Ann in Holy Cross   |
|      |   | 1890      | Sickness at Holy Cross   |
|      |   | 1894      | Father Tosi becomes Prefect Apostolic<br>Sisters of Saint Ann in Akulurak  |
|      |   | 1897      | Sisters of St. Ann accept St. Michael<br>Father René becomes Prefect Apostolic<br>Sisters of Saint Ann accept Dawson<br>St. Michael mission cancelled  |
|      |   | 1898      | Akulurak closes<br>Sisters of Saint Ann arrive in Dawson   |
|      |   | 1905      | Ursulines reopen Akulurak  |
|      |   | 1950s     | Akulurak mission to Andreafski (St. Mary's)  |
|      |   | 1974-1982 | Sr. Agnes, S.S.A., at St. Mary's   |
|      |   | 1988      | Sr. Jeannette, S.S.A., at St. Mary's<br>Sister Kateri, S.S.A., Rural Ministries  |
|      |   | 1991      | Sister Jeannette to Mountain Village<br>Sr. Kateri establishes central office at St. Mary's  |



## A Yukon Territory Saga: Dawson and Whitehorse

---



### Dawson, Part I

Now, slush, water, mud—in ever-recurring cycles!—So it seemed in May 1899 to Sister John Damascene as she wearily pushed one foot ahead of the other at the end of seventeen hours of hiking the trails to the creeks around Dawson. She and another sister were begging. Their guide called a halt about midnight, when a place called Morissey's cabin was reached. As Sister John sank onto a bunk along the wall, the guide noticed her feet. Her gumboots were worn through. The guide pulled them off. The sight of the wet, blistered feet horrified him.

"I didn't know, Sister John! I didn't know!"

Later, when the sisters had retired, the guide walked back seven miles along the trail to a dance hall and trading post they had passed. There he asked for a pair of women's boots.

A lady's voice called out from a curtained alcove, "I have a pair!" The guide said he wanted to buy them and threw his gold poke onto the counter as the lady appeared.

"Aren't you the man," she asked, "who passed here with two nuns? Are they for one of them?"

When the guide answered, "Yes," she pushed back the gold and handed him the boots, saying, "Ask the sisters to pray for me!" She then went back to her business in the curtained alcove.

\* \* \* \* \*

For the missionary, as for the prospector and the Native, the fact that there was an international boundary close to Forty Mile between the American territory known as Alaska and the Yukon Territory (Canada) was a moot question lost in the tangles of brush, Arctic snows, and bureaucracies. Partly because of this and partly because of the great difficulty of covering the vast extent of his Yukon missions, the Catholic bishop of the Athabasca-Mackenzie region of Canada authorized the Jesuits working in Alaska to minister in his vicariate should their travels bring them into his ecclesiastical jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

One miner, George Carmack, prospecting around the Forty Mile region, wandered in his search for gold until August of 1896, when he found good possibilities at Bonanza Creek, about eight miles from the Klondike River in the Yukon Territory. Many who heard of his find hurried to stake their own claims on the Bonanza or the Eldorado, a creek that proved even richer. Forty Mile camp was deserted. A new mining camp, Dawson, mushroomed at the junction of the Klondike and the Yukon Rivers. By March 1897, even Father





*This early photograph of Dawson shows its tent city beginnings, crowded Main Street conditions, and the Klondike and Yukon confluence. Signs indicate that help with real estate, mining, lodging and storage is available even at this stage of the development of Dawson. (SPA)*

William Judge, S.J., with a Nulato Indian named John, who faithfully accompanied him in his mission travels, reached Dawson from Forty Mile.<sup>2</sup> Seeing the crowded conditions of the Dawson camp, where already four thousand people had gathered, Father Judge chose a three-acre lot for a church and hospital before trekking back to Forty Mile for more supplies.

Upon returning to Dawson, he had a large tent erected as an emergency hospital for victims of typhoid fever, rampant in the settlement, or for accident cases. He hired men to cut logs for a permanent hospital which he hoped the

Sisters of Saint Ann would staff. By August, the primitive hospital was ready to receive patients. While waiting for the sisters to arrive, he admitted some patients and, with the assistance of a few lay people, cared for them himself.<sup>3</sup>

At the beginning of September 1897, Sisters Benedict, Mary of the Passion, Mary of the Cross and Joseph Calasactius left Holy Cross on the steamer *Alice*, bound one thousand miles upriver.<sup>4</sup> The trip had no sooner started than rumors warned of the impossibility of getting to Dawson that year. Already the water level in crucial spots of the river was low, preventing further travel by steamer. Nevertheless, the captain of the *Alice* thought he could make it. At Fort Hamlin, the *Alice* met miners shouting, "No means of reaching Dawson!"<sup>5</sup> The Yukon flats proved to be extremely shallow. Snow came on 11 September, huge flakes that resulted in about eight inches of accumulation. The cold weather allowed only short periods on deck, but these were pleasant moments and usually resulted in a good talk with Mrs. William C. Bompas, the wife of the Anglican Bishop of the Mackenzie-Yukon. Just as darkness settled in on 12 September, the *Alice* reached Fort Yukon, where the news was alarming. No provisions had been brought upriver since the spring, and by latest count, there were eight thousand people in Dawson. Food supplies existed for only two thousand. Hearing of the imminent food shortages, the sisters firmly believed that starvation awaited them in Dawson. They were ready to sacrifice their lives.<sup>6</sup>

The captain of the *Alice*, determined to proceed to Dawson yet uneasy about the depth of the river, went ahead by canoe to sound the channel in preparation for the passage of the steamer. On his return, he announced he could not risk his steamer in such shallow water. Everyone would have to go back downriver. Some men, planning to continue on to Dawson in a low-water boat, offered to take the sisters. When they realized they would have to leave their hospital supplies and other provisions behind, they felt they would be useless, and even encumbrances, in the mining camp. While the sisters

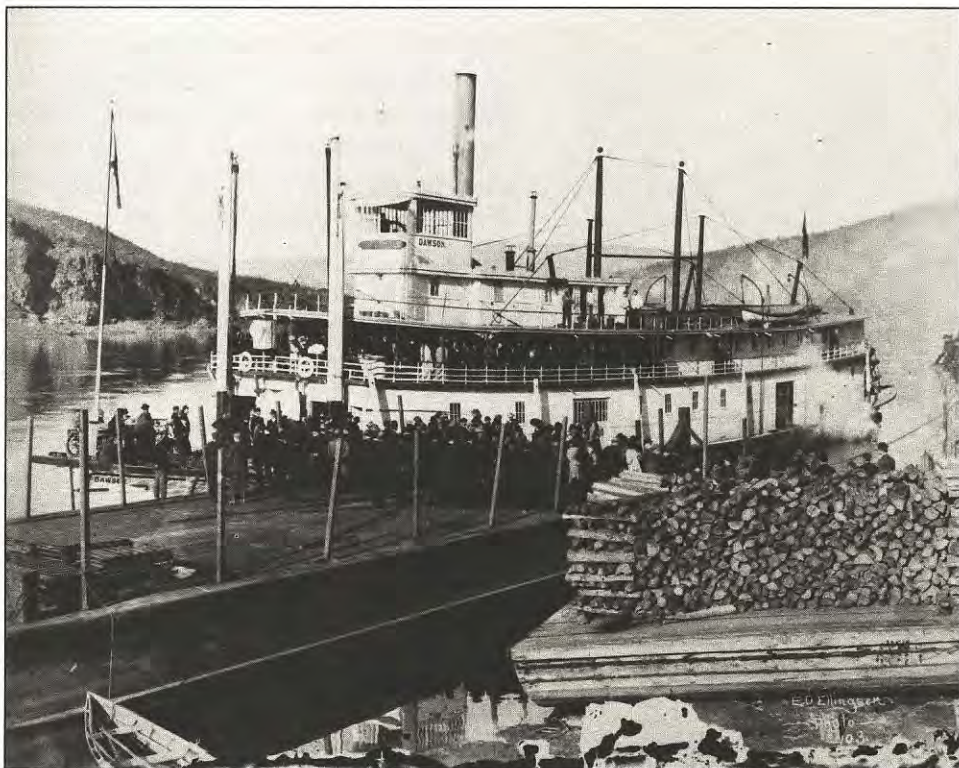


still hesitated, a Doctor Merryman told them that if they should insist on continuing to Dawson, he would use every means to prevent it. They decided, therefore, to abide by the captain's decision that they should return downriver. The sisters were disappointed, as were the other passengers, about whom the sisters commented, "We reckon it a Providence for all these people unable to go up; it will be a number less to meet Death."<sup>7</sup> As it turned out, there were, indeed, food shortages in Dawson that winter; reports, though, about the imminence of starvation had been greatly exaggerated.

Before the return trip was underway, Father René<sup>8</sup> found means of sending a letter with orders that two sisters disembark at Nulato and open a school there.<sup>9</sup> Plans and decisions about Nulato then had to be made. On 16 September the *Alice* started downriver. An upcoming steamer carried another letter to the sisters. This missive was from Father Crimont, advising them that if the *Alice* failed to make it to Dawson, they should try other steamers.<sup>10</sup> Sister Joseph commented in her journal: "We are ready to do so. We are on our way to Nulato to open our mission there till next spring. Already, we have given in a list of provisions for Nulato. Today, after receiving new orders, we have to retract it."

As no other steamers that were hailed<sup>11</sup> could travel on up to Dawson, the sisters continued downriver to Nulato where boats were anchored. The captains protested at the thought of the sisters staying in Nulato. "Starvation awaits us here, too," they cried. As a proof, they took the sisters to the cabin of Father Francis M. Monroe, S.J., to show them his provisions for the winter: one can of lard. Yet even the specter of starvation did not deter the sisters, who considered that to obey Father René meant to open a school. While wondering what to do about supplies, ministry and housing, Sister Joseph became seriously ill. There seemed no place for her to be cared for in Nulato. It was deemed imprudent for only one sister to travel on with her to Holy Cross because of potential nursing crises. To stay alone in Nulato seemed undesirable. All went back to Holy Cross.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout the winter, anxious sisters prayed for people believed to be starving in Dawson, Nulato, and elsewhere. Spring breakup was eagerly awaited. When it did come, Sister Stephen, who had been asked to help get the sisters settled in Dawson, wrote: ". . . the ice is gone, all looks bright. We are momentarily awaiting the boat to carry us to Dawson. Reverend Father Judge kept up the hospital all winter with the aid of hired men."<sup>13</sup>



*The engines of sternwheelers burned a cord of wood an hour. A convenient pile of cut wood is ready for this steamer. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: E. O. Ellingsen, 103, Public Archives of Canada, C-4888)



As soon as the *Alice* came upriver, Brother Bernard I. Cunningham, S.J., Sisters Mary of the Cross, John Damascene, Joseph, and Stephen set off for Dawson. Six events stand out on the 1898 journey. At Kokrines, during a quarrel a man had his head split open with an axe. The captain asked the sisters to intervene and care for the wounded man. Overcoming her fears, Sister Joseph did so. A second event was a consoling one, an encounter with Monica, a former Holy Cross student, who was waiting for a priest to come and baptize her baby; she was ready to do it herself in an emergency.

A third memorable incident was a near disaster. The steamer went aground on a sandbar and floated free only after five days of labor. Again she was stuck, for another five days. The long delay made it necessary for Sister Stephen to return to Holy Cross via a downriver steamer.

Sickness marked a fourth event. When the captain was laid low with fever, Sister Joseph nursed him for four days.<sup>14</sup> Then she herself fell sick, making a fifth dramatic incident. The captain, once again able to be at the helm of his ship, sent some men by small boat one hundred miles to get a doctor for Sister Joseph. The doctor arrived at the *Alice*, prescribed medication, and with orders to follow the treatment, left. Not realizing the consequences, Sister Joseph continued to take other medicine as well. The combination affected her adversely and put her in a critical state. Fortunately, Sister John Damascene diagnosed the problem, stopped the extra medication and saved Sister Joseph's life.

A sixth memory retained by the sisters was the shock they felt when, as the steamer approached Dawson, they heard of a fire in the camp. Boats heading downstream brought further news: Father Judge's hospital and church, both called St. Mary's, were burned. Uneasiness accompanied the sisters on the last miles to Dawson. At length, on 11 July 1898, the *Alice* docked at Dawson.<sup>15</sup>

Having observed the sisters on deck, as he watched from the shore, Father Judge greeted them with a relieved smile. After happy exchanges, he and Brother Cunningham helped the sisters disembark. A rowboat brought Sister Joseph, still too weak to walk, to shore. At the hospital, which had not burned, sister was put to bed. The other sisters got busy immediately.

True enough, there had been a fire. Late on the night preceding Trinity Sunday, Father Judge, called quickly from his prayers, had left a candle burning in the church. Flames consumed the building. Wet blankets spread on the hospital roof and the sweating labor of fire fighters had saved the hospital, although the windows were blown out by the heat. Cloth now covered the hospital windows. A big tent, which had probably been the first temporary hospital, served as the church.

The sisters learned that a Canadian, W. T. Barrett, M.D.,<sup>16</sup> had accepted Father Judge's offer in May to be Medical Advisor and head of medical services at the hospital. Doctor R. R. Macfarlane, M.D., acted as his partner. Previously the Americans, Doctors Chambers, M.D., and LeBlanc, M.D., had been in charge.

That same month, Bishop Emile Jean Baptiste Marie Grouard, O.M.I., appointed Father Pierre (Peter) E. Gendreau, O.M.I., Vicar General, as superior of the Yukon Missions. His assistants were three other Oblates: Fathers Camille (Camillus) Lefebvre, Alphonse Desmarais, and Brother Auguste (Augustin) Dumas. A fourth assistant was Father Ozias Corbeil, a diocesan priest.<sup>17</sup> The Oblates of Mary Immaculate (O.M.I.), the primary Catholic



missionary group in the Canadian North, accepted co-workers, such as diocesan priests. Usually assigned by bishops to established parishes within a diocese, the diocesan priests could choose to devote some years to a mission effort elsewhere. The Oblate group was based in Dawson where they served the settlement and traveled out to the men on the creeks. Realizing that the Yukon was Oblate ecclesiastical territory, the Jesuits were ready to reassign Father Judge within Alaska. The hospital, which was heavily in debt, posed a problem. Father Judge hoped that by July 1899 he could have the debt paid off and leave Dawson with accounts settled. Having been given permission to stay on in Dawson for this purpose, he ministered principally as chaplain at the hospital.

The 30th of August brought a second group of sisters to Dawson from Holy Cross: Sisters Zephyrin, Pauline and Pudentienne. The last, being recently from French Canada, had to overcome her inability to communicate well in English. Sister Zephyrin, superior, despite her good will, showed a lack of assertiveness and leadership. Her kindness, but not her decisiveness, had caused the sisters at Akulurak to choose her as the Dawson superior. In addition, having arrived after the first group also put her at a disadvantage. Decisions had already been made. She could but second them or risk that the sisters appear vacillating. As in any work situation, good will cannot magically produce competency. Sisters were assigned at times to use their gifts when, in reality, the gifts they had to offer were not suitable for the situation. Prayer and effort usually carried the sister along to accomplish reasonably good results, but not without pain for all involved. More and more, as the year progressed, the superior was overlooked in favor of young Sister Mary of the Cross, a natural leader and a daring innovator when ingenuity was required, which was often enough in a frontier hospital with scarcity of medicines and anesthetics.

Dawson truly was a frontier town. The hospital was at the north end of a mile-long quagmire euphemistically called Main Street. Between the police barracks at the south end and St. Mary's Hospital at the north end stretched an array of hastily put up eating places, storage sheds, noisy saloons, stores, theaters, door-swinging dance halls, brothels, and improvised mining and shipping offices. Avenues had been added, paralleling Main Street. The whole river plateau was crammed with structures and tents of every

*A street like a river of mud resulted from Yukon River flooding in the spring. (SPA)*

(Photo Credit: Public Archives of Canada, C-666)





description. The center of the town was uninhabitable, for its pollution was a breeder of sickness.<sup>18</sup>

A striking landmark had long been associated with Dawson. Old legends had survived about that landmark, a distinctive scar on the mountain just in back of St. Mary's. Called Moosehide, the scar originated when an earth-avalanche off the face of the mountain buried with its rubble an Indian village by the river. A more recent village, the sisters were told, three miles downstream from Dawson, was named Moosehide, home for the local Native people. The sisters, hoping for acceptance and friendship, resolved to visit there.

The log hospital, a two-story building<sup>19</sup> (50' x 20'), was chinked inside and out with clay and moss, conditions the sisters were familiar with from their lower Yukon mission experiences. The windows (3' x 4') were rudely framed; the sloping obtuse roof had several stovepipes piercing it. A twenty-foot porch, reached by six steps, indicated the main entrance. No paint or plaster had been used inside the building. Partitions were covered with calcimined unbleached cotton and the furniture was in keeping: simple homemade cots with straw-filled mattresses, wooden chairs, and washstands made from empty packing boxes.<sup>20</sup> A steep slope led from the hospital down to the river where steamers passed so close to the front of the hospital that passengers on deck were easily recognized. Eighty-five steps led from the hospital to the river. A highly paid employee shouldered a yoke, brought down trash, and carried up water many times a day.

During their first year in Dawson, the sisters lived in three convents. The first was a former cold-storage, or ice room. The only light came from cracks between the rough boards. After a few days the sisters were offered a room in the hospital, but space being at a premium, they were discomfited at the thought of occupying an area needed by patients. The second convent was a two-story cabin about fifty feet from the hospital and next to the church. As no woman could be admitted as a patient to the hospital proper, because the wards were always full of men, the second floor of the convent was given over to women patients. The sisters occupied the ground floor. So crowded was this space that, after completion of the church, Sister Joseph slept in the sacristy. Towels had to be shared for there were not enough to go around. Doctors or friends often visited patients until 11:00 P.M. Continued noise filtered through from passersby. Dogs howled. Sleep for the sisters was difficult.<sup>21</sup>

After a few months the sisters changed residence for the third time, to a place above the hospital kitchen. The women patients moved with them and used one of the available rooms. The sisters made do with the other. Their six small beds filled the room and there was barely space to walk, eat, wash, or recreate. Conventual rules, calling for strict silence in the "dormitory" and "refectory," were impossible to follow. After a year of difficulty and improvisation, the sisters set up another place for meals.

The rude hospital had no formal opening ceremony. As soon as space was ready, sick people moved in from their tents or other lodgings. In the fall of 1898, typhoid fever raged again and the impromptu hospital was taxed to its limits with one hundred fifty patients. With increasing numbers of sick demanding care, Father Judge decided to build a hospital annex and hired a foreman to oversee a log-cutting crew. When Father René came to Dawson



for a visit and saw Father Judge's financial condition, he forbade further construction on the three-story annex. There were already too many debts, totalling \$70,000.00 which had accrued through the purchasing of food and supplies for patients, materials for building, medicines, and disbursement of funds to pay the doctors serving at St. Mary's. Employees' salaries also kept the hospital with a spiraling debt.

*The foreman received \$15 a day; each logger got \$10; the cook, \$10 a day (4 A.M. until late at night); the laundress who rarely had time to fold the sheets, so quickly were they used, also earned \$10 a day.*

*Money also went for supplies: a broom cost \$10; a candle \$1; a sack of flour between \$40 and \$50.*

*Father Judge had given orders that fresh meat be served once a day to all hospital workers.<sup>22</sup>*

Father René probably observed that Father Judge could relinquish some of his responsibilities because Good Samaritan Hospital, opened in 1898 by a Presbyterian minister, was shouldering some of the health care Dawsonites required. Founded by Reverend S. Hall Young, an American, Good Samaritan Hospital was subsequently staffed by a Canadian group led by Doctor Andrew Grant.

Canadian government inspection of St. Mary's Hospital occurred in October 1898. Father Judge showed the agent around the hospital, where 125 patients were receiving care. After examining the premises, the financial records, and the functioning of the hospital, the agent declared everything in order. Father Judge was able to receive a government stipend for the care of some patients and a \$7,000 reimbursement grant for expenses incurred in burying victims of typhoid.<sup>23</sup> A committee of Americans organized themselves to subsidize poor Americans stranded in the Yukon and requiring medical care.

Prohibited from continuing the annex, Father Judge turned his attention to building the new church, the expenses being paid by a successful miner, Alexander McDonald, the "Klondike King."<sup>24</sup> Another helpful benefactor of early Dawson was a remarkable Catholic woman, Nellie Cashman, reared on mining-camp struggles that had made her spirit strong. The three Oblates who served the parish, Fathers Gendreau, Lefebvre and Desmarais, organized volunteers to build an Oblate house next to the church. This two-story debt-free building was rapidly completed before winter stilled such activity. Father Desmarais, in addition, put up several mission churches on the creeks where sizable groups of men dug and sluiced for gold. With the completion of the parish church,<sup>25</sup> Father Judge, despite Father René's injunction, resumed construction of the 70' by 23' annex and wrote lengthily to Father René to explain his reasons. Patients were already being brought to the ceilingless first



*St. Mary's Hospital is visible at the left of this photograph, as well as Father Judge's second church (the first having burned in the summer of 1898) and the rectory built by the Oblates. The rectory served as the first school in Dawson. (SPA) (Photo credit: Larss & Duclos, Dawson)*





*This side view shows additional structures at St. Mary's. (SPA)*

floor. During 1898, 1,092 patients were treated at St. Mary's. The register noted 124 deaths.

For the comfort of all, patients arriving at the hospital were required to wash and change their clothes before being assigned to a bed. The miners out on the claims had no ready facilities for cleanliness and lice did not respect anyone. When nurses neglected the rule about baths and clean clothes, the bed linens became infested. It took many a hard boiling of sheets and blankets before the problem was cleared.

Because it was hard to make any other kind of living, most of the women patients were from brothels in the "red light" district across the Klondike River in Klondike City, or Lousetown. Sister John Damascene cared for many of these women who became her special protégées. She had a rare gift of touching hearts as she gave care to these women. Doctors admired her instincts in medication and confided many patients to her solicitude and treatment. Her convalescent women frequently made artificial flowers for church decorations. Through her advice and concern, Sister John encouraged many young women to return home to their parents.

The competency of Sister Mary of the Cross was remarkable. She saw to everything, assisted everyone—so much so that blisters developed on her feet. Whether the blisters were caused by long hours of standing on her feet, or by ill-fitting shoes, she did not lessen her pace. Her readiness to share in extra patient care made her much sought after.

Sister Joseph became concerned about a dying fifty-year-old man who was antagonistic to the priest. She began by stopping by his bed for short visits, talked with him about his home and of how his mother would certainly care for him if she were near. When tears flowed, sister asked him if his mother had taught him any prayers. She started to pray aloud for him, and as she finished, handed him the large medal she had received from Pope Leo XIII. That same day the man died, but to Sister Joseph's joy, only after a good confession and the reception of Holy Communion.

Doctor Barrett attested that "... the Sisters of Saint Ann, while not certificated nurses, were extremely competent in caring for the sick, the result of long experience as missionary teachers, supervisors, and disciplinarians in Indian schools where preservation of health, prevention of disease and the



care of the sick was a daily routine.”<sup>26</sup> He considered Sister John Damascene an outstanding example of aptitude and thoroughness in mastering the technique of surgical nursing. He wrote, “She was in full charge of the operating theatre and her work at St. Mary’s will remain a monument to her zeal and attention in the preparation of the patients and of the operating theatre.”<sup>27</sup>

The winter of 1898 saw some 50,000 people either in Dawson or out on the creeks. Temperatures dropped to such lows as -60 °F or colder. Horses could not be used. In November, a young Californian with both hands frozen came screaming into the hospital. The young man had never seen snow before and was unaware of precautionary measures that could protect him from the severe cold. Amputation was feared, but both hands were saved.

With the end of 1898 approaching, a countdown began of the months remaining before Father Judge’s departure. Men concerned about the hospital debt wrote out bills for former patients who had paid nothing and were now earning salaries or sharing claims. To further reduce the debt, a grand minstrel show was held on Christmas night, when most of the men were in from the creeks and possible patronage was at its highest. By arrangement, all dance halls, bars, and gambling places were closed for the evening. The only entertainment in Dawson that night was the minstrel benefit for St. Mary’s Hospital. Returns from the bills and the minstrel show netted about \$17,000.00. A large debt, despite these efforts, still remained.

Paying off the debt was something Father Judge did not live to experience. The great undertaking he had shouldered in Dawson proved too much for his own health. At the end of December 1898, he contracted pneumonia. Sister Zephyrin attended him, but on 16 January 1899, this noted priest died. He was mourned by Dawsonites who felt they had lost a true “father.” A burial site within the church he had recently built was chosen. To it many visitors often came.

After the death of Father Judge, the administration of the hospital was placed in the hands of lay people. They showed themselves deferential toward the sisters, but made decisions that were often contrary to the rules established by Father Judge. This was yet another situation where the sisters had to let go, though it was painful. In faith, the sisters believed that the contradictions would somehow bear fruit.

As the cold mitigated and the hours of sunlight lengthened, George Byrne, a friend of Father Judge, invited the sisters to Bonanza Creek to meet the owners of the mine and obtain permission to do some begging from miners out on their claims. The trip to Bonanza took four hours by stage. Two sisters stayed a week visiting different groups of miners. Early in May, Sisters John Damascene and Mary of the Cross returned again, this time for twenty-



*Sister Mary Zenon (to the far right) is identifiable in this 1907 photograph of a scene in the operating room, St. Mary’s Hospital. Sister Mary John Damascene, in her white apron, is assisting. Sister Mary Pudencienne is attentive for needs. (SPA)*



eight days. They trudged, with a guide, through snow, slush and mud; rode horses occasionally, slept where they could, and wearily asked again and again for financial help for the hospital. After covering 475 miles and collecting about \$10,000, they returned to Dawson. Their guide gave this report: "I doubt if any sister ever had a like experience filled with hardship and often delicate situations. They were indeed heroines." He added a postscript about the fruits of the efforts at the creeks. "The rich gave some and the poor frequently gave all."<sup>28</sup>

On Ascension Thursday, Sisters Pudentienne and Joseph tried to climb the Dome, the highest point of the mountains at the foot of which Dawson stretched. On June 20, 21, and 22, from this elevation one had a panoramic view of the Midnight Sun. After a two-hour climb, the sisters had scaled only half the distance. Other sisters, in later years, successfully climbed the mountain.

When the ice was due to go out from the river in front of Dawson, government agents ordered all to pile their garbage on the ice. It would be swept away and the town left clean. The accumulation on the ice was a sorry sight. Its disposal helped improve Dawson, but the people downriver received with mixed feelings whatever Dawson sent down by its special ice carrier. Environmental issues in 1899 at Dawson, as in most areas, were localized. The disappearance of trash brought relief to Dawsonites and a sense that a good cleanup had occurred. Effects of their disposal in a land thinly populated and with miles of wilderness and river current received scant or no attention. This detriment to the environment, unacceptable only in much later years, polluted the river, caused snags, trapped objects along cut banks or lodged strange cargo on mid-river sandbars. At the Dawson breakup, the Yukon swallowed what it could and delivered the rest downriver.

Sister Mary of the Cross, as an aside, had undertaken the task of teaching the Catholic Faith to an interested hospital intern. The sessions had gone well, for the young sister was qualified, spontaneous and lively. These attributes were reflected in her energetic and joyous manner with all the hospital employees. These, she came to know, perhaps more than any other sister did, for her nursing schedule kept her on frequent call on the hospital floors. The demands on her time had other consequences: less opportunity to be with her companion sisters and more absences from her scheduled prayers. During the year the sisters observed that, with them, Sister Mary of the Cross was less sociable than with outsiders.

By the spring of 1899, her familiarity with the faith-searching intern was apparent. Father Gendreau, the pastor, older and more reserved, found her quite worldly in spirit, and for a while regarded all the sisters the same, much to their discomfort. Indicators that Sister Mary of the Cross wished to reconsider her commitment as a sister caused Sister Zephyrin to write to the General Superior for advice.<sup>29</sup>

In response, Mother Mary Angel Guardian announced that early in the summer she would formally visit Dawson and the Alaska establishments. These periodic visits were mandated by the Church to ascertain the well-being of the sisters and the observance of their Rules. Besides important decisions about Sister Mary of the Cross, there would be other major business to settle once on the premises.



The route chosen to reach Dawson was not the river one from St. Michael, but rather that which the Klondike Gold Rush had made famous, the White Pass out of Skagway, Alaska. Unlike the prospectors and miners who had to struggle 2400 feet up this 45-mile-long pass, or the shorter but higher Chilkoot Pass out of Dyea, travelers in the summer of 1899 could use the newly-opened railroad that connected with steamers at Lake Bennett.<sup>30</sup>

On the 30th of June, blasts of a ship's whistle announced the arrival of the *Tyrrell*, on which Mother Mary Angel Guardian was a passenger. Greetings, introductions to St. Mary's personnel, news exchanges, and tours around Dawson followed. A talk with Sister Mary of the Cross led to her request to quit the Congregation so that she would be free to marry the intern she had been coaching. She left Dawson, waited for the expiration of her vows and soon after married the intern. Such steps were highly unusual in 1899. The couple returned to Dawson, but later moved away when they found it difficult to earn a living because people, including the sisters, looked askance at the marriage. After Vatican Council II in the 1960s, leaving the Congregation for various reasons, including the wish to marry, become more understandable and acceptable, partly because of the high regard given to individuals' assessments of themselves.

Besides assisting Sister Mary of the Cross in her choices, Mother Angel Guardian attended to a key reason for her formal visit to Dawson. Father René in his official capacity as Prefect Apostolic of Alaska deeded Father Judge's hospital, St. Mary's, to the Sisters of Saint Ann. With it, the sisters assumed the debt still owed by the hospital, viz., \$45,000.<sup>31</sup> Accepting the hospital was an act of faith on the part of the sisters, for the Congregation had no way to pay off the debt. The underlying motive for the assumption of the hospital and debt was the belief that there was much good to be done in Dawson.

Mother Angel Guardian had traveled to Dawson with a new superior for the hospital, Sister Mary Zenon. She had just begun her administrative duties when she received a note from the bank demanding immediate payment of \$10,000 which she did not have. Piqued, but rising to the challenge, she called together the hospital staff and asked if they, all together, could advance the sum. The next morning she appeared at the bank and, to the astonishment of the clerk, handed him the money. It was a long time before the sisters were again troubled by bank pressures.<sup>32</sup>

Sister Zenon consulted with key people—the business manager and the house doctor—to find ways of cutting expenses. With assistance from leading men and women, she set up an organization similar to the one existing in Juneau between the miners and the hospital: a monthly fee of \$1.00 for the right to free hospital care when necessary. Sister asked that the Canadian government subsidize patients unable to pay and hired a lawyer to pressure other people to pay their bills. Thus, little by little, the debt was diminished.

On the other hand, extra expenses added to the debt. The hospital had to guard against erosion of the embankment on which it was built. This protection was guaranteed by extensive cribbing—rows and rows of it, at the back and in front of the building.<sup>33</sup> All this demanded wages, labor, and foresight. In an effort to meet expenses, the sisters continued going in the springtime to the creeks, where generous collections rewarded their efforts. Each spring also revealed the need for improvements at the hospital. The warmth of the build-

**ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL**  
(In Charge of Sisters of St. Anne.)

---

**The Best Equipped, Best Heated and Best  
Ventilated Hospital North  
of Seattle.**

---

**Special Accommodations  
for Private Patients!**

---

STAFF PHYSICIANS:

Drs. W. T. Barrett,	R. R. Macfarlane,
Alfred Thompson,	J. A. Sutherland,
J. A. McArthur,	J. O. La Chapelle.

---

ADDRESS:

**SISTER SUPERIOR ZENON,**  
DAWSON, Y. T.

(*The Yukon Catholic*, Dawson, Y.T.,  
Feb. 1903) (SPA)



ing thawed the frozen ground on which it was built. Permafrost action disturbed foundations and set square corners askew. Consequently, the hospital needed constant jacking, bracing, renewing of pillars and realignment of doors and windows.

Sister Zenon made St. Joseph the bursar of the mission. She also made a contract with St. Anthony. For every three thousand dollars collected on old accounts, a destitute person was given free hospitalization and care. This patient was identified in the financial records as St. Anthony's Patient. The first such patient was a cantankerous man whose rude ways and bad temper caused his nurse, Sister Pudentienne, to grow in the virtue of patience.

In the fall Mother Angel Guardian came upriver from Holy Cross accompanied by Sister Prudence, who assumed charge of the hospital office. She became secretary, sacristan, and dispenser of medicines, as well, despite ongoing earaches and a crippling scurvy.

Many people in Dawson also suffered from scurvy, a condition brought on by their lack of fresh fruit and vegetables. The Native people of the North had remedies and preventatives in their diet of fresh fish and meat, wild greens and berries. Non-Natives frequently neglected to provide for themselves whatever the territory offered naturally in the line of fresh produce. Ignorance, distaste, or neglect of opportunities thus caused dietary deficiencies. There was, in addition, for the non-Native the habit of dependence on store items, the irregular stock of any fresh produce in Dawson stores, and the prohibitive costs when such did appear. Many of the sisters, like Sister Prudence, carried the effects of poor nutrition for the rest of their lives.

Doctor Macfarlane, who practiced at St. Mary's, had learned about a treatment for scurvy impairment that prescribed baths and extensive sweating. This remedy was initiated in Dawson with some good results. Much along the same principle, Father Judge in 1890 at Holy Cross had contrived Turkish baths to help scurvy victims. Sweat lodges, in the Native peoples' cultures, had the same benefits as these non-Native medical "discoveries."

Before leaving Dawson to return East, Mother Angel Guardian approved the staffing by the Sisters of Saint Ann of a Catholic school. William Ogilvie, Commissioner of the Yukon Territory, had invited Dawson clergymen to attend a meeting in May 1899 to discuss the opening of public schools operated on nonsectarian principles, as there were 167 school-aged children then in Dawson. The Catholic representative, Father Gendreau, was aware of minority rights under the *Public School Act of the Northwest Territories (Section 11)*, which stated that once a public school district was established, the religious minority could organize within it a separate school district funded by levies on separate school supporters.

Feeling that in Dawson there would be general recognition and support for his educational project, Father Gendreau transformed the Oblate house<sup>34</sup> into a school. The simple frame building, 30' x 25', was painted red and was well furnished with thirty desks, a table for the teacher, and a big airtight stove. To make the school acceptable by all, he ordered that there be no teaching of religion, no prayer, not even the Sign of the Cross. His plan was to gather all the children of Dawson, Catholic and non-Catholic, and assure payment of the teacher by the government. Sister Joseph<sup>35</sup> would be the teacher, but he, himself, would teach catechism to the Catholic children after school hours.

<b>PHYSICIANS.</b>	
<b>W. G. HEPWORTH, M. D.</b>	
Office Over Cribbs & Rogers Drug Store.	
Telephone 184.	DAWSON
<b>J. O. LaCHAPELLE, M. D.</b>	
LIGGETT'S BLOCK	
Visiting Physician to St. Mary's Hospital, Dawson	
<b>ALFRED THOMPSON</b>	
<b>Physician and Surgeon</b>	
Aurora Bldg., DAWSON, Y. T.	
P. O. Box 152.	Phone No. 58.
<b>W. T. BARRETT, M. D.</b>	
<b>Physician and Surgeon to St. Mary's Hospital.</b>	
Office Hours: 11 to 1, 3 to 5 P. M., 7 to 9 P. M. Office on 1st Ave., Over Northern Cafe.	
Telephone No. 182.	DAWSON, Y. T.

(*The Yukon Catholic*, Dawson, Y.T., Aug. 1902) (SPA)



Commissioner Ogilvie tried to organize a public school for September 1899, but when the steamer, *Stratton*, sank with all its merchandise, including the school supplies, he conceded that no public school could open that year. A public announcement was made that anyone who could start a school would receive a grant to maintain it. Father Gendreau being the only one ready, the Municipal Committee of the Yukon Council awarded him the grant. It was further recommended that similar liberal grants be made to any school established and conducted along the lines of the Northwest Territories Ordinance. The fact that Father Gendreau's school was publicly supported, not by taxes, but by council grants, set a crucial precedent that survived litigation when the Dawson public school opened in 1900. A year later, the *1901 Ordinance Respecting Schools* ensured that the Yukon Territory would have public and separate schools. This dual school system, inaugurated at Dawson, had repercussions politically, especially when movements arose to annex the Yukon Territory to British Columbia, which had no such system. Thus did one small school cast a shadow even as far as Victoria.<sup>36</sup>

St. Mary's School opened on 3 September 1899 with about twenty pupils aged nine to fifteen. The enrollment grew rapidly to forty-six, in four grades. A suitable song opened each school day. Sister Joseph's pedagogical ingenuity was put to the test, for there were few supplies: four or five readers, a few arithmetic books, a blackboard— but no chalk. It was a happy day when someone in Dawson, finding a box of colored chalk, donated it to the school. There were no slates, no maps. However, there were sufficient pencils and paper to be sparingly used.

Christmas 1898 had been spectacular with the hospital benefit shows. Christmas 1899 was also memorable for Dawson. The school children were awed by a Christmas tree celebration made possible by Sister Joseph's subtle begging and by the generosity of local merchants, especially the Alaska Commercial Company outlet, which gave Sister Joseph toys, candy, and nuts for all the students.<sup>37</sup> A week-long Christmas bazaar was organized by a club, the 60 Ladies, to help pay off more of the hospital debts. A promotional folio, *The Paystreak*, appeared a few times to inform people of the bazaar, the types of debts, and the amounts to be paid off.<sup>38</sup> Dawson people came in crowds to the bazaar. Sister Mary Jules of the Sacred Heart, who had joined Sister Pauline as hospital cook, roasted turkeys for the "restaurant." Sister Pauline made candy; other sisters offered paper flowers dipped in wax. Sister Joseph adorned a handkerchief with Brussels lace. There was great rivalry among the booths, all adding excitement and color to the bazaar.<sup>39</sup> At the end, the president of the 60 Ladies presented the sisters with \$12,000.

As the school was near the church at the north end of town, children had to walk a mile or so and carry their lunches. Despite severe temperatures and the dark days of winter, students seldom missed classes. In Dawson, all through December and January, the sun remains hidden behind the mountains. One day in February, when the sun suddenly shot its rays through the classroom windows, a boy shouted, "Look, sister, the sun!" The joyous celebrators of the sun's return bundled up and went for a walk on the river as far as the Native settlement of Moosehide.

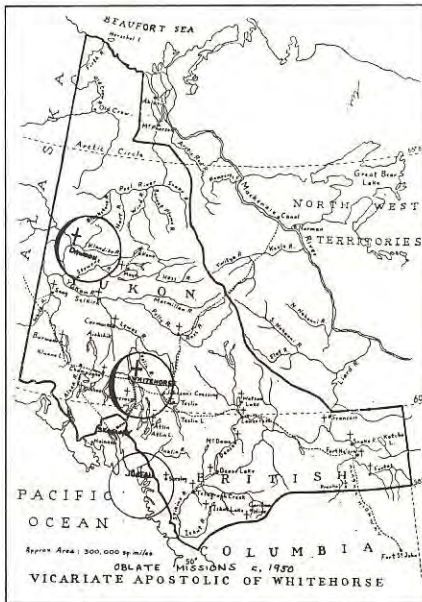
*Sisters (l. to r.) Mary Elie Anicet, Rose Antoinette, and Clementia visit Moosehide, an Indian village near Dawson, in the early 1940s. (SMA)*







*In this 1900 photograph, the sisters assembled on the hospital steps are (left to right from the top): Sisters Mary Prudence, Zenon, Edith, Benedict, Pauline, Pudentienne, Jules of the Sacred Heart, Coeur de Jésus.*



*Map of Yukon Territory*

On 13 February 1900, Commissioner Ogilvie and Mr. Justice Dugas visited the school officially. Finding it satisfactory, even to its kerosene lamps and its sun celebration, Commissioner Ogilvie approved the school and commented favorably on Sister Joseph's supplementary, but adequate, teaching devices. Thus St. Mary's School, its total first year enrollment climbing to fifty-three, became the first officially recognized school in the Yukon Territory. The government sent the teacher, Sister Joseph, \$80 every month. Shortly after the recognition of the school, Mamie Connor, a former student at Victoria, was hired temporarily as teacher's aide.

Father Gendreau loved his little school. On his feast day, Sister Jules baked him a special cake. Nothing would do but that he carry the cake to school and share it with the children. The people of Dawson, sometimes critical of his prudence in not teaching religion in the school, were equally supportive of the educational effort and encouraged the children in their studies. The pastor was pleased that Sister Joseph, and those teachers who followed after her, received many donations, prizes,<sup>40</sup> gold medals, and other awards for the students. When the public school was at length built, Father Gendreau was proud that St. Mary's had an educational foothold in the Yukon Territory.

## Whitehorse

Another educational attempt was made by the Sisters of Saint Ann at Whitehorse, 460 miles from Dawson. Whitehorse, situated on the west bank of the Lewes River, sometimes called the Fifty Mile, or North Yukon, was settled in 1901. It became the terminal for the White Pass and Yukon Railroad, which united the mines of the Canadian Interior with the coastal port of Skagway, Alaska. Three Oblate priests were connected with early Whitehorse: Fathers Anthony Godfrey Eichelsbacher, Elphege Allard, and Camille Lefebvre, the latter having arrived in Whitehorse in the spring of 1900, along with Brother Auguste Dumas. There they literally pitched their tent at the corner of Wood Street and Fourth Avenue until a church was completed in 1901. In April 1901, the Congregation expressed willingness to accept a mission at Whitehorse, even though it had a floating population, a fragile economy, and a negligible chance that a Catholic school would succeed.

Father Ozias Corbeil was assigned to Dawson in 1903. That year, encouraged by the recommendation of Sister Zenon and the appointment of a resident priest, the Congregation assigned two sisters to Whitehorse.<sup>41</sup> Sister Mary Didace was transferred from the Alaska missions on the lower Yukon River. Sister Mary Augustine came North from a school in New Westminster, B.C. Her trip to Whitehorse was her initiation into the North's grandeur and epochal history.

Sister Didace, in five letters to Mother Anastasia, described the environment and ministry, setbacks and joys of Whitehorse. The priest had anticipated government support for the school. The enrollment, however, was small, never more than a dozen students, insufficient to warrant the allocation of a government salary.<sup>42</sup> Of necessity, the pastor paid the sisters' food bills. The sisters tried to cover all their other expenses. Sister Didace gave weekly French lessons to two Protestant women, for a dollar a lesson. Sewing classes for four little girls on Saturdays brought eight dollars a month.<sup>43</sup>



Sister Didace wrote:

*There are very few conveniences; in fact, there are none at all. We have no one to help us, for we cannot afford to pay for this luxury. I am sacristan and cook, laundress and scrub woman. I bring in the wood, carry the water and see to the upkeep of the six rooms in our house.<sup>44</sup>*

Between the lines, letters from Whitehorse spoke of loneliness and discouragement, besides poverty. Winter mail was infrequent. Some of the mail went to the bottom of stormy seas in shipwrecks.<sup>45</sup> Practicing Catholics were few in Whitehorse. For some, the thought of gold monopolized their minds and hearts. For others, having left home and familiar surroundings, the incommodities and strangeness of frontier life led to the breaking of religious habits and encouraged forgetfulness and indifference. Impressing upon parents the value of a Catholic education was difficult.

Commissioner F. T. Congdon, on a tour of the gold and copper mines in the area, inspected the Catholic school at Whitehorse. Related Sister M. Didace (who referred to the commissioner as “governor”):

*We did our best. The pastor assures us that the governor was charmed. Commenting to the priest, he said that there were no better teachers than sisters. All the parents were present, both Catholic and non-Catholic. The program for the governor included a welcome song, three short recitations, a patriotic song and a short address to which the governor responded.<sup>46</sup>*

A news item from *The Daily Evening Star*, published at Whitehorse, Thursday, May 10, 1904, related the following:

*Last week the Sisters’ School was visited by Commissioner Congdon, Robert Lowe, Member Yukon Council, and Reverend Father Corbeil, where an entertainment had been arranged to commemorate the event and to show to the Commissioner and his companions a due appreciation of their visit. The program given below was carried through by the young pupils, who rendered their parts so acceptably as to receive unstinted praise from the visitors and demonstrated that the good sisters who teach the children had spared no pains in teaching the youngsters. Following is the program:*

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Solo - “Song of Welcome”                      | Ethel Leslie, age 7  |
| 2. Recitation - “The Difference”                 | Jos. Williams, age 7 |
| 3. Recitation - “A Little Girls’ Troubles”       | Iris Unsworth, age 8 |
| 4. Recitation - “When the Teacher<br>Gets Cross” | Geo. Couture, age 12 |
| 5. Solo - National Song - “Dear Canada”          | Albert St. Armand    |
| 6. Address of Welcome                            | Irene Martin, age 7  |

*At the close of the program brief but appropriate addresses were made to the teachers and pupils by their distinguished visitors. The parents and friends of the pupils were gratified spectators of the entertainment.*

In speaking to Sister Didace privately, the commissioner suggested that Sister Augustine, not having finished her studies, prepare for government examinations that would give her sufficient accreditation. With good will, Sister Augustine began an assiduous course of studies, devoting every spare moment to her books. Sister Didace generously took on a greater share of the household tasks.<sup>47</sup>

For an expanding teaching Congregation, keeping abreast of particular demands of territorial, provincial, or state Departments of Education added



to the predicament of matching accredited teachers to schools in Quebec, Ontario, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Washington, British Columbia, Alaska, and the Yukon. Requests for sisters sometimes stretched the woman-power of the Congregation, resulting in expediences to staff, rather than to permit "free time" for a continuation of studies. Solutions to the problems of ongoing education and accreditation included enrollment in courses that could be completed in bits and pieces, sometimes on Saturdays, sometimes through correspondence; obligatory study periods during the summer; private, tutorial, or group workshops.

Despite the efforts of the Whitehorse sisters to build up the school both in quality and in enrollment, by May there were only eight Catholic and two Protestant children in the school. Still without sufficient enrollment to draw a government salary, the sisters could look forward only to another year of "begging" for their livelihood.

Early in May, Mothers Mary Anastasia and Agatha, fulfilling their obligation to be aware of situations where the Congregation ministered, visited Whitehorse. Winter clothing was still comfortable. The ice had left the Yukon, but the ice on Lake Laberge prevented navigation to points north. The Whitehorse sisters relished the extra time with the visitors and experienced bonding with the Congregation and assurance about their efforts. In preparation for their coming, they had saved a precious fifty-dollar gift, received from a certain Mr. McNamee. "We have put it aside," Sister M. Didace had written to Lachine when the trip West and North had been announced, "so that, we, too, will be able to pay something towards your expenses."<sup>48</sup> Such contributions were encouraged, but not always expected.

After consulting with Bishop Gabriel Breynat, O.M.I., Mother Anastasia closed the school. Regretfully, the pastor, the few students, and parents of the students admitted that the sisters had other areas to labor in where the response would be greater than it had been in Whitehorse. Both the lack of enough students to guarantee a salary and the difficulty of supplying the Yukon Territory with accredited teachers led to this decision.<sup>49</sup>

Sister Didace was transferred again to the Alaska missions and Sister Augustine to New Westminster. The commissioner's and her own solicitude for her studies bore exceptional fruit when she became Prefect of Studies, supervising the educational quality of the schools directed by the Sisters of Saint Ann in the West and North.

Another proposed foundation, with Sister Benedict in charge, at Conrad, Yukon Territory, was planned, reconsidered, and canceled. Through the years, other establishments in the Yukon Territory were considered by the Congregation.

Whitehorse remained a quiet town until World War II, when rather suddenly it became important again as a transportation center. Factors in that development were the construction of the Alaska Highway and the building of an international airport. In 1940, when Mother Mary Mildred, Provincial Superior, passed through Whitehorse on her way to Dawson, the town numbered 325 persons. On her return three weeks later, Whitehorse was a boom town. Word of opportunities for employment quickly spread and people seized the occasion to ask that sisters immediately open a school, offering courses for elementary, high school, commercial, and music students. Mother



Mildred regretfully declined, having no one just then for a school of such scope because of expansion elsewhere.

Bishop Jean Louis Coudert, O.M.I., Vicar Apostolic of Whitehorse, pressed the demand, acknowledging that

*several religious communities of teaching and nursing sisters have expressed to me their willingness and even anxiety to come and work in our Vicariate, whenever their services would be needed. I think, however, that being so long in Alaska and the Yukon, your Congregation is entitled to the first offer, and pending your definite answer only, will I turn to other Congregations for the teaching or nursing work to be done.<sup>50</sup>*

The bishop had many plans. His Whitehorse property included a block where the church and rectory were located. He was willing to turn over almost the whole block to the sisters for a school or hospital. In Mayo, another frontier community some miles away, rumors were that the local hospital would be offered to the sisters. The bishop advised taking the offer, even if the project seemed inauspicious for the moment.

The Sisters of Saint Ann, after the one-year attempt in Whitehorse, did not return there for the ministry of teaching or for any of the other projects suggested by the Vicar Apostolic. Eventually other religious groups were able to respond to requests for Catholic education and a Catholic hostel.

## Dawson, Part II

During the pastorate of Father Emile Bunoz, O.M.I., a new Catholic school was built in 1904 in the center of Dawson at the corner of Fifth and King, the "Catholic Corner," as it was dubbed. The school was a two-story building with classrooms, a music room, and a teachers' room on the first floor; a parish chapel was on the second. With the new school situated where it was, at some distance from the hospital, the teachers had to travel. In the winter, despite severe cold and storm, a one-horse sleigh, driven by Joachim Granger, carried the sister or sisters, well wrapped in woolens and furs. In the summer the hospital horse and buggy brought the sisters back and forth. After the daily school trip, Babe, the favorite horse, was unhitched from the "taxi." Before being harnessed to another sled or wagon that carried wood to the furnace room at the hospital, Babe usually had a snack of sugar cubes from the sisters in the kitchen.<sup>51</sup>

From 1899 to 1909, 337 pupils registered at St. Mary's School. Other good teachers succeeded Sister Joseph. The Oblates, happy over the success of the Dawson school, built an annex for a Commercial Course in 1914. Sister Mary Esther, who had extensive training in these subjects, taught the course to young men and women. The teaching of young men was innovative and daring for sisters. Although the Congregation had been founded to teach children of both sexes, interdicts had quickly banned the sisters from doing so in Quebec, where having both boys and girls in the same classroom was considered fringing upon the immoral. In the West and in the parochial schools in the United States, however, both sexes were enrolled. In Alaska, the western policy prevailed, but the Jesuits assumed responsibility for the boarding and counseling of older boys. Teaching young men, as in Dawson, accorded with the foundation principles of the Congregation. The age of the students and the mixed setting were innovative and avant-garde for people in general in 1914, but enlightened and responsive to a need. Sister Esther's





*St. Mary's School, built in 1904, appeared like this in 1916. Church services were held on the second floor. The annex for commercial students, built in 1914, is to the side. The school building survived after the closing of the school. A modest bell tower gave the building an architectural flare associated with churches. The criss-cross of wires in this photograph is intriguing.*

(SMA)

(Photo credit: Misumi)

**LADIES' ALTAR SOCIETY.**

Meets every Thursday afternoon in Hall over School.

**Officers.**

Mrs. Captain Starnes . . . . . President  
 Mrs. H. Macaulay . . . . . Vice-President  
 Miss McAndrews . . . . . Secretary  
 Mrs. N. W. Long . . . . . Treasurer

**ST. MARY' HOSPITAL.**

Under direction of Sisters of St. Anne.

Sister Mary Zenon . . . . . Superior  
 Visiting Physicians.

Drs. W. T. Barrett, R. R. Macfarlane,  
 J. A. McArthur, J. O. La Chappelle,  
 Sutherland and A. Thompson.

**ST. MARY'S SCHOOL.**

In charge of Sister Edith and Sister Zenaide.

(*The Yukon Catholic*, Dawson, Y.T., Oct. 1902) (SPA)

classes were soon graduating qualified young adults for positions in the business world. The Commercial Course lasted until 1921, when Sister Esther transferred to other schools requiring a commercial teacher.

Concern for Yukon youth was evinced by the sisters in other ways than through the school proper. From various people, the sisters learned of children who needed care. Some of these children were nurtured by the sisters, as had been done in Juneau, and placed in a boarding school. One such child, Margaret, was the special friend of Sister Mary Jean. Years later, when Sister Jean went to live in a residence for senior sisters, Margaret surprised everyone by giving substantial checks to finance the institution. As Margaret said, "It is my turn to care for Sister Jean!"<sup>52</sup>

A declining population in Dawson brought a decline in the school. Government pay to the teachers at St. Mary's ceased in 1923 when the number of pupils dwindled below the

government's required enrollment. All seven grades continued to be taught, but Sister Mary Ralph was the sole teacher.<sup>53</sup> With the help of occasional lay teachers, St. Mary's stayed open. School events, with the students in white surrounded by pink and green school colors, continued to impress the public favorably by the content of the programs and the appearance of the young people.

Although St. Mary's School had an impact on the people of Dawson, St. Mary's Hospital remained the dominant ministry there for the Sisters of Saint Ann. In 1900, Sister Mary Zenon added a third floor to Father Judge's original two-story structure and lengthened the building.

Surprising the sisters, a Mr. Dionne donated to the hospital an island about two miles down the Yukon River. Promptly named St. Ann's Island, it became known also as the farm. For years it provided grazing fields for the hospital cattle and a favorite spot for outings. With foresight Sister Zenon bought property next to the hospital. The acquisition, eight neighboring lots, allowed space for hospital expansion, a small cemetery, gardens and storage space. In 1906 the old hospital structures were demolished and a new St. Mary's built—this, too, having three stories. One wing provided living quarters for the sisters.<sup>54</sup> Above that was the chapel. Another wing contained the kitchen, storerooms, and employees' quarters. A maternity wing, built on the slope of a hill, abutted the second floor. Separate from the hospital, and important to the advancement of the gardens, was a hothouse built in 1907. By 1908, the Dawson hospital owed the Mother House only \$10,000 of the



debt assumed in 1899, in spite of all the improvements and construction projects that had marked the ten intervening years.

One of Sister Zenon's last efforts at Dawson had to do with the setting up in 1908 of an outdoor statue. The statue was the gift of J. Omer LaChapelle, M.D., who decided to donate a statue if an operation he was performing was successful. "Pray," he said to the sisters in the operating room. "I must save this woman's life. She has five little children. I need all the help that God can give me." Sister Zenon suggested that he give a statue of Our Lady if the surgery was a success. "And it shall be one with Holy Mary holding her Child," answered the doctor.<sup>55</sup> In after years, this statue was brought from Dawson to the sisters' property at Queenswood House in Victoria, B.C., where it became a favorite shrine for sisters and visitors.

When Sister Mary Marcienne replaced Sister Zenon in 1909, one of her initial duties was to arrange the funeral and burial of Sister Mary Lidwine. This young sister had come upriver from Holy Cross, where she had been for three years. Too sick to journey on to the Mother House, Sister Lidwine was hospitalized at Dawson and died there of tuberculosis. She was the first to be buried in the plot of ground set aside as the sisters' cemetery. Sister Lidwine was but one of the many Alaskans who died from tuberculosis. It ravaged the land until the mid-1950s when united efforts of itinerant health workers, schools, hospitals and other concerned agents curtailed it almost to extinction. Especially helpful were village education programs about home care, sanitation of water and dishes, the promotion of Native nutritional foods, such as rose hips, and sufficient bed rest. Institutional care in sanatoriums and isolation wards was a major factor in the eventual successful control of tuberculosis, but this entailed separation of the sick from their homes and wrenched families apart.

During World War I, Sister Mary Mark, a teacher in the school from 1904 to 1915, replaced Sister Marcienne as superior at the hospital. In Dawson as elsewhere, many prayers were being offered for peace. Sister Mary Antonia of Jesus, who had transferred from Holy Cross after twelve years of mission endeavor there, had long dreamed of honoring Christ under the title of King. The two ideas, Prince of Peace and Christ the King, came together in her mind. She resolved to fulfill her longing to crown Christ as King. Neither her local superior nor ecclesiastical authorities would consent. She kept on asking, and finally those opposed gave permission for her to try in order to satisfy what they believed to be an idle dream.

For Sister Antonia, the crowning was to be more than a spiritual one. She wanted an actual crown for the Lord; forbidden to do any actual begging for the project, she complied but put a box by her bookkeeping office. A notice indicated the purpose of the box: the crowning of Christ as King and the petition for world peace. Gold nuggets and precious jewels were anonymously



*Dormer windows and 2-level balustrade porches are reminiscent of the hospitals in Juneau and Douglas. The similarity is even more striking in the 1906 development. (SMA)*





*In 1906, the old structures were demolished and the new 3-story hospital was built to serve Dawson and the area. The greenhouse gave a start to flowers and vegetables and was a precious asset to the grounds. Patients looked for signs of greenery as the winter days dragged on. Some of the extensive cribbing necessary at the site shows up well in this post-1909 view. (SMA)*

dropped into the box. An Italian jeweler in Dawson, Vincent Vesco, fashioned a crown to fit the head of a statue of Jesus then in the sisters' chapel. Most of Dawson entered into Sister Antonia's plan for the ceremony. The Dawson press gave it publicity, and on 30 June 1916, the day of the crowning, a huge crowd filled the hospital grounds where the outdoor ceremony was held.<sup>56</sup> It was a civic as well as a religious ceremony. Speeches were given by the leading men and women of Dawson. Father Louis-Victor Lewis, O.M.I., proclaimed Christ as King of Kings and presented the crown.<sup>57</sup> This public celebration in honor of Christ the King occurred nine years before Rome solemnized the feast. Sister Antonia had pioneered the devotion.

The sisters were ahead of their time, too, when during Sister Antonia's years at Dawson, a quarantine at the hospital prevented the priest from coming for Mass one Easter. With the pastor's approval, Sister Antonia brought a ciborium of consecrated hosts from the chapel to the greenhouse at the edge of the hospital property. The priest stood just off the hospital property and gave the sisters Holy Communion.<sup>58</sup> In pre-Vatican Council II days, it was most unusual for sisters to open the tabernacle and carry the Blessed Sacrament. It was an unforgettable Easter.



After the gold rush waned, the population of Dawson diminished. It was soon found that only one hospital in town was necessary. St. Mary's petitioned to be the one recognized by the government. In 1918 there was much haggling about the decision and what would be fair. Finally the government, not wishing to continue funding both St. Mary's and Good Samaritan Hospital, helped to settle outstanding debts of both hospitals and to bring Good Samaritan to a close. Even after this expedient, St. Mary's continued to have an unstable financial base. Some help arrived when the hospital signed a five-year medical care contract with the Yukon Consolidated Gold Company, Limited. There was help also from another source, the old sourdoughs.

The Klondike gold rush had brought north many men who remained in Dawson for the rest of their lives. As the years went on, some of these prospectors found themselves facing old age with no nearby family to turn to for care. During the summers, the old-timers still liked to prospect the creeks and walk the trails; during the winters the sourdoughs came one by one for shelter and care at St. Mary's. Government subsidies covered some of the expenses for these elderly men. Providing this haven for the old-timers characterized much of the later ministry of the sisters in Dawson. Both Alaska and Canada recognized the needs of old sourdoughs and little by little began to deal with the problem. In Alaska, a few Pioneer Homes opened, but it was a long time before both governments had sufficient suitable retirement places.

One strong reminder of the past disappeared when the old church was demolished. After it was razed, Father Judge's grave, which had been next to the altar, became a "wayside shrine" for those who trudged or drove up and down the road from the town to the hospital. He lived on in the memory of the old-timers, and the newcomers soon learned of the devotedness of Father Judge.<sup>59</sup> Another pioneer of Alaska, Sister John Damascene, died in Dawson in 1923 and was buried next to Sister Lidwine. The flag at St. Mary's was flown at half-mast. Sister John's death was a cause of mourning in Dawson, where she had professionally served since 1898.<sup>60</sup>

Although most sisters found Dawson to be a peaceful place, at times incoming sisters were dismayed at occasional examples of narrow-mindedness. Years spent in Dawson were not always marked with the high adventure that the literature of Jack London and Robert Service evoked. Many were the tensions caused by personality conflicts, isolation and differences in ideals. Sometimes doctors and surgeons were more qualified to know what was best for the hospital than were the sisters. Discordant views about the use of either French or English among the sisters were fraught with disruptive possibilities. Doctors and nurses, hearing the sisters speaking French to each other, were uncomfortably suspicious of being discussed. The backgrounds of the sisters made the choice of either language unpopular, for some sisters were of French-Canadian descent; others, of British Columbian stock, or from various European cultures. Even alternating weeks of using French or English pleased no one.

On the other hand, a certain freedom and informality in the North gratified and surprised the sisters who were assigned to Dawson. More contacts with the priest-missionaries, more of a sense of being co-workers with the clergy in the building of the Kingdom of God seemed visible in the North than had been the case in more populous and sophisticated places. More appreciation of each individual's giftedness was apparent. Good contacts with



*Sister Mary Amée stands among the ice floes at Dawson. Sisters M. John Damascene (white apron) and Epiphane are seated. (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: Sister M. Amée collection)



the bishops and Oblate priests and brothers elicited from the sisters this universal statement, "The clergy of the North are a special breed!"

In 1929, Sister Mary Perpetual Help, superior at Dawson from 1925 to 1930, welcomed back to the North the first professed Sister of St. Ann to have entered the community from Holy Cross Mission. This was Sister Mary Holy Cross, Margaret Mary Demientieff, daughter of Ivan and Elizabeth Newman Demientieff. Sister's delight in being again amid snow and ice, after years in temperate Victoria, was boundless.<sup>61</sup> The northern lights, the blue mountain lakes, the rarefied air on Mount Moosehide or the Dome thrilled her. An outstanding memory for her was a climb up the Dome to share with Dawsonites the annual spectacle of the Midnight Sun. Outings like this were rare for the sisters. Some superiors did not favor outings; others did, saying that the sisters should share in what the civic community does.<sup>62</sup> This rule of thumb became a good guideline for the sisters, in Dawson and elsewhere.

Sister Perpetual Help was succeeded by Sister Antonia of Jesus, who died in 1935 and was the third sister to be buried in Dawson. Following this death, Sister Mary Rose Eva served as superior, assisted in her understanding of St. Mary's and of the North through the presence of Father Philius Gagné, O.M.I., chaplain at the hospital since 1919.<sup>63</sup>

Sister Mary Henrietta of Jesus accepted the responsibility of leadership at St. Mary's Hospital in 1939 and was happy to get to know in a special way some unforgettable sisters: Sister Mary Epiphane, who earned the name of "Mama Blue Eyes," and Sister Mary Amée, who held the record for being the shortest sister of Saint Ann ever to go to Dawson. Sister Epiphane was a kindhearted nurse easily won over to offer a prayer or bring a sweet to someone. Old-timers reached up from their pillows to give her a big kiss. Sister Amée was a good cook and often was seen carrying a bench or box to stand upon in order to stir her pots or reach a shelf. She and Sister Mary Barnabé made a compatible team in the kitchen, from which came many hearty laughs, delighting listeners and inviting them to stop for a snack.

Sister Epiphane cared for the old men for years. Each winter her quota of residents swelled as old-timers, aware of falling temperatures and shortening days, left their lone cabins on the creeks and came to St. Mary's for shelter. Frequently her ward was an international house, with representatives from homelands such as Sweden, Norway, Ireland, Scotland, Czechoslovakia, Canada, England, and the United States. The more able helped the less able. When one needed help to dress himself, a friend gave assistance. Some of the men shoveled snow or did odd jobs. The old men's constant prayer seemed to be, "Sister, help me be good!"

Many of these crusty sourdoughs had been raised in homes where gentleness, respect and honor had been ingrained. The rough storms of life in Dawson and out on the mining creeks had battered the men, hardened their exterior behavior, but, for the most part, had left intact their inner sensitivity and youthful idealism. The sisters' love and insightful care, plus the security of St. Mary's, allowed feelings long repressed to be unashamedly freed.

Stories are many about Sister Mary Epiphane—her ways and her language. She could speak English, but French idioms were translated literally, often to the amusement of others and to her own consternation.

Sister Henrietta's leadership coincided with the peaking of renewed interest in gold mining. The miners were placed on around-the-clock shifts and the



potential for accidents at any hour kept St. Mary's alert and on call through the night. Although World War II had conscripted many medical personnel, the sister-nurses were available to meet most of the laboratory and X-ray demands. Inasmuch as Dawson still had a large red-light district, venereal diseases called for special attention.<sup>64</sup> Despite wartime difficulties and shortages, Sister Henrietta and her staff continued the upgrading and expansion of the hospital with the renovation of the old wings and the construction of the Isolation Extension, the Tuberculosis Department, and the Children's Ward.

Golden jubilee celebrations in 1948 marking fifty years of service in Dawson for the Sisters of Saint Ann occurred during Sister Mark's return as superior. Sister Pudentienne, a pioneer who had left Dawson in 1926 and was reappointed there in 1941, especially rejoiced as she compared what she knew of 11 July 1898 with the Jubilee Day, 11 July 1948. In the intervening years, the sisters had shared much. A Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by Bishop Jean-Louis Coudert, O.M.I. The program included speeches by Bishop Francis D. Gleeson, S.J., recently appointed Vicar Apostolic of Alaska; Father Joseph F. McElmeel, S.J., of Juneau; and Bishop Coudert. Portraits of Father Judge and Sister Zenon were unveiled and a jubilee presentation made to Sister Pudentienne. The people of Dawson gave \$10,000 to the hospital. Guests, assembled for the celebration, toured the facility. At the school, Sister Mary Anthony, there since 1946, also held celebrations, anticipating the 1949 Golden Jubilee of the school.

Many of the flowers adorning the premises for the festivities were from Sister Mary Gedeon's garden. First assigned to Dawson in 1904, Sister Gedeon considered Dawson her home. She served there forty-four years by sewing, providing produce from her garden and greenhouse, and caring for chickens. Sister Gedeon, attending her flowers and chickens, was as much a part of Dawson as St. Mary's itself.

In between the jubilee celebrations in Dawson and the celebrations honoring the centenary of the founding of the Sisters of Saint Ann (1850 to 1950), fire broke out in the hospital on a bitterly cold afternoon, 10 January 1950. The fire apparently started in the attic above the chapel and burned down through the chapel to the floors below. Next door to the chapel was the sisters' infirmary, where Sister Gedeon, recuperating from eye surgery, was a patient. Dense smoke soon filled the infirmary.

The intense cold spell of -50° to -55° F was accompanied by an ice fog that made fire fighting difficult. People in town were alerted by the cry, "Fire!", and by the sight of heavy smoke. The town siren was frozen and could not be used. Scores of Dawsonites hurried to the scene, where already the volunteer fire department was attempting to control the fire. The low water level in the river at this season caused debris to be sucked up and the hoses clogged. They proved ineffectual, and it was soon realized that St. Mary's could not be saved. Acutely ill patients were transferred to the airstrip. A

*Teachers and students at St. Mary's stand on the school steps. The 30 pupils are taught by Sisters Mary Anthony (left) and Clarence Marie (right).*

(Photo credit: Sister Alice Tevini collection)





pilot coming in to land at the Dawson airfield had seen the hospital fire and held his airplane for the possible emergency transfer of patients. The early northern darkness was just becoming hazardous when he took off to Whitehorse with the seriously ill cases. Other patients were transported to the public school.

Doctor Barrie Duncan, Dawson's only physician, went quickly to the hospital. Trained for emergency situations, he directed the removal of equipment essential to the setting up of a temporary hospital with an operating room and X-ray necessities. High school students, dismissed by their principal, assisted in salvaging supplies and instruments. Sister Mark removed records and historical accounts dating back to Father Judge's time, and saved other important papers from her office. Other valuables were rescued from the safe. Each sister had opportunity to remove some priority items from the department with which she was charged. Sisters Amée and Barnabé organized the removal of many food supplies.

The rescue of Sister Gedeon was effected at the last moment. A volunteer fireman and the fire chief found her and carried her from the building just as Sister Mark and Sister Mary Laurena, Director of Nursing, the last sisters to leave, were getting into a truck. Despite their efforts and those of Doctor Duncan, Sister Gedeon died that evening. She was laid to rest on 14 January in the cemetery plot that now looked down on a hospital reduced to ashes.<sup>65</sup>

After the fire, Sister Laurena observed: "If we had only realized that we had more time, we could have saved many more things. But it was a quick get-away." The well-being of patients came first. Observers remarked that Sister Laurena had been a "pillar of cool efficiency throughout the whole ordeal." The Dawson paper cited Sister Mark as a "paragon of coolness and bravery."<sup>66</sup>

A provisional hospital was set up at the other end of town in a two-story log house formerly used by an employee of the Yukon Consolidated Gold Company. Equipment that had been saved from the fire provided the basics required for the provisional hospital. It was occupied immediately by surgical and maternity cases. A large tent was erected in the adjacent yard to accommodate company employees. The former garage became the X-ray department; the laundry room served as outpatient clinic.

Shortly after the fire, the bishop sent a plea to Sister Mary Mark:

*What is all important is that you remain in Dawson! The Sisters of Saint Ann are an integral part of Dawson, and as long as Dawson exists, the presence of the Sisters of Saint Ann is necessary. I count on you to remain at this outpost of the Church in this northern vicariate; God wills it; Courage!*<sup>67</sup>

Taking the bishop's wishes into consideration, the Provincial Council, Victoria, studied the project of restoring Catholic hospital facilities in Dawson.<sup>68</sup> The majority of the sisters favored continuing that northern apostolate.

Consequently, Mother Mary Ludovic, Provincial Superior, and Sister Mary Dorothea came from Victoria at the end of January, 1950. They visited the provisional hospital and went to the Dawson community hall where Sister Mary Xavier was in charge. The city had offered the building as temporary accommodations for twenty elderly men, the most helpless of those seeking winter sanctuary.

After consultation with local government and church officials, Mother Ludovic went East to discuss matters with representatives of the Federal Government. For this trip, she took a plane, an uncommon occurrence in 1950.



Sister left Vancouver by boarding the plane in its hangar, almost like a bush trip in modern times. The flight from the West Coast to Montreal took twelve hours. Through Mother Ludovic's efforts, the sisters were able to obtain the use of two large unoccupied Dawson buildings.

One was an imposing two-story building that had been used by the North West Mounted Police. This building, then called the Court House, under the guidance of a local construction foreman, became the new 25 to 30-bed St. Mary's Hospital, which in December 1950, received patients from the provisional hospital. The formal opening was 6 January 1951.<sup>69</sup>

The other building was a handsome house, erected in 1904 by the Federal Government as a home for the territorial governor. The governor's residence, or Government House, became the home for the aged and infirm patients.<sup>70</sup> The sisters, after living for a while elsewhere, moved to the second floor of Government House. Lay nurses lived on the third floor. Government House was able to open in September 1950, having required less alteration than did the Court House. Although far from convenient, this residence filled a need until the Canadian government was able to provide otherwise for its senior citizens.

The sisters improvised and accommodated themselves to the Court House hospital and life in Government House, but there were problems over which they had no control. The Court House was built near the junction of the Klondike and Yukon Rivers. Ice jams during the annual spring breakups sent flood waters through the lower town where the Court House was located. Going to and from the hospital was difficult. Sometimes canoes had to be used.<sup>71</sup>

Sister Clarence Marie from the eastern seaboard was assigned to Dawson. While sister was in Dawson, her father died in Massachusetts. The Congregation's policy did not allow the sisters stationed a long distance from home to return for funerals. With this policy Sister Clarence Marie complied, as many other missionary sisters had done, offering that sacrifice as part of her missionary effort.<sup>72</sup>

The Congregation staffed many Franco-American schools and had a large academy in Massachusetts. News of the sisters' sharing with the peoples of the North attracted students to similar dedication, which distanced them from home for ten or more year intervals.

Ever vivid memories of Dawson remained with Sister Mary Eugene of Rome, in Dawson for one winter as technologist and X-ray technician. The poetry of the ice fog, the sculptures of the hoarfrost, the ballet of shadows on the snow, the lavenders and pinks on deep-snowed mountains—all remained as "nugget" memories of the Klondike.<sup>73</sup>



*Government House received the visit of H. R. H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, 19 July 1959. Accompanying him as he leaves is Sister Mary Ignatia. (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: Hougen's Limited, Whitehorse)



*Dr. John Barker, M.D., and Sister Mary Laurena are with a patient in the operating room in the new St. Mary's Hospital (Court House). The photograph is dated August 1952. (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: Sister Mary Laurena collection)



In 1954, Sister Mary Ignatia, formerly a missionary in Japan,<sup>74</sup> arrived in Dawson and in 1957 became superior. Early in 1963, she requested that a study be made of Government House, by then commonly called the Old Men's Home. The report showed that, since its 1904 construction, the wooden building had suffered much from annual spring floods. Rotting timbers needed replacement.

Sister Ignatia, after receiving the report about the unsafe foundations, noted other urgent repairs: fire escape, wiring, and plumbing. The engineer recommended that renovations not be attempted, that, instead, the building be closed and the old men housed elsewhere.<sup>75</sup>

After receiving his recommendation, Sister Ignatia went to Whitehorse to report about the Old Men's Home and to seek advice about the hospital's still functioning at the former Court House. Deterioration of that building was also noticeable, patients were steadily decreasing in number, and the Yukon Consolidated Gold Company, long a stable support for the hospital, had announced its decision to close. The government was assuming care of its aged and was erecting proper facilities. These building reports, company announcements, and government initiatives were strong arguments supporting the decision made by the Sisters of Saint Ann to withdraw from Dawson. In April, Bishop Coudert and civic leaders were informed that the residence, hospital, and school would close that summer, the summer of 1963.

Sisters Mary Marcellus and Anthony were the last two teachers at St. Mary's. As they closed the books and put the school effects in order, their thoughts went to Sister Mary Antonius, teacher and principal for two years, and others who had served at Dawson. Sister Mary Adelaide had taught the younger group and brightened the room with colorful teaching aids. Sister Mary Charles of Jesus<sup>76</sup> had gathered the older students even on Saturdays for crafts so that the young people might have something they could offer for the annual bazaar. As diversions in town were few during the winter, bazaars and combined presentations of the public and Catholic schools were like sparkling crystals in an otherwise drab environment. Sisters Verona, Deborah, and Lambert had brought their gifts to the people of Dawson: music, drama, organization. Sister Mary Lambert had been principal and senior teacher when St. Mary's celebrated sixty years of continuous operation in March 1960. A historical pageant prepared by her had underlined the event. The sisters recalled, too, Barbara Persson, a lay volunteer who had come from the Alaska Missions.

Knowing that they were leaving, the sisters filled their minds with even more memories and accepted an excursion to the Second Dome, five hundred feet higher than the other Dome. From that Second Dome, the sisters could see the panorama of gold fields and creeks that had made Dawson famous. The sisters had been a part of it. The Klondike, the Bonanza, the Eldorado, Mayo, Calumet, Keno, Moosehide, Whitehorse, and Saint Ann's Island—all were special names, special places, for special people.

There were six sisters present when Dawson gave the Sisters of Saint Ann a farewell reception. Sister Miriam Rita, one of the last nurses in Dawson, thought of 1898 and of the six Sisters of Saint Ann who had initiated the nursing ministry of the Congregation in Dawson.

Arrangements were made to have the bodies of the four sisters buried in Dawson exhumed and moved to the city cemetery plot, where the graves

*Amid flowers grown by Sister Mary Gedeon, Father Phileas Gagné, O.M.I., stands by the statue given by Dr. J. O. Lachapelle. Sister Mary Antonius (Patricia Dickinson) was despondent at the sight of snow lingering into May after her first year in Dawson. She was told not to fret for summer would come overnight. Dawson fields, it seemed, were covered with snow one week and flowers the next. (SMA)*





would receive proper care.<sup>77</sup> The city of Dawson assumed the expenses. The old hospital site then became a public park.

The closing of the sisters' ministry in Dawson concluded with an unexpected sorrow. Sister Ignatia, who had decided to drive to Victoria, left Dawson, accompanied by a nurse, for Whitehorse. Just before reaching there, Sister Ignatia had a heart attack and died. A car accident was involved, but sister's passenger, the nurse, survived. The body of Sister Ignatia was taken to Victoria for burial.

Thus ended an era of service in the Far North over which Saint Ann and the spirit of Mother Mary Ann had shone as brightly as any of the gold nuggets that had brought fame to the Klondike.

\* \* \* \* \*

If blue can symbolize Juneau and red attempt to portray the idea of Holy Cross, yellow typifies Dawson. Yellow stands for the varieties of Klondike gold, its dull and lighter shades. Yellow is for long days of sunshine—for the Midnight Sun. Yellow is for frosty "sun dogs" or "sun mittens" of the winter. September leaves were golden yellow in the brush; brown-yellow marked threatening sandbars in the Yukon River. Yellow sunlight burnished the rocks on the Dome and Second Dome. Yellow was the heart of the wild rose and colored the daisy. Yellow were Sister Gedeon's chicks; old-gold, the jubilees. Yellowed were the pages of prospectors' notebooks, yellow gold dust lurked in the seams of well-worn pokes, yellowed piano keys of brothel and saloon were quiet in after-years. The yellow glow suffusing Dawson was outshone only by a more golden glory, that of the cross—St. Mary's cross—extending blessings more precious than the gold dust of the creeks.

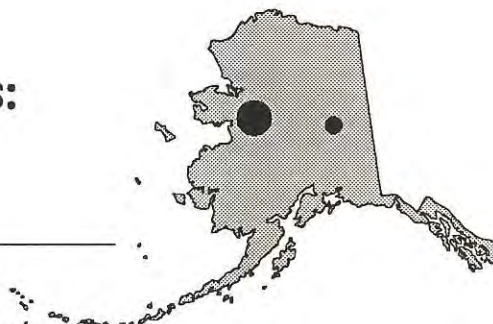


# Time Line for Chapter Three

1871	Gold discovered in the Cassiar, B.C.		
1886	Gold discovered at Forty Mile, Alaska		
1893	Gold discovered at Circle City, Y.T.		
1896	Gold discovered in Klondike area		
1897	Gold shipment from Klondike sent out from St. Michael	1897	Father Judge in Dawson, tent hospital Sisters try to reach Dawson
1898	Good Samaritan Hospital (Presbyterian) opens in Dawson	1898	Two groups of sisters reach Dawson Typhoid epidemic renewed Government inspection of St. Mary's
1899-1900	Gold rush in Nome, Alaska	1899	Death of Father Judge Hospital decided to Congregation St. Mary's School opens
1900	Dawson public school opens	1900	St. Mary's School approved Third floor added to hospital
1901	Ordinance Respecting Schools (Y.T.)	1901	Sisters accept Whitehorse mission
1902	Gold rush in Fairbanks		
		1903	First resident priest in Whitehorse Sisters open school in Whitehorse
1904	Government House built in Dawson	1904	Sisters leave Whitehorse New Catholic school built in Dawson
		1906	New 3-story structure replaces old hospital building
		1909	Sisters' cemetery by hospital
1914	World War I	1914	Commercial Course offered in Dawson
1918	Decision to close Good Samaritan Hospital	1916	Crowning of Christ the King, Prince of Peace
1939	World War II begins		
		1939	Renovation and expansion of St. Mary's Hospital
		1948	Golden jubilees celebrated
		1950	Fire destroys St. Mary's Hospital Provisional hospital (log house) Old men housed in Dawson community hall Government House renovated for old men's residence and nursing staff Court House renovated for hospital Government House opened for old men
1953	Government seat moved from Dawson to Whitehorse Government care increasingly provided for sick and aged	1951	Formal opening of new St. Mary's Hospital at former Court House
		1963	Sisters of Saint Ann withdraw from Dawson
		1978	Hospital site becomes public park



## A Realization and New Calls: Nulato and Fairbanks



Chimney smoke rose straight up into the frosted, sub-zero air when Sister Mary Anne Eveline, her rosy face flushed from her recent walk through the village, poured tea into still another cup. Edna joined the group around the kitchen table. Somehow, in Nulato, there was always room for one more.

The group had gathered to talk about the upcoming Stick Dance\* and what still needed to be arranged. Martha had sent afghans and gloves—homemade, as were her three pies. Friends of the family were “dressing” Esther at the Stick Dance and had been sewing and saving for two years. Sister Anne Eveline brought out what she had made—a toque and scarf—for Esther was one of her friends. Everything seemed to be ready for the weekend commemorative celebration.

Old Andrew had seen many Stick Dances and felt happy knowing that Sister Anne Eveline, who had spent fourteen years in Nulato, was part of the 1983 principal event. For several days now, Harold Esmailka, the pilot, had been flying in and out of Nulato, dropping off many Galena and Koyukuk guests on the frozen-river landing strip. Sister Anne Eveline heard the names of recent arrivals being mentioned by her tea-drinkers and was glad. It was good to be accepted and be part of Koyukon life. Deep peace welled up within her as the shuffling of boots on the porch told her that still another friend would soon share some “chi.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Nulato had had contact with non-Natives for sixty years before the sisters arrived there. In the service of the Russian America Company, which was ever seeking new sources of prime furs, a Creole, Petr Vasilevich Malakov, left St. Michael and traveled the Unalakleet portage to the Yukon River, arriving in 1838 at Nulagito, where he was welcomed by the “chief” and his family. The Native village consisted of a few log houses built at the junction of a clear stream with the Yukon. The people were Athabascans of the Kaiyuhkhotana,<sup>1</sup> or Lower Koyukon group. Nulagito was a meeting place of these Lower Koyukon with those who lived further up the Yukon as far as the Koyukuk River. Malakov recognized in the position of Nulagito, both with regard to access up and down the Yukon River and the portage possibilities to the western coast, valuable expansion opportunities for the Russian America Company.

The next year, on his return to Nulagito, Malakov found that smallpox<sup>2</sup> had struck. The chief, his family, and most of the others had died. Much of the village had burned. Saddened at what he saw and heard, Malakov, nevertheless, set up a trading post and hoped it would prosper. The first storekeeper at

---

\* A Stick Dance is a commemorative celebration honoring particular deceased persons



the post was a man named Nordstrom. After two years, he moved away, the very year that the trading center was destroyed by fire. In September 1841, Vassili Derabin (Derzhavin), charged with restoring the post, rebuilt the company store and houses near a convenient stand of timber. Two years later, in 1843, Lt. Lavrentiy Alekseyevich Zagoskin, in mapping the route to this mid-Yukon River trade center, reported the name of the clear tributary as R[eka] Nulata. Derabin's post became identified as Nulato, at the mouth of the Nulato River.

Again the Russian center was destroyed, this time in February 1851, when the Upper Koyukon attacked.<sup>3</sup> Reasons for the assault differ, but hatred for Derabin was a major factor. Derabin and others were killed, including a British naval officer, Lt. John J. Barnard. Hoping for news of the Franklin naval expedition, unheard of since 1847, he was a guest at Nulato just when the attack occurred.

Resolutely, the Russian America Company built a new trading post, this time with a stockade, two miles up the Yukon from the site of the previous center. Trade flourished for another ten years, yet in 1863, a Creole, Ivan Lukin, looking for more advantages, went by boat further upriver to Fort Yukon. There the Hudson's Bay Company, following a route from Canada, was active in trade. The rival companies coming from opposite ends of the Yukon River had finally met.

American impact on Nulato began in 1865 when, pursuing the effort to lay a cable from North America to Siberia and on to Europe, part of a survey team of the Western Union Telegraph Company reached Nulato.<sup>4</sup> The survey group, also gathering facts for the Smithsonian Institution, was led by Major Robert Kennicott, who, increasingly plagued by mental illness, died at Nulato in May 1866. Another section of the telegraph company, with English artist Frederick Whymper and renowned scientist William Healey Dall, reached Nulato in the fall. The whole group, now led by Dall, continued the survey and fact-finding by ascending the Yukon to Fort Yukon. In the summer of 1867, hearing that an Atlantic cable had successfully been laid, the expedition went downriver to St. Michael and ended its mission. By that time, the United States had effected the purchase of Alaska.

Two years afterward, the riverboat, the *Yukon*, began its service along the great river. On its first trip, an army officer, Capt. Charles W. Raymond, assigned to notify the Hudson's Bay Company post to move out of U.S. land, was on board.<sup>5</sup> Shortly thereafter the Russian company's monopoly on trade was succeeded by that of the Alaska Commercial Company, or, in upper Yukon River areas, by the North American Trading and Transportation Company.

Hunting, trapping and fishing were the principal occupations of the people of Nulato. A good supply of fish was essential for their survival. With ingenuity and art, the Natives had devised ways of catching and preserving fish for winter food for themselves and their sled dogs, needed for the trails. The Natives hunted moose and bear, and trapped mink, otter, marten, muskrat, lynx, wolverine, weasel, and beaver. Brought to the traders, these furs were exchanged for "tokens," a local means of barter. The system, however, kept the Nulato people dependent on the local trader, who often set his prices and conducted his business with his own profits in mind.



In 1873, Father Auguste Lecorre, in the company of François Mercier, a Catholic trader, traveled from Fort Yukon down the Yukon River with Bishop Isidore Clut, O.M.I.<sup>6</sup> The bishop considered Alaska part of his Athabasca-Mackenzie Vicariate. Father Lecorre, after the bishop's return to the Athabasca-Mackenzie, remained in Nulato until a steamboat could take him to St. Michael. Helped with the language by Michael Lebarge, stationed at Fort Nulato, Father Lecorre taught the people during lulls in salmon fishing and the repairing and making of boats.

After spending the winter 1873 to 1874 at St. Michael and on the Yukon delta, the priest learned that Alaska was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Victoria (Vancouver Island) and not of the Athabasca-Mackenzie. He opted to return to the Oblate mission territory. The Nulato Natives, remembering Father Lecorre, were friendly to Bishop Seghers and his companion, Father Joseph Mandart, in 1877. Through that winter, 1877 to 1878, the Victoria missionaries continued Father Lecorre's earlier efforts of instructing and baptizing.

Father Pascal Tosi, honoring the wish of Archbishop Seghers, established a Jesuit mission in Nulato in 1887. The archbishop had considered his visit to Nulato to have been the beginnings of a permanent Catholic mission, that of Our Lady of the Snows. Father Tosi, though, by his presence, plans and projects, truly made of Nulato a permanent mission. He even put in a vegetable garden early in the summer of 1888, the first such garden in that immediate neighborhood.<sup>7</sup> He called Brother Carmelo Giordano from Anvik, where he had wintered with Father Robaut, to build a Catholic church in Nulato. This began a long association of Brother Giordano with the people of Nulato. From them, he learned to speak the Native language with ease and was, besides his carpentry skill, an asset linguistically to the mission endeavor. To the Nulato effort Father Tosi had given much thought. He wrote to Governor Swineford:

*. . . I arrived at Nulato towards the end of September last [1887], spent the winter there, during which I applied myself, among other things, to teaching the children in a small way, just to find out how the people would like it, and what their views might be concerning the education of their children. I was really surprised to find how anxious they were to learn English, and to find them otherwise above the average intelligence. For this coming year two fathers, with a brother, will teach there. . . .<sup>8</sup>*

Father Tosi went on to discuss his ideas, first, for the day school, but then for a central boarding school for the Koyukon. Hopefully, other Yukon River students would come. He described the Koyukon as having a good deal of energy, being impulsive and fiery, but able to cool off and forget. The Nulato boarding school was to be one of three, the other two being at Koserefsky and St. Michael. Located hundreds of miles up the Yukon, the Nulato school would appreciate a government allowance to help pay for the supplies and freight, the tariff from St. Michael being \$50 a ton. Dreams of sufficient support, of the boarding schools, of his belief that the Natives were eager to send



*In this picture of early Nulato, warm sunshine seems to have called many to come out of the cabins and chat with neighbors. The cemetery is barely seen on the far hill. (SMA)*



their children to the schools were all to remain just that, dreams — as subsequent events showed.

For the Sisters of Saint Ann, originally destined for Nulato on the 1888 trip to the Far North, that mission was a goal still not attained. Nulato had occupied the attention of the General Council in Lachine when it accepted a mission in the Far North. Two Sisters of Saint Ann had gone from Holy Cross in 1892 as part of a pilgrimage that went to Wolfhead Point above Nulato to erect a commemorative cross at the spot where Archbishop Seghers had met his death. Thoughts of Archbishop Seghers brought sadness to the sisters, but seeing, at last, the Nulato village he had loved and to which they had aspired renewed their missionary commitment. In 1892 they met the Jesuits there and saw a budding Catholic Faith in that still more distant part of the frozen North than was Holy Cross. The Nulato mission, no longer called Our Lady of the Snows, was now under the patronage of a Jesuit saint canonized in 1885, St. Peter Claver. Hope of sharing in the growth of the mission stayed with the sisters when they left and remained through all the vicissitudes of the opening and closing of Akulurak, the proposals for St. Michael, and the Dawson effort.

In 1899, Mother Angel Guardian, during her first official visit to the North, chose three sisters at Holy Cross Mission for a day school in Nulato. Sister Stephen, experienced foundress, was named as the superior of the group; Sisters Antonia of Jesus and Mary Didace were selected as her companions. Two of the older mission girls, Euphrasia and Ellen, were invited to go along as helpers and interpreters. Early history of the missions shows how some Native people<sup>9</sup> came to the assistance of the missionaries and were forerunners of the Native catechists, deacons, and other church helpers who have since strengthened the Church in Alaska.

Leaving Holy Cross on the steamer *Charles Power*, the sisters and girls traveled upriver 240 miles to Nulato, arriving on the evening of 19 September.<sup>10</sup> Welcoming the group were three Jesuit priests: Fathers Aloysius Ragaru, Joseph Perron, and Jules Jetté.<sup>11</sup> The sisters' log-cabin home, although one and one-half stories high, was much like the other houses in Nulato. The ceiling was low; the walls, partitions, and floors were unfinished. Of good size (24' x 39'), the cabin was intended to house the school for a while and serve as living quarters for the sisters. The building was cold and damp. Evidently work was still being done on it, for shavings had been swept into corners, boards lay around, and moss had been left in piles on the floor. A small cook stove had been set up; however, chips nearby seemed to be the only fuel on hand. Two tables and three rude benches made up the furniture. As the September darkness was settling in fast, there was little else to do that night but prepare beds on the floor. Father Jetté, seeing that there were no blankets, went for the Jesuits' own.<sup>12</sup> Certain that Father René had supplied everything for Nulato, as he had promised, the sisters had brought little from Holy Cross.

They rose early. A quart bowl, in the sisters' luggage, served as a basin for washing. At Mass, the church was so cold that the sisters, wrapped in their fur capes, wondered how the priest could offer the Holy Sacrifice. On returning to the convent, thoughts were of a hot breakfast. Euphrasia and Ellen lit the fire and the sisters searched for provisions. Father René's supplies were found, but the packings were too difficult to fumble with in the cold. In need



of a quick breakfast, the sisters opened a box of pilot bread and found a teapot. As they had brought a box of tea and a can of chicken, a hot breakfast was soon possible. Although it was a day of abstinence from meat on the Church calendar, the chicken was enjoyed. The girls made utensils out of wood, newspapers served as plates and the versatile quart bowl became a teacup shared by all.

Breakfast was scarcely over when the Jesuits came in to continue work on the house. Father Perron fashioned bedsteads; Father Jetté made six chairs. The sisters found empty cracker cases that became cupboards after a piece of cotton print was hung in the front openings. Ambrose, one of the former Holy Cross boys, put up rough boards as shelves. Father Ragaru tried to make the small box stove functional. So many pipes were perforated that the attempt had to be abandoned. He then laid floorboards, built a storm entrance, and contributed a most important item that Sister Stephen described. "It is a square box with a one-hole perforation in the lid; in the box is placed a bucket, for already there is no possibility of going outside to 'parliament,' the sitting is too cold. We keep the box in the storeroom. . . ."<sup>13</sup>

The chapel was in the garret, just above the area set aside as the future classroom. The sisters and girls hung white sheeting in the chapel over the unfinished walls. Since the same type of mud roof as that at Holy Cross was on the house, an open umbrella protected the altar. Oilcloth covered the vestments. To catch rain, Sister Antonia strategically placed in the garret about one hundred tin cans found in the Jesuit garden plot. The cans had been used as plant protectors from wind and untimely frost. Sister Didace, who knew how to handle hammer and saw, put together a confessional.<sup>14</sup>

During the early fall, the Jesuits went out almost every day to fell trees ten or twelve miles upriver and float them down to the mission. After the supply of wood was in, the Jesuits spent time and money to put a board roof over the dirt one on the convent. The sisters offered to do the Jesuits' laundry, but the priests put this off for reconsideration. Discovering that the priests had no socks, the sisters knitted several pairs of warm ones. Although Father Perron himself cared for the sacristy, the sisters made the altar breads and looked after the church linens.<sup>15</sup>

Most of the Nulato people left the village in mid-October to prepare for winter by hunting, visiting winter camps, and readying traplines. With but few people around, the sisters made their annual retreat and were privileged that Father Jetté preached it. During the retreat, the mission girls prepared meals and proved in many other ways to be treasures. The girls had many suitors. Euphrasia had four; Ellen had one, but her heart seemed set on going back to Holy Cross to marry Petruska Demientieff.

Used to the way the young people, the large staff and the devout or curious villagers at Holy Cross celebrated religious feasts, the sisters grieved at the apparent lack of devotion among the Nulato people, who were thoughtful, tenacious in their own beliefs, and restrained in comment. The Nulato people showed personal qualities and a disposition for learning that augured well for the success of the school.<sup>16</sup> Their natural genius was revealed in their homemade, tailored skin clothing, often beautifully ornamented with porcupine quills. During the cold months equally well-made fur clothing was worn. Innate pride in who they were seemed to be the dominant characteristic of the people.<sup>17</sup> Used to making their own decisions at their own pace,



they came to church only when they were ready. A church bell was rung; half an hour later it pealed again. If the people had begun to arrive, a third bell was rung shortly after. Otherwise, the service was canceled.

The sisters' school opened on 2 November 1899 with eleven students that Father Ragaru rounded up in the village. Registration grew to twenty-three by the end of the month, and fifty by the end of the year, although the greatest attendance on any one day was only twenty-four. Sister Stephen wrote:

*. . . presently, there are 23, 3 of whom are Protestants; they pay \$5.00 per month for tuition and board at homes; we would rather not have them . . . but we could not refuse them. [One was Edgar Heiller.]*

These students appear to have come from other villages, for in describing the opening of school, she says:

*. . . he brought them all along, 11 in number, one of whom is a white boy, but a protestant; those from the other villages are expected when the ice takes. . . .<sup>18</sup>*

Irregular attendance was common because of the chores the children had to do at home: carry water, snare rabbits, chop wood, fish through the ice. Seasonally, the whole family, indeed the whole village, left to go to one camp or another for hunting or trapping. The Jesuits taught catechism and prayers in Koyukon, or Ten'ah (the name used by the missionaries), for half-hour periods every morning and afternoon.

Two or three families sometimes shared a small one-room cabin. Most cabins had at least three lamps. The people preferred light to darkness, for they were apprehensive that spirits would get them in the dark. Fear of the evil spirits possessed the people and was one reason the families grouped together. The houses were crowded, small, and had no furniture; the floor served for everything. At night, a pelt or blanket spread out on the floor became a bed, conveniently rolled away during the day. For meals, families grouped themselves around pieces of oilcloth and ate what was theirs. Wooden boxes served as cupboards for the few dishes, the tea, sugar, or other items. Before long, teachings at the school resulted in families using tables and chairs, cupboards and even mirrors.

In order better to understand the people and follow the Jesuits' sermons in church, the sisters began a serious study of Koyukon, the local language. No better teacher could have been found than the gifted linguist, Father Jetté, who hoped that within a year the sisters would be able to speak conversationally. "I'm too old," thought Sister Stephen, yet she went at the study wholeheartedly. The two younger sisters were all ardor, glad to improve their sparse vocabulary and phraseology. A decade of the rosary was daily prayed in Koyukon (Ten'ah). By May, the whole rosary and night prayers at church were in the Native language. Koyukon hymns or English hymns with Koyukon (Ten'ah) choruses, were sung. Sister Antonia eventually understood the language better than did the other two sisters.

They discovered, as winter set in, that temperatures in Nulato dropped much lower than at Holy Cross. For long spells, the Nulato temperature stayed at -50° F, falling to -70° F several times. Ice fog hung low. In such weather, only a few children came to school. The small cook stove was kept burning all night—or as long as possible. It could hold only three pieces of split wood.<sup>19</sup> So cold was the cabin that leaven for the bread, or even the bread dough itself, was kept under one sister's blankets during the night.

*A "chief's" wife, Marina Esmailka, walks with her young son, Franklin. (SPA)*





At Christmas, the sisters and Jesuits were visited by a white couple, a Mr. and Mrs. Grimm, who came from another village in order to have a religious celebration. They brought many treats with them and Christmas Eve parties were planned. Women from three villages crowded into the sisters' house, while the Jesuits entertained the men. The reason for the parties was to deter people from going elsewhere and doing anything that would keep them from Mass on Christmas morning. That Mass was well attended, partly through devotion, and partly with the hope of receiving a loaf of bread, tea, and two pieces of tobacco, which the Jesuits apportioned to the head of each family. Following Mass, the school children were invited to the convent for dinner. No one was absent; some were never seen again at school. The Alaska Commercial Company outlet in Nulato sent complete outfits of women's underwear as gifts for the sisters.<sup>20</sup>

A former student, Justina, whose cabin was two and one-half miles downriver, was very sick. After Justina's death, Father Jetté and the sisters laid her out and led the prayers for her. According to Nulato custom, women came to tuck sheets and blankets around her body so she would not be cold. Traditional lamentations began and continued as the body was carried by dog sled to the church. Because of her rheumatism, Sister Stephen could hardly manage the long walk in the cold. At church, Euphrasia and Ellen joined the sisters in singing parts of the funeral Mass. Once in a while, the congregation tried to join in the singing.<sup>21</sup> For some Natives, the long, drawn-out cadences of Gregorian chant sounded like the lonesome howling of dogs.

Jesuits, acquainted with the ways of the Nulato people for twelve years, noticed more and more changes in the life-style of the people, changes caused not only by the school, but also by firsthand contacts with non-Natives, besides the missionaries. People wanted to learn English to be able to communicate and get jobs with non-Natives. English was important in the work world and trade. At the same time that the missionaries were trying to learn the Native languages, the Natives along the Yukon were trying to cope with the language barriers between themselves and the non-Natives connected with the gold rushes at Ruby, Minto, Forty Mile, and elsewhere. The Yukon River was the main highway for trading post suppliers, outfitters, scientific expeditions, army personnel, other missionaries, adventurers, and steamboat crews.

As the spring of 1900 approached and the days lengthened, literally hundreds of dog sleds began to appear on the river trail. Another gold strike had stirred the world. Men left Dawson to converge on Nome. Pitiful was the sight of men dragging their belongings on makeshift sleds. Even women and girls were among the passersby, despite the camping and travel rigors marking the long trek from Dawson to Nome. Nulato became a busy town, for many miners stopped there to rest. Too often that resting meant unusual disturbances. In patronizing the stores, the miners brought a boom to local businesses. The Native people placed placards on their cabins: "Bread for sale," or "I charge you 50¢ for one night." Accommodations meant a corner of the floor on which to spread one's own blanket and a chance to do one's cooking. Contacts with the transient miners frequently did little to help the Natives live good moral lives.

Some of the contacts initiated drunken brawls as the spring of 1900 continued. A Nulato Native man went a few miles upriver and distilled some



whiskey, which he brought back and sold for fifteen dollars a bottle. Father Ragaru scolded the man who had started the trouble. The next day, the man went to the Jesuits to ask to borrow two dogs so he could go back to his cache and get more whiskey. He could not understand why he was refused. From a letter written by Sister Stephen, this man appears to have been Euphrasia's brother. He came to ask that Euphrasia go live with him, and, as a token of love, gave her a bar of soap, the first mark of brotherly solicitude in nine years. Despite the soap, he was apparently rebuffed on this score also.

At Easter time, soft snow prevented much traveling. Nevertheless, the mail sled came through; each letter received was a gift. Sister Stephen received forty letters that day. To signal spring, Euphrasia and Ellen planted a few flower seeds in boxes. Sister Antonia started radish seeds as a prelude to a small vegetable garden, a continuation of the agricultural effort Father Tosi had begun in 1887 and a carry-over of the emphasis on gardens at Holy Cross.

As the school year ended, Sister Didace, after long months of teaching punctuation, said to a big fellow who was reading aloud: "Period?" He repeated: "Period." She then told him that she had not looked in her book; from the way he let his voice fall, it must have been a period he had come to in his reading. Was it? "Well," said he, "you should have looked; then you would have known!"<sup>22</sup> Although students were learning the English language, the nuances of insinuation, indirect questioning and subtleties took longer to grasp than did straightforward vocabulary. Words were understood literally and the honest replies were given in plain language as simple statements of fact. This stark honesty in communication was disconcerting for people practiced in language innuendoes, partial statements, and underlying meanings.

The coming of summer 1900 encouraged the sisters to undertake a spring cleaning in their house and to prepare for more visitors stopping in between steamer arrivals and departures. But the coming of summer brought more than visitors.<sup>23</sup> Typhoid fever raged through the villages. Every Native person in Nulato suffered from the terrible sickness. The sisters went wearily around the village nursing the stricken people as best they could. A few of the sick were moved into the sisters' own cabin. The great feast of Saint Ann, 26 July, was prepared for by fervent prayers and good works, begging the patroness of the Community to intercede for the people and bring an end to the epidemic. Father René arrived on the feast day and told of the death of Sister Mary Seraphine of the Sacred Heart, superior at Holy Cross, where an epidemic was ravaging the mission. To bring comfort and assistance to the Holy Cross sisters and to help nurse the sick children, Sister Antonia left for there by the first boat.

In August 1900, Sister Stephen herself became ill and Father Jetté advised her to see a doctor in Dawson. There, the doctor urged her to return to Canada for rest and medical attention. He himself, about to leave for Ottawa, offered to assist sister along the way and even paid for her trip. Sister Didace, now alone in Nulato, needed a companion, as specified by Congregational rule. Therefore, Sister Pauline left Dawson for Nulato, where she remained for the winter. Expecting Sister Antonia's return from Holy Cross, the two sisters were surprised when Sister Evariste came instead. Father René, aware of a conflict of personalities in Holy Cross, had arranged the exchange.<sup>24</sup> Sister Evariste opened a night school that year for the adults.



Sister Didace taught twenty-five or so children during the day. Sister Pauline occupied herself with housework, cooking, and visiting the sick. She was also the interim superior, in accordance with directives sent by Mother Angel Guardian.<sup>25</sup> Sister Didace hand-copied music for hymnals that the priests had prepared in the Nulato language.

Christmas 1900 was celebrated with the first Solemn Midnight Mass in Nulato. The sisters prepared a Christmas tree for the children. Gifts were mittens, handkerchiefs, dresses, trousers, underwear—whatever the sisters could make. The children were delighted and the parents even more so because of the usefulness of the gifts.

Believing that the Nulato and Koserefski sisters should form but one group, the General Superior of the Congregation planned to remove the Nulato sisters and close the school. Father Jetté opposed the step, as is evidenced by his letter of 1901:

*When the school at Nulato was begun, I objected to it; Father Crimont and Sister Mary Stephen, having heard my arguments, passed over them. Subsequently, I could see that the school was a success and that my hesitation was unfounded. . . . I cannot agree that this school should be suppressed . . . if the sisters leave, I shall have to try to save the school somehow. . . . I myself would teach if need be.<sup>26</sup>*

As a result, the Nulato sisters left there only for part of the summer and went to Dawson to regain their strength, still undermined by the epidemics of 1900. At the end of July 1901, Sister Stephen returned to Nulato after having spent eight months back East. Sister Pauline was assigned to Holy Cross. The Nulato trio, Sisters Stephen, Evariste, and Didace, taught at the school and cared for the sick in the village.

Until transient tides of non-Natives ebbed and flowed along the Yukon River, liquor was unknown to the interior Athabascans. Distilled liquor and recipes for a Russian brew (kvass) had come to Alaska with the Russians who used both types of drink with little inhibition. British and American vessels had also brought liquor for illegal barter with the Natives. Trading companies soon were involved as well. After the purchase of Alaska by the United States, despite efforts of the Treasury Department and the Army, the abuse of liquor continued. Distilled spirits became a prime item of trade for many Natives in Southeastern, Southcentral, and Southwestern Alaska. Government laws sporadically outlawed liquor, but as there was little chance of enforcing the law and little will, by many, to do so, the abuse mounted. “Hootch” came among the Tlingit early in the American era. The brew took its name from the village of Letushkwin (Kootznahoo, pronounced “Hu-che-nu”) on Admiralty Island. The “bad whiskey” could cause insanity and even death. Alcohol flowed freely in gold rush camps and towns. Along the coastal regions, seamen unashamedly used alcohol for barter.<sup>27</sup>

Governor Swineford, in his reports about the situation in Alaska in the 1890s, cites the Episcopalian missionary at Anvik, the Reverend John Chapman, who wrote:

*. . . liquor has not troubled the Natives speaking the group of dialects found around Anvik; but almost everywhere else in the Yukon country it has made more or less trouble.<sup>28</sup>*

With the opening of the Alaska interior by non-Natives traveling the Yukon River, liquor was introduced to the Nulato people. With it came an attendant swarm of evils. The people were unused to its ravages: physical, mental,



moral. Those who saw the flood of alcohol were not able to dam it, and those who experienced the flood often did not give a damn. "By the turn of the century, the Indians along the Yukon were able to obtain all the whiskey they wanted, either through unscrupulous middlemen or in the saloons that had sprouted up to serve the ever-thirsty miners."<sup>29</sup>

In constant hope of helping the Nulato people in their struggles, Sister Stephen welcomed to Nulato in 1902 two new sisters: Sisters Sylvina and Gedeon, who replaced her other two companions. Full of zeal for the missions, Sister Sylvina taught music and the younger children at school while Sister Gedeon did housework. Sister Sylvina's one year at Nulato was a difficult one and her health was undermined.

In the summer of 1903, the sisters decided to go to Holy Cross for a rest. Seeing how lonely and afraid Sister Gedeon was at Nulato, Sister Pauline offered to exchange places with her. The offer was accepted and Sisters Pauline, Stephen and Sylvina returned to Nulato. But the Jesuits were concerned that Sister Sylvina's health would not withstand the rigors of another winter. Although it was late in the navigation season, Sister Pauline was asked to accompany Sister Sylvina to Dawson.

Sister Madeleine of the Sacred Heart retraced the trip downriver to Nulato with Sister Pauline. The *Leah* started downriver, but many delays resulted in the channels' becoming too shallow for further navigation downstream. The sisters headed back to Dawson, where, during that winter, Sister Pauline nursed the elderly men who needed care. Sister Madeleine of the Sacred Heart resumed her customary duties. Sister Stephen stayed alone at Nulato.

A Caucasian man, having to be away on business, brought his seventeen-year-old Native wife to Sister Stephen and asked if she could board at the convent while he was gone. One morning, soon after her arrival, the girl began beating Sister Stephen and then fled to homes in the village. After recovering from the blows, Sister Stephen went to the Jesuits for advice. Their counsel was to wait for her to come back on her own and then oblige her to eat alone. One of the priests went to see the young woman, who returned to the convent the next day. Afraid that the girl would not be eating enough, Sister Stephen invited her to share her table. Things went on happily from then on. When the husband returned in June, the woman showed that she was not particularly pleased to see him and said that she wanted to stay at the convent. "But," remarked Sister Stephen, "this was just her natural modesty. She really was glad to see him."<sup>30</sup>

While Sister Stephen was alone, her health was good and she taught from November to mid-April 1904. Enrollment reached thirty-eight and indicated the continued success of the school. Between twenty-four and thirty-one were present every day. The Department of Education of Alaska granted a monthly salary to the teacher, on condition that the Nulato school be considered a public school and that sister would adopt the title of "Miss." Sister Stephen became known as Miss Mary Stephen and continued her function as teacher in the mission school. The salary went to the Jesuits, who provided for the sisters' needs. This money, a reliable income, was appreciated, for the missionaries were otherwise dependent solely on charity and donations.

Father Jetté wrote to the Mother House that having the sisters in Nulato was good for the village. Besides teaching the youth, the sisters influenced the adults, Native and non-Native alike. What the sisters would have to say,



about any matter, was of prime concern to the people. Father Jetté reiterated what he had often stated, “. . . to learn a language and be effective required that a person stay a long time in one mission.”<sup>31</sup> Sister Stephen’s long association with the mission was an asset, especially as the two who had shown proficiency in Koyukon, Sisters Didace and Antonia, were now gone.

As soon as the ice broke in Dawson, Sister Pauline came downriver. There was only one other woman on board the steamer, for river captains returning to their boats in winter quarters on the Andreafsky River had priority passage. A month later, Sister Didace, one of the foundresses at Nulato, returned to the village. She was delighted to be back after an absence of two years and to be able to put into use the Koyukon she had learned. Hearing that sickness was obliging Sister Joseph to leave Holy Cross, Sister Stephen sent Sister Pauline on downriver to help at that mission. Nulato got along with just two sisters. For two months, temperatures averaged -50° F and ice fog obscured what little sun there was. Windows were frosted thickly with the sculptured beauty only the North can know. Potatoes were wrapped in blankets to keep them from freezing. Village life continued as usual, for the Nulato people were hardened against the cold.

Although aware of the Jesuits’ displeasure with Native dances, the Natives of Nulato invited neighboring villages to a winter celebration. When everything was ready and the big gathering and dances virtually a foregone conclusion, the people, to the surprise of the missionaries, raised the question, “Are we doing right?” They agreed among themselves to abide by the decision of the Jesuits. This affair was apparently settled to the satisfaction of all. The Native celebration and dances were canceled and the celebration of Christmas accentuated.

Indian dances had come to be thought of as detrimental to spiritual progress in the Faith. Missionaries had noticed how the people became caught up in the chanting, stamping, and gesturing until they were almost ready to collapse. The fatigue and stress of the dances took a physical toll that drained people for some time afterward. At times a medicine man, or shaman, at the dance exerted what appeared to be hypnotic and trance-like situations. The whole decor of unfamiliar masks and hand wands made missionaries suspicious of just what was going on. Not understanding the nuances of attempted explanations, the missionaries condemned the whole proceedings.

In the mid-1960s, with more anthropological understanding of the language and culture, the richness of the dances became better accepted by the missionaries. Further sympathetic study soon brought out the fact that the Native rituals were doing, in their way, what the Church was doing in her liturgical way. The means were different, but the goal was the same. In the Native world, just as in the Catholic world, there were people who went overboard on certain aspects of devotion and failed to grasp the total significance of the spiritual truth being expressed. A great healing along these lines came about with the study of Nulato customs that Father William J. Loyens, S.J., undertook in the mid-1960s as part of his anthropological studies. His writings and enlightening talks helped break down Church suspicions about, and antagonisms toward, the Native dances and customs. Father Loyens’ efforts showed, instead, that these were, by and large, cultural. He also showed that the presence of the Spirit was evident in the Nulato pre-Christian milieu, as



indeed it was throughout the world. But from the 1880s to the 1960s, the Native people still experienced pain and loss in this regard.

Another major tradition of the Nulato people was the great feast for the dead. Everyone in the village carried plates, pots, and pans filled with appetizing foods to the burial grounds and placed these offerings on the graves. Afterward, traditional Native dancing was held to please the spirits of the deceased and to help the mourners forget their sorrow because they were able in ritual ways to express their love. Unfortunately, by the time the Church accepted the Native dances and rites as good, many of the songs and gestures had been forgotten. This is a great cultural tragedy.

Just when conditions at Nulato were beginning to be better understood, circumstances called the sisters to serve in another way. During the last days of August 1906, Father Crimont, Prefect Apostolic since 1904, and Father Francis Monroe, S.J., urged the sisters to close the school in Nulato and initiate a ministry of healing among the sick and the injured in the much larger new town of Fairbanks. This was an unexpected development for Sister Stephen and Sister Mary du Coeur de Jésus, who had replaced Sister Didace.

An Italian miner, Felix Pedro, after prospecting in the North for three years, had discovered gold near the junction of the Tanana and Chena Rivers in 1902. No sooner had he recorded his find than an influx of miners from up and down the Yukon River and from Nome pockmarked the region with their claims. The Fairbanks paper boasted a thousand settlers within a year. Questionable order, characteristic of most mining camps, did not taint Fairbanks. Its reputation quickly drew many law-abiding residents.

Every new mining center seemed to require a hospital. The Sisters of



*A summer scene of Immaculate Conception Church (with Jesuit rectory attached) and St. Joseph's Hospital, as Sister Mary Stephen described it: "... three stories high besides the basement."*

(SPA)

(Photo credit: Cann)

*A light covering of snow and some plumes of smoke offer winter embellishments to the hospital the Sisters of Saint Ann knew in the winter of 1906-1907. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Cann)





Saint Ann had staffed one in Juneau, for the Silverbow; in Douglas, for the Treadwell; and in Dawson, for the Klondike. The Sisters of Charity of Providence had responded in 1902 by opening Holy Cross Hospital in Nome. Now St. Joseph's Hospital, Fairbanks, was the response to the Pedro gold rush. Like Dawson, Fairbanks knew temperature extremes of -50° F in winter to 95° F in summer. Fairbanks also reveled in the light-filled days of summer.

After the Jesuits had built the hospital in Fairbanks, they applied too late in the season for nursing sisters to reach the Interior of Alaska. On his authority as Prefect Apostolic, Father Crimont then requested that a Jesuit brother continue the school at Nulato and that the sisters go to Fairbanks. Father Crimont next asked Sister Zenon for one of the Dawson sisters. After repeated refusals, he said, "I will sit on the doorstep of St. Mary's Hospital and not leave until I have at least one sister." Like the gospel account of the friend who was importuned at night for bread, Sister Zenon could not resist such an appeal.<sup>32</sup> Sister Pauline, back in Dawson by then, was named for Fairbanks and met the other two sisters at Tanana. Together they continued up the Tanana River, into the Chena and landed at Fairbanks, on 30 September 1906. Although the Jesuits were disconcerted that no trained nurse was among them, they welcomed the sisters.<sup>33</sup>

Their coming, however, was ill-timed. The heating system for the hospital had not yet been installed; it was sitting with other freight in Tanana. As the October cold made it impossible to stay at a hospital without heat, a two-room cabin was put at the disposal of the sisters. Three hospital beds were crowded into one room. By arrangement, the sisters and the Jesuits had their meals together, an unusual procedure in 1906. In return, the sisters did the cooking—with what little there was. The sisters were hungry most of the time. The hospital was their prime concern and every day they tried to hasten its opening by doing whatever work they could.

Despite this, after the sisters had experienced two weeks of unsettled conditions, poverty, and actual hunger, the Jesuits decided to send the group back to Nulato. Although navigation on the Yukon River was closed, there was a chance that a small boat might be able to get to Nulato. When the sisters left Fairbanks, a letter was sent to Father Jetté, pastor at Tanana, asking him to arrange the trip between Tanana and Nulato. Father Jetté exploded, "If our superiors sometimes lose their wits, we are not responsible and if there is a Providence for the foolhardy, you will certainly need it."<sup>34</sup> At that season, no one would row the sisters two hundred miles downriver to Nulato. However, as the sisters were already in Tanana, Father Jetté housed them for a week with a local family. The postmaster at Tanana, managed to get the heating plant onto a coal-carrying steamer, the *Ella*, and obtain some accommodation on board for the sisters in order that they might return to Fairbanks.<sup>35</sup>

No one was expecting the sisters back in Fairbanks. When no one met the boat, the sisters found their way to the Jesuit house, where the welcome was as cool as the late October weather. Another cabin was rented for the sisters for four weeks while the heating plant was installed at the hospital. The sisters, with no money and no food, lived off the charity of kind-hearted women in Fairbanks.<sup>36</sup>

Arduous cleaning of the hospital and the Jesuit Club House, a reading and social area open to the public, as well as repeated washings of rather unpre-



sentable linens to be used in the hospital, occupied the sisters. On 18 November 1906, St. Joseph's Hospital opened its doors. Doctors Hall, M.D., W.G. Cassels, M.D.,<sup>37</sup> and J. A. Sutherland, M.D., formed the medical staff. Although none of the sisters had any advanced medical training, they struggled to compensate for this by unlimited services to the thirty-five patients that registered. Two maids and an orderly helped with the care of the patients. Professional nurses were expected for the summer of 1907. The doctors did marvels with their uncertificated helpers and volunteers. The sisters gave their services freely and generously.<sup>38</sup> Sister Mary Coeur de Jésus was cook and Sister Pauline, night nurse.<sup>39</sup>

The Jesuits maintained control of the hospital. Understandably, they had no intention of relinquishing the hospital to an untrained staff. Be that as it may, the success that marked the hospitals in Juneau, Douglas, and Dawson when the Congregation undertook the nursing task was not repeated in Fairbanks. Tension with Father Monroe grew throughout the winter and physical ailments plagued the sisters. Conscious, too, of their lack of medical training, the sisters complied scrupulously with recommendations of doctors and health care regulations.

Worn out and confined to bed for two months, Sister Pauline, veteran missionary, realized that her days in the North were over and that she should return to a more temperate climate.<sup>40</sup> This sister had been a foundress at Holy Cross, Akulurak, Dawson, and Fairbanks. She had come from Dawson to Nulato in 1900. When navigation opened in 1907, she left Fairbanks with Father Crimont on an early steamer bound for Dawson. In saying goodbye to the two remaining sisters, Father Crimont forbade them to leave Fairbanks before his return. However, after his departure, Father Monroe told them that they were free to go. He had shown all year that the hospital he cherished was not to be entrusted to the Sisters of Saint Ann. The sisters waited, though, to hear from their own superiors before leaving Fairbanks 23 June 1907.

Father Crimont, after trying several expedients,<sup>41</sup> obtained for a time the services of the Sisters of St. Benedict<sup>42</sup> and a thirty-four-year-old nurse, Jane Hassen, a candidate to the Order. Jane had had considerable training in a doctor's office.<sup>43</sup> When the Benedictines left Fairbanks, Miss Hassen stayed until, in response to Father Monroe's appeal, the Sisters of Charity of Providence took over the direction of the hospital.

After meeting with Sister Zenon in Juneau and talking with her, Jane decided to use her nursing skills as a Sister of Saint Ann. She entered the Victoria novitiate in 1910. As a religious, Jane was known as Sister Mary Victor. It was a suitable name, for it recalled the victory and peace that came to the Sisters of Saint Ann after the painful struggles of the foundation year of the Fairbanks hospital. Sister Victor was a fruit of, and a reminder of that pain. Possessing an all but infallible diagnostic ability, she was invaluable in the missions where she served. Gifted as a storyteller, with her Irish wit she made many a salient point that told aging miners just where they stood. They appreciated her brusqueness and candor, sometimes short, but always offered with a charity that softened words.

Through the years Sister Victor served at Dawson and Holy Cross, but thought often of the time she bridged the gap when the Fairbanks hospital had no one. As that hospital benefitted from the devotedness of the Sisters of Providence and the city of Fairbanks expanded, Sister Victor looked back on



her early efforts and had a grateful smile. She herself did not return to Fairbanks, but much later, in 1969, the ministry of the Sisters of Saint Ann had a new beginning there.

At the end of the summer of 1969, Sisters Alice Legault and Judith Morin moved into a downtown trailer on Cushman Street and opened the Blue Bead residence. The trailer was so named because of a symbolic story of people discovering other people, a story both sisters appreciated. A single blue bead on a cord became the recognized and loved symbol of the sisters' ministry in Fairbanks.

The severity of winter temperatures had been a challenge for the sisters in 1906 to 1907. Severe cold was still a challenge sixty years later for women now faced with having to drive cars through heavy snows in response to calls for help, to maneuver in streets banked with snow, to keep batteries from freezing. Poor visibility as a result of ice fog, or of exhaust fumes in the sub-zero weather, was another hazard. Windows and entrances to the Blue Bead iced up. Winds pierced the trailer walls.

During her five years in Fairbanks, Sister Judith's special ministry was with college students at the University of Alaska in an area called College. Sister organized an ecumenical campus ministry with Reverend Robert Nelson, a Methodist minister. Bob and Judi, as they were known, made campus ministry integral to college life by setting up a counseling office, offering programs, workshops, retreats, liturgies and other spiritual and social experiences. To facilitate Sister Judith's campus ministry, the sisters in 1971 moved to a trailer court situated at the foot of University Hill.<sup>44</sup>

From 1969 to 1977, Sister Alice's mission in Fairbanks, at first vaguely defined, became more and more clear. Her first year was spent in looking and searching, praying and planning, questioning and discussing. With the blessing of Bishop Francis D. Gleeson, S.J., and his coadjutor, Bishop Robert L. Whelan, S.J., and with the encouragement of the pastors at Immaculate Conception and Sacred Heart parishes, Sister Alice began to meet family and parish needs. She visited homes of former students and co-workers she had been associated with previously. Sister Alice was competent and at ease dealing with the many problems of downtown Fairbanks. She also began a prison ministry to women. She made herself known to people who were otherwise friendless and somehow obtained financial assistance or shelter when it was lacking. Word soon spread, and before long Sister Alice became a byword of hope.

The Salvation Army knew her as a volunteer assistant in feeding the hungry. The Welfare Department also knew her. Sister was always eager to participate in parish functions. Her happiest moments were when people rediscovered their faith and began to witness to it by the way they lived.

With the building of the Alaska Pipeline from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, two primary concerns had to be met by the Church in Fairbanks. The influx of people created a housing shortage. Sister Alice was active in helping people find adequate shelter. In answer to the second need, along with Sister Ellie Brown, O.P., Sister Alice volunteered as part-time chaplain on the pipeline north of Fairbanks during the winter of 1975 to 1976. Chaplaincy meant holding ecumenical services at places like Old Man Camp. The sisters carried the Eucharist with them for Catholic Communion services. Their best work,



they believed, was simply that of the ministry of presence as they talked to employees in the mess halls and recreation rooms.

In 1977, the Soroptimist Society conferred upon Sister Alice the title, “Woman of the Year.” Sister Alice smiled for a picture and quietly went back to her unostentatious serving of the poor. That year, sister went to Montreal, where she had grown up, to study opportunities for ministry and to assess her Alaska effort. Reaffirmed that she belonged in Alaska, sister returned to Fairbanks and to a Parish Outreach Ministry—visiting homes and promoting lay leadership in the Christian community. Sister also acted as resource person for referrals to special agencies, set up a counseling program in the parish office at Immaculate Conception Church, and worked with single parents and refugees.

Even more important to the apostolate in Fairbanks than an individual ministry was the group ministry of Sister Alice and her various companions, whether Sisters of Saint Ann or sisters of some other community, who lived with her. Sister Alice invited neighbors in to share in the sisters’ prayer, to the enrichment of all. She maintained:

*We witness by our presence, hospitality, and prayerful events that we organize from time to time. We offer a ministry of presence and try to offer a loving, compassionate acceptance and guidance. We are willing to listen and help people look for alternatives in their lives.<sup>45</sup>*

Sister Joyce Snyder, S.S.A., a former missionary in Chile, joined Sister Alice in 1979 for ministry among the Hispanics. Some two thousand Spanish-speaking people were estimated to be in the Fairbanks area and its adjacent communities. A major problem was the logistics of getting to every family. The solution came with group meetings, area home visits, and the spreading of the word: “A Spanish-speaking sister is in the city and is available!” At Sacred Heart parish, Sister Joyce was part-time social coordinator, especially involved with youth through giving swimming lessons, visiting the Fairbanks Youth Facility, and directing Girl Scouts. Because of her rich background in music, she joined local chorales and helped prepare meaningful liturgies.<sup>46</sup>

Sister Joyce and Sister Alice lived on Dunkel Street near downtown Fairbanks and within walking distance of Sister Alice’s office in Immaculate Conception parish. Her office was in the shadow of the old St. Joseph’s Hospital where Sister Stephen and her two companions had struggled in 1906 and 1907.

The Fairbanks ministry was furthered by the contributions and witness of many: Sisters Veronica and Denise Doyle, S.S.A., on the college campus; Sister Helen Brennan, S.P.; Japanese student, Hiroko C. Horiuchi; Father William J. Loyens, S.J.; former students; lay men and women of the Fairbanks Church. Through the efforts of all, lay leadership in the Church was promoted and strengthened.

The Blue Bead closed its doors in June 1983, when Sister Alice went again to Montreal and Sister Joyce returned to Massachusetts to discern other apostolic needs. The effort of the Sisters of Saint Ann had ended again in Fairbanks.

Meanwhile, mission involvement had continued at Nulato, where the Blue Bead story of people finding people had no symbol but was truly being lived out. The sisters’ return in 1907 was a happy enactment of people finding joy in reunion with people who had been missed. Father Crispin S. Rossi, S.J.,



pastor at Nulato, let them know how truly good it was to find them once again in the village. He and Brother Peter Brancoli, S.J., repeated: "We could do nothing without your cooperation!"<sup>47</sup> The sisters had no time to pine for Fairbanks as they cleaned the convent of a year's accumulation of dust. The Jesuits had tried to do something with the school in the sisters' absence, especially with the older boys. School opened again, with Sister Stephen as teacher and Sister Coeur de Jésus as aide, on 17 September. Brother Joseph V. O'Hare, S.J., taught the older boys. When the families left for fall hunting, the number of pupils dwindled to four. With the return of families in November, some forty students registered, averaging a daily attendance of thirty-five.

As 1908 dawned, scarcely a ripple of wind-blown snow disturbed the many paths made by booted feet in and around Nulato; hardly a ptarmigan dipped its head in acknowledgement. But Sister Stephen recognized the new year as marking the twentieth anniversary of her ministry in the Far North. At sixty-four, she was considered to be in her old and suffering age. The North had hastened her physical deterioration. Little did she or anyone else foresee that this pioneer missionary would celebrate her one hundredth birthday, live long years at the Mother House and inspire scores of young sisters.

The new year had an unexpected trial in store. Stirred by people opposed to church ministry through the schools, some non-Natives had persuaded the Nulato people to sign a request that the government open a truly public school in their village. The request had been granted<sup>48</sup> and a public school building began to be constructed in the summer of 1908. Doctor E. A. Norton, M.D., was appointed teacher. Other government doctors/teachers were appointed to St. Lawrence Island and Iliamna. Besides teaching, Doctor Norton was to furnish medical relief to the Native people in his vicinity according to the plan set up by Sheldon Jackson. The arrival of the public school teacher surprised the Jesuits and sisters. After consultation, the hard decision was reached that the sisters should leave Nulato.

An excerpt from a letter written by Sister Stephen speaks of the poignancy she felt at the loss of the school, a loss she attributed to her lack of virtue and of competency in dealing with the government.<sup>49</sup> Mother Anastasia called Sister Stephen to Dawson, where she happened to be visiting, and named Sister Mary Coeur de Jésus to Holy Cross.

Some considered that under the direction of Doctor Norton, the school year was a failure. The official school attendance figures<sup>50</sup> of the Department of Education differ from the "failure" description alluded to by sisters in their correspondence.

Average daily attendance	21	
Enrollment	47	
Cost per pupil on average attendance		\$118.46
Cost per pupil on enrollment		53.14
Total cost		\$ 2,487.64



*The U.S. Hospital in Nulato, 1909, where Doctor Norton taught when the public school opened. (SPA)*



The teacher left Nulato by the first boat in June 1909. After his departure, the way was clear for the sisters to return, to the joy of those who had pleaded for the reopening of the mission school.

But Sister Stephen did not return.<sup>51</sup> The new teacher and superior was Sister Mary Winifred. Sister Coeur de Jésus came from Holy Cross with a young woman from the mission. A third sister, Sister Mary Addée, was another new face for Nulato. Sister Winifred decided to open the school building at the mission site, erected about the same time as the sisters' house, but as yet unused. The first sisters teaching in Nulato had managed with the two small rooms within the convent itself, but the increasing number of children made more space necessary. Two other rooms were added to the school building, a new type of mortar held the moss in place, and cotton cloth adorned the inside walls. Another public school teacher, assigned to Nulato for 1909 to 1910, opened the public school, but not a child attended. When the superintendent came, the teacher was alone, playing cards. All the children were at the mission school. A conscientious man, the teacher tried to do his duty and justify his salary by offering night classes for those who cared to attend. It should be noted that the sisters received no salary after the public school opened;<sup>52</sup> they, therefore, became independent of government inspection.

The U.S. Bureau of Education report for 1910 mentions the physician, Walter L. Barbour, M.D., as serving Nulato and the Lower Yukon Districts. Physician for the Tanana and upper Yukon Districts was C. M. Rosin, M.D., who was in Nulato the following year, 1910 to 1911.

That the mission school might continue to be a success, the sisters prayed and planned. Monthly picnics rewarded all those who had regular attendance during the month. To teach etiquette, impromptu tables were set with odds and ends of dishes. Folded paper napkins were placed by each setting. The children learned quickly and carried the ideas home. The picnic days demanded much preparation, but kept both classrooms consistently filled. A domestic science course was added to the curriculum. The actual doing of things was always more popular than the straight textbook teaching and, of all the activities, making doughnuts was the favorite. At 5:00 P.M., the sisters rang the bell to call the youngsters for religious instruction and singing.

Critics frowned on any mixture of religion and school work. Knowing this, the sisters were on their guard. To nip the criticism that arithmetic was being neglected, Sister Winifred invited everyone to a public demonstration in which the subject was given prominence.

School attendance became even more regular when the First Territorial Legislature, meeting in March 1913, passed the Compulsory School Act, an act that unintentionally disrupted Native ways of life. For the children to stay in school, as the law required, the women had to stay in the village. The separation of husband and wife, father and children, brought additional social problems to the villages. If the husband stayed home to protect and care for his family, there were no furs. If he went trapping, his family had to try to manage without him. Traditional family togetherness was threatened, as was the man's self-esteem and well-being.

In 1910, the government designated Sister Winifred as public school teacher. Her salary was \$85 a month and she was known as Miss Winifred Sally. She was asked to teach at the other end of town in the public school





*Earnest students look up wide-eyed from their books to pose for the camera. (SPA)*

*Esther McGinty (3rd in first row) and Lilly Stickman (2nd girl) are in this early picture of Nulato Fourth Graders. Notice the covers on the tops of the desks.*



*Sister Mary Winifred's classroom, 1914, shows that she has a green thumb for flowers. The framed sayings above the blackboard read: "Let Us All Do Our Best Today" and "I Live To Do Good To Others."*



building. Doctor Rosin, living in the residence attached to that school, resisted this arrangement, making it difficult to get to the school supplies stored there. With great firmness, Sister Winifred made sure that in justice she had all that rightfully belonged to the school. An inspector from the Department of Education visited the school in May and found it satisfactory. He accepted Sister Winifred's suggestion that the public school be turned into a hospital. The sisters were then able to teach in their own school, but materials and heat were supplied by the government. The inspector was acting on what Governor Swineford had earlier stated:

*The missionaries and teachers can always be relied upon for cooperation and help to the civil government in its work, and as such helps, are valuable agencies for good. I believe them worthy of all the encouragement and aid which the Government can legitimately give them.*<sup>53</sup>

The fact that Sister Coeur de Jésus taught was unusual, for she was a coadjutrix, or auxiliary, sister. The Congregation was primarily an educational one, but supportive ministries were necessary. In her youth, Sister had opted for non-teaching apostolates and entered into the spirit of auxiliary service. Father Rossi, though, noting sister's rare disposition for teaching little ones, pleaded with the Lachine major authorities that Nulato would benefit if she would be allowed to teach.<sup>54</sup> When permission was given, three classrooms were organized, and the good reputation of the school spread up and down the river.<sup>55</sup>

Billy McCarty, Sr., of Ruby remembered some of his experiences in the Nulato school and recounted them in his biography. "The Catholic Sisters, the nuns, taught school down there. They had a pretty good school down there. But I was just full of mischief." Billy had been started in his education by his stepfather, had learned basic English, and entered the second grade in Nulato when the family moved there. One day a stunt of his dumped a pot of water on the sister who was teaching. Billy was in Grade Four then, and that was the end of his schooling. He went to work (at age 11) minding reindeer in Unalakleet.<sup>56</sup>

Sister Coeur de Jésus learned to appreciate the honesty of the children and their concern for keeping their word. If a reward was promised, the reward was expected, even if sister forgot. Otherwise, next time around, there was no response to her wishes. Fortunately compensation for the oversight was acceptable.<sup>57</sup>

That the Nulato people loved Sister Coeur de Jésus was proven more than once, but especially during a summer when she was alone. The village people went to the fish camps to catch and dry fish for the winter. As these camps were five or six miles from the village, the priest excused the people from attendance at Sunday Mass. Rather than leave Sister Coeur de Jésus alone for the Sunday liturgy, many of the people rose at 3:00 A.M., it being daylight up North, attended to their night catch, cut the fish, and rowed to the mission for Mass.

Sister Mary of the Eucharistic Heart, missioned to Nulato in 1912, quickly gained the affection of all, especially through her little surprises or acts of kindness. Sister died suddenly on 2 November 1913 and was buried in Nulato in a section where other non-Natives were buried. The next year her grave was moved closer to the mission, and in the 1980s to the cemetery on the Nulato hill.



Her replacement, Sister Mary Amelia, seemed to show by her melancholy that she had no love for distant missions. Her joyless demeanor and delicate health meant that she could not survive long in Nulato. Another sister, also with poor health, succeeded her. Sister Mary Francis of Jesus, though, found in the North inspiration for her gift of poetry. She described the rhythms of twinkling stars and shimmering snow crystals; the minor wailing chords of Arctic winds; the dirge of river sounds.

Through the first twenty-five years of the school, the constant teaching of the sisters, especially through the domestic science courses and family visits, brought continued changes in life-style to the homes in the village, which, in some cases, eased the hardship of subsistence living. The sisters wished that the Catholic faith would develop equally well. The great obstacle to the steady growth of the faith, they believed, was the counter witness to Christian faith of several non-Natives among the wireless operators, boat helpers, miners, and others with whom the Native people came in contact.

Active and practical, Sister Winifred had a chicken house built in 1920 and made the chicken venture a success for several years. For the winter, each chicken was fitted with little slippers. Sister also kept up a flourishing garden, with plants set out after good starts in the mission greenhouse. Both the chicken house and greenhouse were abandoned when grain and fuel became too expensive.

After fourteen years in Dawson, Sister Mary Ralph (Sister Pauline's niece) was assigned to Nulato as superior of the sisters. A letter of 1925 describes her struggle with loneliness as she carried her lamp from room to room in the winter darkness. Father Joseph McElmeel, S.J., told her, "Sister, every missionary has to be her own light." Through the long dark months of winter, Father McElmeel brought other illumination by teaching courses in Sacred Scripture. One great benefit the sisters enjoyed in Alaska was the spiritual richness that came to them through the priestly ministry of the Jesuits.

Sister Ralph believed that women religious were helping to raise the dignity of Native women, who, she felt, were considered much inferior to the men. She saw that these women looked up to the sisters with some awe, for the sisters were able to speak up, contradict if need be, and act with some independence.<sup>58</sup>

One of the first Sisters of Saint Ann to travel by plane was Sister Coeur de Jésus. Sister slipped on the ice in Nulato, one wintry day of hazardous walking, and broke her leg. Nulato, by 1927, was a small air center. In winter the runway was the frozen river, where evergreen trees marked off the best landing area. Hearing Father McElmeel's emergency radio call, a Wien mail plane flying from Nome to Fairbanks detoured to Nulato. The pilot unloaded the mail pouches and eased sister from a stretcher to a seat. Despite sister's nausea and pain, the trip went well. Ralph and Noel Wien, founders of the pioneer airline, discounted the fares for both sister and Father McElmeel, who accompanied her to Fairbanks. Her double fracture was attended to at St. Joseph's Hospital, the very place she had helped open twenty years previously.

The Nulato trio for 1927 to 1928, and for many years after that, were Sisters Mary Claude, Abigail, and Coeur de Jésus. After her leg healed, the latter gave cooking lessons to those women who wanted to know how to prepare "white people's food." The convent kitchen was used. Father McElmeel helped the school by giving older boys carpentry lessons in his new shop.



*Sister Mary Amelia was in Nulato in 1914 and admired the large mittens decorated with rick-rack braid. (SPA)*



*Sisters who stayed several years in Nulato, such as Sisters Claude, Abigail and Coeur de Jésus, had the joy of seeing children become adults.*



*Village caches are in the background of these pictures. The ornately decorated parkas are marvels of fur work and display the artistic talent of the Nulato people.*



Sister Claude, more than twenty years in Nulato, loved the place and people. Comparisons with other missions, sometimes not favorable toward the Yukon River missions, hurt her. She wrote:

*. . . there is always this with visitors who go to the Eskimo land, viz., comparing these people with our Indians and they are so different. I don't mean that our work is minimized but I suppose the difference is so evident that they can't help talking about it. For instance: the people of Hooper Bay come to Mass every morning, about 40 of them even when it is exceedingly cold in midwinter. In Nelson Island, the people come to make visits at all hours of the day in the church and many daily communions. . . . and here in Nulato we can't say*

*that of our Indians.*

*. . . I know that good is being done and if our people are not as pious as they seem to be in other places, they certainly die in a manner that I would be willing to live a hundred years were I sure to die in the same holy way.<sup>59</sup>*

By using a chapel-boat along the Yukon River in the summer, the priest was able to visit various fish camps and offer Mass for the people there. When the sisters could go along on the *St. Anthony*, the excursion was always a treat. Sister Claude's blue eyes sparkled and her pink cheeks flushed even more as the sisters packed candles, altar linens, prayer books, and lunches in preparation for the outings.

The sisters shared in the decision of Father McElmeel to sell the *St. Anthony* in May 1934 to provide enough money to buy, tear down, and salvage the government hospital in Tanana. He wanted the materials for a new school in Nulato. Building that school was a cooperative effort: the lumber was sawed at John Sommer's Nulato mill; Daniel Sipary was foreman of the Nulato work crew that dug the cellar; and Brother Edward J. Horwedel, S.J., laid the





The children seem to be shivering as they group before the front of the church. The sisters' winter hoods are as varied as the children's. Sister Mary Abigail, in her black "capeline"; Sister Mary Claude, with a dark ruff; Sister Mary Coeur de Jésus, with a white ruff, are probably greeting signs of spring, for they are wearing no mittens. (SPA).



This picture indicates the church, school and sisters' house, much as the mission layout was until the early 1940s when the Jesuits and sisters changed houses. The sisters then lived on the other side of the church. (SPA)



Nulato youngsters huddle together in front of Sister Mary Claude in this March 1928 picture.

Some of the youngsters are named:

- |                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Leopoldine Dimoska | 6. Teresa Machine |
| 2. Alice Lake         | 7. Rita Jap       |
| 3. Anita Ambrose      | 8. Hilda Tommy    |
| 4. Bertha Ismailka    | 9. Gladys Jap     |
| 5. Ellen Willie       | (SPA)             |

foundations. Raisin-rich gingerbread for all the workers was supplied by the sisters.

One of the best-known names connected with Nulato is that of Father John Baptiste Baud, S.J., who came in the summer of 1935 and immediately caught Father McElmeel's enthusiasm for the village and its mission stations, especially Koyukuk and Kaltag. Father Baud, a skilled carpenter, replaced the *St. Anthony* with the *Seghers* in 1938. Sisters Claude, Abigail, and Antonia of the Sacred Heart traveled often on the *Seghers*. The portable altar and box seats were serviceable and well arrayed. Morning sunshine coming through the red and yellow silk drapes in the enclosed cabin diffused an unforgettable glow.



In 1939, Nulato responded to the desire of the missionaries to have a monument in memory of Archbishop Seghers erected in the village. Such a monument was placed on mission grounds near the school to celebrate the 40th anniversary of its opening. Bishop Walter J. Fitzgerald, S.J., Coadjutor to Bishop Crimont, blessed the monument and Father McElmeel gave the eulogy.

The Nulato group of sisters and priest functioned smoothly together for eight years. This was not always the case. At Christmas, memories of Father Jetté and Sister Didace surfaced when someone brought out the hymn book, *Yoyit Rokanaga*, containing twenty-one hymns translated from the French or English into Ten'ah (Koyukon) by Father Jetté, with accompaniments hand-copied by Sister Didace. Revival of interest in the Native tongue also led to renewing efforts to teach prayers in the Ten'ah language. During the winter there was much to talk about, for Father Baud had stories of his home in France, his experiences in the French Legion, and his new-found friends in America. Father Baud also discussed his oil paintings. Sister Mary Pius, replacing Sister Claude, became part of the group in 1942. Sister Pius learned to become an expert rabbit snarer. Every day after school, she walked her circuit and supplied the mission with fresh meat and rabbit fur. Although the Native people were amused at seeing her check her snares, they felt a special kinship for this sister who tried to live, as they did, off the land.

By 1942, radio had made its appearance in the Nulato convent. The congenial missionaries enjoyed beautiful music that lightened their spirits. When *Tundra Topics*, a bush "newspaper of the air," made its debut, the Nulato sisters had special permission to extend their evening activities until after the program, which began at 9:00, the beginning hour of Solemn Silence and retirement prescribed by the Rule.

Sister Antonia of the Sacred Heart taught the primary grades and was conscious of the memory of her aunt, Sister Antonia of Jesus, pioneer sister in Nulato. A school display of workbooks and crafts led some visitors to question whether or not the children had actually done the work. They had. The girls' dexterity with the needle was especially evident. The display emphasized the natural skill of the Nulato people and their art even with new media. Father Baud, also concerned with education, continued Father McElmeel's manual arts program. In 1941-1942, under Father Baud's direction, the priest's house was remodeled to become the convent; the convent became the rectory. The sisters helped in the hammering, sawing, calcimining and wall stencilling. In 1949, Father Baud reinstated the name, Our Lady of the Snows, to the parish.

Father McElmeel, S.J., now pastor at Galena, asked for two sisters to go there for a few weeks, as children would benefit from religious instruction. Many families from Nulato and other villages had relocated during World War II to Galena, where a military airfield was built. To spare two sisters from Nulato was impossible. Sister Antonia went alone, therefore, and stayed in an empty cabin. She taught four classes daily, visited the people in their homes and received inquirers and parents in the evenings. Father McElmeel taught two classes a day and showed accompanying picture slides. The whole catechetical experience was good, but when permission was requested from Lachine to repeat such a session, that request was denied. Authorities noted that a sister should always be accompanied. This restriction limited each one's



mobility and service. The obligation of daily Mass for the sisters also frustrated the priests, limiting their activities to mission stations. Modifications of these rules came only in the 1960s.

Two special events marked the spring of 1951: one pointed to the past and the other to the future. Maryann Ambrose, the last living daughter of Kerilka, the friend from whom Archbishop Seghers had purchased a cabin in the winter of 1877-1878, died in March. With her death, the last link with early missionary effort in Nulato seemed severed. The second event marked the direction the people of Nulato were taking for the future. For the first time, two students from the mission school successfully completed Government Grade Eight examinations. Both students, Maxie Huhndorf and Frederick Stickman, received their certificates.

A newcomer to Alaska, but a veteran missionary among Native people of both eastern and western Canada, replaced Sister Mary Pius in 1952. Sister Dorothy Marie later admitted that her first reaction to Nulato, as the bush airplane circled above the village, was that it was very primitive. She associated Nulato with lack of drinking water. The mission depended on summer rain, for it had no well. The rain water was often sooty and oily because it was collected from the galvanized roofs of the mission. For the yearly provision of water, about forty aluminum-painted drums stored in the basement were filled with this rain water. A weekly supply was hand-pumped to the kitchen drum. The Native people usually carried their drinking water from the Nulato River, about one mile southwest of the village.

Sister Dorothy introduced Sister Mary Freda, another newcomer to Alaska, to the particularities of Nulato when the office of superior again had to be filled. In mid-winter, acute arthritis sent Sister Antonia of the Sacred Heart to Fairbanks and eventually to St. Ann's Hospital in Juneau. The convent in Nulato was cold even though it was equipped for central heating. Fuel was used sparingly. One of the sisters remembers that she felt like a seal on a cake of ice as she knelt on her prie-dieu in chapel. The school was just as cold. When the students wiped off their slates with a wet rag, a film of ice covered the slate. Roy Huhndorf, from the vantage point of adulthood, had this to say about the mission school he knew:

*From 1946 to 1955, before I left Nulato for Anchorage, the educational system of this small village was represented by three extraordinary women . . . each of whom made an enduring impression on her students. They were stern, though loving teachers, who had no use for aimlessness and lack of purpose. They were from an order that did not hesitate to discipline the students and to emphasize the need to strive, to work hard and to be serious about a student's work.*

*The sisters felt they were preparing us for a world beyond the banks of the Yukon. They could not foresee the vast changes that would alter the world in which their young charges lived. They didn't know how, 20 years later, some of these children would have responsibilities of great magnitude as the State and Alaska native community underwent great change, but they had a glimmer that we needed to be ready.<sup>60</sup>*

In 1956, Sister Dorothy became superior only to learn that, because of shortages of sisters elsewhere, the Congregation was planning to withdraw



*A favorite place for picture-taking in Nulato seems to be before a doorway. In this instance, Sisters Clarence Marie, Dorothy Marie and Claire Cecilia have called their young friends to stand on the convent steps with them on a sunny day. Two of the sisters are wearing work aprons so a picnic seems to be in preparation. The year is about 1957. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Sister Dorothy Forest collection)



from Nulato. Sister wrote that it was Nulato and similar Alaska missions that had drawn her and many others to the Sisters of Saint Ann. Her remarks were heard by the General Council. Nulato stayed as part of the Congregation's involvement with the North. Sister Dorothy was to welcome new sisters and new growth.<sup>61</sup>

The sisters were coached by a Public Health nurse, Miss Douglas "Doug" Barnesley, R.N., as they wished to continue visiting the sick in the village. Sometimes, when all medical help seemed to fail, the sisters sought the intercession of their foundress, Mother Mary Ann, to obtain a special gift of health from God. With great faith, the people joined in these intercessory prayers.

If Sister Dorothy Marie associated Nulato with a deprivation of water, Sister Mary Rose of the Child Jesus experienced too much of it. The annual spring floods damaged walls, left muddy sediment on books and furniture, loosened labels on canned goods, disrupted life, and provided enough work to fill the vacation months of summer. Part of her school vacation was spent giving religious education sessions in Kaltag, where she and her companion stayed with Mrs. Edgar (Virginia) Kalland, an Eskimo woman and a good friend of the sisters.

Sister Mary Anne Rita was welcomed to Nulato in 1962 just as Father Baud and Sister Dorothy Marie were being assigned elsewhere. A priest from the Bristol Bay, Father George S. Endal, S.J., and his companion, "Brother" Joseph Lundowski, a layman who had attached himself to Father Endal to assist with liturgical and other services, transferred to Nulato. The priest sensed progress within the village. A city status was being sought and plans for a new school, at Father Endal's invitation, were given to the Department of Education, Juneau. The newcomers were interested in Nulato's past as well as its future, and the anthropologist, Father Loyens, on his visits to Nulato, brought the newcomers to see the ruins of the old Russian fort, buried in grass and weeds in back of the village.

Sister Anne Eveline, although unaware of it in 1965, was to see both the end and the beginning of types of missionary presence. Her term as superior began with a celebration for Father Loyens in Sipary Hall, the village gathering place. New energy for the mission came that year to Nulato. Young volunteers eager to assist the Jesuits in their Church work in Alaska were arriving from major educational centers in the lower States to begin filling needs. Mary Haischer, the first of these volunteers in Nulato, taught in the schools, reorganized the library, and introduced the first folk Mass to Nulato. VISTA workers (Volunteers In Service To America) were also in Nulato. Young adults of the village itself became involved in Project Head Start. A townsite, far removed from the threat of floods, was projected. Slowly, and then with increasing rapidity, because of transportation and communication advances, the old ways yielded to newer aspects of life in Nulato. In 1968, a public two-year high school was built.

Increased involvement of apostolic lay people and the assuming of many responsibilities by the Nulato people themselves caused the Sisters of Saint Ann to reconsider continued commitment to Our Lady of the Snows Mission. In February 1969, Sister Kathleen Moroney, Provincial Superior, officially notified those concerned that the sisters would withdraw that summer. They had been in Nulato exactly seventy years (1899 to 1969). Sister



*In this 1959 aerial view of Nulato, the mission (including the library) are at the left. Buildings at the mission are: Sisters' House, church, school, Jesuit House. A mission boat appears to be pulled up and another, possibly the Seghers, is at the water's edge. The monument to Archbishop Seghers is just outside the shadow of the school. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Will Thompson)



*While visiting Edna Stickman in her home, Sister Mary Anne Eveline admires the bead work Edna has completed.*

(Photo credit: Sister Anne Eveline Paquette collection)

Anne Eveline wrote on the final pages of the sisters' Council Book: "... Sadness fills our hearts as we see all that has not been done to prepare these people for the radical changes that are so rapidly taking place, social changes which bring havoc to their way of life. . . ."62

Three years later, Sister Anne Eveline, whose concern for the Nulato people had not waned, returned as religious-education coordinator, continuing in this work until her transfer in 1980. Sister found encouragement and guidance in Father Charles A. Saalfeld, S.J. Part of her role, as she saw it, was to enter as fully as possible into the Native way of life. Sister Agnes Marie shared the Nulato apostolate from 1972 to 1973. After her departure, Sister Anne Eveline continued on alone in the village. Sister learned to cut fish as the Native women did, and participated in their other chores. Sister Carmelita MacKenzie flew in from Victoria, British Columbia, for two summers to share community life with Sister Anne Eveline. Arriving in June, during the fishing season, most of Sister Carmelita's impressions had to do with fish-wheels, "kicker" boats, outdoor fish-cutting tables, and buzzing airplanes. In



the afternoons the sisters taught religious-education classes to the children of Nulato, Kaltag, or Koyukuk.<sup>63</sup>

Sister Jeannette LaRose joined Sister Anne Eveline in 1979. Sister Jeannette advocated leadership training for lay ministries and initiated local charismatic prayer groups. Noting the great need for adult education as she visited neighboring villages, she accepted the offer of the Dena Corporation, Fairbanks, to assume responsibility for an adult upgrading program for the villages of the Nulato area. Her efforts with this program brought her national honors.

After the sudden death of Father Saalfeld in March 1978, a priest from Georgia, Father Charles A. Bartles, S.J., came to Nulato. Amiable introductions and beginnings eventually led to tensions as the new missionary and veteran Sister Anne Eveline found themselves differing about how to bring the Good News of Christ to the people. As a result, after a difficult year and a half, sister left the village she loved.

One of the many sisters searching for a life-style and meaningful ministry to which she felt called, Sister Helene Corneau came from Victoria to join Sister Jeannette in her isolated apostolate in the Nulato area in 1980. In a short while Sister Helene realized that sharing in the life along the Yukon River was not for her. Sister Jeannette stayed on, but in the summer of 1981 moved to Galena where she was named pastor, ministering among people who seemed happy to have her. Father Thomas W. Fisk, S.J., came to Galena once a month and at his visits sister had people ready for the reception of the sacraments reserved for priestly ministry.<sup>64</sup>

At the request of Bishop Whelan in 1982, Sister Jeannette returned to Nulato. Father Bartles was transferred and Nulato was served by Father Theodore E. Kestler, S.J. Sister Jeannette formed a Christian community with several committed volunteers.

The long history of the comings and goings of the sisters to Nulato finally ended in 1983 when the Sisters of Saint Ann definitely withdrew from that Yukon River mission and accepted a new beginning in the Yup'ik villages of Chefornek and Nightmute. Though the sisters have permanently left Nulato, Sr. Anne Eveline still returns there for the Stick Dances and keeps in touch with the people of Nulato in various other ways.

\* \* \* \* \*

What color can symbolize Nulato? None other than brown—rich shades of brown. There is the golden brown of drying grass along the cemetery road, the deeper brown of willows by the sloughs. There is the chocolate brown of fur on beaver hats. Browning doughnuts sizzle and brown-crust bread, hot from the oven, melts butter as it is spread. There are the browns, tans and beiges of friendly log cabins and of caches—newly made or graying through the years. There is a rosy glow on brown-faced healthy children and there is the taffy brown of runners for the sleds. Brown is for suntanned fishermen and for gunnysacks the women use in cutting fish. Brown is for steamer paddlewheels, for barges showing scuffs and water lines. Brown is for the iodine of Fairbanks and for the autumn years of Sister Stephen's life. Brown is for doors opening and closing on various stages of ministry in Nulato. Brown is, finally, for Sister Anne Eveline's warm cups of "chi."



# Time Line for Chapter Four

- 1838 Malakov welcomed at Nulagito
- 1838-1839 Great smallpox epidemic  
Malakov returns to Nulagito
- 1839-1841 Nordstrom as trader
- 1841 Trading center burns down  
Derabin arrives to rebuild (Sept.)
- 1843 Zagoskin names R[eka] Nulata
- 1851 Attack by Koyukon  
Death of Derabin and Lt. Barnard  
Trading center destroyed
- 1853 Stockaded center built up the Yukon
- 1863 Lukin in Nulato; by boat to Ft. Yukon
- 1865 Western Union Telegraph Co. survey group
- 1866 Death of Major Robert Kennicott (May)  
Frederick Whymper and W.H. Dall arrive with survey group (fall)
- 1867 Successful laying of Atlantic cable  
Purchase of Alaska by U.S.  
Whymper and Dall by boat downriver
- 1869 U.S. riverboat, the *Yukon*, ascends the river.  
Charles W. Raymond assignment in Alaska  
Alaska Commercial Co. monopoly on lower and middle Yukon River
- 1873 Lecorre and Bishop Clut in Nulato
- 1873-1874 Lecorre at St. Michael and delta
- 1877-1878 Mandart and Bishop Seghers at Nulato
- 1886 Sisters of Saint Ann in Juneau  
Death of Archbishop Seghers
- 1887 Tosi "outside" giving news and getting help  
Tosi in Nulato  
Jesuit "school" in Nulato
- 1888 Giordano to build church in Nulato  
Sisters of Saint Ann accept Nulato, the "Far North"  
Sisters of Saint Ann assigned to Koserefski by Jesuit mission superior
- 1892 Trip to Nulato from Holy Cross
- 1894 Sisters of Saint Ann to Akulurak
- 1897 Attempt to winter at Nulato
- 1898 Sisters of Saint Ann leave Akulurak  
Six sisters reach Dawson
- 1899 Sisters of Saint Ann in Nulato for a day school
- 1900 Great typhoid epidemic
- 1901 Tentative plan to withdraw from Nulato
- 1906 Nulato sisters to Fairbanks  
Fairbanks hospital opens in Nov.
- 1907 Sisters of Saint Ann leave Fairbanks  
Sisters return to Nulato
- 1908 Sisters leave Nulato
- 1909 Sisters return to Nulato  
Sister is designated public school teacher
- 1912 Sister dies in Nulato



1913 Compulsory School Act

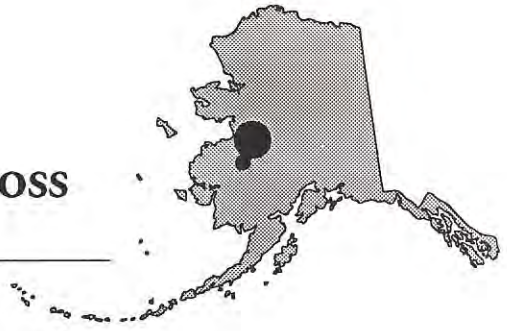
1930s Chapel boat ministry  
1956 Plan to close Nulato  
1960s Father Loyens' anthropological study  
1969 Sisters of Saint Ann leave Nulato  
Sisters of Saint Ann in Fairbanks  
Blue Bead opens  
Campus ministry  
Social work (homes and institutions)

1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

1972 Sister of Saint Ann as religious education coordinator in Nulato  
1979 Hispanic ministry in Fairbanks  
Education for leadership in Nulato  
Dena Corporation sponsors sister for adult education in villages  
1983 Sisters of Saint Ann leave Fairbanks  
Sisters of Saint Ann leave Nulato



## A Continued Growth: Holy Cross



The gray waters of the Yukon River swirled as a “kicker boat” grew larger, while watchers on a distant riverbank studied its approach. Ice had recently left the river and the fishing season was at hand. Loungers who followed the movement of the boat were expecting, in the 1940s, a plane to pick them up for cannery jobs in the Bristol Bay area.

The kicker boat turned to move up along the edge of the sandbar before entering the slough at Holy Cross and tying up at the village. Keen eyes had by then identified the boat. “Only William’s!”

“Why him?” the men wondered. “He can’t come! Got kid!”

A few hours later, the watchers on the bank still scanned the sky for their plane. The kicker had long since arrived at the village. Scarcely any attention had been given to “Only William,” who, with shoulders sagging and face determined, was now entering the Girls House at the mission complex. One of the man’s arms held a blanket-wrapped tot, the other pulled hard at the chain of the summoning bell.

The clangs had barely ceased when Sister Annonciade came around the corner of the hallway.

“Here! Take!” said the man, thrusting the small child at the sister. When he saw her hesitate—the child was still a baby—the man added, “You take! Or I will kill!”

His wife had died, he had no way of making a living, he had asked many people to care for his child, but in vain. He wanted to go to the cannery. What could he do with the child? The sisters! They had cared for children for years! The sisters at the mission would care for his child. He could get on with the business of making a living!

Holy Cross Mission, slowly developing from its 1888 foundation, was continuing its efforts to help all those who came. That growth and caring was at great cost for all concerned.

\* \* \* \* \*

Clusters of forget-me-nots, the state flower of Alaska, are favorites for gardens in the 49th State. Memories of life at Holy Cross have become “forget-me-nots” for those who came to share and those who shared.

Sister Mary Bernadette, newly named as superior at Holy Cross, and Sister Mary Lidwine garnered their first forget-me-not memories as the river steamer they had been traveling on docked at Holy Cross in 1906. It was 4:00 A.M., skies were overcast, and the dim light made Sister Bernadette grateful that she could not see details, for she had heard of the poverty of Holy Cross. What she held closest to her heart was that material things mattered little; people were what counted. Yet, when the arriving sisters were welcomed at their Far North home, their courage almost failed them.

After breakfast the sisters were introduced to the children. Big girls, shy and embarrassed, accepted gifts of pencils and candy with grateful smiles; little





*Holy Cross Mission and village  
around 1920. (SPA)*

girls, quiet, but with big smiles and bright eyes, said their thanks; boys of all sizes remembered to use their right hand in accepting handkerchiefs and candy offered them. The children all spoke distinctly and seemed full of good will, but the difference between those who had just arrived and those who had been at the mission a while was readily observable.<sup>2</sup>

Schooling at Holy Cross was free, the sisters learned, and at the beginning even the boarders paid nothing. Some years later, parents were asked to give, when possible, a donation of fish, moose, or a small fee. A few parents were able to comply; many more could not. Sister Bernadette discovered that a system had been elaborated whereby parents agreed to let their older children who had finished classes remain at the mission where they were known as “big boys” or “big girls.” These youths formed a young adult group that helped with cutting logs or blocks of ice, and also learned about farming, and mechanics, or fur sewing and Home Economics. Some of the older girls became teacher aides, helped in the kitchen, or assisted with preschoolers. Keeping the young people at Holy Cross a few extra years was helpful in strengthening and supporting these young adults for their future life, as well as encouraging responsible work habits for jobs with non-Natives. The Jesuits tried to find employment as boat mechanics or assistants at roadhouses for the young men and women leaving Holy Cross. The girls who became adept at baking, needlecraft or furwork could find sales for their work. The village women, former “big girls,” had cooperated in making the fur hoods and fur capes of the sisters when Father Crimont, in 1898, had stipulated that each sister have a warm outfit. These women prepared other items for mission use or for gifts: dresses, shirts, quilts, moosehide gloves, slippers, beaver hats. Remuneration for this work, requested by the mission, was in food staples or clothing. Several of the village women had been students at the mission and the sisters knew them and their needs.

It was not unusual for older students to marry each other at the mission. After the church ceremony, the couple had a special meal at the Girls House. Guests were the officiating priest, any relatives that could be present, and friends. A wedding cake, made by the sister in the kitchen, was acclaimed, cut, and shared. Afterward, the new home was blessed. In it, the sisters would have placed a few surprises: holy pictures for the walls, a statue, kitchen utensils, blankets, or whatever they thought would be helpful. Often there was



entertainment in the evening. Everyone was invited and a treat of candy ended the day.

While being given a tour of the mission, starting with the Girls House, Sister Bernadette noted the sagging doorway of the chapel. Instinctively, she put out her elbow to brace it. She was heartened that the sisters' dormitory, on the second floor, had feather beds and fur throws for the winter. Separated from the sisters' quarters by a storage space was another dormitory with beds for twenty-eight girls. A washbasin rested at the foot of each bed. At night each girl put her basin on the floor and, kneeling, washed herself. All the girls were adept at taking sponge baths underneath a heavy nightgown. One nightgown was for baths and got wet in the process. There was another, dry nightgown to slip into after the sponge bath was finished.

Below the girls' dormitory was a combined recreation/workroom, well-lighted and ventilated. Wall ventilators could be opened in the winter when the five windows were frozen shut. Next to this room was an annex used as a laundry. The primitive system of piping water directly from the river channel had been improved. The Alaska Commercial Company had donated three large tanks to store water. By 1906 a windmill on a hill pumped water, and mission buildings had minimal faucets and sinks.<sup>3</sup> But outhouses were always a part of Holy Cross.

To get from the laundry to the kitchen necessitated going outdoors. The children's dining room above the kitchen seated seventy children at three long tables and one smaller one. Fish, garden produce, bread baked by the boys with potato yeast, tea brewed from Labrador Tea picked in the woods, berries or stewed prunes made up most of the meals. On Sundays, meat from game brought to the mission by the hunters was a special treat.

Dr. Sheldon Jackson, General Agent for Education in Alaska, while visiting northwestern coastal settlements in 1890 to establish schools, learned of herds of domesticated reindeer that flourished on the Siberian coast.<sup>4</sup> He believed such herds could help Alaskans. When the United States government disputed about the purchasing and importing of domesticated Siberian reindeer to help the Native peoples of Alaska, public interest provided him with the funds to begin the project. Experienced Lapp reindeer herders were



*Holy Cross has a well-cared for look in this picture of uncertain date. The post office was established in 1899 under the name "Koserefski." In 1912 the post office name was changed to that of Holy Cross. The work of the Jesuit Brothers in building up the mission was remarkable. The photograph was taken from the north hill on which a large cross was erected.*

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Church                                       | 7. Laundry          |
| 2. Jesuit House                                 | 8. Post Office      |
| 3. Sisters' House                               | 9. Jesuit Warehouse |
| Girls' House                                    | 10. Barn and Stable |
| Sisters' School                                 | 11. Saw Mill        |
| 4. Kitchen and Refectory                        | 12. Carpenter Shop  |
| 5. Boys' School (House)                         |                     |
| 6. Kindergarten House (c. 1915)<br>(Baby House) |                     |

(SPA)



brought to Alaska to give proper training to neophyte herders. The initial herd prospered and was divided among the villages. A herd was introduced at Nulato. When caring for the animals proved too difficult, it was decided to move the herd down to Holy Cross. A reindeer station, with a large pen and a house for the herders, was set up on the far side of the Yukon River and up the Innoko, where forage was sufficient. Brother Peter Brancoli, S.J., then at Nulato, undertook to drive the herd downriver to Holy Cross. The effort cost the lives of many reindeer because of storms and wolves. An exhausted Brother Brancoli was glad to relinquish his charges, which soon grew into a strong herd again at Holy Cross's Reindeer Station. Reindeer meat was a welcome addition to the menus; reindeer hides made serviceable mattresses.

Sister Bernadette and her companion were introduced to Holy Angels House, built in 1899, fifteen feet behind the Girls House, as a home for the smallest children. The building, called the Kindergarten, or—by the older children—the Baby House, was 36 by 24 feet, one story high, divided into two rooms by a half-partition. The front room was classroom, recreation room and work room. Its tables and benches could accommodate thirty-five children. Double bunks were in the second room. A cubicle served as the bathroom, with a couple of one-hole seats and buckets that needed to be removed even during the night. In the same room, the children hung their mukluks, footwear for the cold months.

These mukluks and others were carefully examined by the newly-arrived sisters. The sole of the mukluk was usually made of laftak, the hide of the sea lion. Sometimes home-tanned moose skin was used. Many of the mukluks were knee high; most were shorter. The sole was sewed with waxed sinews to the leg section made of seal or reindeer skin. Special three-sided needles were used. To assure a good fit, laftak had to be pleated at the toe and heel. These pleats, hard to make, were oftentimes worked with the teeth or with a woman's knife (*ulu*), which featured a specially curved blade. Thongs at the ankle and at the top, where colored cloth borders could be added, fastened the mukluk securely. In nearby bags, quantities of straw were kept for reshaping wet mukluks, as well as for allowing air and extra warmth when worn.<sup>5</sup>

The tour continued with a look at the chicken house and gardens. Attempts were made to protect the chickens from cold and predators. Even so, weasels managed to get them. The Jesuits had tried keeping chickens in part of their house. When chicken lice took over, the chickens were evicted. As the chickens provided much needed eggs and meat and even the feathers were saved, the trouble of keeping chickens was worth it. Fields of vegetables and a few small flower gardens set off the buildings. The garden had expanded since Sister Winifred, in 1892, had pored over seed catalogues and agricultural booklets, chosen varieties of seeds judiciously, planted them with due care, tended the seedlings, transplanted them as need arose and set them out in the gardens with the help of the Jesuits and many other hands. Versatile and multi-usage tin cans provided protection when necessary against wind or frost. Some distance away, across the gardens, was the barn for the few cows and horses the mission owned. Haying was done in the meadow, about a mile away, south of the village.

The 1902 Government Education Report had this to say about the gardens at Holy Cross:



*The school of Holy Cross with its flourishing garden in summer is a veritable oasis in the wild desert of the Yukon, and few travelers pass without visiting it, and expressing surprise at finding such a progressive institution in such an inhospitable country. A remarkable feature about Holy Cross Mission is the flourishing vegetable garden of about 6 acres; it is the work of the larger boys and girls under the direction of their respective teachers, and in addition to the vegetable garden the girls cultivate a nice flower garden. The produce of the garden this year amounted to about 500 bushels of potatoes, some 600 good solid heads of cabbage, turnips and rutabagas in abundance, peas, lima beans, beets, salad, radishes, cress, etc.<sup>6</sup>*

On the sisters' first tour, they saw carpenters and heard hammering, for a new church, complete with bell tower, was being built. It would open, hopefully, for Christmas that year. Although the mission buildings were made of squared-off logs, the new church was built of boards<sup>7</sup> cut at the Jesuit-operated sawmill. After the completion of the church, work on a better house for the sisters and girls would begin, to be finished by 1908.<sup>8</sup>

Another building, the school where the sisters taught, was pointed out. The first school building was a structure that had been intended for a sawmill. Education was carried on in different ways to accommodate different types of students. The older boys were taught by one of the Jesuit brothers. The younger boys were taught along with the girls by the sisters. The Department of Education paid \$60 a month to one of the brothers and to one of the sisters. The sister's stipend went to the Jesuit fund for the maintenance of the mission. Outdoor recess was obligatory so that the children might have fresh air. Afternoon classes began at 3:30, as the daylight hours of early afternoon had to be used for outdoor chores or sewing. Two or three times a year, Father Superior gave examinations in the classes to check the progress being made in the children's studies. When inspectors came, or boat passengers spent time ashore, the children were ever ready to receive the guests with a variety of exercises that brought a good name to the educational endeavors at the mission. Part of the progress in schooling was due to the children's proficiency in English. The variety of languages spoken by the mission children, who came from widely different areas, had increasingly made the use of a common Native language almost impossible and English had to be used. In retrospect, one can see that the advantage of Father Tosi's 1888 plan of having three boarding schools (at Nulato, Holy Cross, and the Yukon River delta) would have had greater geographic homogeneity in the enrollment and less of a language problem. The major local language might have been used more prominently.

The 1902 education report bears citing again:

*Holy Cross Mission, Koserefsky.—Rev. J. L. Lucchesi, Rev. Jos. Perron; Brothers V. O'Hare, Al. Markham, P. Brancoli, Ed. Horweedel, E. Lefebvre.*

*1. There is a boarding school for boys under immediate charge of the Fathers; it numbered 42, this number being steadily maintained during the year. They are remarkable for good behavior, docility, and earnestness to improve as well in all the branches of a common English education as in the various trades, such as carpentry, blacksmithing, garden and farm work.*

*2. There is also a boarding school for girls, numbering 46 pupils, in charge of the Sisters of St. Anne, viz, Sisters M. Winifred, Antonia, Pauline, Mary of the Passion, Mary Joseph, and Julia. The conduct of these girls is exemplary; their application to study and work is all that could be desired, and their progress is in proportion. Besides the regular hours for class work, they*



*are instructed in all kinds of needlework, common and fancy, besides cooking and all useful work suitable to their sex and condition.*

*3. The day and night schools are in the care of the Sisters, and their number varies from 12 to 20.*

The village children, the sisters believed, were disadvantaged if compared with the boarders. Day schools for the village children had been tried, but the children, not used to regular hours for bedtime and meals, were usually cold and hungry. They responded wearily to enticements that encouraged attendance. Sister Joseph, teacher, made an overparka for each of the children to wear in school. Occasional treats and plenty of tea also helped maintain the children's interest for a while. Father Joseph Perron, S.J., held evening sessions for Koserefski adults. At times, the sisters followed the classes in order to learn more prayers in the Koserefski language. Olga Angela translated hymns and prayers from the Nulato language, then in common use by the missionaries, into the Koserefski language. Classes in English were also given to the Koserefski people in these adult evening sessions, for increased navigation on the Yukon River urged better communicative ability.

Up on a sloping hill was a cemetery, where many victims of epidemics were buried. Wooden fences surrounded graves, including those of two sisters. Sister Mary Angilbert died at Holy Cross at the age of twenty-seven, after serving five years as teacher and cook. People remembered her saying with a laugh, "Look! God smiles so kindly on my efforts, that like Him, from nothing I make all kinds of good things!" Her death, in May 1896, was followed four years later by that of Sister Mary Seraphine of the Sacred Heart, who died of exhaustion from the nursing she did during the typhoid epidemic of 1900.

Summer at Holy Cross was a time for outings as long as protection from mosquitoes was provided. Father John L. Lucchesi, S.J.,<sup>9</sup> believed that the change was not only permissible but necessary for the good of the sisters and children. Stories were told of memorable outings, such as the summer Sisters Winifred and Antonia camped at Twenty Mile with five girls and came home with two barrels of blueberries. Another time, Sister Mary of the Passion went across the Yukon with six girls to fill bags with coarse sand. A storm arose and, unable to return home, they sought shelter with a Native family. The mission personnel spent an anxious night wondering what had happened. As soon as it was feasible, the search was on for the missing ones, who finally were brought home safely.

Winter outings, too, were memorable. Once, when everyone else had left for a picnic, Sister Pauline put a pot of pancake batter in a dog sled, along with the two smallest children. After sister and the pancake batter were settled in the sled, the driver started off. The dogs managed to upset the sled and the batter spilled. Fortunately, the blanket at the bottom of the sled collected most of the batter, which, because of poverty, was matter-of-factly poured back into the pot. Despite the mishap, there were enough pancakes for all.

As the years went by, Sister Bernadette added scenic memories of her Holy Cross experience. Sudden surprises of beauty became vivid photographs in her mind: the Reindeer Mountains in their whiteness, or tinged with winter lavender or pink; the hills close at hand, always colorful, full of variety depending on the season; bare branches and dried grass protruding through



the snow; graceful and much-awaited steamers appearing on the Yukon River; the green of willows by the sloughs. After twelve years in Holy Cross, in the summer of 1918, she left carrying all these unforgettable memories with her. Sister Mary Alberic succeeded her as superior.

By that time, Alaska was a territory. An excerpt from the Report of the Commissioner of Education, Chester D. Henderson, describes the Holy Cross of that era.

*Schools for Natives are maintained at Holy Cross, Akulurak, Nulato and Hot Springs. A distinctive feature of these schools is the attention paid to vocational training. Holy Cross was established in 1888, and is now the most important and largest school maintained by the church. A dormitory system is provided as a means of caring for orphans and children whose parents reside in other villages. A school farm and saw mill are operated by the mission. The enrollment of the school is approximately 110 pupils; 8 teachers are on the faculty, 5 being provided by the church and 3 by the government, through the payment of regular teachers' salaries to 3 of the nuns by the U.S. Bureau of Education.<sup>10</sup>*

Mother Mary Leopoldine, General Superior, on her official visit to Holy Cross in 1921, accepted two "big girls," Olga Waldron and Margaret Mary Demientieff, as postulants for the Congregation. Olga traveled to the Mother House and remained in the Congregation until 1924. Margaret Mary entered the Victoria novitiate in 1923, after spending a year with her family. She made heroic adaptations to life in Victoria, different in almost every way from her life-style on the Yukon.

Her religious name was Sister Mary Holy Cross and her first mission sharing was in Dawson. Never assigned to Holy Cross, she visited her family periodically during her sixty years of religious life.

The sisters' and girls' building, erected during 1907 and 1908, was a two-story frame building, with kitchen and dining rooms and dormer windows. In 1923, it was remodeled and enlarged, the roof raised, a large extension added, and a third floor built across the whole structure. Father John B. Sifton, S.J., called this large building the Leopoldine Hotel, after Mother Mary Leopoldine, who, in the name of the Congregation, had given the Jesuits a substantial donation for the project. This was the building remembered by those who were at Holy Cross Mission in its last years. While details for the enlargement were being formulated, Sister Alberic arranged that dining rooms for the Jesuits and big boys be included in the plans. Sister wrote convincingly to the Mother House that the sisters should assume the responsibility of cooking for the Jesuits and the young men. Having only one kitchen would cut down on expenses. Permission for sisters to cook for men and serve them meals was a rare transgression of custom in 1922 and until



*Ivan (Evan) Demientieff's children: Gerald, Angela, Amutka, Michael, Eliza, Tessie, Rita, Margaret, Stanley*  
(Photo credit: U. of Alaska, Fairbanks)





*Sister Mary Jules of the Sacred Heart prepares the main meal with the help of mission girls Margaret Papp, Myrtle Atwater, Gertrude Doyle, Hilma Otten (c. 1930). (SPA)*



*Children are playing in the yard at Holy Cross in the 1920s. (Picture is from Sister Mary Eulalia's collection and may be one that she took and developed.) (SPA)*

then, the men at the mission had had separate cooking facilities. Many parts of the new building eventually proved disappointing when patches of mold disfigured the walls and the natural shrinking and cracking of the wood, as it continued to dry, let in mosquitoes and cold air.

Beginning in 1920, Sister Mary Eulalia of Barcelona spent fifty years of her life on the missions, all these years, except one, in Alaska. Having left her companion at Nulato, Sister Eulalia, at the age of twenty, traveled downriver to Holy Cross on a steamer, with only one other woman on board. One of the passengers, a miner, thought that Sister Eulalia would make him an excellent wife and cook. She was approached with such an offer, but gracefully declined. Sister Eulalia shared her love successively as teacher and house-mother of the little ones at Holy Angels House, the older girls, and the young ladies at the mission. She worked with other sisters in the gardens, on the trips for blueberries and lowbush cranberries, at fish tables and fishstrip camps, in the laundry, and sewing rooms.



Overlooking scratches from stiff, frozen evergreen branches, she prepared sprigs to be woven into festoons and wreaths for church decorations at Christmas time. She poured colored water into 5-gallon cans she had managed to cut down to size, let the water freeze, and put candles into hollows in the resulting blocks of ice. Later these blocks were removed from the tins and lined up along the path to the church. On Christmas Eve, these colorful, brightly lit ice-candles were visible from afar. Dog teams on the Yukon River seemed to be beckoned by these ice-candles, filling the darkness with a Christmas glow.

Recognizing the Native people's giftedness for art, sister encouraged her girls to decorate stationery, illustrate programs and booklets, and create pencil and water color art pieces. Sister's own artistry designed patterns for beadwork and inlay calfskin borders for parkas. Her notebook of pointers for furwork or fish-cutting shows her concern for detail and quality. Despite her busy schedule and the ceaseless mending she undertook, she always had time for a gentle word with her girls, many of whom were with her for years and for whom she was a second mother.

Newly arrived sisters admired the special quality of Sister Eulalia's love for Holy Cross. One such admirer was Sister Mary John Bernard. Her reactions to Holy Cross were typical of those of other sisters, who, although they admired what they saw in others, were so overwhelmed by what often appeared to be insurmountable difficulties in mission life, that they felt incapable of imitating them. Yet seasoned missionaries wisely repeated that the physical circumstances did not matter after one came to know and love the Native people.

In 1924, airmail service to Holy Cross began from McGrath in central Alaska. Formerly, it had required a mail carrier several days to drive his dog team from McGrath to Holy Cross. With airplanes, only a few hours were now needed to cover the same distance. Eager eyes that had watched for the first sign of the mail sled coming up over a distant ridge now scanned the skies for a speck that approached with a hum and then a roar. Weather, indeed, might detain the plane at McGrath, but the increasingly frequent mail days boosted morale. The old missionaries remembered that, in years gone by, the bulk of the mail had depended upon the summer steamboats.

The Congregation, in 1926, officially implementing a directive from Rome, notified the houses of Alaska and the Yukon Territory that henceforth Alaska and Dawson would be attached to St. Joseph's Province, with headquarters in Victoria, B.C., rather than to the Mother House in Lachine, Quebec. The reason for this was that St. Joseph's, the western province of the Congregation, was geographically closer to the northern missions than was Lachine. Reactions among the sisters of the North were somewhat like those of an uprooted tree, for many sisters at Holy Cross were of French Canadian descent, with family homes back East. When Holy Cross was attached to the Mother House in Quebec, the sisters felt a direct bond with their French Canadian background. Coming North had meant a relinquishment, partially recompensed, as it were, by the "privileged status" of direct lines with the Mother House. Sisters coming, as they did, from the East, knew little of the West. The western mentality, more liberal than that back East, was a threatening "unknown." The 1926 decision placed the affected sisters at Holy Cross in the position of better understanding the trauma and loss felt by



incoming Native students severed from lifelines of cultural security. Some of the beneficent effects of what sympathy and welcome can do were experienced by the sisters also as Victoria reached out to them in supportive understanding.

Still, some aspects of French Canadian culture remained in Holy Cross. Father Francis M. Menager, S.J., came to the recreation room to sing "les bonnes chansons" of memorable family reunions. New Year's Day, traditionally the day for the paternal blessing and gift-giving for French Canadians, was celebrated at Holy Cross almost as much as Christmas. Even those not used to such customs participated and church hymns in French were attempted. All this effort to bridge culture differences was an opportunity for the sisters to understand the cultural voids Native people felt at Holy Cross, but this aspect was by and large missed.

Other efforts for supportive understanding were made by Holy Cross itself, but for different reasons. In 1926, when the Church-sponsored Eucharistic Congress was held in Chicago, Father Philip I. Delon, S.J., superior of the Alaska missions, decided to attend that international gathering. Five students traveled with him, Stanley Demientieff and Joseph Prince to represent the pupils, and three others to rejoin their father, now living in the Chicago area. The motives of the trip were to make Holy Cross known and to solicit funds for the mission effort. To attract interest, Father Delon asked the mission for a showpiece, two dolls dressed as a Native couple, one in a winter fur parka, the other in a reindeer skin parka. The woman's small slippers were beaded with a wild rose design that was a marvel of needlecraft. The trip to the Eucharistic Congress made the Alaska Native people and their artistry better known. It also resulted in Joseph Prince's entering the Jesuit Order. The three children seeking their father returned to the mission.

Sister Alberic furthered understanding and support of Holy Cross after her reassignment back East. From schools she obtained textbooks, especially English grammars. Sister sent a can opener, the use of which amazed the children. A watch with a luminous dial came for the sister gardener so she would not have to strike a match in the dormitory dark to see if it was time for the hothouse fires to have another stoking. Salt and pepper shakers came for the children's tables to replace the bowls of coarse, half-ground salt. Cloth napkins arrived for the Jesuit dining room. A gramophone was uncrated, wound, and played, The music entranced the children. Part of the reason Sister Alberic was able to arouse enthusiasm for the mission came from the visual aids she had, photographs that Sister Eulalia had learned to take and develop. Her photographs helped record the 1920s and 1930s at Holy Cross.

A Nova Scotian, Sister Mary Thomasina, came to Holy Cross to care for the little ones at Holy Angels House in 1928. Besides this charge, Sister Thomasina took over the mending and the making of new clothes for the pupils. With the help of the "big girls," old-fashioned black dresses received from benefactors were remodeled according to an updated design. Thereafter, these black dresses, with white collars and cuffs and large red bows, graced many a Holy Cross reception.

To accent certain days, clothes for special occasions were worn. Usually this special attire was a new jumper-like apron. Red and yellow Scottish plaid cotton berets for the girls to wear to church replaced black veiling. Berets made of red felt with swirls of gold braid were worn on Sundays. Black berets were



kept only for Good Friday. Out came pink aprons for the chant of the “alleluia” on Holy Saturday, when, according to the pre-Vatican II custom, Lent ended at noon, the house was blessed with Easter water, and meat could be eaten.

On dress-up occasions, the boys wore Buster Brown suits. Later there were corduroy trousers and flannelette shirts of bright plaids. After World War II, khaki army uniforms were cut down to proper sizes for the boys. Innumerable blue denims, in various stages of faded or mended condition, were worn.

An exaggerated sense of modesty on the part of the sisters affected many of the policies and routines of the school. For example, the sisters frowned on short sleeves for the girls. As everyday dresses usually came from benefactors’ boxes, many were in need of alterations. Pieces of other sleeves were sewn to lengthen the short sleeves, the results not always becoming. For many years, the little boys, given baths by the big girls, wore short cotton skirts.

Psychological and physical reasons contributed to bed-wetting, a problem with which it was difficult to cope. Children who were bed wetters required daily baths. The change of sheets caused daily extra wash loads in a galvanized wash tub in which the sister scrubbed and rinsed the bed sheets, as the big laundry did not operate often enough. The discolored, patched sheets were unsightly as they dried on lines in the recreation rooms.

Probably an even more difficult situation came from the bucket brigades, which every morning and evening saw the emptying of the removable buckets from the inside toilets. These full buckets were carried to a dumping spot at a little bridge that extended over the embankment where the creek emptied into a slough further away. Many were the accidents, or near spills that splashed, and many frozen tell-tales marked the passage of a bucket. In the summer, long cubicked outhouses were used during the day. The children, of course, were forbidden to use these outhouses in the winter. One child who disregarded this rule froze her fingers while trying to fasten her underwear. Although her fingers blistered and ballooned, they were saved.

Sister Mary Armella, born of German parents in Heerlen, Holland, was surprised to see cows at Holy Cross. They relished garden greens! Her repertoire of mission stories included those of chasing the cows from the gardens. Sister loved the mission from the moment she arrived in the summer of 1929 and was impressed by what her predecessors had accomplished. Besides teaching at the school, to which two extra rooms on a second story had been added in 1927, Sister Armella coached older girls in church music, organ, and chorale that they might lead hymns and parts of the Mass in ceremonies in their own

*Sister Mary Armella in her Grade 5 classroom is assisted by Frances Frank (left) and Mildred Durgan (right corner) in displaying some of their class projects, 1932-1933. (SPA)*





*Tatiana Demientieff was a teacher for a while and is shown here with her group of Paimiut students. Other young women from Holy Cross also taught in Paimiut. (SPA)*



villages. Priests requested this help, the Native people responded well to music, and the girls enjoyed the lessons. A sense of added self-worth developed.

Sister Armella volunteered for a proposed mission at Paimiut, a small village about thirty-five miles downriver from Holy Cross.<sup>11</sup> At Paimiut, aging Father Robaut had been ministering for some time and had built a church and school. When it appeared that there would not be enough work for three sisters, as the rule of the Congregation required, the mission at Paimiut was not accepted. Sister Armella, therefore, went to Paimiut only for short visits, such as accompanying the nurse when she was called to help a mother at childbirth. Talk of a permanent foundation at Paimiut continued for some years, especially during the time of Father Francis B. Prangé, S.J. As a cabin was ready and the people were well disposed, Tatiana Demientieff and another older girl, Dora Cristo, went to teach the children in lieu of sisters. This was a forerunner of what developed after Vatican II as collaboration of the laity in the pastoral (social, educational, spiritual) ministry of the Church, according to the Spirit-given gifts of each person. Dora and Tatiana, at the same time as teaching, influenced everyone by their good example. Formal lessons in religious education were programmed, church music improved, and better appreciation of Holy Cross resulted.

*Sister Mary Anne Rita and Brother Aloysius Laird, S.J., are part of the fishing crew displaying this catch of salmon. (SPA)*



Beginning in the late 1940s, a group from Holy Cross Mission went each summer to the Paimiut area to make fish strips: special narrow lengths of King salmon carefully treated in brine, and hung on racks for drying and smoking. The Ivan Demientieff family had been responsible until then for the supply of fish strips for the mission personnel. Sister Eulalia learned the art from the Demientieffs when they were getting too old for the task. Going to fish camp was an important cultural preparation for students who would be returning home. The excursion was also a reward for older boys and girls. Paimiut was situated among tall, lush grass and by the



1950s was the home of only a few families. At Paimiut the boys made the mission school building their summer camp while the girls used the main house that Bishop Crimont had thought to use in his retirement years.

Nick Demientieff, a nephew of Ivan and a river-boat pilot, often towed the mission barge to the Paimiut fish camp and tied the barge against a solid embankment below the village site. The mission load, besides the people, included fish nets, barrels, sacks of salt, gunny sacks, old clothes, rubber aprons, fish knives, soaking tubs, axes, water pails, and gasoline. Varieties of luggage, pots, pans, and food supplies completed the cargo.

Mother Mary Ann's intervention was sought when drinking water became a problem at Paimiut. Many times the outboard motor boat, the "kicker," had to go to a spring downriver for good water. With the large number in the fish crew, a nearby supply of drinking water was much desired. After sinking a well,<sup>12</sup> suitable water was found and, to the amazement of everyone, within two hours this well had three feet of water in it.

When the King salmon were running, they were usually caught in nets, then brought to the mission barge, cut into strips, treated, and dried. Sister Eulalia was adept with the versatile curved blade used by the Native women. Fish heads were preserved in brine or strung on poles to dry. The roe, the milt, the fish hearts and fish cheeks were favorites on the menu. The tally of fish was kept by counting the fish hearts placed in a can as the cutting went



*Boys at Paimiut (SPA)*

*A "kicker" boat lies quietly in the waters which have supplied the fish for these drying racks.*

(Photo credit: Kenneth Stone, courtesy of Bob Betz, Fairbanks) (SPA)





on. The sisters remarked about the hearts pumping regularly, long after the fish were dead.

Bellies were salted and preserved in barrels as a provision for winter meals. Tails were slashed and wind-dried on various poles along the bank. The arduous tasks of the fish camp filled six busy weeks. Jake Aloysius, Paimiut leader, always saw to it that the mission people felt welcome. He provided radio communication with Holy Cross all through the fishing season, shared his knowledge, and put his icehouse (blocks of ice he had buried in sawdust) at the disposal of the mission. Fish strips from five or six hundred King salmon were put up for the mission every year. Three or four thousand dog salmon might also be cleaned, slashed, and dried, but these were incidental to the main work of the Paimiut fishing crew.

Sister Mary Eulalia's notes

Page 1  
King Salmon for strips

- Use only fresh fish - Not sun-cooked fish
- Remove:
  - A. Head
  - B. Pectoral Fin.
  - C. Ventral Fin.
  - Save the heart and cook it
- Open Salmon. Remove entrails. Cut off the tail. Cut off a large piece of the belly.
- Or make this cut which will give you many short ends for strips which is undesirable.
- Salt the belly part that is removed from the salmon this way:
  - A. Split the belly in half
  - B. make slits biaswise so fish may dry more thoroughly.

Sister Mary Eulalia kept notes about the fishing excursions and the various ways of cutting fish that she learned from the Native people. Her notebook, full of diagrams and sketches, was her textbook when teaching the young people how to provide later on for their families and dog teams.

The fishing season at Holy Cross Mission itself started a little later than the one at Paimiut, for the stress at Holy Cross was on dog salmon. Ten or twelve thousand were cut during the summer. Two or three

J.M.C.A. 1950		J.M.C.A. - 1951 -	
June 13	Left Holy Cross 7:15 AM. Paimiut	June 13	Left Holy Cross at 10:45 AM. Paimiut
14th	AM 11 King - 0 Dogs	14th	AM 11 King - 0 Dogs
15th	AM 17 King - 8 Dogs	15th	AM 17 King - 8 Dogs
16th	AM 16 King - 10 Dogs	16th	AM 16 King - 10 Dogs
17th	AM 22 King - 11 Dogs	17th	AM 22 King - 11 Dogs
18th	AM 15 King - 16 Dogs	18th	AM 15 King - 16 Dogs
19th	AM 18 King - 45 Dogs	19th	AM 18 King - 45 Dogs
20th	AM 24 King - 46 Dogs	20th	AM 24 King - 46 Dogs
21st	AM 22 King - 52 Dogs	21st	AM 22 King - 52 Dogs
22nd	AM 23 King - 33 Dogs	22nd	AM 23 King - 33 Dogs
23rd	AM 22 King - 23 Dogs	23rd	AM 22 King - 23 Dogs
24th	AM 27 King - 28 Dogs	24th	AM 27 King - 28 Dogs
25th	AM 24 King - 48 Dogs	25th	AM 24 King - 48 Dogs
26th	AM 23 King - 43 Dogs	26th	AM 23 King - 43 Dogs
27th	AM 20 King - 57 Dogs	27th	AM 20 King - 57 Dogs
28th	AM 16 King - 38 Dogs	28th	AM 16 King - 38 Dogs
29th	AM 20 King - 22 Dogs	29th	AM 20 King - 22 Dogs
30th	AM 16 King - 22 Dogs	30th	AM 16 King - 22 Dogs
July 1st	AM 9 King - 18 Dogs	July 1st	AM 9 King - 18 Dogs
2nd	AM 9 King - 38 Dogs	2nd	AM 9 King - 38 Dogs
3rd	AM 7 King - 41 Dogs	3rd	AM 7 King - 41 Dogs
4th	AM 9 King - 41 Dogs	4th	AM 9 King - 41 Dogs
5th	AM 2 King - 41 Dogs	5th	AM 2 King - 41 Dogs
6th	AM 1 King - 31 Dogs	6th	AM 1 King - 31 Dogs
7th	AM 0 King - 27 Dogs	7th	AM 0 King - 27 Dogs
Total	731	Total	739
Largest Salmon		Largest Salmon	
2nd Bank 44" x 25 1/2"		2nd Bank 44" x 25 1/2"	
27th Jake + Band (each) 47" by 31"		27th Jake + Band (each) 47" by 31"	
29th Alec 49" x 27"		29th Alec 49" x 27"	
He made 310 Flat Salmon 3 1/2 slabs.		He made 310 Flat Salmon 3 1/2 slabs.	
		Left for Holy Cross 2nd Bank with...	



*Sister Mary Eulalia cuts fish strips with her girls. Those with her at this cutting table are Alice Withrow, Mary Dahlquist, Anna Jacobs, Ella Wheeler. The preparation of the fish is being done on the mission barge anchored at Paimiut for the fishing season. (SPA)*



sisters worked with the girls at the cutting tables in assembly-line fashion. The boys went several times daily for the hundreds of fish caught in mission fish wheels, where water-propelled baskets scooped up the salmon. Boys carried the fish by tubfuls to the tables for gutting, cleaning and cutting. Other boys brought the slashed fish to the drying racks where the wind formed a slight crust, hopefully before the rains soured the fish or the flies laid eggs from which maggots would develop. Wearing great rubber aprons, the cutting crew worked on tables covered with gunny sacks, excellent for keeping the fish from slipping. They were protected somewhat from the plague of mosquitoes by head netting or smudges. During the fish runs, long, tiring sessions, some in the early morning, some late into the evening, gradually saw the smokehouses fill with hanging fish ready for the slow process of curing.

Rewards for the children followed these fatiguing fishing season “bees” and the equally tiring garden work. Picnics, carnivals or parties featuring popcorn balls or homemade lollipops rejuvenated spirits. Sometimes, extra-hard workers received a new dress or other prized item found in a benefactor’s box.

Sister Mary Sidonia had come with Sister Armella in 1929 to assume many of the chores at the mission. She was charged with acres of vegetable gardens. Alongside the older boarders and the Jesuits, sister planted and weeded, reaped and sorted, piled and stored the hundreds of sacks of potatoes, carrots, turnips, rutabagas, and other vegetables that were necessary for the health of the children and staff. Hundreds of cabbages, some weighing as much as forty pounds, were shredded and prepared as sauerkraut. This was kept in hogsheads or other large barrels, stored in dirt cellars underneath the girls’ house.

Sister Sidonia was responsible for choosing seeds, starting seedlings and planning the vegetable gardens. She consulted with the Jesuit brothers, but her principal helper was Sister Eulalia. Crouching by the celery boxes, Sister



Eulalia banked green stalks of celery for blanching; standing by the cutting tables, she wielded a cleaver to trim roots and leaves.

At Holy Cross the diet of fish, wild game and garden vegetables was supplemented by berries—sometimes rose hips, but usually blueberries and lowbush cranberries, commonly known as “red berries.” Excursions to find wild raspberries provided occasional other outings. An August expedition and another just after the first frost resulted in fifteen to twenty barrels of berries for the year. Tallies were kept of how much was collected and by whom so that rewards could be given to prize pickers.

#### Names of Students and Amounts of Blueberries Picked in August 1950

Girls	Boys
1. Alice Withrow 45 lbs	1. George Lee 27 lbs
2. Nathalia Myers 30 lbs	2. Jack Demientieff 25 lbs
Lizzie Kameroff	Joe Hooligan
Anna Jacobs	Barton Andrews
Mary Dee [Dahlquist]	Stanley Aucoin
3. Dolores Isaac 25 lbs	3. Stanley Andrews 24 lbs
Agnes Stevens	4. James Agnes 23 lbs
Catherine Peters	Henry George
Betty Isaac	5. George Philips 22 lbs
Agnes One	6. Victor Alexie 21 lbs
4. Helen Golga 20 lbs	Alvin Manook
Gladys Withrow	George One
Mary Stevens	7. Emmett Nollner 20 lbs
5. Florence Engelstad 18 lbs	Francis Brush
Irene Peterson	Jim Martin
6. Helena Thompson 15 lbs	Fred Wheeler
7. Irene Stevens 13 lbs	8. Glen Evans 19 lbs
8. Elsie Maxili 10 lbs	9. Buddy Andrews 18 lbs
Mary Wheeler	Morgan Andrew 18 lbs
Grace Morgan	10. Tommy Clarence 17 lbs
Julia Fox	11. Calvin Thurmond 15 lbs
Anna Patsey	Jack Evans
Mary Rose Peterson	Larry Lee
9. Mary Aucoin 8 lbs	12. Lloyd Elasanga 12 lbs
Julia Ann Demoski	13. Steve Jacobs 10 lbs
	Birdie Demientieff
Total 515 lbs.	Total 526 lbs.
	10 Barrels
	5 Pails
	42 2-qt. Jars

*Berries were plentiful and ripe. We picked one day (that is six hours) at Albert's Lake. Then towards evening we went to St. Joseph's Mt. slept there and the next morning picked for five hours. Left early (about 3:30) for home.*

*THANKS A MILLION!*

*(Statistics and comments taken from Sister Eulalia's notebook).*



Sister Mary Justa loved berrying. Originally from Saskatchewan, she came to Holy Cross in 1930 as teacher and aide. For her the berry fields of Alaska were reminiscent of the fields back home. She considered the berry trip outings the highlights of her three years at Holy Cross.

The Sister Sidonia/Sister Eulalia team was charged with the laundry. While Sister Sidonia was responsible for the washing itself, much of it done on scrub boards and in wooden tubs, Sister Eulalia prepared the upstairs drying room, heated old-fashioned sadirons, and spread sheets, pillowcases, blankets, towels, aprons and clothes across the lines in the hot, steamy room.

Sister Sidonia mixed soap solutions, struggled with antique machinery and faced the ever-present water problem. Upstairs, in the drying room, Sister Eulalia ached from stretching and lugging, ironing and folding, climbing the stairs innumerable times. During the winter there was frost on the walls to contend with, or frozen pipes; in the summer, the roof leaked. There was always the imminent danger of fire because of the hot stoves in an old, tinder-like building. Laundry-day assignments to the drying room were welcomed for the one reason that the reward for a hot day's labor was the luxury of a bath in the tub Bishop Crimont had given. For a long time it was the only bathtub in the mission.

One laundry day Sister Mary Clement Joseph, trying to smooth a sheet going through an old mangle, caught her left hand in the rollers. Several moments elapsed before the mangle could be stopped. Sister's hand was severely burned and bruised. Sister Epiphane, nurse, realized that a doctor would have to treat it. Although the Jesuits radioed for an emergency plane to pick up Sister Clement Joseph, it was four days before a plane could land at Holy Cross. Sister then left for Fairbanks where she was given the best of care by A. R. Carter, M.D., and the Sisters of Providence. About three months later, sister returned to Holy Cross. The doctor had been obliged to amputate 3 1/2 fingers.

Not all the sisters assigned to the North had longings for missionary life, nor were all the sisters who had longings gifted with aptitudes that made mission life compatible with their temperaments. Besides the French-English tensions, there were the differences that came from being introduced to religious life in the East or in the West. Sometimes the new missionary discovered she was the only young sister in the group. Often she missed having a zestful, energetic companion. Some sisters, too, were asked to take over ministries for which they felt they had no particular talent. Historian Aurel Krause remarks "that many persons were attracted to the missionary work [in Alaska] who were not suited to their posts and had no understanding of the Indian character and customs and so satisfied themselves with superficial



*Sisters Mary Eulalia and Sidonia transplant 1,000 cabbages (with help). In the background, the church scaffolding shows the beginning of the work to enlarge it. (SPA)*





*A moosehide jacket for Father Bernard Hubbard, S.J., is in the making. Sister Mary Gustave encouraged her young ladies in their bead work. Four girls are identified: 2nd girl from left: Sophie Cristo (holding a sleeve) In back of her: Aggie Maxili (pocket) 2nd girl from right: Margaret Papp (sleeve) Last girl on right: Margaret Parks (band) (c. 1932) (SPA)*



*Fur work and other Native arts were encouraged at the mission.*

results.”<sup>13</sup> Although the remark was instigated by observations in Southeastern Alaska, the truth applied to mission effort everywhere and among all Native groups.

Father Bernard Hubbard, S.J., was one who had longings for the North, but was not a missionary. Attempting an Alaskan experience in 1931, he suddenly became sick while on the trail, tumbled into his dog sled and let the dogs find their way to some shelter. They picked up the trail to Holy Cross, where the sled stopped and life-saving care was given to the feverish priest. The dogs, as a response of a grateful mission, received a bonus treat of dried fish. Led by Sister Mary

Gustave, a quiet sister renowned for her mounds of sewing and darning, the mission girls made Father Hubbard a moosehide jacket carefully cut, sewn and beaded. Later when Father Hubbard spoke of Alaska’s glaciers, volcanos, missions, and Native people, he added the story of how the dogs had saved his life. As he talked, he was able to wear his moosehide jacket and extol the school at Holy Cross.

Sister Mary Angela, at Holy Cross from 1933 to 1956 (except for one year at Nulato), was senior teacher and assistant supervisor of children after school hours. When epidemics raged, as they periodically did, she assisted in the nursing. Tuberculosis was common. Doctor Robert Fortuine called tuberculosis “the scourge of Alaska,” as, indeed, it was. European countries in the nineteenth century suffered from tuberculosis, where it afflicted rich and poor, noted and ordinary people, those who stayed home and those who traveled. Perhaps the prevalence of tuberculosis in Alaska resulted from contact with the European or other non-Native seamen and traders,<sup>14</sup> miners and adventurers who came to Alaska. Alaskan darkness, dampness, and crowded homes were other factors conducive to the spread of the disease. Lung tuberculosis among the mission children was prevalent even into the 1940s. A government-sponsored program throughout Alaska finally brought this disease under control in the 1950s. Some

children at Holy Cross were afflicted with tuberculosis of the bone and were crippled with chest and hip defects. Two sun porches built at the front of the “Leopoldine Hotel” were meant to provide rest and fresh air for children with respiratory trouble.

Weather conditions were carefully read and recorded by Sister Angela when the government installed a small weather station at Holy Cross. People thinking back on Holy Cross days can readily picture Sister Angela, wearing her



heavy, insulated World War II Air Force boots, her fur cape with its black serge covering, and her fur hood, as, with flashlight in hand, she held the reading stick to the light. She had wanted to go North ever since her novitiate days, but a bout with typhoid fever had delayed her departure. Sister suffered from asthma, especially during the summer. Whether or not the asthma was an allergy reaction to salmon, dust, wildflowers, or mosquitoes remained undetermined. Many a night sister spent breathing heavily in chapel, waiting out long hours of sleeplessness.

Roger Dayton, a student from Koyukuk, wrote in later years an autobiographical account<sup>15</sup> that included some of his Holy Cross experiences as a student.

*My parents sent us down to Holy Cross, two of us, in the summer of 1930. Me and my younger brother, Oscar. He was three years younger than me. They made arrangements with the missionaries there that we were going to be there for five years. My brother passed away just a few months before we were set to come home. He got sick somehow. I don't know what kind of sickness he got. He was sick for about a month and then he passed away.*

*When we first got there my brother and I used to talk our language quite a bit, but the missionaries didn't like that.*

*They couldn't understand us and they might think we're talking about them. They made us speak English so they'd understand what we're saying. They'd remind us not to speak our language, but we never got punished for that. We got punished for fighting and for being lazy. And for answering back or whatever mischief we'd get into.*

*When you start school there they don't put you in a grade, they start you off with Primer A. I went through Primer A and B, both of them. Then I went to first, second, and third grade. That's the highest I went to—third grade.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*It was like any regular school. Start around nine o'clock and out maybe three o'clock in the afternoon. But they sure make us learn. Oh, yes, they make us learn. Mostly about Bible history. Well, it was since missionaries being there. They talked mostly about Bible and the Lord. They see to it that the kids learned. And if they didn't learn they got disciplined.*

*Sometimes instead of being graduated they'd put you back. Anybody that couldn't learn. There was some kids like that. And they were year after year in the same grade. They just couldn't learn anything. It was just natural I guess.*

In commenting about the language problem, he says:

*I spoke very little English when I went to Holy Cross. Then after five years I completely forgot my language up here. When I came back to Koyukuk I couldn't understand even my own father and mother.*

*There were kids from all over the place in Holy Cross. Some from Fairbanks, some from way down river, some from the Kuskokwim River. All over. Kids from different places spoke among themselves. Like Eskimos among themselves and Natives from here use the language of the Interior. Some of the kids when they were sent there didn't know a word of English. After awhile, they'd catch on.*

Roger Dayton's autobiographical account continues with comments about discipline for the boys and memories about the village.

*There was over two hundred kids down there, so to us that was a lot. We knew just what to expect because my father and mother were down there themselves and they used to talk quite a bit about it. There were rules and regulations and all the kids were alike. There was not love too much for one*



*This group of children came from Hooper Bay and Kashunak. Sister Mary Perpetual Help, superior from 1930 to 1942, helped welcome them. The old Kindergarten, or Baby House, is in back, as well as a corner of the kitchen/dining rooms of "Leopoldine Hotel."*



*kid or nothing. The missionaries handled it like that. They didn't favor nobody. I suppose it was good for us. Of course, when we'd get into mischief, they'd discipline us quite a bit and they spanked us.*

*I got disciplined for answering back. I still remember I got paddling in the mouth for answering back. It hurt so much I still remember that. It wasn't like now, you know, they hardly lick any kid in school anymore. And there's lots of other ways you get punished. Sometimes they make you miss a meal. Sometimes they make you go to bed early. Sometimes we'd get spanking pretty hard for smoking. I used to get into that. Maybe when we'd take a walk down to the village we'd pick up butts here and there. That way we obtained tobacco. And the bigger boys were allowed to smoke. Camel, Lucky Strike, or whatever the bigger boys give us. Like if we gave them some candy they'd give us cigarettes. It was a pretty good trade but of course we'd get punished for it. We got pretty hard spanking for that with a strap about quarter inch thick. They make us put down our pants and whoa! That really hurts. A leather strap.*

*There were families living in Holy Cross village; Demientieffs, Andrews, Edwards, Walkers, and some other people that I don't remember. Mostly the people from the village came to visit the school when they visited their kids. And every weekend the kids right from Holy Cross visited their folks. They boarded at the school but every weekend were permitted to visit their folks.*

Although he had relatives in the village, visits<sup>16</sup> were rare. Gifts of candy were appreciated—and remembered. One thing that struck him, in retrospect, was all the fun he had at the mission where he and the other boys found humor in daily events.

A joyful memory connected with Holy Cross for those who were at the mission in 1938 was the blessing of the outdoor statue of Our Lady of Grace, placed on a solid base halfway up the mountain slope in back of the mission. To reach the statue, one walked along a dirt trail that took a circuitous route



from the warehouses and laundry. As one climbed the mountain, the ground, though firm, moved with each footstep, probably due to the type of soil and the permafrost below the surface. The statue, visible from the river, and the cross on another hill became the landmarks of the mission. Processions to the shrine of Our Lady were pleasant when the wind blew away the mosquitoes or gnats. At other times the insects seemed a small price to pay for the beauty of the wildflowers along the path and the view one enjoyed. Coming down from the shrine, people usually took a shortcut through the cemetery and stopped at particular graves. By 1942, three sisters were buried there, the latest being Sister Mary Perpetual Help who had died suddenly.

The building that became known as the hospital was originally the home of an early school boy. The house was a stone's throw from the Girls House. Father Philip Delon, S.J., saw the advantage of having this building in order to house visitors. Before it could be used as a hospital, the building required many modifications and some enlargement. Father John B. Sifton, S.J., in charge of the Jesuit missions in Alaska, backed the idea of a hospital facility at Holy Cross. He also hoped that a trained nurse, such as Sister Mary of the Passion, might be there.<sup>17</sup> When remodeling was finished, the hospital had eight small rooms and two solariums. The first floor was reserved for men and boys; the second, for women and girls. Father Robaut, as a patient, spent his last days in this hospital.

It was a misnomer to call this building a hospital, though it offered a roof, isolation and quiet rest. Water had to be carried from the girls' building; honey buckets were part of the facilities, and it was heated by a single wood-burning stove. One sister, sometimes two, had sleeping accommodations in this building. When children too young to follow an institutional schedule were accepted at the mission, they stayed with the sister-nurse at the hospital, for the facility opened just when the old Holy Angels House was no longer serviceable except for storage and the mending of mukluks.

One sister who sometimes lived at the hospital was Sister Mary Joanne. She told<sup>18</sup> with her customary humor about the night she had a vomiting spell. She used a pail, and then, in -35° F weather, went outdoors to empty it over the little bridge not far away. She was also carrying a flashlight and a pitcher of water with which to rinse the pail. As she set the pitcher down, it slipped on the icy boards and fell into the frozen creek below the bridge. The spilling water splashed on sister's feet and froze her momentarily to the bridge.

Sister Mary Edward of Jesus was mission nurse from 1941 to 1956. Responsible for all medical needs at the mission and village, she lived at the little hospital and kept it ready for the use of traveling dentists or doctors who offered their services. A metal table served for emergency operations. The clean, though patently old, dentist's chair and other equipment at the hospital surprised visiting doctors who expected only improvised working quarters. Sister also prepared layettes for mothers-to-be and kept a supply of confinement necessities for Native midwives. Always calm in an emergency, Sister Edward restored severed fingers or brought healing to numerous ills. Messages that she gave to Brother George J. Feltes, S.J., were transmitted by him, via ham radio, to doctors in Bethel. Many paid tribute to her wisdom and admired her ability to diagnose medical problems.

Sister Edward loved the infants and toddlers who came to the mission. Sister arranged with women in the village to care for infants until they were old





*Sister Mary Edward of Jesus, nurse, and Cecilia Jorgensen are on the way to the village. It was Cecilia's joy to help carry the black bag of medicines. (SPA)*  
 (Photo credit: U. of Alaska, Fairbanks)

enough to walk around securely at the mission. Then the tots became Sister Edward's special charges. She delighted in dressing them up and ransacked benefactors' boxes to find attractive treasures that would fit her charges: Michael, Willie, Patsy, Mary, Esther, Cecilia, Sybil, Gloria, Margie, and others. Many a smile came to peoples' faces as they saw Sister Edward, black bag in hand, headed toward the village with one or more toddlers tagging along in pretty outfits that spoke of loving care.

St. Joseph's Hall was a first aid room in the main building. Sister Edward ministered there every day after breakfast and again after supper to those who came needing a bandage, aspirins, or an injection. Sometimes the medication required was just a bit of extra attention or a loving hug. With medicine back in the cupboards, St. Joseph's Hall became a parlor used especially by the young women and men of marriageable age still at the mission.

Every two or three months, Sister Edward spent a week mixing, baking, cutting, and mailing altar bread to the Alaskan missionaries. She learned to cope with the uneven heat that the 5KW generator sporadically sent to her electric baking iron. Despite the patience it required, the task was easier than that which Tatiana Demientieff had known. She had used long-handled baking irons heated on the kitchen stove.

Another special ministry of Sister Edward had to do with a dark room, a place between two hallways, where secondhand clothes were kept. This became her store, where village women bought items for nickels and dimes. These small sales added up, until eventually there was enough to buy penicillin for emergencies. The surplus stock of the store furnished items for the Christmas sale to which the villagers and mission folk looked forward. Here in the store were hidden items for Toyland. Just before Christmas, one of the recreation rooms was transformed into Holy Cross Department Store. Sometimes one of the sisters would dress as Mrs. Santa Claus. The mission children, especially, examined everything, exclaimed at various articles and let it be known what items they favored to find under the tree. Notebooks kept by the sisters recorded what each child desired; perhaps Mary wanted an over-sized green frog or Johnnie a rubber airplane. Sybil might want a doll dressed by the sisters in floral ribbon. Jesuit Brothers Aloysius Laird, Francis J. Fox, and George Feltes joined enthusiastically in the Christmas preparations. While the sisters spent evenings making and dressing dozens of dolls or cutting out and sewing cowboy shirts, the brothers and big boys repaired cars and trucks, improvised a track for a toy train or carved and painted hobby horses.

The first issue of *Northern Winds*, a mission newsletter to relatives, benefactors, and friends, appeared in 1945. The Jesuits were responsible for its composition; the sisters took care of the typing, mimeographing, addressing, and mailing. These mimeographed newsletters had occasional sketches of parka clad children or sled dogs yapping in their harnesses. In an introductory



article solicited from Bishop Walter J. Fitzgerald, S.J., the prelate wrote that Holy Cross could be considered “. . . the premier of the Catholic Missions of the Interior of Alaska.”

Sister Mary Rose of the Child Jesus was at Holy Cross from 1942 to 1947 as teacher for Grades 3, 4, and 5, among whom were teenagers gradually being exposed to English. That many of the students had little or no understanding of English was a problem sister faced with ingenuity and kindness. Some students came

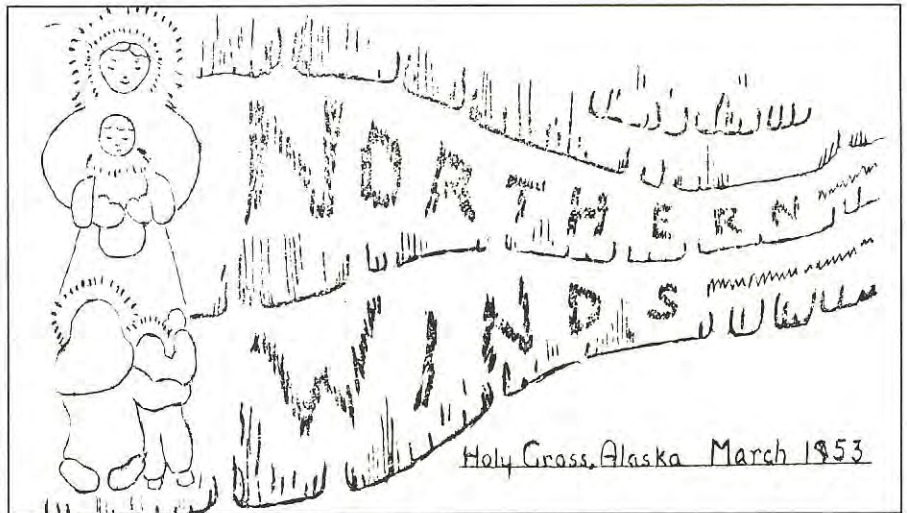
from areas where there were, as yet, no schools. Sister Rose’s great sorrow during her years at Holy Cross was that while the mission group was on a berrypicking trip, one child became separated from her companions and disappeared. The mission men and boys searched for her for days. The supposition is that she must have been caught in a quagmire.

Although not a teacher, Sister Mary Aza, in Holy Cross from 1938 to 1947, was able to educate everyone in basic music theory. She sewed an immense staff upon a large white cloth. Large wooden music symbols, made for her by one of the Jesuits, were her teaching tools. These she used with success as she taught elementary facts about music. After instruction and practice, the children were able to place symbols upon the staff in their proper position. Marches and other drills helped the children understand different rhythms. Visitors at the mission were continually amazed at the children’s familiarity with Gregorian Chant, classical choruses, and modern ballads that guaranteed enjoyable church services and social evenings. Sister Aza was also a good seamstress. In the fall of the year, while the young people she supervised were napping or at school, she sewed and stuffed colorful cloth animals. These she gave to the superior on the Feast of Saint Nicholas, 6 December, to help assure that the mission Christmas trees would be well laden.

Sister sought other means to bring happiness to her little ones. Although poverty was extreme and seldom was a piece of candy available, Sister Aza found a treat for her preschoolers. When prunes were served, sister gathered many pits in a dish. She scalded these before handing a few out to each child for a “party.” Sitting in her battered rocking chair, she placed a sadiron on her knees and with a hammer, cracked each child’s treasures. When the kernels emerged, the little ones delighted in their treat.

Holy Cross was so cold in December and January that even though Brother John Hess, S.J., lit three fires in the church basement, the temperature inside still was below freezing when morning Mass ended. At the Offertory of the Mass, the priest sometimes had to use the wire end of an artificial flower to break through the ice in the water cruet.

The cold weather provided good hockey. Two teams would be organized by the Jesuit scholastics (men in training for the priesthood). Mr. John R.



*“Northern Winds” introduced readers to interesting aspects of life in a northern mission.*



Buchanan, S.J., for instance, sponsored the “Pack Rats” and challenged the “Roguish Mission Boys,” organized by Mr. Bernard T. Duffy, S.J.

Three sisters who were destined to spend many years in Alaska arrived in 1946. A Canadian Pacific Princess boat brought Sisters Mary George Edmond, Ida of the Eucharist, and Kathleen Mary to Juneau, where they were welcomed at St. Ann’s Hospital. A refurbished DC-3, declared a surplus aircraft by the U. S. Air Force, carried them to Anchorage, where they landed at Elmendorf Air Force Base, for Anchorage International Airport was not yet in use. The sisters were taken to Providence Hospital, then on “L” Street. Father Joseph T. Walsh, chaplain, offered to show them Fourth Avenue (the only paved street in Anchorage) and the beginnings of the new Holy Family Church. He introduced the sisters to some of his friends who became generous benefactors of mission work. The Sisters of Providence, besides providing hospitality, gave the new missionaries gifts for Holy Cross, including a bag of bananas. At departure time Father Walsh added a small live turtle to bring to the children.

With such varied luggage as turtle, bananas, steamer trunk, suitcases, umbrellas, and gloves, the sisters boarded another DC-3 for the flight to McGrath. Once in McGrath, the sisters were directed to Oscar Winchell, veteran mail carrier and pilot, who saw to the last lap of their journey to Holy Cross. Weather conditions were poor, but after bumping through air pockets and fighting wind and rain, the red four-seater landed in the meadow at Holy Cross. No one was there to meet the plane. Oscar Winchell pointed out a dirt road that led to the mission. From the surrounding woods, two brown-faced men, Pius Savage and Willie Dagouyuk, suddenly appeared and offered to help with the baggage. The walk to the mission was made through drizzle, mud, and curious mosquitoes buzzing inquisitively. When the strange party passed through the village, faces in windows looked out shyly and furtively.

A happy welcome awaited the sisters at the mission, although no one had heard the plane or expected visitors on that wet August Day. Father James C. Spils, S.J., had a handshake and a smile; the sisters had various surprises. Sister Eulalia came out to meet the group with an umbrella that had been hanging in the closet for years. As she opened it, the black cloth hung in shreds from rusty spokes. Emotions made ordinary greetings difficult. One did not know whether to laugh or cry.

Sister George’s heart tightened at the sight of the girls wearing their best aprons with “Purity Flour” still visible through the cherry red dye that attempted to disguise the flour sacking. The girls were also wearing high-heeled shoes with the heels cut down. The new superior, Sister George Edmond, cried. At that moment, she resolved to write home and to benefactors.

Memories of the first meal: year-old eggs fried in rancid butter that had been donated to the mission; memories of the first reception: all the girls dressed in white, wearing an odd assortment of antediluvian dresses; memories of Sister Ida’s first moose: thrown across the kitchen counter one morning as a greeting to the new cook—these initial impressions stayed with the newcomers.

At the urging of Father Spils, already introducing new thinking into the mission scene, Sister Eulalia extended her fur work with the big girls and



included the women of the village. Sister accepted orders, then sent away for furs and linings. She talked with the women about the requested items, asked advice about appropriate furs for different uses, the best tanning, how to cut for economy and purpose. In doing so each woman's self-image was raised and her own creativity called forth. At home, whether by daylight, Aladdin lamp, or lantern, mothers cut and sewed, recalled old patterns, beaded, trimmed with fur, made yarn or fur tassels. Fur parkas, fur-dressed dolls, and fur footwear items, as well as beaver or marten hats and moosehide or bearskin mittens were popular. Many of the fur pieces were shipped on consignment under Sister Eulalia's guidance. The Gilded Cage of Anchorage, directed by Marsha Hoppin, working for the Alaska Crippled Children's Association, of which she was founder and sponsor, encouraged this market for Holy Cross items. They soon had a name for quality and beauty.

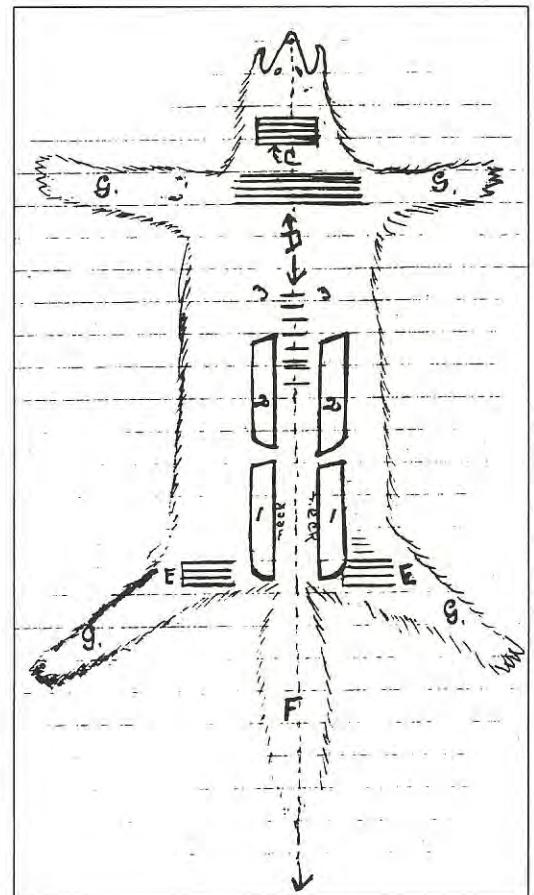
The women were supplied by the mission with all that was required for an undertaking: needles, thread, zippers, patterns, lining materials of various hues and textures, needed furs. The sewing projects kept women in their homes with their families, but enabled them to improve their economy. When the finished products, always wrapped in cloths for protection, were brought to Sister Eulalia, the women returned home knowing they had earned sacks of flour, potatoes, cornmeal, or other food staples. The women might also have particularly wanted yardage, or boxes of rummage carefully chosen. Many a struggling family, low on cash, survived the poverty years of the 1930s and 1940s because of these extras from a mission that had little itself. Some of the appreciated yardage came through newly-arrived Sister Mary Rosalia, whose father was employed in the Cranston Print Works in Webster, Massachusetts. Through him the women of the village benefitted, as did the mission, from flawed materials that, nevertheless, were serviceable for dresses, shirts, aprons, and nightgowns.

In all of this, Sister George Edmond was supportive, an instigator of new ideas, and a resource through her correspondence, contacting potential buyers. Her typewriter was always in use as she described the mission and its needs to relatives and friends. Often a little tot, whom she was babysitting, stood in back of her on her chair and, remembering days with a mother, carefully "combed" sister's long black veil.

In the late spring of 1947, sister had to fly to Anchorage, where she made many new contacts and received useful gifts for the mission. It was on this trip that she met Dr. Milo H. Fritz, who had been called in as a consultant in her health problem. Dr. Fritz was an Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat specialist from New York and was in Alaska on a special research project for the Alaska Department of Health.

Becoming interested in the missions through Sister George's description of needs and events, he obtained permission from Dr. C. Earl Albrecht, Commissioner of Health, to continue and complete the survey at Holy Cross. There Doctor Fritz assessed the medical needs of the children and arranged to perform surgery with instruments flown in from Bethel Hospital. Sister Edward and other mission personnel helped with sterilizing supplies, carrying patients,

*Girls were taught how to use a wolfskin to best advantage in fur work. (Sr. Mary Eulalia's notebook) (SPA)*





bringing trays, or comforting the children. One little girl marked by a disfiguring eye tumor received the doctor's special attention. Waking from the anesthetic, she called, "Doctor Fritz! Doctor Fritz!" As soon as he could, the doctor went to her cot. As he knelt by her, she murmured: "Thank you, doctor, for making me beautiful!" During the tonsil operations, Father Spils kept the suction machine running through crucial periods. Father William McIntyre, S.J., served as intern and carried patients from the operating room to the cots in the ward. Doctor Fritz remarked about his Holy Cross experience: "This is the first place I've found where work is done for unselfish motives. Everything here has a purpose and it's so darn easy to see what it is!"

The following summer, Doctor Fritz interested Adolph Vogel, M.D., also an EENT specialist and a Duke University alumnus, to join him in another Good Samaritan gesture. Together, they completed the cases left behind in 1947. Joseph Shelton, M.D., came from Anchorage in 1954 for further tonsillectomies and refractions. An Elmendorf Air Force dentist, A. D. McKinnon, D.D.S., during his military leave gave his services. With Sister Edward as dental assistant, he worked twelve hours a day. During Doctor McKinnon's stay at the mission, his son was undergoing major surgery in Anchorage. When the doctor was asked why he had left his bedside to come to Holy Cross, he replied: "I knew if I took care of God's children here, God would take care of mine in Anchorage." His faith was rewarded as the boy made a complete recovery. Sister Mary George's friends in Anchorage paid for the doctor's traveling expenses. Bart LaRue, D.D.S., another dentist, and his wife, Elizabeth, came periodically to Holy Cross, either on their own or as part of the team on the Yukon River Medical Boat.

KL7EN, ham radio at Holy Cross, a standby for emergency communications, provided opportunities to keep in touch with the Alaska Native Service Hospital in Bethel and with other missions. In some of their transmitted conversations, the Jesuits resorted to Latin. If the sisters had a chance to spread Congregation news, they used French. Unable to understand, the village women, who always listened to the radio, would complain to Sister Superior: "No fair, you talk like birds . . . we understand nothing!"

The centenary year of the foundation of the Sisters of St. Ann, 1950, brought an occasion to speak via ham radio to the Mother House in Lachine, Quebec. A phone-patch made possible such a conversation over 6,000 miles. As part of the exchange of news, Sister Angela talked about her plans to present the life of Mother Mary Ann in a pageant based on *Marie Esther*, the story for children written by Sister Mary Ethelind, S.S.A. The title was taken from Mother Mary Ann's family name, Marie Esther Sureau Blondin. Sister Ida then described the renovations in the kitchen, where fresh, light paint was transforming the pantries and work areas.

Ham radio time did not allow for lengthy descriptions of all the changes occurring at Holy Cross, but, especially through Sister Ida's efforts, the food service areas were improved. Hot cereal was cooked fresh every morning. Previously, because of the problem of boiling water early enough to cook great pots of mush, it had been made the day before and then reheated. Sister Ida, up at 4:00 or 4:30 every morning, dried green wood in the ovens so that she could have a hot fire early and have freshly made mush to serve.

Concerned about the heavy bread at the mission, sister studied the fermenting barrel of potato-yeast mixture that was used as leaven. She insisted that it



be discarded in favor of Fleischmans Dry Yeast. The result: better bread for the mission people. After studying the problem the village women were having with their bread, she counseled them to use less salt. When her ovens were not filled with green wood that had been carried ice-covered and wet from the woodshed, they were filled with sugar cookies, slabs of cornbread, roasting peanuts, or cakes—sometimes made with fish eggs. Sister's courage and ingenuity never dimmed, even though the bricks lining the fire box burnt out and the hot water pipes broke.

Little by little, with Sister George Edmond's encouragement, the annual food requisition to Seattle each spring began to include commodities such as peanut butter and honey, heretofore unheard of at the mission. Working with Sister Kathleen, primary teacher and handy with tempera paints, the dining areas became brighter, happier-looking places, as colorful paintings appeared on transoms in winter and curtainless windows in summer. Much of this effort at bringing beauty into the lives of the children was motivated by the knowledge that little Esther, one of the mission tots, would one day be blind because of a hereditary disease.

Of special concern to Sister Ida were the hard-working Jesuits and big boys. For Thanksgiving she tried to improvise roast turkeys by shaping mashed potatoes around a block of canned luncheon meat. The winter fish caught in Yukon River fish traps under the ice were cooked in appetizing ways. When she spotted young Brother Francis J. Fox, S.J., and his crew of boys coming in from the logging camp where they spent part of every winter, she welcomed and renewed them with moose steaks or hot rabbit stew. The woodcutters who would come with sled loads of logs brought in four hundred cords of wood annually. Piled in the yard, the wood pile was the scene of major chores on weekdays for the boys who operated the circular saw, chopped wood into required lengths, and carried loads to any of the forty stoves at the mission. The biggest load was for the kitchen.

During the flood year of 1949, when the river was still high and the steamer docked in front of the mission instead of down past the village, dark-eyed Sister Mary Anne Rita disembarked. Her luggage included school materials and lists of friends eager to send additional reading and social studies helps for the school. Fond of fresh fruit, a rarity in Holy Cross, Sister Anne Rita was grateful for the occasional boxes of apples and oranges the local trader, George Turner, sent to the mission. Generous with her time, she accepted to go with Sister Kathleen to Nome in the summer of 1950 to give a month of religious education classes at the request of Father Neil K. Murphy, S.J. King Island Eskimos traveled to Nome over ninety miles by umiak from their island home to spend the summer. They sold their Eskimo carvings or other curios that tourists sought. The King Island children, plus the Native and white children of Nome itself, made up the student registration of 113 for four hours a day.

One evening in Nome, Sister Kathleen welcomed an Eskimo man who knocked at the rectory door. He had an empty mayonnaise jar in his hand and asked for holy water. After his departure, Father Murphy said with awe: "That man is an Eskimo chief. He was on the beach one night when he was attacked, badly beaten up, and left almost dead. Found by his friends, the chief was asked: 'Why didn't you fight back? You are strong!' 'I know,' said the Eskimo chief. 'If I had fought back I would have killed him. I was ready to die, but I didn't know if he was!'"



*Sister Mary Ida of the Eucharist and Sister Miriam Jude make Christmas cookies with Grace Cristo and Emily Lopez as able assistants. Enough Christmas goodies were made to pack some in boxes to mail out to Jesuits ministering in the villages. (SPA)*



Sister Miriam Jude was welcomed in 1950 at Holy Cross where she ministered in the kitchen and at fish-cutting bees. Her hearty laugh and sense of humor relieved tensions rising from overwhelming burdens of work. After Sister Kathleen was assigned to Nulato, early in 1956, Sister Miriam Jude took over the primary class, but left Holy Cross that summer to continue studying toward degrees in nursing and psychiatry.

The first Territorial Welfare Conference for needy children was held in Palmer, in 1952. Sister George Edmond, Mother Mary Antoinette, O.S.U., from St. Mary's on the Andreafsky, and Father James U. Conwell, S.J., Chancellor of the Vicariate of Northern Alaska, represented the Catholic missions of northern Alaska. This conference convoked some ninety delegates from fifteen church groups. Part of the discussion centered on finances, for all the missions had the perennial problem of reaching out in faith to shelter and educate children and of then realizing that the wherewithal to do so, as one would wish, was lacking. The Territory of Alaska was demanding that more formal acceptance of students be implemented. There was a tension between churches realizing the crisis situations children often were in and the restraining: "Fill out the forms first!" of the government.

As attending the Palmer meeting necessitated a stopover in Anchorage for Sister George, she accepted Father Walsh's invitation to speak at a Communion breakfast for the officers of Fort Richardson, a military base adjoining Anchorage.<sup>19</sup> Sister spoke about the great concern at Holy Cross to find the funds for a new, efficient laundry. Touched by Sister George's talk, the officers at Fort Richardson began a collection to help purchase a good second-hand dynamo, abandoned at one of the gold mines in Flat. The dynamo was big enough to power the industrial machinery already acquired from Army surplus yards. A letter from the soldiers in February 1953 asked



for the invoice covering the dynamo and also inquired about the proposed cost of air transportation to Holy Cross. These military men, helped by the Air Force personnel at Elmendorf Air Force Base, contributed over \$2,000 to the project. Another benefactor, Bishop John Wright of Worcester, Massachusetts, paid the freight expenses. Sister Joanne, who had replaced Sister Sidonia as laundress, soon learned how to use the heavy equipment which expedited work. The John Aubuchon family of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, contributed in a major way to the cost of the new laundry building, outfitted even with convenient hampers and storage bins.

Sister Anne Rita and Mr. William J. Loyens, then a Jesuit scholastic at Holy Cross, answered the call of Sister George Edmond for the opening of a high school at Holy Cross in 1954. Political, social, and transportation changes in Alaska required that young citizens have as much education as possible. Eighth-grade graduates were invited to continue their education. At Holy Cross, the high school classroom was on the third floor of the Girls House. Sister Eulalia and the girls decorated this room so attractively that it was nicknamed "heaven." Sister George obtained good shoes and clothes for students to wear during school hours to give dignity to the high school. Mr. Loyens and Sister Anne Rita taught basic high school courses. The first students were able to graduate after only three years of studies. Sister George taught Home Economics and transformed the old post office, a small building nearby, into a cooking and sewing unit.

Two other sisters, who were to have an impact on the Alaska missions for the next thirty years, arrived together in 1952 after delays in McGrath and Aniak. They were Sisters Mary Alice Therese and Dorothy Marie. They stepped off their pontoon plane just after James A. Walker's boat had docked. Coming down from Nulato, Walker had given passage to Mother Mary Liliane, General Superior, and Sister Mary Magdalena (Sister Mary Eulalia's blood sister), her companion. Another passenger was a retired prelate from Montreal, Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau, who had accepted Mother Mary Liliane's invitation to join her on her official visitation of the Alaska missions.

Mr. Armand M. Nigro, S.J., scholastic, met Sister Alice and Sister Dorothy at the plane. "Which one is for Nulato?" he asked, as a greeting, for he had heard already Mother Liliane say that one of the incoming sisters was to be reassigned. Sister Dorothy realized, to her disappointment, that she was the one. She knew Sister Alice Therese was to be in charge of boarders and there were no boarders in Nulato.

Old Irene, a village woman with a penchant for giving nicknames, called Sister Alice "the little sister." Sister Alice Therese was from Montreal and one of the last French Canadian sisters to be assigned to Alaska. Enforcement of new immigration laws meant difficulties in staffing the Alaska houses.



*With Father William T. McIntyre, S.J., are Grade 8 graduates, 1954. Front row (l. to r.) are Virginia Karipari, Fr. McIntyre, S.J., Anna Patsy, Julia Ann Demoski; Back row (l. to r.): Robert Baker, Mary Dahlquist, Lloyd Elasanga, Grace Cristo, Teddy Mayac. (SPA)*



Ministries required the transfer of sisters from one country to another, but the procedure became more and more difficult, almost ending the possibility of assigning Canadian sisters to the Alaska apostolates.

Sister Alice found the children and the mission personnel patient with her limited English. She, herself, suffered from isolation and from all that caused discomfort to the children, especially their lack of good mukluks, variety in food, and warm housing. She asked Brother Laird to build toilet cubicles in the tub room next to the juniors' recreation room. With his gold tooth showing in a broad smile, Brother Laird replied: "One sister wants it in; the next sister wants it out!"

The summer of 1954 saw intimations of a major change for Holy Cross and the Alaska mission work. In a short letter to Mother Mary Liliame in July, Sister George Edmond mentioned that she would visit Copper Creek at the request of Father Jules M. Convert, Jesuit superior. "Very discreetly," confided sister, "I can tell you that Copper Creek is the probable site for the new location of Holy Cross."

Following the annual welfare meeting in Palmer, Sister George, Mother Frances Connell, O.S.U., and Father James U. Conwell, S.J., were driven to Copper Center by Mrs. Jack (Audrey) Clawson, benefactress of the missions and friend of Sister George. Father Convert and Father John R. Buchanan, S.J. (former scholastic at Holy Cross), pastor of Copper Center and other highway missions, accompanied them in a small truck.

Father Buchanan had successfully petitioned Congress for unused acres of land in a valley at the foot of Mount Drum. This land was to be used to further his educational purposes. Father Spils was chosen by Bishop Gleeson to construct a boarding school, with facilities to accommodate fifty children. On a fir tree on the point of land where the Tazlina River met the Copper River, Sister George



*Christmas dinner at Holy Cross around 1952. The children are Leo Anthony, Michael Lonergan, Dennis Kennedy, Vivian Anakak (bow), Esther Lopez, Agnes Gregory.*  
(Photo credit: U. of Alaska, Fairbanks)



*Sister Mary Alice Therese and Georgia Ekstrom examine a glass rabbit at Easter in the juniors recreation room. The picture is dated 1954.*  
(Photo credit: U. of Alaska, Fairbanks)



placed a photo-button of Mother Mary Ann and asked for her intercession in this project.

At a meeting, 22-24 January 1955, Bishop Gleeson, Father Henry J. Schultheis, S.J., Provincial Superior of the Oregon Province, and Alaska-based Jesuits Norman E. Donohue, Paul C. O'Connor, James C. Spils, Edmund A. Anable, Thomas P. Cunningham, Jules M. Convert, John Buchanan and James Conwell met to consider the future of Holy Cross. The Yukon River mission was becoming a heavy financial burden for the bishop. Deteriorating buildings had to be replaced and increasing costs of freight were becoming prohibitive. It was decided to close the old boarding school at Holy Cross, to maintain a day school under the sisters' supervision, and to expand the building program in the Copper River area so that the educational effort begun at Holy Cross Mission could continue.<sup>20</sup>

Some time earlier there had been a foment in Holy Cross village about the mission school. The people had learned that other villages had a public school offering a few salaried jobs for villagers as janitors, cooks, servers in a hot lunch program, or teacher's aides. Holy Cross villagers wished to have the same privileges. Also, the villagers knew that government schools were receiving classroom supplies beyond what Holy Cross Mission could afford. With the intention of obtaining these privileges, people signed a petition circulated among the families. The petition spoke to the missionaries of ingratitude and discontent rather than of a wish for financial help. Many unsuspecting villagers signed the petition, which they were unable to read or interpret. There were many heartaches as a result, which made the totally independent decision to close the boarding school at Holy Cross a more drastic measure than what the petition had addressed: educational benefits for the village.

A serious hand infection obliged Sister George Edmond to fly to Anchorage in February 1955. At Providence Hospital Sister George received the final word that the Jesuit consultors had decided not only that Holy Cross Mission would close, but also that the school at Copper Center would open on 1 September 1956. As Father Spils was in Anchorage at the same time, he and Sister George pored over construction plans for the new project.

Further decisions resulting from the consultors' meeting assigned Father Michael B. Collins, S.J., to Anchorage, where he would receive building supplies obtained by Father Buchanan in the States. Brother Feltes and some young men trained at Holy Cross in mechanics were to arrive at the building site in June to begin maintenance of the equipment on hand. Directives were given that Holy Cross should begin to reduce its student body. Only about thirty students would be transferred to the new school. Other students at Holy Cross would either return to their village homes or be placed elsewhere. This was a traumatic time<sup>21</sup> for the missionaries and children at Holy Cross Mission and for the people of the village.

Sister George Edmond, who through an indult from Rome had remained superior in Holy Cross for nine years (three years beyond the usual time), left for the Eastern states in the summer of 1955. There she hoped to show the American government that it had responsibilities it had not, as yet, assumed for the children of the North. Many of those being cared for at Holy Cross should have received government help, as they were orphans or abandoned children.



She also realized that Holy Cross had been in operation for years without any written contract between the Jesuits and the Sisters of Saint Ann. The sisters, up to 1955, turned over to the Jesuits all monies; the Jesuits provided room and board and usually travel expenses. The Congregation furnished personal clothing and other items. Most of the Jesuit superiors showed understanding and kindness and did all they could with the meager means at their disposal.<sup>22</sup> Before leaving, Sister George made new arrangements about the use of mission monies.

Sister Pius became the superior of the sisters for the last year that Holy Cross operated as a boarding school. The year was a soul-searching one: Should the Sisters of Saint Ann continue to maintain their traditional missionary role in the North? Several of the Jesuits felt that neither Holy Cross nor Nulato should have sisters because their presence tied down the priest to those villages. If Holy Cross and Nulato were just mission stations visited once a month, the priest would be free to visit more villages and serve more people.

Sister Mary Luca, Provincial Superior, proposed to withdraw all the sisters from the isolated missions of Holy Cross and Nulato and assign them to more central locations. She felt that the modern girl could not take the hardships the veteran missionaries had withstood. From some young Jesuits, she heard corroboration of her own thinking about these matters.<sup>23</sup> There was talk, too, that an entirely new staff of sisters should be appointed to Copper Center. One priest was heard to say, "We do not want any of the traditions of Holy Cross to be carried to Copper Center."<sup>24</sup>

The move to Copper Center (Glennallen) was effected on 14 October 1956. Students living in Holy Cross watched with sadness their classmates taking off for new educational opportunities. A detailed account of the move and the innovative school is given in Chapter Seven, which relates the story of the educational effort begun at Holy Cross in 1888 and continued at the Copper River site.

Sisters Pius, Ida, and Therese Bernadette were assigned to share in the life of Holy Cross villagers. The closure of the mission boarding school and the departure of the students and staff for Copper Center required a different pattern of living for those who remained to staff the Holy Cross day school. Two boarders were for a while still under the sisters' care. The sisters moved from the Girls House to what had been the Jesuit residence. The pastor, Father John P. Fox, S.J., and his nephew, Brother Fox, along with Brother Ignatius J. Jakes, S.J., moved to the vacated boys' house. Much had to be done in both places. In the Jesuit house, cooking and dining areas had to be organized. The three-story Girls House demanded weeks of work to complete the sorting of clothes, closing of rooms, disposing of supplies, selecting of things to be sold to villagers or others. Classes continued in the school, where adaptations to smaller groups were made. Agnes Alexie, John and Peter Capsul, and Carl Walker graduated from Grade 8 in May 1957. Sister Ida, continuing the health care ministry of the sisters, became involved with nursing in the village. Everyone missed the activity of the boarding school and faithful friends were puzzled by all the changes.

There were also good features. The village children came from the sidelines, as it were, to become the stars, the centers of attraction for the sisters who had been absorbed with boarding school needs before. Sister Ida came to



know village children needing particular attention. She contacted authorities in the Girl Scout organization and initiated a program that blossomed as a popular after-school activity. Sister Ida, who years before had relinquished her desire to teach in order to meet the community's need for cooks, felt that she was, at last, a teacher as she explained the scout goals and procedures, counseled, and shared in the youths' activities. Some of the pain the village experienced at the closing of the mission boarding school was lessened as the villagers saw their young people happy and involved, particularly through the Girl Scout events.

In March 1957, Mother Mary Luca visited Nulato and Holy Cross. At both places, it was stated that the closing of these small missions was imminent.<sup>25</sup> When elderly Sister Pius heard the news, she exclaimed, "If Holy Cross closes, then I pray the good God to take me to Him first!" She died rather suddenly on 7 June, with Sisters Ida and Therese Bernadette attending her, and she was buried at Holy Cross.

The sisters were withdrawn from Holy Cross in July 1957. James A. Walker wrote, "Their departure was like the going away of a flame."<sup>26</sup> His brother Frank established a trust in 1969 in gratitude for the care and the education he had received at Holy Cross in his youth.<sup>27</sup>

With the closing of the mission boarding school, an era ended. The Native people of the Holy Cross area could look back on contacts that had changed their lives. According to Dr. James W. Van Stone, the Native way of life had been interrupted in its evolvement by five non-Native contact communities:

1. Russian (including Siberian fur trade and Russian Orthodox missionary effort)
2. American fur trade
3. American missionary efforts (including the Sisters from Canada)
4. Gold rushes
5. American government (federal, territorial, local)

Aboriginal trade routes set precedents for Native people to acquire goods not produced locally by themselves. The way was thus prepared for Natives to barter and trade with what they had for the tea, tobacco, and cloth of either the Russian American company or the Alaska Commercial Company and other American trading companies. The Russian Orthodox Church ministries and presence at the Kvipak Mission spreading from Ikogmiut prepared a way for the Episcopalian and Roman Catholic mission evangelization at Anvik, Holy Cross, and the Innoko region. The mission activities, especially through the schools, brought skills, comforts, and new life systems to the Native people. Mission sanctions affected cultural behavior. With the coming of non-Natives not identified with church groups during the gold rushes, other culture changes resulted: alcohol abuse, regular jobs with wages (cutting wood for the riverboat furnaces), holding jobs on the boats. When government intervention in education, medical care, and social assistance (job training and protection) also became valued in the Native villages, acculturation bonded the Natives to a new way of life.

Each contact, as it introduced concepts and items of change, brought instability to the pre-contact Native life-style, giving stress to a fragmentation sequence that broke up the Native way of life.<sup>28</sup> This major fragmentation of a whole culture was symbolized, in a smaller way, at the breaking up of mission components at Holy Cross: staff, students, traditions, material items.



Even the new ideas that began dissemination after Vatican Council II accentuated the mission fragmentation and the resulting loss of stability in the village.

Through the years the mission buildings were gradually taken down. The hospital was torn down and the lumber salvaged. The tiny post office building that had been transformed into a Home Economics cottage was sold and removed in one piece. The Girls' House was demolished by the villagers, who were given the lumber to build new homes for themselves. The educational project in the Copper River area and the established mission at St. Mary's received much equipment.

Volunteers helping the missions of Alaska taught at Holy Cross after the 1957 departure of the sisters. One of them, Genevieve Hetu, a graduate of Anna Maria College, Paxton, Massachusetts, noted how the village people missed the strong moral support of sisters. She believed, too, that women like herself, offering temporary assistance and valuable witness, could not provide the continuity needed in mission work. She hoped, though, that Alaska would be a proving ground for a strong lay apostolate movement in the Church.<sup>29</sup>

Three Sisters of Saint Ann returned to Holy Cross in 1965. Sisters Mary Isaac Jogues, Anne Rita, and Bernardi took up residence in the old Jesuit house. Materials for two new prefabricated, one-story buildings had arrived. The school was ready, but work had not begun on the convent. Sister Mary Kevin replaced Sister Bernardi in 1966 and remained until 1969. Experienced in practical nursing, Sister Kevin was often consulted by Margaret Demientieff, the village midwife. During Sister Kevin's stay in Holy Cross, she saved at least two lives.<sup>30</sup> Sister was able to provide temporary medical help and with the assistance of Jerry Walker, pilot, and Margaret Demientieff, emergency cases were taken to Bethel. Later, Mary Rawley, R.N., was stationed in Holy Cross.

Sister Anne Rita, during the winter of 1966 to 1967, fell on the ice, but with her usual determination tried to ignore resultant pain and to continue teaching her classes. Mrs. Anna Wenzel, R.N., visiting Holy Cross as part of her duties as Public Health Nurse supervisor, noted sister's condition and persuaded her to leave for medical attention.

In 1968, Sister Dorothy Marie was assigned as teacher of the upper grades and as superior of the Holy Cross sisters. Sister Isaac Jogues became principal of the school. In spite of conflicting personalities, an effort was made to live as a loving community. Sister Dorothy visited the families in the village and would have liked to stay on at Holy Cross indefinitely, for Holy Cross had always appealed to her. Three young adults, part of a group helping out in the Alaska missions, came to assist. Divisions arose about Vatican II developments. Authority, discipline, liturgy—all came into question. Difficulties continued and two volunteers left in the fall. Sister Kevin, not a teacher, but guided by Sister Isaac Jogues, subsequently taught in the school.

A Hungarian refugee, Father Andrew Eordogh, S.J., gave five years of his life to the Alaska missions in thanksgiving for his escape during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. He was pastor at Holy Cross village from 1965 to 1969. Trained as an architect in the Communist regime, he studied the historic old church that had graced the Holy Cross scene since 1906. To the chagrin of many people, he decided to tear down the building as he believed it no longer safe to use. Foundations had shifted or rotted, and required



repair. The wood-burning stoves beneath the church floor were fire hazards. Getting a wood supply was a problem. His intentions were good, but his actions devastated many people. When the church was demolished, all the ornate wood carvings on the walls and ceiling were lost. People claimed whatever was salvageable. Frances Demientieff moved the belfry to her fish camp downriver. There, on a hillside, the belfry became a place of devotion, prayer, and remembrance. The large oil painting canvas of the Holy Family was rolled up and stored, hopefully for future use. Unrolled after a time, the paint had cracked, flaked, and chipped. The canvas was ruined. Small windows were kept by some villagers, the large crucifix went to Kalskag, the church bell waited for a new home.

Father Eordogh began unloading gravel at a nearby site in preparation for building a new church. He was interrupted by his transfer before the construction project was anywhere near ready to start. Insensitivity to people's feelings has always hurt mission work in spreading the Good News. In Holy Cross, the destruction of the church building was the third of such insensitivities, the third of three near-fatal wounds: the closing of the old mission, misunderstood changes of some aspects of Vatican II, and the loss of the people's visible sign of Faith and commitment, their historic church.

Once more a decision was made for the Sisters of Saint Ann to withdraw from Holy Cross. Negotiations with the Department of Education resulted in the Holy Cross school's being incorporated into the public school system under a village school board. As the sisters prepared to leave for summer studies in 1969, they said farewell to the people and place they loved. Sister Dorothy Marie compared the wrenching of such goodbyes to be like that of death. Although she had been asked by officials to stay on and teach in the school, the Congregation asked her to share her gifts elsewhere.<sup>31</sup>

Sisters of other congregations lived in Holy Cross from time to time for a year or more. In 1973, Sister Agnes Marie, a Sister of Saint Ann, became part of a team of sisters involved in catechetics and pastoral work. The team was stationed in Holy Cross, a central place from which to move out to other villages. Sister Agnes had no previous experience of Holy Cross. The traditional ministries were gone, the traditional religious habit was gone, sometimes even religious names were gone. But Sister Agnes Marie found she had the key to every Native person's heart. She had to say only: "I am a Sister of Saint Ann." All doors opened to her.<sup>32</sup>

Sisters Anne Eveline Paquette and Margaret Cantwell were assigned in 1987 to Holy Cross where they became involved in pastoral ministry. There was no resident priest in the village. Father Andrew P. D'Arco, pastor of Aniak and Kalskag on the Kuskokwim River, flew to Holy Cross for a few days each month. The village, (now officially a city) with the help of the Catholic Church Extension Society and the Missionary Diocese of Fairbanks, built a new church, in external design much like the historic one that had been demolished. In 1989 Sister Anne Eveline became pastoral administrator of the parish and looked forward to a new era at Holy Cross.

\* \* \* \* \*

White is the color for this second part of the history of the Sisters of Saint Ann in Holy Cross. Against the white buildings of the mission complex, blue forget-me-nots show to advantage. White is for the many-windowed buildings, warm and friendly against the snowy background of the hills.





White is for the Eucharist, the lifted Host at Masses offered by Jesuit mission priests. White is for the sisters' coifs, framing faces both young and old. White is for popcorn balls and skating rink, boiling starch and sudsy water, composition books, organ keys, weather station, and whitewashed bricks making flower beds delineate "S.S.A." between the convent and the church. White is for rabbit fur and calf skin inlays, winter ptarmigan and ermine, Samoyed sled dogs, and long-awaited mail from home, First Communion and Confirmation veils. White is for the small crosses on the cemetery hill and for the large cross on the north hill: the cross that guided river steamers, miners and haggard mushers of the North.

*The church at Holy Cross,  
splendid amid winter glory.*

*Holy Cross Mission*





# Time Line for Chapter Five

1890	Sheldon Jackson observes Siberian domesticated reindeer		
1898	Klondike gold rush; river busy	1896	Death of Sister Mary Angilbert
1899	Gold rush to Nome	1899	U.S. post office under name of Koserefski
1900	Typhoid fever, cholera, influenza	1900	Death of Sister Mary Seraphine of S.H.
1902	Gold rush to Fairbanks		
1904	Diphtheria, whooping cough epidemics		
1905	Alaska given title: Territory		
		1906	Historic church of planed lumber
1912	Alaska attains territorial stature	1907-1908	Girls House renovated, dormer windows
1913	1st Territorial Legislature Compulsory Education Law	1912	U.S. post office under name of Holy Cross
1914	World War I begins		
1915	2nd Territorial Legislature Juneau Native Hospital		
1916	1st appropriation by government for medical assistance to Natives		
1917	United States enters World War I 3rd Territorial Legislature Comprehensive public school system planned		
1923	Government grants to church schools discontinued	1923	Girls House enlarged to L-shaped 3 stories
		1924	Air mail service from McGrath
		1926	28th International Eucharistic Congress in Chicago
1930s	The Great Depression	1927	Additional story to Holy Cross School
1931	Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) administers Alaska Native schools and hospitals (replacing the handling by the Bureau of Education concerned with the dual role since 1884)		
1934	Johnson-O'Malley Act unifies and expands services for Natives		
		1938	Our Lady of Grace outdoor statue on hill
1940	Alaska Native Service Hospital in Bethel		
1941	Pearl Harbor, America joins World War II		
1942	Japanese invade Aleutian Islands Alaska-Canada Highway built		
1945	End of World War II		
		1948	Bishop Gleeson moves Vicariate center to Fairbanks
1952	1st Territorial Welfare Conference in Palmer	1952	New laundry at Holy Cross
1955	U.S. Public Health Service replaces BIA	1955	Decision to close boarding school at Holy Cross Decision to open a college-prep boarding school at "Copper Center" (Glennallen) Sister George Edmond seeks government assistance for care of children in need
		1956	Move from Holy Cross to "Copper Center"
1956	Alaska Constitution was adopted Hungarian Revolution occurred	1957	Death of Sister Pius Sisters withdraw from Holy Cross
		1962	Opening of Vatican Council II in Rome
1959	Alaska becomes 49th State	1965	Sisters of Saint Ann return to Holy Cross Pre-fab living quarters and school
1968	Oil discovered on Arctic slope		

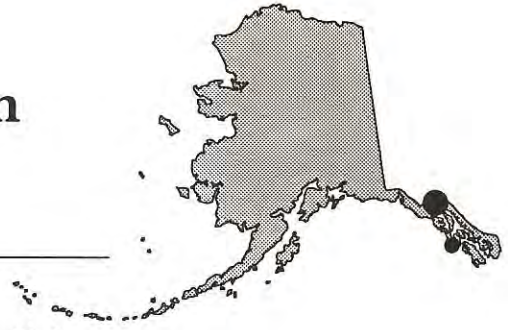


1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

- 1969 Historic church torn down  
Sisters leave Holy Cross
- 1973 Sister Agnes Marie, SSA, in Holy Cross for catechetics  
and pastoral ministry  
Day school at Holy Cross
- 1974 Sister Agnes leaves for St. Mary's
- 1984 Pastor at Holy Cross, Father Michael J. Kaniecki, S.J.,  
ordained as Coadjutor Bishop of Fairbanks
- 1987 Sisters of Saint Ann return to Holy Cross for pastoral  
ministry
- 1988 Former Catholic day school dismantled
- 1989 New church at Holy Cross  
Sister M. Anne Eveline named Pastoral Administrator
- 1991 Renovation of warehouse (former new laundry)



## A New Effort in Southeastern Alaska: Skagway and Sitka



**D**isturbed by noises in the night, Sister Rosalinda woke Sister Philippa with a cautionary gesture.

“Something’s happening downstairs! Come on!” she whispered.

They descended the staircase to the children’s recreation room and saw the outside door open and close. Cautiously crossing the room, Sister Rosalinda stumbled on something.

She gasped, “ An ax! A wet ax!”

She picked it up shakily, shoved it into a nearby locker, and shot the bolt. As she did so, the outside door opened again. Silhouetted in the frame, a young soldier stood there, unsteadily. Before he could speak, two policemen appeared behind him.

They gave the story to the sisters. The soldier had been forced by his companions to drink excessively time and time again. On this night he had rebelled, grabbed an ax from a woodpile and grazed the head of his principal tormentor. Realizing he was in trouble, the young soldier had sought out the mission, where, previously, he had found friends and safety.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Skagway, Part I 1932 to 1945

The sisters in Victoria first heard of the Skagway area when, in 1885, Father John Althoff went from Nanaimo to Victoria to welcome back Archbishop Seghers as he returned to his Vancouver Island See. At a subsequent clergy gathering, Father Althoff spoke of the beauties of the Chilkoot land. The archbishop, always happy at the thought of expanded missionary activity, exclaimed, “We must have a mission there!” Taken aback, Father Althoff replied, “First, there must be some inhabitants!”<sup>1</sup>

There were inhabitants, but scattered in small pockets amid the vast, wild splendor of the North. The Chilkats and Chilkoots were two of the subtribes of the numerous Tlingit people, who formed the majority of the Native population of Southeastern Alaska. Aboriginal villages and seasonal camps of these northern Tlingits of the Skagway area had been set up in the mountainous territory that was theirs. Three special villages commanded the ocean edge of three principal passes to the Canadian interior: the Dalton Trail to the Porcupine mining region, the Dyea (Chilkoot) Pass ascending steeply into the Yukon Territory, and the White Pass, winding through ravines and over mountains into the lake and river system of the Canadian north.<sup>2</sup> Tlingits lived from the sea through fishing and the hunting of marine life; they lived on the sea, traveling far in their great, ornately carved boats; they lived by the sea, in solidly built homes, often with ornamented story-telling houseposts



integral to the structures and surrounded by a medley of totem poles, tall and short. But the Chilkats and Chilkoots were also at home in the mountains and their passes. The people were strong and as sure-footed as the mountain goats they hunted. Conscious of their power as controllers of the passes, the men bartered shrewdly for good wages when their services were requested as guides or as packers of supplies. Only with gold rush pressures were these exclusive rights relinquished.

Governor Alfred P. Swineford, in his 1888 fiscal year report, described the tenacity with which the Chilkats controlled the passes. He also expressed his fears of these northern Tlingits.

*They are a fierce and warlike people, more so than any other of the native clans of Alaska, and frighten away all other Indians who apply for or undertake to do any of the packing for the white men, for doing which they themselves demand and extort exorbitant prices. As a consequence there have been frequent quarrels between themselves and the white miners, none of which, however, has resulted in bloodshed. But last spring a fight occurred between the leader of the Chilkats and a Sitka Indian. The white miners took no part in the fight, but many were apprehensive of further trouble, their fears only being allayed when the United States steamer *Pinta* appeared in the inlet. As no white persons were injured no complaints or arrests were made, and though I can not hear that any of the miners were molested while on their way out from the Yukon this fall, I am apprehensive of more trouble next spring, in which event it is more than likely the whites may be embroiled. If there is any one point in the Territory where a military post should be established and maintained it is among these Chilkats; a continuous show of force in that neighborhood would be sufficient to insure their good behavior in the future.<sup>3</sup>*

On Chilkoot Inlet, the government opened in 1904 Fort William H. Seward to assure order and act as a deterrent to trouble in the region. The name of the fort was changed to that of Chilkoot Barracks in 1922 and to Port Chilkoot when the installation closed in 1943.<sup>4</sup> Through all its history, it was, as Governor Swineford had labelled it, but a “show of force.”

The northern Tlingits, sharing in the general culture of other Tlingits, were artists. Everywhere in Southeastern Alaska, Tlingit art had developed into a plethora of manifestations: shell ornamentation, cedar vessels, prestigious blankets for ceremonial dance, and the emblematic totems with faces high on poles looking out over the villages, the sea, the Tlingit land. Magnificent potlatches, where tribal leaders sought to outdo one another with extravagant gifts and feasting, were significant aspects of Tlingit life and inspired much of the art. Chilkat blankets, woven from goat wool, featured hereditary designs and were important art pieces specially produced by the northern Tlingits.

Besides the numerous Tlingits, other Native peoples made Southeastern Alaska their home. The Haida Indians lived on the southern half of Prince of Wales Island and shared in much the same sort of life-style as did their Tlingit neighbors. Estimates about the relative populations at the beginning of the nineteenth century give 15,000 Tlingits and about 1,800 Haida. Both groups were divided into clans, or moieties, with prohibitions about marrying into their own moiety. All Tlingits belonged to the Raven moiety, with the northerners also being of the Eagle. The southerners were of the Raven/Wolf. All Haida moieties were of the Raven/Wolf. Symbols of these moieties recurred in design and dance.



Besides the Tlingits and Haidas, a third Native group became part of the Indian peoples of Southeastern Alaska in 1887. Canadian Tsimshians emigrated from Canada to Annette Island with their leader, an Anglican missionary, the Reverend William Duncan. The most famous village of these Tsimshians was New Metlakatla (Metlakatla), which soon had a flourishing church school.<sup>5</sup>

Various other church groups brought Christianity to Southeastern Alaska. The Russian Orthodox Church, in the area since 1800, was embedded culturally and historically, especially in Sitka. Next visible in scope was the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Sheldon Jackson and Mrs. Amanda R. McFarland established a school in Wrangell in 1877. In Sitka in 1878, Reverend John G. Brady and Miss Fannie Kellogg opened a school.<sup>6</sup> These educational efforts expanded, leading to the establishment of the Presbyterian Boys' Boarding School in 1880; its outgrowth, the Sitka Industrial Training School; and Sheldon Jackson College. In Juneau, the first public school was able to open in 1885 by utilizing the old Presbyterian church. Beginning in 1886, Roman Catholic hospitals and schools became landmarks in Juneau and Douglas. Church workers of the Evangelical Mission Union of Sweden, as well as of the Society of Friends, brought commitment to the Native peoples of Southeastern Alaska.

Governor Swineford wrote, somewhat patronizingly:

*The natives of southeastern Alaska are, as a general thing, a provident, self-sustaining people, peaceable, and not at all averse to the efforts that are being made for their civilization through the education of their children. Indeed, a marked improvement in their condition is noticeable from year to year, particularly in and about the settlements where the Christian missionaries have been able to reach and bring their teachings and influence to bear upon the people.*<sup>7</sup>

Be that as it may, Southeastern Alaska became a colorful mosaic of Native and non-Native societies, sometimes blending, sometimes clashing, sometimes withdrawing from each other. But curiosity and appreciation of various aspects of each other's cultures kept geographers, ethnologists, missionaries, and other non-Natives interacting with equally curious Natives, coping, compromising, complying. Skagway, the site of Pius X Mission and of a span of educational commitment of the Sisters of Saint Ann, entered modern history in the late 1880s.

The German geographers, Aurel and Arthur Krause, on an 1883 map, identified a dominant river in the Chilkats' land as the Schkagué River. In 1891, that same river was called the Shkagway by Lt. Col. Henry Ezra Nichols, U.S.N.<sup>8</sup>

Three miles northwest of the river was a Chilkat Tlingit village, Dyaytahk, recognized by the English derivative, Dyea, in 1896.<sup>9</sup> In Chilkoot Inlet, about where Fort Seward was built, the Native village of Deshu (Däschü) evolved into Haines Mission (Presbyterian), and in 1884 as Haines, although local people referred to it as Chilkoot.<sup>10</sup>

From the head of Lynn Canal, ninety miles northwest of Juneau, Archbishop Seghers and his companions in 1886 had, with Native guides and packers, crossed over the mountains to the Stewart River. In 1897, a trader, Captain William Moore, hearing repeated stories of gold finds in the Interior, opened a trading post near the river by then called "Skagway," a derivation of the Native expression for "Home of the North Wind."<sup>11</sup> From this trading post





*The largest town in Alaska during the Klondike gold rush days, Skagway mushroomed at the head of Lynn Canal. (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: ASN-No-10864-36)

mushroomed the largest town in Alaska, as three thousand gold-seekers, hoping for rich strikes, milled through the area during the Klondike gold rush. The port of Skagway, served by the Alaska Steamship Company despite threats of ice, remained open the year round, bringing a constant influx of people. The town spread out on a level stretch of land, reaching back from the waterfront and along the river. Surrounding the region were the high mountains of the White Pass of Skagway and the Chilkoot Pass of Dyea, exhausting routes to and from the Canadian North.

Under easier conditions than miners had, some sisters passed through Skagway in 1899 on their way to Dawson via the

recently opened White Pass and Yukon Railroad. Afterward, the Skagway route was often used by missionaries entering or leaving the Far North. The scenery was spectacular: fjords, glaciers, mountains, islets, forested slopes, snow-capped peaks, with unexpected discoveries of animal life in primeval surroundings.

The log book of one traveling north from Juneau ticked off Gastineau Channel, Douglas Island, Mendenhall Glacier, Shrine Island, Davidson and Denver Glaciers. After passing the port of Haines, one saw Dyea to the left, just before the boat docked at Skagway. Face Mountain, so called locally because of a formation like a face looking heavenward, and AB Mountain, on which melting snows in the spring brought out the two letters, were strong guardians of Skagway.

Rail traffic into Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, kept Skagway a promising town even after slumping gold mining activities put an end to the frenetic arrivals of men and supplies bound for the Klondike and other gold fields, and to the notorious swindling and robbing that awaited returning gold miners.

At the height of the gold rush, Father Philibert Turnell (Filiberto Tornielli), S.J., asked to be assigned to Skagway to minister to the residents and transients there. He saw Skagway as a depraved town needing a Catholic presence. Father René helped him remodel an empty store into St. Mark's Catholic Church.<sup>12</sup> Despite his old age, Father Turnell ministered to his parish, but also was shepherd and missionary to the saloon keepers and dance hall girls, to disappointed miners and victims of "Soapy Smith's" crooked deals, to dismayed Indians and anxious government officials. Father Peter C. Bougis, S.J., succeeded Father Turnell in 1905, but in 1908 Father Turnell returned to his mountain-shadowed parish.<sup>13</sup>



Father Turnell's successor was young Father G. Edgar Gallant, assigned to Skagway after his ordination in 1918. Father Gallant was a diocesan priest and a graduate of Mount Angel Benedictine Seminary in Mt. Angel, Oregon. While studying for the priesthood, he had spent some summers near Haines as timekeeper and bookkeeper at a fish cannery. Seeing how a Native man who had been at a residential school remembered Latin hymns and retained what he had learned as a boy, the seminarian determined to devote his life to the education of Native Alaskans. When Bishop Crimont, shortly after his elevation to the episcopacy in 1917, visited Mount Angel to interest the seminarians in Alaska, Edgar Gallant volunteered. He had been accepted for the Montana diocese, but that bishop released him for the Vicariate of Alaska. Even before completing his studies, Father Gallant was ordained in Juneau, 30 March 1918. It was the first Catholic ordination in Alaska.

The tall, thin, 24-year-old priest brought promise to the Vicariate. He was a change from Father Turnell for the people of Skagway. The Jesuit, Father Turnell, was from Italy, had European ways and was aged. The young Father Gallant was from Prince Edward Island, on the eastern seaboard of Canada, had Benedictine liturgical tastes, and was diocesan. He was at home with culture and expensive tastes. In Skagway, there was little of that, but through the years, Father Gallant's hobbies surrounded him with such objects. That liking for the best in liturgy, music and craftsmanship gave distinctive characteristics to the school he founded.

Ever interested in education, Father Gallant, who had heard of Holy Cross Mission in the Interior, thought to reproduce in Southeastern Alaska what had been accomplished on the Yukon River. When an opportunity arose, he purchased an acreage, 500 by 300 feet, near the Skagway airport and the Skagway River—a step made possible through a generous gift of J. M. Klein of Chicago.<sup>14</sup>

In talking about his proposed school at Skagway, Father Gallant reasoned that the territorial Indian school being planned for Wrangell, south of Juneau, could properly be balanced by a similar school at Skagway, north of Juneau. Bishop Crimont, anxious to bring the Catholic faith to the Native people of southeastern islands and coastal settlements, understood that logic.

He wrote to Father Gallant, "I have very much at heart the erection of a boarding-school for Indian children of southeastern Alaska. . . . I commend your zeal . . . I pray that God may be with you in the great task of gathering funds to put up the building."<sup>15</sup>

In 1930, Father Gallant accompanied Bishop Crimont on his official visit to Rome and met a group of American tourists looking for another partner for a game of bridge.<sup>16</sup> Accepting the invitation to join them, Father Gallant sat down. The game affected his whole future, for the bridge players became interested in hearing of his ministry and his dream for a boarding school. As the game came to an end, one man, John F. O'Dea, of Canton, Ohio, drew Father Gallant aside and offered to donate \$30,000 for the building of the school on condition that it be named after the late Pope Pius X, in gratitude for business favors obtained through that saintly pontiff's intercession.<sup>17</sup>

Other help for the proposed mission school came from non-Catholic friends of Father Gallant. Mr. and Mrs. O'Dea remained the most outstanding benefactors of the mission with their donation of \$30,000 and the furnishings of the chapel. The feast of St. John the Evangelist, 27 December,



*Pius X Mission, Skagway, in the 1930s, consisted of this one building, Crimont Hall. AB Mountain, 5,000' high and 4 miles north of Skagway, is in back. This picture may have been taken in the late fall of 1932 or the spring of 1933. (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: Dedman's Photo Shop, Skagway)



patronal feast of John O’Dea, became known at Skagway as “Founder’s Day” and was a major holiday.<sup>18</sup>

The cornerstone of Pius X Mission was blessed and placed by Bishop Emile M. Buno, O.M.I., Bishop of Prince Rupert, on 30 August 1931. By December, the first unit, called Crimont Hall, was furnished and ready for use. It was a brick, two-story building, 120 feet by 57 feet costing approximately \$65,000. Within its halls were thirty-three rooms—accommodations for sixty children. In 1931, it was the most modern Native school in the Territory of Alaska.<sup>19</sup>

The next year, 1932, the government opened a non-sectarian institute in Wrangell for Native elementary school children who needed a place to room and board as they received their education. In 1947, a government boarding school, Mt. Edgecumbe, was available for older Native students. This school, plus the one in Wrangell, rivalled Pius X Mission in drawing students.

The question arose, “What sisters will serve in this Skagway mission?” Several times various groups of sisters were contacted, the Sisters of Saint Ann included, but no affirmative decision was reached until 25 August 1932, when Bishop Crimont wired Victoria a renewed pressing appeal for sisters. The urgent request was forwarded to the Mother House, where the General Council under Mother Mary Dorothy, General Superior, accepted the invitation. A reply to Victoria read, “Proposition concerning Skagway accepted. God bless your generosity.”<sup>20</sup>

By the middle of September, Sisters Mary Martin of Tours, superior, and Adolphus, teacher, were on their way to Skagway. Having reveled in the majestic scenery as well as the comforts of steamer travel on the “Inside Passage” (coastal-island) route, the sisters reached Skagway on 19 September. As very few Southeastern Alaska Native children attended St. Ann’s School in Juneau, the sisters looked forward to an increased involvement with Southeastern Alaska Natives through Pius X Mission. Sisters Martin of Tours and Adolphus were joined a week later by Sisters Pudentienne, named as boarder caregiver, and Julien, as cook.<sup>21</sup> Sister Pudentienne had been a foundress both at Akulurak and at Dawson in the 1890s.

For the opening ceremonies, 26 September 1932, officiated at by Bishop Crimont, Mother Mary Leopoldine and Sister Mary Patrick came from



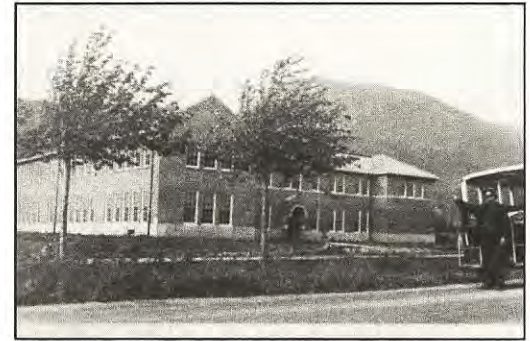
Victoria. Mass, inspection and blessing of the building, and having sisters on the premises brought joy to the aging bishop, ever solicitous for the care of Native children. His advice to the sisters was threefold: Be co-workers with God, generous in His service, loving and patient with the children.<sup>22</sup>

Eight youngsters came from Juneau by gas boat on 5 October.<sup>23</sup> Another group, this time from Wrangell and Petersburg, arrived on 16 October. The bishop and Father Gallant had obtained the services of Mr. Leo A. Dufour, deacon, for the care of the older boys and the teaching of the upper grades.<sup>24</sup> Classes opened on 18 October with an enrollment of forty-two pupils in Grades 1 to 6. Gradually other grades were added as older children registered. By and large, the students were Presbyterian or Orthodox; Catholics were few; others had no religion at all. Sister Adolphus and Mr. Dufour were assisted in the classroom teaching by a dedicated lay woman, Mrs. Vic Sparks of Skagway.<sup>25</sup> Sister Pudentienne taught social skills in the dormitory and recreation rooms. Sister Julien continued the children's education in cooking and household chores. Unified effort brought visible results.

A marvel for the children from the small settlements was the trolley car that ran past Pius X Mission. The clanging of the trolley was soon recognized. A rare treat was a ride into town on the trolley. The conductor became a friend and knew many of the children by name.

During November of that first year, cases of clothing and school supplies came from the Sisters of Saint Ann and their students in the Eastern states. For Christmas, the children at Pius X Mission wore their school uniforms for the first time. Striped blue dresses with white collars were admired by the girls. The boys had dark trousers, white shirts and blue pullover sweaters emblazoned with the school monogram: PXM.

A picture taken at the end of the first year shows the young people wearing their school uniforms and appearing as well-groomed young Alaskan Natives.



*A trolley car ran in front of Pius X Mission. The conductor, Martin Itjen, became a friend to all. This picture seems to have been taken in the summer of 1932, as some of the trees near the building in later pictures have not yet been planted. (SPA)*



*Staff and students at Pius X Mission at the end of the first year pose for this photograph in front of Crimont Hall. Staff members are (l to r.) Mrs. Vic Sparks, Sr. M. Pudentienne, Sr. M. Martin of Tours, Fr. G. Edgar Gallant, Mr. Leo Dufour (deacon), Sr. M. Adolphus, Sr. M. Julien. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Unknown)



A total of fifty-two children enrolled that first year. According to Sisters of Saint Ann chronicles, the children responded well to the efforts made for them.

The happiness of that opening year continued throughout the 1930s. One problem that did surface was the geographic isolation of Skagway. This was overcome somewhat by the cooperation of traveling priests, who chaperoned groups of children en route to the mission or assisted in orientating prospective students. Father Hubbard, plying the waters of Southeastern Alaska in the *Emilie* as he came and went on his scientific excursions, brought in children occasionally. So did Father Francis Monroe, S.J.

Another problem at Pius X Mission was the supervision of the older boys. At Holy Cross there had been Jesuit brothers and then Jesuit scholastics to do this. Father Gallant belonged to no religious community and could rely on commitments only of individuals. The sisters cared for the girls and small boys, but registration of older boys as boarders depended on whether or not a male supervisor was available for the school year.<sup>26</sup> When Mr. Dufour returned to the seminary in 1933, there was no male supervisor, and consequently there were no older boys as boarders for the school year, 1933 to 1934. Norman Chinnock of Chicago was the supervisor for the boys during the school year 1934 to 1935.

That year saw the death of one of the boys, Billy Jackson, who had to leave school because of terminal sickness and return to his home in Haines. Though blind and enduring intense pain from tuberculous meningitis, he edified everyone by his patience and faith. At his funeral, four mission boys were pallbearers and four served at the altar. The funeral, although sad, was a spiritual consolation for



*The religious on staff for 1936-37 are pictured here with a group of students. On the left, Sister Mary Milburge is seated. Standing behind her are Sisters Mary Rosalinda and Philippa. Father Gallant stands in the last row (left). Seated on the right side of the photograph is Sister Mary Pudentielle. Sisters Mary Aurelius and Aza are standing. The lay man at the back is Norman Chinnock. (SPA)*

Father Gallant. "Pius X Mission," he said, "has begun its work. It was worth the building."<sup>27</sup>

Attracted to the art of weaving, and, perhaps, inspired by the fame of the Chilkat blanket, Father Gallant installed looms at the mission. Both the priest and the children wove items for tourists stopping in at Pius X Mission. The sale of these items contributed to the maintenance of the school. Father Gallant's artistry in weaving and in creating liturgical vestments became well known. Much of his taste for liturgical art came from his training at Mount Angel, the Benedictine seminary to which he always remained close and from which he drew help.

Through the years, Father Gallant was assisted by various seminarians and priests. Father F. Merrill Sulzman, originally from Troy, New York, aided Father Gallant, both with his presence and with the flow of financial gifts from his family. Father Sulzman's short first stint at Skagway immediately



predated the sisters' arrival, but they came to know him when he returned in later years to teach at the school.

Father Gallant's frequent absences from Skagway for fund-raising tours or welfare conferences necessitated that another priest be on the premises to offer Mass and assure other priestly functions. These priests became friends of the sisters. When paths crossed in future ministries, there was joy in recalling Skagway days, reviewing what had happened to the students, and wishing each other well in current undertakings. Father Les Walsh, O.S.B., came for the school year 1938 to 1939. Father Raymond A. Mosey was in Skagway for a few years. The traveling missionary, Father Joseph Allard, O.M.I., on his way from Whitehorse and Atlin to visit the Native settlements at Sitka, Chichagof, and Hoonah, stopped at Pius X Mission for short intervals. David A. Melbourne spent summers in Skagway before his priestly ordination in 1939. A local young man, Harley A. Baker (whose mother, Mrs. Chris Larsen, lived near the mission) was ordained in 1941 and served at Pius X Mission until his transfer to Anchorage in 1949. His mother kept the mission church supplied with flowers from her colorful Alaskan garden.

Despite her years, Sister Pudentienne replaced Sister Martin of Tours as local superior in 1935. After having known the privations of Dawson and Akulurak, Sister Pudentienne found the conveniences of Skagway to be plush. Through the years she had lost much of her decision-making ability. She seemed weak compared with vigorous Father Gallant. His word and his wishes dominated, especially when the superior lacked assertiveness. Even in Father Gallant's absences, the schedules and philosophies he set up remained rigidly unchanged.

In the summer of 1935, Sisters Mary Philippa and Rosalinda went north together. The deep valleys cleaving the mountains spoke to Sister Rosalinda, a poet, more than did all the tales of mining epochs. Golden autumn foliage on the lower slopes of the mountains inspired within her a sonnet that ended with the couplet:

*The hills along their slopes and so far up  
Are lined with gold, like some great holy cup.<sup>28</sup>*

Sister Mary Aza, who came to Skagway in the early 1930s, brought her giftedness in music. At Father Gallant's request, she taught Gregorian Plain Chant to the children. When St. Mark's Church in town was closed because of constant vandalism, the mission chapel, dedicated to Saint Thérèse, the Little Flower, became the parish center. Parishioners benefitted from the students' talent in singing Gregorian motets and Masses. To ensure perfection of quality, Father Gallant paid all expenses for Sister Aza to attend summer sessions at the Pius X School of Liturgical Music in New York City. Great was Father Gallant's disappointment when Sister Aza was transferred to Holy Cross in 1938.

Yet music continued to flourish at Pius X Mission. In 1939, Father Gallant introduced woodwind instruments and a few violins at the school. He himself taught some music courses. Native children, as has already been noted, are naturally musical, and in a few months the Skagway orchestra, directed by Father Gallant, was able to give its first concert. Besides the orchestra, Pius X had a band, under the direction of the accomplished saxophonist, Father Sulzman.





*Sister Mary Aimée of the Precious Blood and the Pius X Mission orchestra pose with the priests at the school. Sister Mary Aimée was chief musician during her years at Skagway, 1939-1959. Father Gallant is to the left, Father Sulzman to the right. (SPA)*

For twenty years (1939 to 1959), Sister Mary Aimée of the Precious Blood ministered at Skagway, especially through her talent in music. Sister Aimée continued the tradition of excellence in liturgical music that Sister Aza had begun. She gave piano lessons to townspeople and to soldiers stationed in Skagway during World War II. The Christmas Midnight Mass and the Spring Festival gave her pupils special opportunities for annual performances. Besides being involved with the arts, sister attended to more prosaic needs, for she was in charge of the laundry. During vacations, she went with other sisters to Haines to teach catechism and be a presence among the people. She felt that Mother Mary Ann's dream of educating children of both sexes in the love of God and neighbor was fulfilled vividly in Alaska.

Carving lessons, taught by Samuel Jackson of Skagway, an expert totem pole carver, were introduced at Pius X Mission in 1939, for totem poles and other forms of wood carving were part of the cultural heritage of the children of Southeastern Alaska. It was hoped that carving would become more than just a hobby for the children, would give them a familiar feeling of home, and would assist them in developing a positive self-image.

The spirit at the school continued to be one of concern for the students in personal ways. Sister Philippa, with the little boys she cared for always requiring tissue, carried a plentiful supply of it in her voluminous pockets, for she believed in meeting the needs of the children. Shortly after her decision to enter religious life, Sister Philippa had a serious talk with her mother. "Above all," her mother had said, "be kind to the children."<sup>29</sup> Sister lived by these words and the admonition of Bishop Crimont, given in 1932, to be "loving and patient with the children."

Pius X Mission seemed a happy place due to the efforts of all to foster joy and personal growth in the children. Baptisms were many during those first years. First Communions were frequent. Devotional exercises received priority: exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, rosary recited together in chapel,



night prayer in common, litanies and annual religious celebrations. The life-style seemed almost Benedictine.

"It made no difference what nationality you were, we became Catholics," commented Lee Jimmie, one of the first students at Pius X Mission. He stayed with the school until his graduation. Another student of the early days, Alex Stevens, often affirmed his belief that Father Gallant had taught him to think things through. Fred Mahle, from Kodiak, was lonely and afraid "of those old nuns in those awful black, heavy garments." Fears and strangeness disappeared after a while. Skagway youngsters came to realize they had a "father" in Father Gallant. He might be strict, but he was honest and fair.<sup>30</sup>

Pearl Young Dick recalled how frightened she was when she arrived at Skagway with her brother Les in 1936. "I had no formal education before I entered," she said, "and I always gave credit to my benefactor Father Gallant and also to the great Sisters of Saint Ann. . . ." <sup>31</sup>

Sister Rosalinda remembered the animals at Pius X Mission. There was a St. Bernard dog, Ben, who had free run of the place. He favored lying below the open classroom windows from which came voices of his friends. When pictures were taken, Ben liked being included in the group shot. The mission had cows when Father Gallant, as a support for the mission, bought the Skagway Pioneer Dairy to supply milk for the children and to give practice in dairying to the older boys. However, the supervisor of the boys usually ended up with the chores related to the dairy, for the Native boys remained unenthusiastic about dairying. Another mission pet was Punch, a gray tiger cat, popular with all and, for some reason, attracted to the top of Sister Rosalinda's desk.

The sisters who came and went at Pius X Mission during the 1930s all helped to lay the foundations of a school that was promising. Whether young or elderly, each brought her particular gifts: Sisters Mary Milburge, cook and teacher; Thecla, teacher; Aurelius, cook; Marcellus, teacher; Clement Joseph, boarders' caregiver; Good Counsel, music teacher; and Xaverine, seamstress. Some of these sisters remained at Skagway for a short while; others became almost synonymous with the name Pius X Mission. By 1939, with a school enrollment of forty-four boys and twenty-five girls, seven sisters were on the staff. A visiting sister, recalling her stopover in Skagway, recorded these observations about the mission.

*The words "native children" include a high percentage of those whose parentage is half white and half Indian;*

*. . . these native children at their present stage of development may be classified as half and half. They speak English with an Indian accent; they dress like moderns and adopt the amenities of their white associations. On the other hand, they cling to their communal life in camps or huts, even to such as are built on stakes on the beach, and they prefer the floor to chairs and tables. The manners which they put on while in school are easily "discarded" out of it. The writer, while a guest at the Skagway institution, was adopted by a charming little girl of ten or so. She showed me around with the grace of a hostess; her English was perfect, and when she failed to understand, she would say "Pardon" so nicely that the tone and manner have remained with me these many years—all the while the poor little lady was just pining to be with her grandmother. . . .*

*Father Gallant's establishment is an ideal get-together. Here pupils sit at oblong tables of eight, and invigorating their youth with the fat of the land, discuss problems with the wisdom of their years.*



*Here the infirm as well as the ignorant have a home. One day, some boys approached the principal. "Father," they said, "there is a sick, nobody's lad at Cordova. He would like to come here, if you would take him in." "Why, of course, let him come and welcome." The newcomer was as miserable as his kindly pleaders had represented him; all the more reason for the special attentions that he received.<sup>32</sup>*

Except for the "Benedictine" element of liturgy and prayer, life at Pius X Mission was much like that for children in other mission boarding schools. Bessie Weokoluk recalls that when she was at the Presbyterian mission at Haines, back in the 1920s and 1930s, she was discouraged from speaking in her Tlingit language.<sup>33</sup> It is the big regret she has of mission days and one she shares with many of her generation and other generations who, as part of a school curriculum, experienced similar discouragements in trying to maintain even that aspect of their Native cultures.

In the 1990s, public apologies about such insensitivity were offered by leading churchmen and churchwomen in Alaska as new realization of the injustices committed against the Native peoples were focused upon.<sup>34</sup> Harm and hurt caused by sweeping condemnations of Native religious beliefs, destruction of cultural riches, and deprivation of Native languages were particularly in need of healing by the Spirit that endows and loves all peoples.

As the 1940s began, one that would see great changes in the mission, Sister Mary Edna was superior. She was replaced in August 1942 by Sister Claude, who had just completed twenty-four years in Nulato. Skagway, set in its scenic splendor, was becoming ever better known within the Congregation. Various sisters stopped on their way to Dawson or traveled up from Juneau to assist the staff during the summer. Others made retreats in the peaceful surroundings of the mission. Students remaining at school through the summer enjoyed pleasant outings with the sisters: a climb up a mountain, a picnic, a trip. One unforgettable excursion was the ride on the narrow-gauge railroad to Lake Bennett, where the flavor of Klondike gold rush days still could be experienced.

A feeling of peace characterized Skagway for Sister Mary Florence, a teacher there for thirteen years. Full of enthusiasm, she arrived in 1944 and immediately felt the kindness of the people of Skagway toward the mission. In turn, Sister Florence tried to be patient and understanding with pupils, several of whom completed Grade 12 after encouragement from her. Southeastern Alaska became almost a second home to Sister Florence because of her many years either in Skagway or Juneau.

Another sister who traveled north in 1944 was Sister Mary Clementina, musician. During her one year at Skagway, Sister Clementina taught piano, violin, and chorus. Sister Clementina found Father Gallant to be a wonderful, generous priest, who "practically worked miracles" to keep the mission going.<sup>35</sup>

In spite of all the work that was done and the many achievements, the years at Skagway for some sisters meant times of misunderstandings, apparent indifference, conflicts of personalities and clashes of wills. Father Gallant's lengthy absences and his decisions about how money should be spent piqued and troubled many. The war years brought their own tensions, anxieties, and inconveniences. Despite this, the Skagway mission was still in its summer of growth and the North Wind blew only gentle breezes. Colder blasts were to come.



## Skagway Sanatorium 1945 to 1947

In April 1942, just four months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, fifteen hundred white soldiers of the 340th Corps of Engineers and fifteen hundred black soldiers of the 73rd Regiment camped around the Skagway airport while U.S. Army military barracks were set up three miles out of Skagway.<sup>36</sup> Some soldiers visited at the mission, were impressed by the work done for the Native children, and remained friends and benefactors even after moving from the temporary camp.

With the Japanese invasion of Attu and Kiska and the attack on Dutch Harbor, World War II came frighteningly close to all Alaskans. The military pre-empted the White Pass and Yukon Railroad and monitored all shipping. An emergency hospital was quickly built at the Skagway barracks as a place of safe retreat for those injured in combat. The presence of the Japanese on two of the Aleutian Islands meant the precautionary evacuation of women and children from the islands. Many of the Aleuts so uprooted were found to have tuberculosis. Isolation and extended hospital care were required.

When the threat of further invasions by the Japanese subsided, the Honorable Ernest Gruening, Governor of the Territory of Alaska, arranged with the military for the territorial takeover of barracks in Skagway and made plans to transform them into a sanatorium.<sup>37</sup> But the war had also curtailed the number of nurses available for civilian care. After preliminary negotiations, the governor asked Bishop Crimont for a religious congregation to staff the proposed Skagway sanatorium. Many congregations were contacted; none accepted.

The Sisters of Saint Ann agreed in February 1945 to a temporary contract for nursing services at the Skagway Sanatorium. Mother Mary Leopoldine, formerly the Provincial Superior in the West and then General Superior of the Congregation, had argued forcefully on behalf of the needs of western apostolates.

Authorized by Mother Leopoldine and invited by Bishop Crimont, the Provincial Superior, Mother Mary Mildred, went to Juneau to work out details with Governor Gruening; Sister Mary Alfreda, superior at St. Ann's Hospital, Juneau; and public health officials. Bishop Crimont, who was hospitalized, was unable to attend, so Father Gallant represented the prelate. When the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs soon handed over the direction of the hospital to its Division of Health,<sup>38</sup> the sisters dealt with that division.

The Territory of Alaska was already in the midst of a multipronged campaign to eliminate tuberculosis by providing sanatoriums, health education and home care. Traveling public health nurses explained the importance and benefits of sterilizing dishes and of the need for isolation of patients. Available Native foods were studied for their vitamin content. One good source was found in the plentiful rose hip. Southeastern Alaska, with its high average rainfall, was a sunless, damp region for much of the year. The Haida, Tlingit, and Tsimshian people easily became victims of tuberculosis. Still, as the sisters discovered, they were people who knew how to fight. Most of the patients courageously followed directions and thus overcame the threat of tuberculosis.

Assigned to this ministry of caring for tuberculosis-stricken Native people were Sisters Mary Faustina, nursing directress; Beatrice, X-ray and laboratory



technician; Rosalita, nurse; and Rose Antoinette, nurse. Mother Mildred assumed the role of Acting Matron until 7 May 1945. Sister Mary Henrietta of Jesus, named as superior at the sanatorium, was detained in Dawson due to immigration laws.

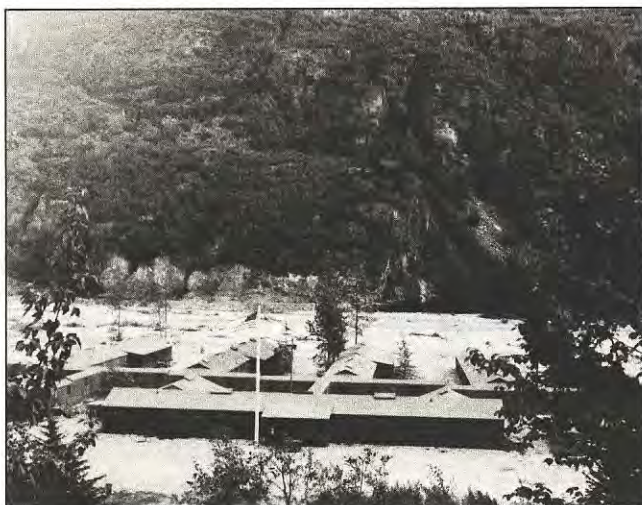
On the way north to the Skagway sanatorium, the sisters stopped at the Juneau hospital to visit Bishop Crimont. As they gathered around his bed to receive a last blessing, the bishop asked Mother Mildred if all the sisters had volunteered for the sanatorium. Her reply was that all were glad to come. Seeing the evasiveness of the answer, the bishop asked again: "Did they all volunteer?" Not receiving a satisfactory answer from Mother Mildred, he asked each sister individually. Each one answered: "I was named." The bishop sighed. "I requested that only volunteers be selected. Your mission will not last."<sup>39</sup>

Continuing on to Skagway in the company of Colonel E. W. Norris, Director of Health, Indian Service, the sisters arrived at their destination on 24 March. After a brief visit at Pius X Mission, the newcomers went on to the sanatorium where the acting manager and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. W. Richardson, along with others on the staff welcomed them. The sisters were shown their clean, meagerly furnished rooms. The rest of the hospital, it was easy to observe, was in a deteriorated condition, hardly ready for patients. Supplies were still in their packages on shelves in a large storeroom. Looking around, the sisters felt that much of the equipment was new, but had been sitting around for a while.

Two buildings, at the site before the Army took over, were in a state of disrepair from lack of use. They had to be given extensive scrubblings. For the next three weeks, the sisters shouldered many jobs and pitched in to establish order in the different departments related to their work.

The military origins of the one-story sanatorium were evident in its T-shaped construction. Peculiar to it was its long 640-foot corridor, from which opened out large dormitories, or cottages, each with a diet kitchen, a few private rooms, a solarium and a

*Skagway Sanatorium and the flag that was raised on opening day, 14 April 1945. (SPA)*  
(Photo Credit: Unknown)



*Corridor at the Skagway Sanatorium (SPA)*  
(Photo credit: Sister Mary McGarrigle collection)



screened-in porch. At one end of the long corridor were the kitchen and dining rooms; at the other end were the sisters' quarters. Married couples and male help lived in a separate building.<sup>40</sup>

Next to the sanatorium, the Skagway River, just a swift mountain stream usually, became a raging torrent when the melting snows on the mountains poured into it. Constant flooding had widened the river bed, until, in 1945, it measured several hundred feet across. A dike restrained the flood water. The hospital was built on the rocky, sandy base thus salvaged. Although the elevation was barely two hundred feet above sea level, the air was invigorating and the mountain winds refreshing.<sup>41</sup>

April saw the sanatorium take shape and the staff completed. Sister Mary Beatrice, who had stayed in Juneau for a refresher course in laboratory-related TB cultures and blood groups, came on 2 April. On 10 April, Dr. Rudolph Haas, the Medical Director, arrived and began a series of conferences designed to insure a uniform method of patient care procedures. Four lay nurses reported for duty. The administrative assistant and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Andresen, reached Skagway on 14 April. That day marked the beginning of health care ministry as six patients came from the Juneau Native Hospital tuberculosis ward. The official opening of the sanatorium was marked by a simple flag-raising ceremony on 14 April 1945. The flag was then lowered to half-mast, for the nation was mourning the death on 12 April of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Frequently the sisters at the sanatorium went to Pius X Mission, for as yet there was no chapel at the barracks. Father Gallant had promised the sanatorium sisters a liturgical chapel. He was absent just then from Skagway and detained in Kodiak where he was introducing the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart to hospital service there.<sup>42</sup> When the room set aside for the chapel was finally ready, Sister Claude brought necessary appurtenances from Pius X Mission and set up a temporary chapel at the barracks.

A week after the opening of the sanatorium, Donald C. Foster, General Superintendent of the Alaska Native Service, accompanied by a government photographer, inspected everything and expressed satisfaction with the progress thus far. The medical officer in charge of the Western U.S. Division, Lt. Col. Mueller, of Whitehorse, also toured the barracks. By arrangement, when surgery was required for a patient, the Army surgeon from Whitehorse was called to the Skagway sanatorium. The usual type of surgery was a chest operation.

Monthly staff meetings, exacted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, began in May. Successive months saw continued progress in opening wards for additional patients.

Doctor Haas was dedicated to his profession, kind and considerate to all. He loved cookouts and always brought a couple of eggs for himself, for he was a strict Jew and ate only Kosher food. One evening, Sister Beatrice found him outdoors crying. Although he was from Portland, Maine, where he had a medical practice, his family was in Germany. That particular day was the anniversary of his father's death in a concentration camp.<sup>43</sup>

Several more patients arrived at the sanatorium in June, bringing the total to forty-five. As no other lay nurses came, the sisters applied to the provincial house in Victoria for assistance. Sister Mary Ambrose responded and began her health care for the tuberculous on 1 July. For a short time, Sister Mary

*Mother Mary Mildred talks over sanatorium affairs with Don C. Foster in 1945.*

(Photo credit: Sister Mary McGarrigle collection)



*Rudolph Haas, M.D., Administrator and Medical Director at Skagway Sanatorium, looks up from the work on his desk. A vase of nasturtiums shows that flowers were growing somewhere, either in a window box or garden spot.*







*Girls' Ward, Skagway Sanatorium (SPA)*  
 (Photo credit: Sister Mary McGar-  
 rige collection)

*Patients in the Girls' Ward enjoy the sunshine outside their "cottage." (SPA)*  
 (Photo credit: Sister Mary McGar-  
 rige collection)



Albert gave her services, but was hospitalized within a month and had to seek a specialist's care in Victoria. Another helper, Sister Mary Noemi, brought relief. Her nursing services in the women's ward relieved Sister Faustina, already nursing supervisor in the men's ward.

Eventually, when more lay nurses applied and were accepted, their living quarters became too crowded. Skagway nursing stints often overlapped, necessitating rooms for extra nurses. By contrast, the sisters' quarters proved too big. A proposed exchange was well received. Realizing that the turnover of nurses was occurring too frequently, Sister Henrietta promised a Mass of Thanksgiving in honor of Saint Joseph for every nurse that came and stayed at least six months. The constant comings and goings of nurses who stayed only a short time unbalanced the operating budget of the hospital, committed to pay traveling expenses from Seattle to Skagway.

Sister Mary Lucita, who replaced Sister Rose Antoinette in January 1946, found the frequent servings of reindeer meat difficult. She looked forward to the simple pleasure of Sunday morning bacon.<sup>44</sup> Sister Lucita came to love her patients, especially the children. Improvements that eased the work of the sisters marked the beginnings of her year. A Flexifone radio-type communication system was inaugurated throughout the sanatorium. Seventy white Gatch beds replaced the Army cots; curtains between the beds provided privacy as needed; a fourth ward was opened. Good patient relations and better possibilities for patient care brought a sense of satisfaction to Sister Lucita.

A ruling in March that all employees in TB sanatoriums must take a 28-day holiday after a year of service required that such vacations be staggered and set up well ahead of implementation. Sister Faustina, the first to take such a holiday, spent her time in Victoria. Other sisters went to Juneau, each in turn, to make their retreat. By helping at the Juneau hospital, they covered their room and board. Lay nurses, too, needed month-long holidays. Inasmuch as their pay continued and substitute nurses also received pay checks—something not built into the budget for that year—operating finances were additionally strained.<sup>45</sup> While working in Skagway, Sister Rosalita suddenly became ill. She was moved into a ward and given every care. Despite this, sister had to leave for an extended rest in Victoria.

Statistics given for the Skagway Sanatorium<sup>46</sup> for its opening year were:

Number of interns	72
Number of externs	174
Number of Catholics	31
X-ray examinations	822
Lab examinations	1,540
Deaths	7

At the conclusion of the first year of the sisters' ministry at the sanatorium, their contract was renewed.<sup>47</sup> Mother Mildred, though, advised the groups concerned that the sisters would remain just for that year. Government



officials planned expanding the sanatorium facilities by opening another ward and closing in the screened porches.

As the bright colors of September gilded the mountain slopes, Doctor Haas left to resume private practice in Maine. Testimonials of appreciation went with him from the personnel of the sanatorium. He was succeeded by Dr. David Shulman, who soon realized what "Home of the North Wind" meant. Heating problems developed throughout the sanatorium. Inability to heat the buildings adequately was made more acute by the inclemency of the late fall and early winter. The sun, when it shone, seemed to wear "sun mittens," and the patients, too, wore mittens. All available heat was sent to the wards for the comfort of the patients. Other areas were so cold that some employees wore parkas in the dining rooms. With the boilers proving inadequate, the government sought alternative facilities. One existed at Sitka and word was sent to the authorities at the Skagway sanatorium to prepare for an immediate transfer of patients and personnel to Sitka. Declaration of the move was kept secret until 14 January 1947, but discreet packing began. There were ninety patients to transfer. An unabated cold spell huddled over Skagway until the eve of the scheduled departure. As moving patients in very cold weather seemed imprudent, the sisters implored Mother Mary Ann to intercede in the matter. The answer apparently came when a telegram, shortly received, announced that the boat scheduled for transfer would be delayed for two days. During that interim, the temperature rose to 30 degrees above zero.

*Each patient carried a pillowcase with personal items in it, including an apple, an orange and a chocolate bar. Each also carried a blanket, soap, a towel and dental care supplies. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Sister Mary McGarrigle collection)



### Sitka Sanatorium February 1947 to June 1947

On the afternoon of 6 February 1947, the transfer ship, the *North Star*, docked at Skagway. Moving the patients from the sanatorium to the vessel took place in an orderly manner. Required to travel third-class because of their infectious condition, the patients were placed in comfortable bunks in steeage. Excitement compensated for inconveniences and the patients enjoyed the trip. But those who cared for them had the difficult task of serving meals and disinfecting all used articles. The *North Star*, after a voyage of sixteen hours, entered Sitka Sound.

*Each person had his or her own bed linen carried in a neat bundle on board the ship. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Sister Mary McGarrigle collection)

On a clear day, Mount Edgecumbe, the "Fujiyama" of Alaska, greets all visitors to Sitka, on the west coast of Baranof Island. The mountain graced the days when the Sitka Natives had no other enemies than their Native neighbors. Mount Edgecumbe has seen their tribal wars, has looked down on foreign explorers, Russian colonizers and the raising of the American flag. The picturesque main street in Sitka is crowned by the Orthodox cathedral.

Sister Mary of the Cross, travelling south from Dawson in 1899, had known a rainy Sitka. She wrote of the stopover there.

*. . . Sitka, the pretty capital, was reached about 6 P.M. There is to be seen the oldest Greek Cathedral in the new world, also totem poles and Indian graveyards; it is a real picturesque spot and there seems to be quite a population. Honorable Judge Johnson and wife, who reside here, came down to the steamer to see us and invited us to call on them the following morning, as the steamer would leave only in the afternoon. We should have liked very much to visit the Catholic church which we were told was a dilapidated old*





*building, but when we arose the next morning, we witnessed a storm of wind and rain such as we had never seen, and as it lasted all forenoon, we were not able to go ashore.*<sup>48</sup>

The *North Star* anchored at Japonski Island, adjacent to Alice Island where the Sitka sanatorium was located. The same kind of military installation familiar to the Skagway personnel awaited them in Sitka, for it, too, had been built to serve as barracks. The Sitka buildings had not been as well finished as the Skagway ones, but the heating system was superior. After the patients disembarked and were brought to their new home, the *North Star* was disinfected. Only when sanitary measures were completed to the satisfaction of the Health Officer did the sisters make their way to their residence, a duplex, on Japonski Island.

Japonski, Alice and Charcoal Islands were three former Navy and Army installations connected by causeways. For their meals, the sisters went to a huge mess hall a quarter of a mile away. The sanatorium on Alice Island was a mile distant. The sisters traveled to these places five or six times a day by truck or other available conveyance. On Japonski Island there was an orthopedic hospital for fifty crippled Native children and a boarding school, Mt. Edgumbe, for six hundred Native children. Both institutions were government sponsored.

Mother Mildred flew in unexpectedly to visit the sisters on 24 March, the second anniversary of their arrival in Skagway. The news of her visit reached the sisters in their respective wards. After their shifts, they hurried home to greet their guest, who stayed four days with them. She met the doctors and other personnel and became acquainted with the area. Other visitors included members of the Juneau Legislature, who came to view the progress of the sanatorium and observe the situation for themselves.

With the beginning of April, 450 school children began to take their meals in the mess hall. That crowded the sanatorium staff. The graduate nurses and teachers formed a club and hired their own cook. The cost, \$45 a month for each one, was prohibitive for the sisters, who decided to have breakfast and supper at home. Another inconvenience was that the pastor in Sitka, Father Sulzman, was frequently unable to offer Mass. Opportunities for regular daily Mass were available only with the visits of Father Robert L. Whelan, S.J., from Juneau whenever he could manage to stay in Sitka for a while. Eating, living, and working conditions encroached more and more on rules that the sisters' way of life demanded. Finally, Bishop Walter J. Fitzgerald, S.J., approved the sisters' request for withdrawal from the sanatorium when their current contract would expire, 1 July 1947.<sup>49</sup>

Appreciation for the sisters' services was expressed. The Juneau paper quoted Dr. Howard C. Rufus, Medical Director of the Alaska Native Service, who said: "The sisters worked under terrific handicaps due to the personnel shortage and difficulty in obtaining materials and supplies during the war. Their efforts were undaunted day and night to see that the tuberculosis patients received every needed attention."

Statistics for the Skagway/Sitka Sanatorium, July 1946 to July 1947, record:

<i>Number of Interns</i>	126
<i>Externs</i>	894
<i>Catholics</i>	20



<i>X-ray Examinations</i>	1,289
<i>Lab Examinations</i>	1,683
<i>Deaths</i>	12

The General Superintendent of the Alaska Native Service, Donald C. Foster, also expressed appreciation. Part of his testimonial letter read:

*You have contributed materially to the success of our campaign against tuberculosis. Frankly, we could not have opened and operated the tuberculosis sanatorium without your fine service and whole-hearted support.<sup>50</sup>*

In later years, some sisters returned to Sitka, but only for short intervals, such as sessions of religious education. Sisters Ethel and John Bernard taught in St. Gregory Nazianzus Catholic Church in the mornings and went to the island hospital to visit patients and teach in the pediatric and tuberculosis wards.

## Skagway, Part II 1945 to 1959

While the tuberculosis sanatorium was still functioning in Skagway, it was a refuge for an emergency at Pius X Mission. Fire destroyed Crimont Hall just after midnight, 16 November 1945. Sister Mary Isaac Jogues was awakened by the cry, "Fire!" The alarm quickly carried to the other sisters who hurried to rouse and evacuate the children. Father Gallant, not yet retired to his own residence, helped with the evacuation. Older boys carried the young children, wrapped in blankets, down the stairs and out to safety. Even as the fire department struggled in the cold to control the blaze, impossible to subdue in the wind, Father Gallant realized that the destruction of the building would be complete. He removed the Blessed Sacrament from the chapel and saved whatever else he could.

The children were offered shelter by friends and neighbors whom the fire had roused and brought to the scene. The Presbyterian minister, Reverend Friedsell, immediately took all the girls and two sisters to the community hall. When Dr. Rudolph Haas, Mr. Andresen, and Major Richmond arrived from the sanatorium, they filled trucks and cars with the children and brought them out to the army barracks where two large wards were put at their disposal.<sup>51</sup> Meal shifts to accommodate the children were organized.

Father Gallant, although saddened at the blackened shell of Crimont Hall, offered a Mass of Thanksgiving in the morning that no lives had been lost. Father Louis B. Fink, S.J., came by boat from Juneau with 1 1/2 tons of clothing donated by the city, collected by the Blue Cab Company, and transported by the steamer free of charge. The sisters in Juneau sent care packages and the sisters at the sanatorium shared generously out of whatever they had.

Father Gallant secured the temporary use of empty Army barracks in town on Broadway, which, hopefully, after plumbing was renewed and other modifications made, could house the mission personnel. Leaving his assistant, Father Harley Baker, to handle the adaptations and ready the Broadway barracks for occupancy, Father Gallant departed for Seattle and a six-month fund-raising campaign for the rebuilding of Pius X Mission.

About a month after the fire, 14 December, the children moved from the sanatorium barracks to the Broadway barracks, nicknamed Pius X Junior. Sisters Noemi and Rose Antoinette came from the sanatorium to help get everyone settled in the new quarters.<sup>52</sup> Eighty Army cots, each with two sets of sheets and pillow cases and three woolen blankets, furnished the dormitories.



Water-damaged desks, salvaged from the burned mission, were set up in two large classrooms. The Skagway Public Library donated seven hundred books. Rough benches were aligned in a room designated as a chapel.

That Christmas was special. A big tree was decorated in the barracks dining hall. Skagway people sent boxes of homemade cookies. The men of the White Pass mess hall took up a collection for the mission children. Christmas continued all through January, which became known as the month of gifts because of all that was received from well-wishers everywhere.<sup>53</sup> Despite the hardships of the year, seven pupils graduated from Grade 8 in May 1946. Julia Moreno, who had been at the mission since she was four, received a grade of 99 percent in the Territorial Examinations.<sup>54</sup> Her success brought encouragement to the struggling mission. May also saw the return of Father Gallant, absent since the fire. There was enthusiastic talk about rebuilding Pius X Mission. The school year ended on a hopeful note as everyone sat around a bonfire and enjoyed a wiener roast arranged by Father Baker.<sup>55</sup>

Labor problems and materials not arriving on schedule delayed the reconstruction of the mission. Teachers continued to use the Broadway barracks for classrooms. Many a walk past the burned building brought back memories; many a prayer was raised that a new building would soon be constructed. A whole year went by and then another was well on its way before plans for leaving the barracks could be made. On 19 March 1948, in a temporary chapel in the partly restored building, a Mass of Thanksgiving was offered.<sup>56</sup>

The next day, school furniture was moved to the mission site, where classes were taught under unusual circumstances by Sisters Florence, Ann Eloise, William, and Anne Rita. Sleeping and living quarters were still unfinished, but somehow, Sister Milburge succeeded in organizing a dining room, Sister Aurelius managed to feed her charges. Sister Aimée continued to give music lessons.

Besides teaching in the grade school, the sisters were now involved with secondary education. High school classes had opened on 15 September 1945, two months before the fire.<sup>57</sup> Father Gallant had suggested a system of teaching each core subject all day long for six weeks. This was because he, himself, could then teach a course. Away on prolonged trips, he could manage to be in Skagway occasionally for a six-week period. His idea was tried, found wanting, and a regular high school program of semester or year-length courses was introduced.

The main building, a two-story brick structure, housed chapel, classrooms, dining rooms, sewing rooms, kitchen, laundry, and staff rooms. The chapel was finished in cedar. A Hammond electric organ, complete with outside chimes, was a gift. Sleeping quarters were in five separate units, with a central heating system. Each cottage was able to house twenty-four pupils. When finished, the mission could accommodate 120 children. The day finally came when everyone moved to the new quarters. On 26 May 1948, all connections with the Broadway barracks, home since December 1945, were severed.

Two new sisters arrived in September 1948. Sister Mary Agatha of the Angels sensed immediately that Father Gallant was the "Number 1 Man," in full authority. She noted that it would have been better if the sisters had been in charge.<sup>58</sup> Her companion on the trip north, Sister Mary Walburga, left





*The rebuilt Pius X Mission looked very different from the brick Crimont Hall. The main building and attached cottages are of a style reminiscent of Skagway Sanatorium with its hallway and wards. AB Mountain is in the background. (c. 1953)*

(Photo credit: Paul J. Sincic, Douglas)

*Sister Mary Joseph Raphael cared for these little ones: (l. to r.) Danny Murphy, Bernadine and Dickie Diedrickson, Mary Ann Martinez, Stevie Everson.*  
(Photo credit: Paul J. Sincic, Douglas)



*These graduates are (l. to r.) Ted Landon, Eva Phillips, Adeline Alexandra, Marjorie Benson, Primo Rodriguez.*

(Photo credit: Paul J. Sincic, Douglas)



Skagway in 1952 to become a contemplative nun. Sister Agatha taught every subject from Grade 8 through high school, even typing and leather tooling.

Sister Kevin was at Skagway for just one year. She knew loneliness and experienced what many parents go through: fatigue at being constantly surrounded by children. There were few occasions for meeting any adults other than those at the mission. Lack of fresh fruit and vegetables, sometimes for weeks at a stretch, made proper diets difficult to follow.<sup>59</sup> As for Sister Mary Felicia, Skagway responded to all her desires. She enjoyed teaching and afterwards remembered with delight her mountain climbing expeditions with the girls, who sang as they hiked. Sister encouraged her girls to dress neatly and with style. The girls had access to up-to-date catalogues and were adept at ripping apart benefactors' outmoded donations and making something fresh from the laundered pieces. Sister longed to live in a Native village near the children's homes. But when she asked to do so, the idea was not approved by the Congregation.<sup>60</sup>

The 1950s were rife with considerations about withdrawing sisters from Skagway. Three reasons were offered: the need to readjust personnel so as to concentrate on places where young women might respond to a call to life as a Sister of Saint Ann; the difficulty of a Canadian congregation having sufficient interchangeable American personnel qualified for teaching in Alaska;

the possibility that, with the opening of new apostolates, some other group of sisters might be attracted to the area.<sup>61</sup> Back salaries (1945 to 1952) of \$30 a month owed for each sister, according to the 1932 contract, were requested by the Congregation. No monies were available, said Father Gallant, but he felt that at some future time, Pius X Mission itself might possibly be deeded to the Sisters of Saint Ann.<sup>62</sup>

Bishop Gleeson gave no release of the sisters from Skagway when the request was made for withdrawal after the 1951 to 1952 school year.<sup>63</sup> Subsequently, his successor, Bishop O'Flanagan, was notified again and again, but no answer from him was forthcoming. Notice of the intent to withdraw was given to Father Gallant, who, in 1951, became Vicar General of the Diocese of Juneau. Father Gallant himself seemed unsure of the future of Pius X Mission. For a while, he considered having it as a school totally for boys with the sisters responsible only for housekeeping. Girls would be given a Catholic education at another place, perhaps at Wrangell where the government school, it was rumored, was about to close. A third idea proposed by Father Gallant was that the sisters be involved with the parish in opening a Catholic day school for local children in Skagway.<sup>64</sup> To all of these proposals, the Congregation said, "No."

Despite the requests for permission to withdraw, the sisters remained at the mission fulfilling their tasks. Mother Luca reiterated the decision to withdraw from

*The Native culture of southeastern Indians is highlighted by these students preparing to participate in a parade through town. Left to right are Rachel Albert, Placido Martinez (back), Evelyn Avelino, Jackie Everson (smallest).*

(Photo credit: Paul J. Sincic, Douglas)





Skagway and gave the date: 30 June 1956.<sup>65</sup> That date came and went. The sisters remained.

One who witnessed the indecision of those years was Sister Mary Joseph Raphael, in Skagway from 1948 to 1958. She was awed at her responsibility for twenty-seven boys aged five to fourteen. During her years at Skagway, she was also teacher for kindergarten through Grade 3. When she became a high school teacher, she still preferred her junior boys to her older students.

A close associate of Sister Joseph Raphael and the other sisters at Skagway during the 1950s was Father Francis A. Cowgill, principal, teacher, good friend of the sisters, and supporter of their work. One of his efforts at helping the students was the introduction of lapidary work. In seeing gems come from unpolished, rough stones, he hoped the young people would learn that they, too, were gems. Silver designing, also taught to the children, resulted in fine displays of jewelry for tourists and other interested visitors. Even after leaving Skagway, Father Cowgill remained in touch with the sisters he had known and was sensitive to concerns of the Congregation.

Being named to Pius X Mission, Sister Mary Rose Estelle was pleased to know that the mission accepted homeless children of a variety of ages. The bond of unity among the sisters and the happiness felt when other sisters came from Juneau or Dawson were bright parts of sister's memories of Skagway.<sup>66</sup>

For Sister Mary Joanne, who left Holy Cross in 1956 to serve at Skagway, the atmosphere at Pius X Mission was pleasant. Conveniences she had not known at Holy Cross were appreciated. Sister Joanne cooked for the personnel of sixty and every two weeks ordered groceries from Seattle. While sister was in Skagway, she helped with the remodeling of the sisters' religious costumes according to directives received from the Mother House. Another sister who had been at Holy Cross, Sister Mary Rosalia, was first on the staff while the mission was still in the Broadway barracks. On her return to Skagway in 1958, she discovered that many of the current pupils were troubled youths, placed at the mission by social services.

A news release of 25 March 1958 announced that Father Gallant was to receive the title of Domestic Prelate, a title of honor in the Church. Henceforth, Father Gallant would be called Monsignor.<sup>67</sup> As the school was already planning to celebrate the priest's fortieth anniversary of ordination on 30 March, the ceremonies took the form of congratulations for the new honor as well. The Mission Auxiliary hosted a tea.

According to some sisters, Monsignor Gallant, as he aged, was hard to understand and accept. Other sisters loved and appreciated his kindnesses. His numerous absences weakened morale at the school. The sisters felt that he did not understand the problems of the school. The sisters also thought that, kind hearted as he was, he spent money on things other than essentials. Through these difficulties, the sisters had a sense of following closely the path Mother Mary Ann had followed during her years of misunderstandings. New appreciation of the heritage of the Congregation and of love for Mother Mary Ann was observable to Sister Mary Angela,



*Young boys, full of life, leave their smiles as a heritage to all. Left to right: Ronald and Raymond Stevens.*  
(Photo credit: Paul J. Sincic, Douglas)



local superior at Skagway in 1958. The love was noticeable among both sisters and students.<sup>68</sup>

Unexpectedly in 1959, Monsignor Gallant was named pastor of Holy Family Church in Anchorage, a growing metropolis in Southcentral Alaska. His move again raised questions about Pius X Mission. The General Administration in Lachine was interested in the Skagway property because of a plan to group all the sisters in Alaska into a pro-province, an administrative district within the Congregation. Pius X Mission would be a valued part of that pro-province.<sup>69</sup> Monsignor Gallant wrote to Mother Mary Liliane, General Superior:

*In discussing my leaving Skagway with His Excellency, I made known to him the matter of your wish to take over Pius X Mission. He is very favorable to the idea, and asked me to write you and to go to Lachine, if necessary, to discuss the matter. . . . His Excellency has given me full power to act in the matter. . . .*

*Will you kindly let me know if you are still interested in taking over Pius X Mission. . . ?<sup>70</sup>*

An agreement was reached between the Sisters of Saint Ann and the Vicar General of Southeastern Alaska (Monsignor Gallant), subject to the approval of Bishop Dermot O'Flanagan, that the sisters, for one year, assume the administration of the mission, henceforth to be known as Pius X School.<sup>71</sup> In the contract, provisions were made to enroll both Native and non-Native children. Only boys in the lower grades would be accepted as boarders. No more boys over ten years of age were to become boarders. Adolescent boys already accepted for 1959 to 1960, when not in class, were to be under the immediate supervision of a male disciplinarian. Problem boys would be asked to withdraw. The parish was asked to subsidize day pupils unable to pay tuition, the mission chapel would continue to function as the parish church, the pastor would reside in a residence adjoining the school, and if mutually agreeable, would be served his meals at the mission.

September 1959 was a difficult month. Not only Monsignor Gallant, but also Father Francis Cowgill, was leaving for Anchorage. Monsignor considered that checks and tuition for the coming school year were his. Files, records, and the safe were closed to the sisters. Monsignor was inconsistent in his directives before his departure. A social worker sent three older boys in August and despite the sisters' request that they not be accepted, Monsignor admitted them. As the date of Monsignor Gallant and Father Cowgill's departure neared, the new pastor for Skagway, Father Francis W. Nugent, arrived. He was far from pleased with the proposed arrangements. Finding what he considered insufficient work in Skagway for his priesthood, he believed the Church would best be served if he were in Juneau. Skagway could be visited as a mission from Juneau.

When the sisters asked Father Nugent about the possibilities for an academy or private school for girls at Pius X, he answered that it would take years to build an appealing reputation. Skagway was too isolated for any family to cover travel costs for boarding students and had no future for families living there. Sisters were needed in larger centers where newly opened Catholic schools were drawing large enrollments.<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, to give the operation of the newly organized Pius X School a fair try, the scholastic year began. John Orton was hired to care for the older boys and teach Grades 6, 7, and 8, as well as science in the high school.



Another lay person, Miss Clare Schubert, of Detroit, visited the mission and offered her services.<sup>73</sup> Sister Mary Baptista was appointed superior. Sister Baptista also taught Grades 3, 4, and 5; Sister Florence, Grades 1 and 2; Sister Rose Estelle, the high school classes. Sister Milburge continued her household tasks. Sister Elizabeth Marie arrived as general aide. Sister Aimée planned a new year of chorale and music teaching.

Bishop O'Flanagan was invited to meet Mother Mary Angelus, the Provincial Superior in Victoria, at his convenience, to discuss the current situation at Skagway and the future of the school. The bishop requested a summary of negotiations already entered into with Monsignor Gallant. The Pius X Mission property, stated the bishop, belonged to the diocese.<sup>74</sup>

A report dated 30 December 1959 noted that several boys seemed in need of more professional help than the sisters were prepared to give. Some case histories were sad accounts of run-ins with the law or of abnormal social behavior. From the happy mission experience of the 1930s, Pius X School was becoming a receiving place for children with learning or social behavior problems. These influences changed the character of the school, so that those students who did show good will and academic potential suffered from the disintegration of the school's spirit.

Andrew Beierly and Byron Mallott were both on the student council when the sisters were left in charge of the school. These adolescent boys missed Monsignor Gallant and, when they saw the school dwindle in size and spirit, felt that it had been Monsignor Gallant, indeed, who had held the mission together. The students were critical of the different ways of doing things that the sisters wished to implement. According to the boys, regimentation was returning.<sup>75</sup>

The high school closed on 15 October. Mr. Orton, supervisor of the boys, had to leave in mid-November because of failing health. Sister Baptista and Miss Schubert continued teaching and assumed the care for the boys.<sup>76</sup> Grades 1 to 9 had an enrollment of thirteen boys as boarders and one girl boarder. A few day students brought the school registration to twenty-one.

All these factors resulted in the decision that the boarding students be placed elsewhere and Pius X School be closed. A letter officially informing the bishop of this intent was sent to him on 30 November 1959, after all other efforts to consult with him personally had met with no response.<sup>77</sup>

The sisters were reassigned to other missions after the children left. Sisters Baptista, Florence, and Aurelius (who had replaced Sister Milburge), were the last to leave and departed from Pius X School on 30 December 1959. The keys to the mission buildings were left with Father Nugent. Bishop O'Flanagan had been singularly quiet all through the difficult months that ended 1959.<sup>78</sup> Earnest prayer asking for Mother Mary Ann's intercession in the difficulties at Skagway renewed the sisters' awareness of the pain misunderstandings can cause, even when efforts are made to resolve difficult situations in the best possible way.

One of the effects of closing Pius X School was that the Sisters of Saint Ann, who had agreed<sup>79</sup> to staff an interparish school in Anchorage, were no longer welcome there. The acceptance had been through Father Harley Baker, pastor at Holy Family parish, Anchorage. Monsignor Gallant, who succeeded him, advised Mother Liliane that the Congregation was no longer expected to staff the school.<sup>80</sup> This rejection showed Monsignor's displeasure



with the closing of Pius X School, a displeasure that lingered until about 1968. A Golden Jubilee dinner honoring Monsignor's fifty years of priesthood brought many of his friends to Anchorage, among whom were Sisters of Saint Ann who had worked with him in Skagway. The attendance of the sisters showed their willingness to let go of the hurt that they had endured during the later years at Skagway.<sup>81</sup>

.....

Orange is the color for Skagway! Orange is a mixture of the gold rush glow of the early days and the anguished red of the final months of Pius X School. Orange is for the sunrises and sunsets coloring the sky down Lynn Canal. Orange recalls the flames that engulfed Crimont Hall and the cases of oranges found under the 1945 Christmas tree. Skagway is the story of a mission boarding school effort like that at Holy Cross and of a hospital ministry to meet a need, as had been the case at Dawson. The blend produced a unique effect just as the blend of red and yellow results in the special hue of orange. Orange is for the deepening autumn foliage on Face Mountain looking heavenward and on AB Mountain slopes. Orange is for Sister Aurelius' Halloween cakes, for the flowers in Mrs. Larsen's garden, as well as for Mount Edgecumbe's harvest moon. Orange is for the glow of tiger-eye rosaries that Monsignor Gallant confected and for the amber gems polished by Father Cowgill and his hobbyists in the lapidary shop. Finally, orange is for the blending sweeps of Northern Lights that pirouetted to the tune of children's laughter and excited whistles in the streets and fields of Skagway.



## Time Line for Chapter 6

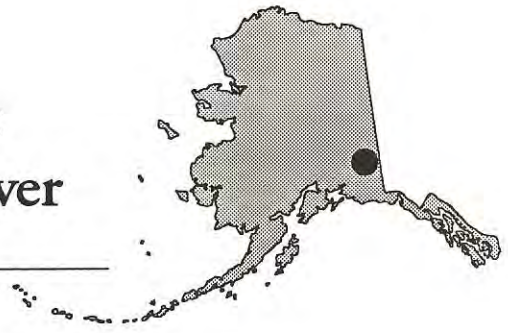
1800	Sitka established by Russians		
1867	Purchase of Alaska by U.S.		
1877	Presbyterian school in Wrangell		
1878	Presbyterian school in Sitka		
	Windham Bay gold camp (first true Alaskan gold camp)		
1881	Willard Mission (Presbyterian) at Haines	1879	Father Althoff in Wrangell, St. Rose of Lima parish established by Bishop Seghers
1883	German geographers describe Schkagué River	1882	Father Althoff visits Juneau and on up the coast
1884	Organic Act appropriates money for education in Alaska		
	Presbyterian missionary Sheldon Jackson appointed General Agent for Education		
1885	Old Presbyterian church becomes first public school in Juneau	1885	Father Althoff renamed to Southeastern Alaska
1886	Friends' Society opens school in Douglas	1886	Sisters of Saint Ann open Catholic hospital and school in Juneau
1887	Tsimshians, with Anglican missionary, set up New Metlakahla on Annette I.		Archbishop Seghers and party, guided by Natives, cross Chilkoot Pass
	Gold discovered at Douglas		
1891	Lt. Comdr. H. E. Nichols, U.S.N., maps Skagway area ("Shkagway River")	1895	Sisters of Saint Ann open Catholic school in Douglas
1896	Dyaytahk becomes known as Dyea		
1897	Trading post at Skagway opened by Capt. William Moore	1897	Catholic hospital opens in Douglas
	Gold rush to Klondike begins		
	Skagway becomes boom town		
1898	Gold rush peaks	1899	Sisters use new White Pass and Yukon R.R. to and from Dawson
1900	Juneau becomes capital of Alaska		
	Smallpox epidemic		
1904	Fort William Seward opens near Haines		
1912	Tlingit-Haida group organizes Alaska Native Brotherhood		
1918	World War I ends	1918	Fr. G. Edgar Gallant ordained priest in Juneau
			Father Gallant assigned to Skagway
		1920	Sisters of Saint Ann leave Douglas
		1930	Father Gallant meets John O'Dea
		1931	Crimont Hall (Pius X Mission) built
1932	Government opens Wrangell Institute as boarding school for young Natives	1932	Sisters of Saint Ann enter into educational ministry in Skagway for Natives
1939	World War II begins		
1941	Pearl Harbor bombed by Japanese	1941	Father Baker ordained, serves in Skagway
1942	Japanese attack Dutch Harbor	1942	73rd Regiment, U.S. Army, and the 340th Corps of Engineers move into Skagway barracks
	Japanese invade Aleutians (Kiska and Attu)		
	U.S. evacuates women and children from danger zones in Aleutians		
1943	Fort Seward closes, population center becomes Port Chilkoot		
1945	World War II ends	1945	(Feb.) Sisters of Saint Ann agree to staff Skagway Sanatorium for Natives with tuberculosis
			(April) Skagway Sanatorium opens



- (Nov.) Fire destroys Crimont Hall  
Mission temporarily at sanatorium  
(Dec.) Mission personnel move to Broadway Barracks in town
- 1946 Military barracks at Seward and Sitka renovated for civilian use  
Former naval station on Japonski I. becomes Mt. Edgecumbe, boarding school for Natives in high school
- 1947 (Feb.) Transfer of personnel from Skagway to Sitka on the *North Star*  
(July) Sisters of Saint Ann leave Sitka Sanatorium
- 1948 Bishop Gleeson, S.J., becomes Vicar Apostolic of Alaska  
New Pius X Mission complex opens
- 1949 Father Baker transferred to Anchorage
- 1951 Bishop O'Flanagan becomes Bishop of Juneau  
Father Gallant becomes Vicar General of the diocese
- 1958 Father Gallant becomes Domestic Prelate with title of Monsignor
- 1959 Monsignor Gallant and Father Cowgill transferred to Anchorage  
Sisters of Saint Ann agree to operate Pius X School for one year  
(Sept.) Pius X School opens  
(Dec.) Pius X School closes  
Buildings remain as parish facilities
- 1959 (Jan.) Alaska officially becomes a state
- 1966 Tlingit-Haida Central Council formed at Sitka meeting
- 1968 St. Ann's Hospital and School close in Juneau
- 1970 Tlingit-Haida Central Council moves its offices to Sitka
- 1979 St. Rose of Lima, Catholic parish in Wrangell, celebrates 100 years of Catholic presence in Southeastern Alaska



## An Educational Experiment: Glennallen and the Copper River



In the multi-purpose room of the school, Sister Mary Bernard of Siena, holding her varnish brush, stepped back to cast a critical eye on the ninth desk she had just renovated. Across from her working area, Rosemary Kasgnoc and Becky Wobser, soapy rags in hand, were scrubbing down a phalanx of chairs, recently brought in from the dusty quonset hut that served as warehouse for the school. A powder cleanser was removing Army insignia as well as the dirt of years of storage. Under Sister Bernard's direction, the large room was becoming an attractive Commercial Course facility.

The desks, when dry, would be aligned; the chairs would complement the desks. On the corner table, still littered with packaging materials, was a new dictaphone, courtesy of a dictaphone company.

As Sister Bernard bent to dip her brush in the varnish again, the outside door on the hallway opened, bringing a draft of cool, fresh air. Nick Zerbinos's voice hailed the workers and in a moment he was in the room. His yellow coveralls were grimy from much use. A fresh sprinkle of sawdust covered his shoulders. Some of it slid down—to the consternation of the varnisher—as Nick deposited a box not far from her. Homemade bookends, half a dozen pairs of them, were his gift for the new commercial department.

With thanks, sister accepted the gift and blinked back quick tears at this latest of many gifts making her dream a reality. Typewriters and typing tables had come from Catholic Junior High in Anchorage; desk pads had been made up by a sister-companion; wee pots of flowers had been arranged by a volunteer. There were also brand new dictionaries and even pen and pencil holders to help students develop an organizational attitude.

And now Nick's bookends! What mattered a few bits of sawdust mixed into the varnish. What was important was the love mixed into the work. That was what made Copper Valley School!

\* \* \* \* \*

When the Sisters of Saint Ann withdrew from Pius X School, Skagway (1959), and St. Ann's School, Juneau (1968), their years of commitment to teaching in Southeastern Alaska ended. The closing of Holy Cross Mission (1956), though, described in the last part of Chapter Five, was the beginning of a new educational epoch.

Copper Valley School, the subject of this chapter, crowned the educational efforts with which the sisters had been involved in Southeastern Alaska and the Yukon River missions. This new school, set in the Copper River region at Glennallen, served students from all of Alaska, much as Holy Cross Mission had done.

Don Ignacio Arteaga, Spanish navigator exploring Southcentral Alaska in 1779, gave the name "Rio de los Perdidos" ("River of the Lost") to an



impressive stream emptying over a 29-mile-wide delta on Prince William Sound. His pejorative description of the Copper River (English translation of the Native name: the "Aetna," "Atna," or "Ahtena")<sup>2</sup> belied the fact that it flows through one of the most beautiful areas of Alaska. Stretching along the western edge of the Wrangell Mountains, the Copper snakes its way for 250 miles past the Wrangell range, and through the Chugach Mountains to the salt waters of the Gulf of Alaska. An Athabascan group, the Aetnas, later spelled Ahtnas, live along the mountainous course of the Copper and its tributaries. As the river expands at its delta, it graces the lives of a group of people of Southcentral Alaska, the Eyaks.

In the summer of 1885, Lieutenant Henry T. Allen and his party, exploring for the United States Government, on a lengthy deployment ascended about halfway up the Copper River to Taral, a Native village, went up the frozen Chitina River into the Wrangell Mountains, and returned to Taral. The next spring, after successfully negotiating the rest of the Copper River, the party reached the Tanana and Koyukuk Rivers, which they explored, before heading down the Yukon River, eventually reaching St. Michael via Unalakleet.<sup>3</sup> Allen's long trek was one of exhaustion and endurance. Hunger, cold, and mishaps shadowed the party. Treacherous waters, high mountains, sub-zero temperatures in winter, and the hostility of the Native people, bent on retaining undisputed right to their lands and their lives, made access into the Copper River valley difficult for early Russian explorers and missionaries. Nevertheless, the Russian Orthodox Church was introduced among the Athabascan Ahtnas. Traces of that Faith remained long after the Orthodox clergy were no longer able to serve the people.<sup>4</sup>

When, in 1900, a bonanza of copper deposits was found to be in the Copper River region, the Kennecott (a misspelling of the name of Robert Kennicott, for whom a nearby glacier was named) Mines Corporation, part of the Morgan-Guggenheim Alaska Syndicate, was formed. Two important camps developed, one at McCarthy, near the junction of the Chitina and Nazina Rivers in 1906,<sup>5</sup> and one near Taral in 1908 at the meeting place of the Chitina and the Copper. From this latter camp, the town of Chitina grew. Besides being a mining camp, Chitina was a supply depot and the terminus of a railroad. A turbulent section of the Copper River at Abercrombie Rapids prevented river navigation from the mines to the Gulf of Alaska and transport to purchasers. In response to the transportation problem, a standard-gauge railroad, completed in 1911, was built to connect the mines and the seaport of Katalla. With the closing of the mines in 1938 because of ore exhaustion, the railroad ceased to function, McCarthy became a ghost town, and the importance of Chitina, Katalla, and the neighboring coastal town of Cordova waned.

But prospectors, eager to reach the interior of Alaska, had also developed trails through the Copper Valley from another coastal town, Valdez. Gradually, the trails became a 370-mile wagon road which facilitated travel especially to the gold-strike regions around Fairbanks. Roadhouses opened along the wagon route at strategic points. One of the oldest of these roadhouses was the Copper Center Lodge, about one hundred miles north of Valdez. Its proprietors in the 1950s, the George Ashbys, were important friends and helpers of Copper Valley School.



Just before the closing of the McCarthy mines, a Protestant group, Central Alaska Missions, began its involvement with the Copper Valley area. In 1937, Reverend Vincent Joy and his family arrived to serve the Native people and settlers at Copper Center. While at Moody Bible Institute, Reverend Joy had concentrated on medical techniques and principles. This knowledge and his experience as an orderly enabled him to help the Copper Center people in meaningful ways. The work of Reverend Joy prospered. Other Central Alaska Missions personnel joined him. In 1942, the group built a mission chapel at Copper Center and another one in 1946 at Glennallen.<sup>6</sup>A mission plane became part of the Central Alaska Missions in 1949. The church group opened Faith Hospital in Glennallen in 1956;<sup>7</sup>a church radio station and the Alaska Bible College enriched the mission scene in the 1960s.

The Catholic Church formally entered into the service of the Copper River area with the assignment of a young Jesuit, Father John R. Buchanan, who had been at Holy Cross as a scholastic from 1942 to 1944. Following Father Buchanan's ordination and his return to Alaska in 1949, Bishop Gleeson assigned him to the Tok missions, named after a settlement near the Alaska-Yukon border. From Tok, the young priest visited along the highways: the Richardson, from Valdez on the coast to Delta; the Glenn, from Glennallen on toward Palmer; the Tok Cutoff through Gakona to Tok; and the Alaska Highway, from Tok to Delta. In spite of potholes and frost heaves, these highway sections, built and improved by World War II exigencies, allowed Father Buchanan to reach the disparate points of his 74,000-square-mile parish.<sup>8</sup>

Along the highways were scatterings of homesteads, trading posts, gas stations, restaurants and lodges. Non-Natives had followed the highways to build new homes and businesses in an area that promised a future. Vast wilderness expanses were interrupted only by dirt access roads to trapping camps or mines. Communities identified themselves with major establishments or landmarks: Sheep Mountain, Tonsina, Eureka, Gunsight Mountain, Sourdough, Kenny Lake, Gulkana. The roads were passable, although in winter, when temperatures fell to -50° F or lower, most people stayed home.

Throughout his extensive territory, Father Buchanan noted traces of the early Russian penetration of the region in the remnants of Orthodox faith he found among the Native people.<sup>9</sup> Father Vsevolod Roshko (Rochcau), of the Catholic Eastern rite, and a priest-companion from Fordham University visited Father Buchanan's mission area in 1955. There was thought of establishing an Eastern rite parish. But, already, Central Alaska Missions with stress on American ways and Bible study was building solidly on the ground prepared by Orthodoxy.

With the help of parishioners and benefactors, especially from the States, Father Buchanan established four Catholic chapels along the highways. His periodic newsletter informed various highway groups of his travels and doings. In 1952 his wish for a mission school began to be expressed, since he could see no possibility of a comprehensive and enduring faith among his people without the opening of a Catholic school, the standard missionary pattern.<sup>10</sup> Bishop Francis D. Gleeson, S.J., of Fairbanks, was interested, but committed himself to no more than, "We'll see!"

In the summer of 1952, while building the Glennallen chapel, Father Buchanan visited Chitina, where the teachers received him well and backed



his idea of a Catholic school. That fall, Father James U. Conwell, S.J., Chancellor for the Bishop of Northern Alaska, traveled with Father Buchanan all through the Tok Missions. One day, as they stopped at Atlasta House, near the Glennallen settlement, the proprietor, John White, knowing of their interest in a possible school, suggested an area in the Tazlina River flats. Part of the ground was free of permafrost, as the land had been cleared some years back for an agricultural experiment.

The Tazlina flats, between Glennallen and the neighboring community of Copper Center, were eagerly examined by the interested priests as they stood on the bank of the glacial Tazlina River. They dreamed of a high school and university that would educate for leadership the most capable of the Native boys and girls from the Catholic missions. The site John White suggested seemed suitable, and the United States Congress was petitioned for a land grant to be used for educational purposes. Envisioned for the school was a student body composed of Indian, Eskimo, and Caucasian youth, about one-third each. The planners were encouraged and hopeful when Bishop Gleeson named Father James C. Spils, S.J., builder of St. Mary's on the Andreafsky River, in charge of construction.

Father Buchanan, who already had a reputation as a scrounger for mission-chapel materials, redoubled his begging, now geared toward his proposed college-prep school. His ability to convince potential benefactors of the true value of such a school guaranteed that practically anything and everything he needed was given to him for this purpose. As he had the habit of personally trucking donated materials back to the building site, he soon became known as the Pack Rat Priest, who offered businesses the opportunity to share in his educational dream, carried off what they had to offer, and assured them of God's blessings. Jim and Larry Brown, who ran the Pack River Lumber Company, Sandpoint, Idaho, gave an initial 100,000 feet of lumber. Alaska Freight Lines, Helphrey Freight Lines, and United Freight Lines were responsible for much of this shipping.<sup>11</sup> General Paint Corporation was contacted for paint. Cash available to Father Buchanan was always at a minimum, but soon materials began leaving Seattle for the Alaska Educational Project. Lyle and Green Construction gave steam pipes and fittings; other businesses donated their products: glass, cement, hardware. Copper Valley School was on its way.

The idea of moving Holy Cross Mission to the Copper Valley Educational Project, as Father Buchanan's school was originally called, matured in 1955. Tentative ideas had brought Sister Mary George Edmond to the site in 1954. Continuing discussions about the relocation of Holy Cross to the site dominated by the Wrangell Mountains convinced sister she should be ready for an unprecedented phase of mission endeavor.

The January 1955 decision<sup>12</sup> of Bishop Gleeson and his consultants to close the boarding school at Holy Cross and expand the proposed enrollment at the Copper River site saw her ready to act. Sister George left Alaska for Anna Maria College, a college run by the Sisters of Saint Ann in Paxton, Massachusetts. There, she initiated contacts with federal government officials and presented the needs of the many orphaned or abandoned children being cared for at Holy Cross Mission without any remuneration whatsoever. At times bush pilots, in response to emergency situations, would pick up a child or a family of children without homes or adult caregivers and bring them to



the mission for protection. Slow mail service, further hindered by poor weather conditions, prevented the Father Superior from immediately communicating with government agencies for permission to receive these children. Sometimes parents or other relatives brought children, again with no papers. Lacking expressed government permission, the mission had no right to financial help. Unfortunately, nothing tangible resulted from sister's efforts to change this.

Although Sister George Edmond did not foresee it, the year spent in Massachusetts resulted in meeting with people who became foundation stones of the innovative educational project, and indeed, of a new movement in the Church of Alaska. One night Sister George accompanied a group of college students to an orphanage where she met Father Timothy Harrington, the future Bishop of Worcester. He directed her to see a monsignor connected with the Archdiocese of Boston. Following his suggestion, Sister George met with Sister John, S.S.J., at Regis College. Sister John, who had recently arranged for one of her graduates to go to an island in the South Pacific as a volunteer, was the first sister in the United States to initiate such a program. Both sisters talked enthusiastically about Alaska and the role that volunteer women could play. Sister George was invited to return to Regis College and lecture about the northern missions. As a result, two young women of the graduating class, Marge Mannix and Ann Kent, offered their services as volunteers for the Copper Valley project.<sup>13</sup>

Sister George wrote to Bishop Gleeson asking his views about introducing lay helpers at the Copper Valley project. He took the question to his consultants, some of whom immediately turned down the idea. Seeing the possibilities of the movement, Bishop Gleeson overruled the consultants and gave Sister George the green light.

When she reported all this as part of an assignment in one of her sociology classes at Anna Maria College, similar desires for involvement were kindled among the young women there. Numerous students expressed their willingness to give a year or more to the Church in Alaska. After careful screening, Sister George chose Rosemary Bobka and Shirley Richards. Newspaper publicity soon followed as sister and the girls were interviewed and photographed. A courthouse secretary, Jacqueline Langlois of Worcester, Massachusetts, offered to go north with the group. Jeannette Rageotte, from Rhode Island, volunteered her services as an all-around helper. That made six volunteers, the beginning of the volunteer program for the Catholic Church in Alaska and forerunner of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.<sup>14</sup>

A few months later, Steve Jankowski, master welder, phoned to ask for information about the volunteer movement and the school being built. After interviewing him, Sister George again communicated with Bishop Gleeson, who wired back, "SPILS SAYS SEND IMMEDIATELY."<sup>15</sup>

The problem of paying transportation costs to Alaska for these volunteers was a formidable one. Sister George gave lectures to parish groups, religious and civic organizations, and schools in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York. These lectures made known the poverty of Holy Cross Mission, the need for better educational facilities, and the hope of the Church for Native leadership in all walks of life. Following these lectures, which included the showing of slides, generous donations were given to sister for the North.



News of these talks reached the television show "Strike It Rich." Program organizers communicated with sister and asked if she would agree to be on their show. They wanted to help. Sister went to New York City, appeared on the program and received the maximum award of \$500, which immediately was matched by an anonymous donor. The Heart Line of the program contributed many other gifts, including clinical equipment, dental supplies, aspirin, cough syrups, and ointments. Various other groups organized linen and cutlery showers. Sister's brother, Arthur Babin, stored supplies and prepared everything for shipment.

The accumulated gifts for the educational project were shipped crosscountry by train to a military detachment at Fort Lewis, Washington. The commander of this group combined the donation shipment with the supplies of his unit being transported to Alaska. Such were the Good Samaritans and their offerings that contributed to the initiative and spirit of Father Buchanan's dream-school.<sup>16</sup>

Father Spils again was faced with the responsibility of the construction of a school. The challenge was great, his faith and trust, greater. Because of a lack of funds, most of the work had to be done by amateurs and depended on materials contributed by businesses or culled from Army surplus yards. Father Spils had a reliable assistant, Michael Lyschinsky, a carpenter whom Father Buchanan had picked up hitchhiking on the Alaska Highway. Mike devoted himself wholeheartedly to the educational project, and even sold his rifles to keep food on the table.<sup>17</sup>

Ned Abrams, a Jewish architect in California, drew up a detailed set of plans for the school: separate one-storied buildings linked by a maze of halls. After the erection of the shell of one of these wooden buildings, the impracticality of this plan for a coeducational high school became evident. The original plans were scrapped and Ned Abrams immediately began work on another set, his second valuable donation. These new architectural designs called for a school in the form of a wheel. A covered recreational area was the hub with seven buildings spreading out like spokes. The first wooden building was incorporated into the revised plans, but the remaining sections were to be two stories high and made of concrete blocks.

The school was built in the shadow of Mount Drum, a dominant part of the Wrangell Mountains. Runoffs from snow fields, glaciers, and streams flowed into the swift Copper River nearby which cut a wide passage, giving the school its final<sup>18</sup> name: Copper Valley School. Although technically in Glennallen, the school was close to Copper Center<sup>19</sup> and 111 miles north of Valdez. A turnoff from the Richardson Highway and a mile over a dirt road led to the grass and willows of the educational site. A wooded area where moose roamed surrounded the land-grant acreage.

Sisters assigned<sup>20</sup> to Copper Valley School in 1956 were: Sisters George Edmond, superior; Agatha of the Angels; Freda; Alice Therese; and Edward of Jesus. Sister George Edmond flew to Anchorage from New York in the summer of 1956 with Marge Mannix and Ann Kent. While waiting in Anchorage for other sisters and for transportation to the project site, two hundred miles northeast of the city, sister met Bishop Gleeson. She described the gifts that were on the way north and mentioned the \$1500 given her for the purchase of an organ, a memorial gift. People had been generous to the extent that she still had enough to give the bishop several thousand dollars.



She handed him a check. As the bishop took it and looked at the amount, his eyes filled with tears. Very simply, he said, "May I use this money to pay the hired workmen? Otherwise, we will have to fold up!" The check saved the school.<sup>21</sup>

On 8 August 1956, Sisters George, Agatha and Freda, along with Marge Mannix and Ann Kent, arrived at the educational site. The other two sisters would come from Holy Cross later. At the new school, the main parts of the wooden building were up. Outer walls of one cement block building were being finished. Workmen, Jesuits, sisters, lay staff, and visitors all lived in the first building, where brown butcher paper served as walls separating the rooms. Coffee cans served as lavatories during the night; an outdoor privy sufficed during the day. Water was brought in from thirteen miles away. The open water containers usually lost about half the contents as the vehicles carrying them bumped along the roads. Glacial water from the Tazlina River was used for cooking and washing. Efforts to find a good well<sup>22</sup> failed until Father Spils, using a divining rod, discovered where to dig. Other samplings found salty, oily, high mineral content water that could not be used.

When it became evident that the arrival of the sisters and the volunteer women was going to strain the living capacity of the one building, it was decided that the women would sleep in the Glennallen chapel, five miles from the building site. Bunk beds were hurriedly built; a basin and a five-gallon water can were requisitioned; a Coleman lantern was suspended from the rafters; a tarp hung over the back door. The chapel quarters were so tight that the women had to wait on their bunks while one after the other tired worker washed up in the basin. An outdoor privy was at some distance across a creek.

Although Father Spils objected to having students at the school, since the buildings were not ready, Father Buchanan sensed that continued successful soliciting needed the presence of the children on the premises. Therefore, all efforts went into immediate preparations for students due to arrive from Holy Cross in mid-October 1956.

That decision allowed only several weeks to improvise and organize. The workmen hammered away, pushed with their forklifts and bulldozers, wrestled with inadequate and makeshift plumbing and heating systems. The sisters cleaned, searched for beds and chairs, uncrated school books and planned. They saw to the cooking, laundry, public relations, sewing, counseling, scrubbing, recordkeeping, begging. In all of this, they were supported by keen awareness of the example set by their foundress, Mother Mary Ann, in her own life. They found courage and strength to continue to share of themselves as had the many pioneers who had preceded them.

Sister Freda, after just one year in the North at Nulato, had come to Copper Valley with good will, but with little experience in subsistence cooking or in substituting for what was lacking. From an Eskimo from the western coast, George Sipary, who had been cooking for the construction crew, Sister Freda learned where things were—if they were—and what could be done with what was found. Cases of canned purple plums had been donated, so meal after meal saw purple plums served as dessert. Their frequency almost made them



*The first volunteers that came from the East with Sister Mary George Edmond (center), Ann Kent and Marge Mannix, stand at last on Copper Valley soil scarred with patterned treads of the bulldozer. Sister Mary Freda, near Ann, and Sister Mary Agatha of the Angels, near Marge, also felt the challenge of the educational effort. (SPA)*



a symbol of Copper Valley. Sister Freda had been a hospital dietitian, for the most part in kitchens outfitted with stainless steel. These contrasted vividly with the makeshift realities of Copper Valley, where even the sink did not have an outlet. The first caribou brought to her proved, when inspected, not to have been gutted. The rot was difficult to forget. With the help of George Sipary, Sister Freda struggled each day to provide sufficient food in varied, nourishing meals.

For Sister Agatha, formerly at Pius X Mission in Skagway, setting up a classroom at Copper Valley was a challenge. The main room of the wooden building was decided upon for the classroom, despite the fact that this same room was a dining room three times a day and a recreation room for the staff during the evening. Here, too, cases of a cereal, Cheerios, were stored, along with a number of other dry staples. As chalkboards were nonexistent, sister transformed window shades into writing surfaces that could be raised or lowered at will. To find materials, she was adept at crawling under tarps spread over loads of building supplies or surplus materials in back of the school. One early October afternoon, sister crawled out from under a dusty canvas to find herself looking up at Bishop Gleeson, who had just arrived from Fairbanks. Her coif was dirty and her work apron ready for the laundry. But sister was smiling, for she had just found enough tables, although one was missing a leg, for her classroom.

The bishop asked her, "How's everything?" She responded: "Fine, Bishop! But we don't have water and we have no Blessed Sacrament." (The temporary chapel was not yet finished.) Bishop Gleeson said, with an answering smile, "I can give you God, but God will have to give you water."

Mother Mary Ann remained the unseen, but inspiring, fourth sister at the site during those two months that the initial group of sisters was there. The reading of a new biography about the foundress gave Sister George the fortitude to continue her efforts at Copper Valley with all its frustrations and tensions. Another source of renewal for the sisters was Father Spils, who never reneged on his life-offering to God and would not allow others to do so either.<sup>23</sup>

Marge and Ann, the two volunteers from Regis College, pitched in and accepted whatever job they were called upon to do. Their first postgraduate labor was to match a truckload of military shoes that had ended up in piles in the attic space of the wooden building. The young women also prepared walls for painting and swung paint brushes and rollers. There being but one washing machine, the laundry went on and on. The machine was set up outdoors and water was carried by bucket. As they worked, the young women thought of the coming of the children, of the French and Spanish language classes that would begin, of the encouragement they would give the children.

Then the other four volunteers arrived: Rosemary Bobka, Shirley Richard, Jacqueline Langlois, and Jean-

*Sister Mary George Edmond and Father James C. Spils, S.J., at work on another Copper Valley project—this time a tabernacle. (SPA)*





nette Rageotte, bringing with them their talents, good will and love. They joined the sisters and the girls from Regis in the already crowded chapel-dormitory. When the sisters provided them with warm flannelette nightwear, the volunteers posed for a flash picture and entitled it "The Flanneletes." This night of hilarity celebrated their arrival on Alaskan missionary soil.

As 14 October, the day on which the Holy Cross group was to arrive came near, Father Buchanan completed arrangements with Alaska Airlines to fly the staff and children from Holy Cross to the Gulkana airport, twelve miles from Copper Valley School. Stinson bush planes shuttled the group, a few at a time, from Holy Cross to Aniak on the Kuskokwim River where a DC-4

Starliner flew Mr. Thomas N. Gallagher, S.J., Brother John Hess, S.J., Sisters Edward, Alice Therese, and twenty-six children to Gulkana, 540 miles east. This fly-in, "Operation Snowbird," was a gift of Alaska Airlines.<sup>24</sup> Cecil and Mildred Hinshaw, along with their neighbors at Gulkana, welcomed with words and refreshments the tired, but excited, children and staff.

An old bus acquired by the school provided transportation to the Copper River educational site. Darkness had fallen before the passengers and their luggage were settled for this last lap of the trip. Most of the children had not seen a bus. When the vehicle left Gulkana and turned onto the Richardson Highway, everyone was silent, awed by the experience. Suddenly glaring headlights coming toward the bus appeared. Screams erupted from the panic-stricken children and the driver, Al Gyllenhammer, U.S. Air Force, applied the brakes. The children were petrified by the oncoming traffic, something Holy Cross did not have. It was the first of many introductions to modern living.

On reaching Copper Valley School, the children were noticeably disappointed. The new school had monopolized their thoughts for more than a year. Much of what the students came to at Copper was even less than what they had had at Holy Cross. But they soon came to appreciate what was going into the construction effort in order to give them, Alaska's future, a quality education.

Sister Alice wiped away tears that night, changing gloom into smiles for more than one child as she tucked each youngster into bed in improvised rooms.<sup>25</sup> This was the beginning of twelve years of loving concern for Sister Alice at Copper, where she was in charge of the girls. She was a capable French teacher and a future superior of the sisters.

Jeanne LeBoeuf, a volunteer from Massachusetts, came with Simone Langlois in 1957 to share Sister Alice's care of the girls, especially the younger



*Copper Valley School under construction, as of 1958. The sisters' quarters were in the T-shaped building, the section stretching to the right. (SPA) (Photo credit: Copper Valley School, Public Relations Dept.)*



ones. It was a long time before the Girls' Building was ready to receive the boarders. When it was, it became a warm, love-filled place, made attractive with Army surplus bunkbeds, variously colored drapes and improvised sofas. The bare wooden floor edging the carpets was ingeniously stained with brown shoe polish, a huge quantity of which had been donated to the school.

Sister Edward, nurse, set up a clinic for the cuts, aches, and pains of both staff and children. She was given assistance by the doctors and nurses stationed at Faith Hospital in Glennallen. Young Neil Scannell developed a case of acute appendicitis; little Cecilia Jorgensen fell through the second-floor ramp connecting the buildings; an accident occurred in the tarring of the roofs. The clinic became a place where hurts of the heart received as much attention as bodily ailments. In between clinic sessions, Sister Edward could be found at the washing machine, sewing machine, or dish pan. She set a pace followed by many volunteer nurses who successively replaced her.

As school was late getting underway, teachers and students strove to make up for lost time. A few local children came as day scholars or as weekly boarders. The school was initially planned as a high school, but because some of the students transferring from Holy Cross were of grade school age, Copper Valley also opened a grade school. Holy Cross experiences convinced the staff that youngsters should not be accepted as boarders until they were at least in Grade 6. This kept registration for the grade school low. As the Holy Cross children moved into high school classes, the lower grades were discontinued.

Father Francis J. Fallert, S.J., was named principal of the college-prep school at Copper Valley. As principal, he developed in the school a family spirit that was remarkable. Despite the inevitable tensions and difficulties inherent in dealing with various groups, the school progressed under his administration. Sister George, concerned that the sisters not be just "horsepower," but be accepted as women who were capable educators, requested that the superior of the sisters be the principal of the grade school. The Jesuit superior was automatically the principal of the high school and superintendent of the entire complex. Father Spils assisted with the spiritual life of the school. Father Buchanan was away most of the time on begging tours.

Bit by bit, the first building, the T-shaped wooden one, was completed. The longer part contained the temporary chapel, the women volunteers' living quarters and the clinic. The shorter upright of the T became the sisters' quarters.

That the sisters were not welcome by all at Copper Valley was sometimes felt through significant actions and words.<sup>26</sup> There was not always perfect harmony between the workers at Copper Valley. The sisters had to adjust to sharing responsibilities with the volunteers—young idealistic youth who functioned very differently from the seasoned missionaries.

In March 1957, Mother Mary Luca, Provincial Superior, came from Victoria to visit the North. Traveling from Anchorage in the cab of a truck was a novel experience for her. As the truck skirted threatening precipices among the Chugach Mountains, the trip along the Glenn Highway became more and more frightening. Once at Copper Valley and able to see, in person, the difficulties faced by the sisters and their state of exhaustion, she considered taking them away from there. When she discussed this idea with Father Spils, he looked at her in a shocked way. "Take them, if you want," he said, "and if



you can assume the terrible responsibility of necessitating the closing of this educational enterprise of the Church.” The sisters remained.<sup>27</sup>

After the arrival of the students, laundry problems had increased. To help with the difficulties, George and Catherine Ashby of Copper Center Lodge offered their laundry facilities for a day each week. On that day, all laundry was bagged and brought by truck to the lodge where, by this time, Sisters George and Edward were already preparing the machines. One basket of laundry followed another into the washing machine. At noon, the Ashbys served the sisters a meal such as the lodge was noted for. Then the washing and drying continued. What was not able to be dried there was brought back to school to be hung on water pipes in the dining room.

Other friends invited the sisters and women volunteers to use their bathtubs. Each week groups went to different homes. This basic health need was an occasion to meet families, share a cup of coffee, and exchange information. Fred and Blanche Champoux not only helped the adults but gave special love to young students. Harry and Gladys Heintz, Harry and Jean Speerstra, the Leo Fisher family, Ed and Amber Klopp, the Flemings, the Hinshaws—were encouraging and supportive neighbors through the years.

The names of all the workers, volunteers and friends of Copper Valley School would fill pages for a book of its own. No one can think of the educational project without calling to mind Tony and Rita Sipary and their family: Simeon, Elizabeth (nicknamed Little Sister), Harold, Regis, Danny, and Chucky. Tony, master-mechanic at the school and a graduate of Brother Feltes’ machine-shop training at Holy Cross, was responsible for the machinery. He was Father Spils’ dependable operator. The welder, Steve Jankowski, proved invaluable. From the outset, significant workers at Copper Valley School were: Jack and Irene Wheeler, Mike and Shirley Douglas, Pop and Mom Diaz, Dennis Stevens and a group of engineering students from Gonzaga. Among them were Father Spils’ nephews, Dick Spils and Tom and Larry Reisenauer. Committed builders included Tim Boardwell, Aldor Rageotte, Joe Newman from Holy Cross, Jim Poore, Larry Douville, and servicemen from Fort Richardson, Fort Greely, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Eielson Air Force Base, and Ladd Field. Colonel Harold W. Paige arranged transportation for the military men. When his duties allowed, he, too, became a truck driver to haul supplies from Anchorage. It was the colonel who was instrumental in obtaining a huge water tank for the school. The trucking of this tank from Anchorage to the school was done with trepidation and with helicopter surveillance, for the highway curves were many. Ann Paige, the colonel’s wife, often accompanied him on dangerous night trips. In recognition for all his services to the Church, Colonel Paige was honored by the Holy See, at the request of Bishop Gleeson.

When shopping, conventions, or health reasons brought the sisters to Anchorage, they were advised and helped by Ann and Harold Paige, Jack and Audrey Clawson, Cappy and Doris Faroe, the Leo A. Walshes, the Grinzells, Rusty Imlach, the Vernon and Walter J. Hickel families, and other friends. The Sisters of Providence were always hospitable.

If Father Spils was desperate for hardware, a list of items presented to Cappy Faroe got immediate attention. Cappy filled the order gratuitously. Other devoted friends and benefactors were Al and Minnie Swalling, as well as the owners of Bagoy’s Flower Shop. Patricia James, dietitian at Providence



Hospital, kept Sister George informed when major food sales were announced.

May 1957 saw the first high school graduation: Teddy Mayac and Anna Patsey received their diplomas. They had begun their high-school education at Holy Cross under the Jesuit scholastic, William J. Loyens, and Sisters Anne Rita and George Edmond. Teddy became an excellent ivory carver, a talent inherited from his gifted father, Peter. Anna went to Spokane, Washington, to study nursing at Sacred Heart Hospital. She returned to Alaska as a registered nurse and served her people at the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage.

Changes in the sisters' assignments brought Sister Ida from Holy Cross to Copper Valley as a replacement for Sister Freda. Sister Therese Bernadette came as teacher for Grades 7 and 8. She found the lay volunteers at Copper Valley School in the forefront of lay ministry. An unusual situation occurred when aunt and niece were assigned to the same mission. Sister Eulalia, after spending thirty-six years at Holy Cross Mission, had been transferred in 1956 to Lower Post Indian Residential School in British Columbia. After a year there, sister was reassigned in 1957 to Copper Valley School, where she assumed many responsibilities. Her niece, Sister Denise Marie, came with pockets full of jokes and a sense of humor that lightened spirits and made indelible impressions. Sister Anne Eveline also joined the Copper Valley community as teacher in 1957.

At Holy Cross Mission, students had stayed year-round. At Copper Valley every student left the school for the summer months. Students who could not go home were placed with friends of the school. Construction projects continued. Those sisters not scheduled for summer studies at the universities or not engaged in catechetical ministry found much to do at Copper. In the summer of 1957 an experimental retreat for military personnel was held, and in the summer of 1958 six three-day retreats, arranged by Father Conwell, were offered for servicemen and their wives. With the success of these retreats, that ministry became an annual part of life at Copper Valley. Sometimes groups of priests, chaplains or sisters of various congregations met at Copper Valley for spiritual renewal. As the school was usually short staffed during the summer, the retreat ministry was demanding for those who remained at home to ready the buildings, prepare and serve meals, take care of the laundry, and show hospitality. Retreatants were cooperative and understanding about inadequate bathrooms, salty drinking water from the well, and barracks-like furnishings. Sisters George, Eulalia, and Ida worked especially hard at the retreat effort.

The saga of Copper Valley School brought more volunteers who joined the first group from the East. Eight Gonzaga University students from Spokane, Washington, came for the 1957 to 1958 year and formed the nucleus of a Volunteer Alumni Association: the LAMBS, or the Lay Apostles Mission Board. This group, organized by one of those Spokane students, Mickey Byrnes, was instrumental in bringing needed help to the school. Lay apostles in the state of Washington organized apple-picking weekends, which meant barrels and boxes of fruit shipped to Alaska and welcomed at Copper Valley. These lay apostles, learning that fresh meat was limited on the menus served at the struggling school, obtained permits and hunted for elk, the meat from



which was shipped North. The LAMBS are remembered with gratitude, especially by those who were responsible for food provisions.

Undeterred by dust, gnats and mosquitoes, the volunteers at Copper Valley unloaded trucks, sorted materials, scrubbed and painted, picked berries and mushrooms, traveled to Valdez for fish, picnicked as they hunted for marble in an abandoned quarry, spread tar on roofs and ramp, greeted visitors, hauled water, coached basketball, fed the furnace, organized classrooms, directed chorus or drama, met in chapel, played cribbage, drank coffee, took stock of life's values and left their mark.

New names the children came to know and love included those of Dennis Frie, Leonard Hagel, Melvin Kays, Judy Casey, Sylvia Servatius, Joanne Manfred—all Gonzaga people. Jack Cannon came from Boston College; Cecile Daoust (Teak) and Barbara Persson, from Massachusetts; Floyd Loony, from Washington; Paulynne Allen, from Hawaii; Margaret Pickett, from Anchorage; Dick, Dorothy, and David Barger, from Eagle River; Larry Kruljack, Mike Brockert, Henry Marois, Lydia Witt, from the West Coast.

In 1958, Father James Conwell replaced Father Fallert as superior of the school. Just a year later, Father Conwell resigned because he was stricken with terminal cancer. Father Fallert returned as superior. In the best of his own remarkable tradition, Father Conwell ordered a school dance for the students after he informed them of his cancer and his imminent departure for the hospital. In memory of him, friends donated a large crucifix that hung in the main chapel until 1971, when it was installed in Sacred Heart Cathedral, Fairbanks.

Heartache and joy were intertwined at Copper Valley. It was hard for Father Spils, uncertain about appropriate building supplies an incoming truck might hold. Once he waited months for the nuts to arrive that would match a donated supply of bolts. Uncertainties and inadequacies at Copper Valley were hard for the Jesuits, for the sisters, for the workmen, for the volunteers, and for students. People learned to improvise.

The gym floor was cement, the classrooms were cold, the bus broke down, the chores were many. All this hardship bound students and staff into a united group that developed into a school with a unique personality, spirit, and charm.

During May 1958, Emily Lopez and Lucille Snow<sup>28</sup> graduated from high school. Emily was hospitalized in Anchorage at the Alaska Native Medical Center, where a special graduation was held. Father Fallert and Sister George represented the school there. Lucille was given a scholarship to Anna Maria College,<sup>29</sup> but after a bout with homesickness, she came back to Alaska. Margaret Mary Steve, from Stebbins, a 1959 graduate, went on to a commercial art school in the Lower 48.

Craig Barbare, who lived at the Jesuit House in Anchorage, on Seventh Avenue,<sup>30</sup> trucked many loads of supplies to Copper

*Emily wears her wrist corsage proudly as she experiences her own graduation ceremony while a patient at Alaska Native Medical Center in May 1958. From left to right: Father Francis Fallert, S.J., Lucille Snow (from McGrath), Emily Lopez (from Holy Cross), Sister Mary George Edmond. (SPA)*





and kept a place in Anchorage where other provisions could be stored while waiting for transportation to the building site. On his trips to Copper Valley, Craig was always sure of a cup of coffee, a warm welcome, and a hot meal within minutes. The kitchen, dining rooms, and warehouse were Sister Ida's domain. Here, the sister in white performed miracles known only to herself and God, and once in a while to an astonished staff and student body. With Father Spils, sister had planned much of the layout of the kitchen facilities. Gifted with a sense of the sacramental for all things material, Sister Ida revered all that was entrusted to her. With faith and determination, she put in long hours, not only in cooking, but also in scraping and painting Army surplus chairs and tables, covering unsightly water pipes with aluminum paint, making curtains and aprons, dish towels, imitation fireplaces, floral arrangements. Sister was adept at skinning, gutting and quartering wild game, usually some caribou, occasionally a moose, a few times a buffalo brought down from Delta. Sister had skinning races with the returning hunters. As her skinning knives were always sharp, she usually won the races.

Once when she had no onion to perk up the caribou she was serving, Sister Ida sent an SOS heavenward. A few days later, an interstate van pulled into the kitchen yard and unloaded fifty bushels of onions, shipped by a Freemason in California to honor a bet he had made with Father Buchanan. Another time, seasoning was even more desperately needed and there were not even dried onions left. The kitchen and pantry had been searched for a stray can of onion flakes. Finally, Sister Ida said: "Lord, we need that!" Resolutely and determinedly, she walked into the pantry, climbed her short stepladder, put out her hand, and found a forgotten can.

Serving fish temptingly was the center of another problem. Sister often wished she had lemons, at least, for the workmen's platters. While in Anchorage for a dental appointment, she spent a few dollars of benefactors' money to purchase a small case of lemons and exultantly came home to Copper Valley with her treat. Arriving at the school, she discovered fifteen women, all with juicers, in the kitchen. Several large cases of lemons had been left at the school. Lemon juice was flowing by the quart and lemon halves littered all available table and counter spaces.

Sister Ida made Copper Valley famous for its hospitality and parties. Volunteers helped her, especially with the baking. George Cusick was baker for three years. Beverly Brooks gave nine years to the Copper Valley kitchen. Beverly visited her home in Massachusetts every year and came back to Copper Valley with party favors and other decorations for the big dining room, always made festive for "family dinners," when staff and students ate together formally, and at holiday seasons. Beverly was as dependable as Sister Ida for early rising and sourdough pancake making.

Other volunteers who continued to enrich Copper Valley were Mary Jo Cravens, Carol Desrosiers, Aurora Tomas, Paul Schweiger, Del Hoover, Don Barrows, Deanna Jenkinson. Father Paul B. Mueller, S.J., came for pastoral ministry along the highways. Two other Jesuit scholastics, John W. Lawlor, and William Cooper, enriched the staff. Graduates were from all parts of Alaska: Agatha Savage, Holy Cross; Rebecca Brocies, Tok; Joan Bill, Hooper Bay; Wilson Jerue, Holy Cross; Frank Narusch, Anchorage; and Peter Demoski, Nulato.



Sister Anne Rita came to Copper Valley in 1959. With amazement, she saw the progress in higher education the Native students had made since the tenuous opening of the high school in Holy Cross. Ever vivacious and quick, Sister Anne Rita moved rapidly to and from her posts as grade school librarian, teacher, sacristan. During summer vacations her suitcase was rarely on the shelf, for she delighted in going out for sessions of religious education, especially to Cordova and Valdez, where she made many friends for the school. Father David Melbourne was pastor of Cordova-Valdez when the sisters first went there from Copper Valley. He was succeeded in 1959 by Father John A. Lunney. At Cordova, sister and her companion were welcomed by Mrs. Bea Dinneen, who opened her house to them. At Valdez, Mrs. Marie Whalen received them. Father Edward C. O'Neill, C.Ss.R, arranged for visits of other sister catechists to Seward.

The sisters went to the Matanuska Valley where children from Palmer and Wasilla followed catechetical classes. During these sessions the sisters lived in a small house rented out to teachers. The Palmer church was built of logs and the rectory was minuscule. But the Palmer-Wasilla welcome was always of a largesse that more than made up for any inconvenience. The farm people of the Matanuska Valley were as generous with their garden produce for Copper Valley as with their friendship.

Bishop Gleeson, pastor at Nenana, invited the sisters for annual religious education sessions in the summer. The sisters lived in the rectory and taught in the kitchen and living room. From Nenana the sisters went to Clear and Healy, farther down the Alaska Railroad line. One summer, two lay volunteers went to the Bristol Bay area and stayed at Holy Rosary Parish in Dillingham, and at Clarks Point. Sister Ida went with Judy Casey, R.N., to Huslia<sup>31</sup> from which they returned with windburned, blistered faces. At Copper itself, during the school year, the sisters taught Sunday school to the few local Catholic children attending public school in the area.

The 1960s saw Adolph and Ruby Hoephner, with their teenaged son, Jim, volunteering at Copper Valley. The James Crane family, which included ten children, squeezed into the Glennallen chapel and made it home for a year. The family felt that even the youngest could give by being an example. When they returned to Kentucky, their gift of a large outdoor marble statue of Our Lady of Lourdes was a reminder of their volunteering at Copper Valley. Raymond and Freda Harry brought more volunteer help, while their son and daughter, Bud and Vaughn, attended high school. Jeannette Turino supplemented care of the boys. Kenneth Stone stressed gentlemanly behavior. Mr. and Mrs. Hilary Kunz came from the state of Washington. So did Mrs. Gertrude Luosey, Mrs. Cecilia Stone and a host of other mature volunteers. Tourists, like Marlene Mlarker, and health care personnel who stopped in for inspections or clinics, became friends and assets when the sisters agitated for proper health standards in all departments. Betty Malay, R.N., and Anna Z. Wenzel, R.N., showed special concern.

Thus, Copper Valley developed. Where once Father Buchanan and Father Conwell had dreamed, there grew an institution with seven buildings like spokes of a wheel. The complex could serve 150 students. School spirit was high and the future seemed encouraging.



One of the 1960 volunteers, Genevieve Hetu, sponsored a contest for a school song. A senior, Irene Demientieff, won the contest with these words that fitted the music of "Syncopated Clock."

Copper Valley School

*There's a big wheel built on Mile One-Eleven;  
The spokes of learning just number seven.  
Snow-capped Mount Drum looms in the rear;  
The Copper and Tazlina meet near here.  
Packy Board Palace\*, as it's known to all  
When the first flood of pupils arrives in the fall,  
Here we learn to live by the Golden Rule;  
This is the place called Copper Valley School.*

(\* A nickname because of the chipboard panelling making up the inside walls)



Volunteer, Mary Kay Ketter, is proud of her 1962-1963 choral group. The feeling seems mutual.  
Row 4 (top) l. to r.: Cathy Vaska, Vaughn Harry, Lucille Marshall, Anita Olsen, Joyce Emmons, Arnold Lincoln, Leo Schaeffer, Fred Henry, John Paul, Jake Aloysius, Mike Madros, Jerry McElroy, Raymond Harry, Diane Crawford, Mary Wahrer, Jill Goddard, Renée Lemmon, Mary Lolnitz.  
Row 3: Mary Sims, Mary Mayac, Sharon Tirelli, Vivian Lincoln, Barbara Demoski, Cathy Jung, Rudy Walker, Ron Pelto, Trygve Jorgensen, Victor Nicholas, Jim Kinney, Joy Pettys, Margaret (Margo) Rupert, Norma Rice, Pat Rice.  
Row 2: Catherine Pitka, Margaret Semaken, Barbara Richards, Lorraine Walker, Bill Daugherty, Ed Roach, Jerry Smelser, Richard Jung, Rose Frank (with dark-rimmed glasses), Helen (Sally) Floresta, Dolores Tumulak, Mary Ann Demientieff.  
Row 1: Esther Lopez, Natalie Solomon, Anna Stickman, Domingo Floresta, Paul Jackson, Mary Kay Ketter, Charlie Kokuluk, Nellie (Tiny) Demientieff, Sophie Javier, Eileen Norbert, Jenny Dayton, Merriline Kangas. (SPA)  
(Photo credit: Kenneth Stone)



Much of the joy at Copper Valley came from music, for one heard it everywhere. Music came from the open windows of the various dorms. A Fairbanks benefactor sent Sister George a Gulbranson organ to heighten the liturgical ceremonies. He also sent a large jukebox that was installed on the mezzanine. It provided music as people came and went from one building to another and offered rhythm and zest during ice skating hours. Another gift came from the L and J Music Store in Anchorage. Sister George went there to purchase triangles for Sister Clementina, choir directress, who wanted them for the Music Festival in Anchorage, one of the highlight performances for the Copper Valley chorus. The clerk at the music store showed her the triangles and then asked if the school could use a portable organ. Sister paid for the triangles, but walked out with the gift of an organ.

Sister George left Copper Valley in 1962 for a community assignment in Kamloops, B.C. Although replacing her was difficult, Sister Agatha took on the challenge. From 1962 to 1965, she was superior of the sisters' group and principal of the grade school.

The story of the Sisters of Saint Ann at Copper Valley would be incomplete without mention of Nick and Rose Zerbinos, who aided in various ways: he as carpenter and heavy-equipment operator; she as accountant or as house-mother for the boys. Rose was a homesteader whose courage was doubly proved when, after a fire, she froze her feet as she struggled barefooted through the snow. Another woman, valiant and energetic, was Miss Mildred Keaton, nurse in Alaska for some fifty years. After her retirement in 1963, she offered her services at Copper Valley School. "Ma Keaton" or "Mrs. McGinty," as the students sometimes called her, knew the parents and grandparents of many students, especially those who came from Nome, Kotzebue, and Barrow. She encouraged art and kept pieces of diamond willow ready to be peeled, polished and crafted. The walls in her clinic were decorated with paintings by the young artists of Copper Valley School.

Awards came to the school: for music, for art and for other activities. The Civil Air Patrol was initiated in 1960. Both the Boy Cadet and the Girl Cadet sections flourished, winning awards in the Anchorage Fur Rendezvous parades. The basketball team, the "Bucks," won a few trophies. Eileen Norbert topped a state "Voice of Democracy" contest. Rivalry with Monroe High, the Catholic school in Fairbanks, brought remarkable achievement in debate and drama.

Teachers, including the sisters, were part of the Copper Valley Teachers Association, whose other members were from the neighboring settlements of Kenny Lake, Copper Center, Chitina, and Gakona, as well as from Glennallen. Local interschool activities brought honors to Copper Valley. The location and facilities being appropriate, the Alaska Boys State began to convene annually at the educational site. Year after year, in all of these varying activities, the Sisters of Saint Ann were women truly involved.



*The Journalism Class meets with Sister Kathleen Mary to discuss the evening news sheet, Scuttlebutt, and the next edition of the school paper, Newswheel. From left to right: Chuck Akers, Arnold Lincoln, Rudy Walker, Mike Madros, Domingo Floresta, Jim Hoephner, Jim Kinney, Renée Lemmon, Sophie Javier, Fred Henry. (SPA)*

*A page from Newswheel, February 1968.*





Father John B. Baud, S.J., came to Copper Valley School from Nulato, where he had served for twenty-seven years. He and Sister Kathleen Mary combined their ideas and enlarged the Art Department. Anton Smario and Anna Jean Mahon also promoted art in its many forms among the gifted students. Mr. Smario used his talent at the offset press. Anna Jean repainted the fourteen plaques of the Way of the Cross donated after the construction of the chapel wing was begun.

Recognizing the need for a reliable bus at the school, and hearing that such a bus could be obtained by redeeming 1,500,000 Betty Crocker coupons, Father Baud in 1963 added that project to his other responsibilities. The response to his announcement about the coupon drive was dramatic. Coupons poured in. Eleven months after launching the project, Father Baud notified the General Mills offices that he had 1,000,000 coupons on hand. Two men from Anchorage made the trip to the school, verified the number, and handed the priest a check for \$5,000. Soon afterwards, another 500,000 coupons were ready for counting. A second check, this one for \$2,500, was presented. Fathers Fallert and Buchanan went to Detroit to pick up a new bus. They drove it all the way to Alaska via the Alaska Highway. There was much rejoicing and cheering as “Betty Bus” rolled into the circle at Copper Valley School.<sup>32</sup>

The 1964 Good Friday earthquake occurred just after the evening meal. As the 8.5 earthquake shook the school on 27 March, all evacuated the building, only to discover disconcerting fissures on the crust of the snow. Frightened observers noted that dirt cliffs along the Tazlina River were cascading, scrub trees nearby were whipping crazily, the spoke-like buildings themselves were rising and falling as though on a moving sea. The buildings cracked along some of the cement joinings, but did not fall. They rode out the massive earthquake well, to the relief of Father Spils, the other Jesuits, Steve Jankowski, Aldor Rageotte, Tony Sipary, Nick Zerbinos—everyone! As the tremors subsided, workmen and Jesuits, searching for telltale whiffs of smoke, rifts, or leaks strode purposefully through the buildings. There was debris everywhere and some pipes had become disconnected, but there was no major damage. Father Fallert went immediately to the ham radio to try to establish contact with relatives of the students and staff. One high school student, Harry Henderson, lost his father in the earthquake and subsequent tidal wave at Valdez.

Copper Valley School had been designated by the Civil Air Defense as a center should disaster strike. Red Cross supplies were promised. Hence, all through an anxious night, preparations were made to receive refugees from Valdez. Copper Valley School, though shaken and cracked, soon held twice as many people as had been there the day before. Subsequently, some Valdez students opted to finish the school year at Copper Valley. Arrangements were made for them to do so, but the seniors received Valdez diplomas on graduation day. The end of the 1964 school year also signaled the end of Grades 1 through 6 at Copper Valley. Primary grade equipment was forwarded to Nulato.<sup>33</sup>

When Bishop Gleeson requested an auxiliary bishop to assist him in his northern missionary diocese, the choice fell on Father George T. Boileau, S.J., a priest of a sensitive, poetic nature. He decided to have his episcopal ordination on 31 July 1964 at Copper Valley School, so that visiting dignitaries might have a firsthand idea of what a mission school was like and



experience, to some degree, the bush. He consulted with Sister Ida about the feasibility of feeding some five hundred guests. Plans were made and the summer saw their implementation. By the end of July, buildings were emptied of furniture, scrubbed clean, and reorganized for the visitors. The sisters' quarters were reserved for the prelates, one of whom was His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman of New York. The adaptable sisters moved to a dressing room in the gym, a room that had recently been used to hang caribou for curing. Mrs. John Gallagher, mother of Father Thomas Gallagher, S.J., (former scholastic at Holy Cross and Copper Valley) came from Dash Point, Washington, to be hostess for the ecclesiastical dignitaries.

On Saint Ann's Day, 26 July, the bishop-elect offered an intimate and emotional Mass for the sisters in thanksgiving for all that was being done for him. One last request was that special loaves of bread be baked for the ordination ceremonies. On the eve of his ordination to the episcopacy, he came to the kitchen, sat at the counter, and shared one of the fresh loaves with Sister Ida, while he talked about his dreams and his hopes.<sup>34</sup> There was great joy at his consecration as bishop—and great sorrow six months later, when on 15 February 1965 the prelate with so much promise died of a heart attack while he was canvassing for lay volunteers.

Before the start of the 1964 to 1965 year, Sister Agatha, in response to a request from Bishop Gleeson, flew to Bristol Bay to organize the school year for Holy Rosary School in Dillingham, and thus help Father Norman Donohue, S.J., pastor and principal.

Holy Rosary was a boarding school serving the Bristol Bay region in Southwestern Alaska. Day students from the town contributed to the student body, made up of some Catholic children, many Moravians, and a number of Russian Orthodox. The school curriculum needed updating and the incoming teachers required some programming and organizational help, which Sister Agatha provided.

While Holy Rosary was revamping its educational program, Copper Valley as well was studying its policies and formulating what was deemed best for the future. Although Grades 7 and 8 were functioning well, plans were underway to phase out these two grades, as had been done for Grades 1 through 6. One reason for phasing out all grades other than the high school years was the resolve arrived at in the beginning stages of Copper Valley that it would be a college preparatory school and address the needs of older students in its limited facilities.

In the summer of 1965, Sister George Edmond returned as superior of the sisters and assistant in the high school office. She continued her interest in the Home Economics department and taught several courses. Recently purchased sewing machines, cooking pots, pans, utensils, and textbooks had been added through a money gift from Bishop John Wright of Worcester. Other benefactors furnished linens, towels, and curtains. The girls themselves painted the cement floor a deep maroon and applied lighter designs effectively with swishes of brushes. In time, classes were taught by other qualified Home Economics teachers: Mary Kay Ketter, Carol Desrosiers, Suzanne Curtin, Marion Kelly, Kathleen Cardinal and Gertrude Luosey. Returning for a second year, Mrs. Luosey invited even the high school boys to learn the art of cooking.



While Sister Agatha was at Copper Valley, she often wished that the sisters, capable women all, be treated as co-equals with the Jesuits and the volunteers. Instead, she sensed the sisters often were only backstage hands.<sup>35</sup> She admitted afterward that the sisters were work oriented and found little time for leisure. In retrospect, she believed the sisters should have made more opportunities to be present to people.

Sister Alice, on the other hand, was convinced that she listened to, loved, and helped both students and volunteers. Her regret was that the sisters' rule of life obliged them to have a separate dining room.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, they could not share meals with the students, except on such occasions as family dinners.

Sister Agnes Marie arrived in Alaska from Massachusetts in 1965 and remained six years at Copper Valley School. Particular students during her time were three boys from Gambia, West Africa. These boys, Baboucarr Jeng, Serign Saho, and Abdul Jeng, demonstrated an amazing zeal for studies. But the personnel at Copper Valley had witnessed a similar hunger for learning when Fred Ngige, Peter Kuria, Lorna Obat, and Karen Ezra had come from Kenya, East Africa.

Peter and Fred had finished classes as far as Grade 8 in Kenya, but had not qualified for entrance to the high schools. A teacher had advised that the boys go to the public library, consult books with listings of schools in other countries, and try to get accepted in one of them. Alaska was not far down on the alphabetical list of American schools. The boys spotted the address of Copper Valley, wrote to the principal, and were accepted. Tuition at the school would be free. Travel expenses were covered by donations and ticket assistance from the government in Kenya. Each of the African students had his or her own story of events leading to acceptance at Copper Valley. All the stories revealed determination to acquire an education, cost what it may in leaving homeland and family.

Sister Agnes Marie, a versatile teacher, specialized in mathematics and became school librarian. A strong motive for her presence at Copper Valley was her conviction that she was giving her students tools<sup>37</sup> by which they could retain their image and self-respect. Some of the other "tools" she handed around were paintbrushes. Dipped into coral-colored paint that had been donated, the brushes transformed the gray cement blocks of the school into a pink, seven-spoked wheel.

Rumors in and around Copper Valley School in the mid-1960s were confirmed in February 1966 with the announcement that Rome had created the Archdiocese of Anchorage from sections of Alaska carved from both the Diocese of Juneau and the Missionary Diocese of Fairbanks. With the erection of the archdiocese, comprising the Third Judicial District of the State of Alaska, Copper Valley, because of its location within that district, ceased being under the jurisdiction of Bishop Gleeson and became part of the Archdiocese of Anchorage. The Most Reverend Joseph T. Ryan, of Albany, New York, was named the first Archbishop of Anchorage. The ordination to the episcopacy was in the archbishop's home city in March prior to his coming to Alaska. Two Sisters of Saint Ann, Mother Mary Rose of the Sacred Heart and Mother Mary Velma, both General Councillors, officially represented the whole Congregation at the ordination.

Installation festivities for the new archbishop were held in April at West High School, Anchorage. Organizers asked Copper Valley school to supply a



chorus, Civil Air Patrol honor guards, and acolytes. It was an hour of celebration and exuberance ran high. To see more of the archdiocese, the archbishop and some of his visitors, in the days that followed, drove to Glennallen, to acquaint themselves with the area, the people, and Copper Valley School.

The establishment of the Archdiocese of Anchorage occurred almost simultaneously with the implementation of many directives and ideas of Vatican Council II (October 1962 to December 1965). Change in ecclesiastical jurisdiction also came as social changes, college crises, drug and alcohol crazes erupted. Happenings in distant places found repercussions in Copper Valley. The Jesuit Order was in the front line of liturgical change and in the interpretation of the thinking of Vatican Council II. Volunteers from colleges experiencing unrest brought with them the seeds of discontent found in their respective colleges.

Also coinciding with the establishment of the archdiocese were changes in the educational policies of the State of Alaska. Village students were encouraged to participate in a boarding home program in the cities, a program geared to help Native young people from the bush villages remain in Alaska for their higher education. Previously, according to a government-sponsored plan that had been in place for years, Native students had the option of Mt. Edgecumbe or "outside" schools for Natives. Copper Valley youth felt it unjust to have to pay their own plane fares to come to the Catholic school and felt dissatisfaction at being removed from the lively scene of the city boarding homes. When the State of Alaska lowered the legal drinking age for its youth, enforcement of the no-liquor policy at Copper Valley was difficult as some students were of legal age. An increasing number of students smoked surreptitiously. Within heavily varnished chipboard walls and under tarred roofs, fire was an imminent possibility. Fire insurance premiums were prohibitive. Finally, tension between some Jesuits and the more conservative Archbishop Ryan about educational policies caused a widening rift that seriously weakened the possibility of continuing the operation of Copper Valley School. Caught in the middle of this situation were the sisters.

None of the tension between Jesuits and archbishop was lost on the volunteers, who sided with one or the other. Disharmony infected the pupils. Among the sisters, too, there was dissidence. Some of them, as a result of the interpretations of Vatican Council II, opted for the new freedoms and the experimental, while others preferred slower changes. The sisters' own lives and customs were challenged. The religious habit was drastically modified and then put aside by those who chose to do so. Civil names replaced the familiar religious names.

In 1967, Sister Mary Bernard of Siena, commercial teacher, assumed the leadership of the sisters. Sister Bernard had come to Copper Valley in 1965 and had been surprised at first by the expansive size of the school and by



*Copper Valley School, c. 1964.*  
(Photo credit: Sister Mary Barry collection)





*Snowflakes are falling, eventually to cover the burdocks and tall dry grass by the Girls' Dorm. Shelly Murray and Rita "Tootie" Demientieff try to memorize the patterns of a few snow crystals before they melt. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Copper Valley School, Public Relations Dept.)

*Sister Mary Bernard of Siena encourages her Office Practice class, 1966-67. Note the homemade typewriter covers and stands for manuals. Kathy Zerbinos and Mary Jorgensen have front desks. David Angaiak and Angela Norbert are near sister. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Copper Valley School, Public Relations Dept.)



local conveniences. She had expected to find a village with people living in a rudimentary style. Her reaction made her realize that advances in the missions of the Church in Alaska were not well enough understood by people in general. Sister introduced business education courses at Copper Valley. She felt these courses to be imperative for some students, seemingly more job-oriented than college-inclined. Her interest in the students' well-being was encouraged in the classrooms and dorms by Sisters Mary John Robert, Emma, and Donna, who had recently joined the group of sisters at Copper Valley. Sister Anne Eveline returned for a second time.

As the late 1960s unfolded, occasional jubilee celebrations added intermittent notes of happiness in the school. Sister Eulalia's golden jubilee of religious life was highlighted in 1968. Spring floods and snow showers could not deter Archbishop Ryan from driving two hundred miles to attend. Speaking during the dinner, he challenged the assembled student body, "You are looking for fulfillment? There (pointing to Sister Eulalia) is fulfillment! A full life, indeed!" Father James E. Jacobson, as principal, spoke warmly and sincerely of sister's hidden jobs at the laundry and of her ability to find in the attic such items as crepe paper streamers, costumes, Arctic "bunny boots," work clothes, artificial flowers, yardage, and trinkets. As a jubilee gift, former volunteers, led by Kenneth Stone, offered a money tree, to be used as an educational fund for young sisters.

For Mildred Keaton's golden jubilee of nursing, Copper Valley celebrations again underlined what it meant to live one's life for others. Incidents of her nursing days in the Arctic were recalled, especially by her friends, the Glenn Briggs of Eagle River. Wall decorations of the symbolic nursing lamp carried a message to several students, who, led by the light of that lamp, chose nursing careers for themselves.

In 1969 there was concern about the necessity to close Copper Valley School for financial reasons. After assessments and discussions with individuals, Archbishop Ryan called a meeting in Anchorage for his consultants, school personnel, Father Bernard F. McMeel, S.J., (Jesuit Superior in Alaska), and Bishop Robert L. Whelan, S.J., of Fairbanks. Everyone present, except Father



McMeel and Bishop Whelan, thought the closing of the school was necessary.

Subsequently, Archbishop Ryan offered Copper Valley School both to the Diocese of Fairbanks and to the Jesuits, debt-free, as well as a free hand in the operation of the school. Both Father McMeel and Bishop Whelan, though they would have liked to see the school stay open, felt they did not have the Jesuit personnel available to accept the archbishop's proposals.<sup>38</sup>

The archbishop tried to interest other religious orders of men, but with no success. On hearing that the Jesuit principals and superiors were preparing to leave Copper Valley School, the archbishop, in 1969, asked an experienced educator, Father Richard B. Saudis, from Chicago, to go to the school. He succeeded Father Jacobson as principal in 1970.

During the school year 1970 to 1971, the question of closing Copper Valley, continuing it as it was, or using it for specialized programs, received considerable thought and prayer. Again, several meetings were called by the archbishop who discussed anew with the administrative staff, the sisters, the businessmen of Anchorage, and his consultants the various possibilities for the school.

Disheartened by the change of spirit at Copper Valley, the sisters spoke of alternatives they could see as viable ministries for themselves. Sister Donna suggested venturing into the boarding home program in the city. Sister Ida stated she could not continue her cooking apostolate and no one seemed likely to replace her. Sister Bernard believed that the school should become either a college-prep school, as originally planned, or a center for other special-needs students, as a dual program begun at Copper Valley was proving unworkable.<sup>39</sup>

On 13 March 1971, the archbishop formally announced the closing of Copper Valley School, effective at the end of the school term.<sup>40</sup> Reactions to the announcement were of a wide range, from approval to acrimonious criticism. Commencement exercises on 23 May 1971 saw the last of the Copper Valley School students leave "Packy-Board Palace" in emotional farewells.

The sisters remained to clean. They boxed and crated what could be used elsewhere, being careful to leave everything as the archbishop wished, in good shape for whatever future the buildings might have. With the conviction that a new ministry for the sisters would develop, items belonging to the Congregation were stored in Fairbanks in the care of Brother George Feltes, S.J. Sisters Ida and Bernard were the last sisters to leave the school. It was on the Jesuits' feast day, that of their founder, St. Ignatius of Loyola, 31 July.

After the closing, there was thought for a while that Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, implementing the Prudhoe Bay-Valdez pipeline project to bring Arctic oil to the consumers of the world, might lease the school facilities and maintenance yard.

In August 1974, Copper Valley School was auctioned off. The school was in good condition, although Archbishop Ryan had been obliged to hire Loomis Guards to safeguard the property. Tony Sipary and his family had continued to live on or near the premises and had been vigilant about preserving the school from vandalism. So had Mr. and Mrs. Nick Zerbinos, homesteaders in the wooded vicinity.

The auction drew a large crowd of bargain-hunters and of just plain curious people. Three Glennallen men, friends of the school, formed a partnership







# Time Line for Chapter 7

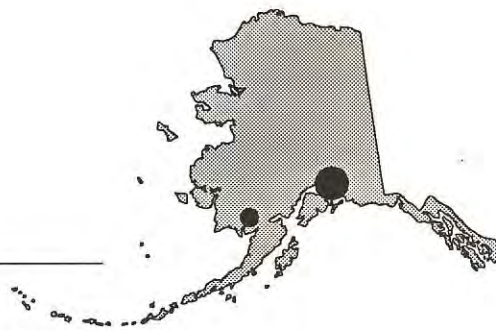
- 1779 Arteaga names "Rio de los Perdidos"
- 1790 Fidalgo names "Puerto Cordova" (Orca Bay)
- 1885-1886 Lt. H. T. Allen explores the Copper/Tanana regions
- 1896 Copper Center Trading Post set up
- 1898 Copper Center camp for miners en route
- 1900 Copper deposits found in Wrangell Mts.
- 1901 Copper Center established as village
- 1903 Katalla settlers establish a supply port to further recent oil finds
- 1906 McCarthy mining camp for Kennecott Copper Mines  
Cordova town named by Michael J. Heney, builder of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad
- 1908 Chitina mining and railroad camp established near Taral
- 1911 Railroad completed; connects mines with coastal port  
Cordova celebrates "Copper Day" when first copper shipment arrives in April
- 1917 Richardson Road connects Valdez port with Fairbanks in the interior of Alaska
- 1937 Central Alaska Missions begins to help at Copper Center
- 1938 Closing of Kennecott Mines
- 1942 Central Alaska Missions builds chapel at Copper Center  
Glenn Highway (190 miles) from Anchorage to the Richardson Highway at Glennallen  
Alaska (Alcan) Highway begun (Dawson Creek, B.C., to Fairbanks, Alaska)
- 1943 Haines Cut-off from Alaska Highway to Chilkoot Barracks (Ft. Seward)
- 1946 Central Alaska Missions builds chapel at Glennallen
- 1942-1943 John R. Buchanan, S.J., scholastic, at Holy Cross Mission
- 1949 Father Buchanan assigned to Tok Missions
- 1952 Need for Catholic school realized  
John White (Atlasta House) suggests Tazlina River flats near Copper River
- 1955 Catholic Eastern rite priests visit area  
Decision to close boarding school at Holy Cross  
Decision to expand school plans at the Copper River educational site  
Sister George in Massachusetts to study and to elicit government help for needy children  
Lay volunteer movement approved; Regis College students offer their service; Anna Maria College also enters the volunteer program
- 1956 Faith Hospital (Central Alaska Missions) opens in Glennallen
- 1956 (Aug.) First three sisters and Regis College volunteers at Copper Valley School  
(Oct.) "Operation Snowbird" brings staff and students from Holy Cross to Copper Valley



- |      |   |      |  |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1959 | Alaska proclaimed 49th State  | 1957 | Sisters of Saint Ann leave Holy Cross<br>(March) Considerations about withdrawing sisters from Copper Valley School<br>(May) First high school graduation at Copper Valley School<br>Gonzaga University students arrive as volunteers; LAMBS initiated |
| 1964 | (March) Earthquake hits southcentral Alaska; tidal wave follows             | 1958 | Father James Conwell, S.J., replaces Father Fallert, S.J.  |
| 1968 | Oil discovered on the North Slope<br>Plans for Trans-Alaska Pipeline System | 1959 | Father Fallert returns to Copper Valley School (CVS)<br>Pius X School closes; sisters withdraw from Skagway  |
| 1971 | (Dec.) Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act passed                           | 1962 | Opening of Vatican Council II  |
| 1977 | First oil through Trans-Alaska Pipeline reaches Valdez                      | 1963 | Betty Crocker Coupon Drive at CVS  |
|      |   | 1964 | CVS becomes emergency shelter; Valdez students enroll<br>Grades 1 through 6 close at CVS<br>(July) Episcopal ordination of Bishop George Boileau, S.J.   |
|      |   | 1965 | Closing of Vatican Council II  |
|      |   | 1966 | (Feb.) Archdiocese of Anchorage is established; CVS changes diocese<br>(April) Archbishop Joseph T. Ryan is installed in Anchorage as the first Archbishop of Anchorage  |
|      |   | 1969 | Meetings about necessity to close CVS<br>Father Richard B. Saudis at CVS   |
|      |   | 1970 | Father Saudis succeeds Father James E. Jacobson, S.J., as principal  |
|      |   | 1971 | (March) Announcement to close CVS<br>(May) Last CVS graduation<br>(July) Last staff members leave CVS<br>Catholic parish center relocated at Glennallen  |
|      |   | 1974 | Auction of Copper Valley School  |
|      |   | 1976 | Copper Valley School building destroyed by fire  |



## Another Call for Women: Urban and Rural Ministries



The barbed wire and extra fencing that surrounded Ridgeview since its transformation from a nursing home into a women's prison did anything but enhance it. The forbidding look caused a reaction in Sister Dorothy every time she drove past it, or stopped in as she was now doing. Snow on the Chugach Mountains east of Anchorage was just turning lavender in the fading winter light. The coloring and the atmosphere seemed symbolic to sister.

"These women in Ridgeview are being bruised and hurt by their time in prison," she thought, "as the light of their hope fades into an early Alaskan dusk. I'll keep depression, though, from becoming black despair for them."

With her bag containing among other things her small Bible, sister was admitted and given permission to visit the various women she knew. To one, she brought news of a three-year-old daughter; to another, a message from a mother in the Alaska Native Medical Center; to a third, the disappointing results of efforts on her behalf on the part of a local lawyer. All the women were glad to see Sister Dorothy and share in a short Bible reading and prayer with her.

When sister left Ridgeview, darkness had settled over the city. A light snow was falling before headlights of cars streaming down the highway. "But within Ridgeview," sister mused, "the Light of Christ is dissipating despondency, total darkness."

\* \* \* \* \*

Captain James Cook, R.N., following directives of the British Admiralty, explored the northwest coast of North America in 1778, bringing his ships into coves and inlets of Alaska as he sought the elusive Northwest Passage.<sup>1</sup> Anchorage lies at the head of Cook Inlet, recalling his visit to the North. Turnagain Arm, an estuary of Cook Inlet, is a reminder of his disappointed hopes of finding the western end of the passage. Another estuary, Knik ("Fire") Arm, received its name from the Tanaina Indians<sup>2</sup> living in the area and recalls the long history of the Native people predating what the Russian, British, and other explorers began with their "discoveries" along the coast of Southcentral Alaska.

A promise of employment on the Alaska Railroad being built from Seward to Fairbanks brought Ship Creek, in Southcentral Alaska, into prominence. There, in 1913, a tent city sprang up, which later grew into the city of present-day Anchorage. In 1969, it was in this city that Sister Dorothy Forest began her ministry. Anchorage, by then, was home to more Alaska Native people than any other place in the state.

Anchorage was also the See city for the Archdiocese of Anchorage, under the direction of Archbishop Ryan, who had become a controversial figure because of his stand on issues such as the closing of Copper Valley School.



His personality and leadership, however, had attracted several communities of women religious to come North and enter into the diverse, but fledgling ministries of the archdiocese.

Among those communities of women were the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who, by 1969, had opened Catholic Charities offices in the city and were involved with religious education in Palmer and Wasilla. The Sisters of Mercy, accepting to teach in the Catholic school that had opened in Anchorage, saw the school close, but stayed on to direct catechetical ministries in the city parishes. Other teachers had been the Sisters of Providence,<sup>3</sup> in Anchorage since 1939, but now primarily associated with their hospital, which was moved during the 1960s from a downtown location to the Goose Lake region. Holy Spirit Retreat House was home for the Sister Adorers<sup>4</sup> of the Precious Blood, who lived out their contemplative life on the gentle slopes of the Chugach Mountains. Kodiak Island, southwest of Anchorage, knew the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart, who directed the Catholic grade school for St. Mary's Parish and administered Griffin Memorial Hospital since 1945. Besides these groupings of ministering sisters, other individual sisters offered archdiocesan help as they searched out ways of serving appropriate to them.

As traditional ministries in schools and hospitals waned for the Sisters of Saint Ann, sharing life with the people of Alaska became a challenge and an anxiety. To seek out how best to modify calls to educate and heal, how best to place the small number of available sisters, how best to respond to ever-widening and splintering Church, civic, and personal needs required consultation, meetings, discernment, training, openness, and faith.

In 1969, Sister Dorothy, loving Alaska and believing that her calls to ministry lay in the classroom, had accepted a teaching assignment at the Catholic school on Fireweed Lane.<sup>5</sup> When that school closed, before she had even started to teach in it, she discovered, as did many another sister in the 1960s and 1970s, a plethora of gifts that flowered from the root and stem of formal teaching.

Archbishop Ryan asked her to coordinate religious education among the Native youth living in the city as a result of the state boarding home program. Her association with the Native people, especially through her years at Nulato, made her the obvious choice for such a ministry. Her respect, understanding, and commitment to the Native people enhanced that choice.

In her ministry, Sister Dorothy found advice and assistance in Father Henry G. Hargreaves, S.J., who was involved with the Native apostolate in Anchorage. He, too, was an experienced "bush" missionary. Contacts were made with Native youth and Native families through personal knowledge or through information obtained from parishes, other Jesuits traveling in and out of Anchorage, former students, and the chaplain at the Alaska Native Medical Center.

Like Mother Mary Ann, whose spirit impregnated the lives of many sisters, Sister Dorothy specialized in preparing older youth for the sacraments. Father Hargreaves and Sister Dorothy visited families and encouraged youth to join in the programs of the Young Christian Students and the Catholic Youth Organization. Both priest and sister attempted to realize Archbishop Ryan's goal of integrating Native people into the life of the city parishes: Holy Family, St. Anthony's, and St. Benedict's.<sup>6</sup>



The archdiocese had parishes at Cordova and Valdez on the southcentral coast. On the Kenai Peninsula were mission centers under the Redemptorists.<sup>7</sup> The archdiocese extended eastward to Eagle River, Palmer, Glennallen, Gakona, Kenny Lake, and Chitina; westward, to distant Dillingham and its subsidiary stations in the Bristol Bay region. Wasilla, Big Lake, Talkeetna, and Trapper Creek stretched along a road north. Outside the archdiocese lay the whole of Northern Alaska and the long stretch of Southeastern Alaska. In both areas the Sisters of Saint Ann had a sense of belonging; in both areas the Congregation had attachments and a history. But the Church of the archdiocese, as the 1960s ended and the 1970s began, called for new involvements, new daring. There were new voids to be filled.

For the Sisters of Saint Ann, entering into ministries separate from institutional corporateness, life outside the institution was somewhat like that of an exposed creature during a molting period after the shedding of protective devices and before new ones were in place. But the community philosophy that each sister be responsible for her own religious life strength and her own continuing formation helped the sisters, neophytes in new ministries, to become competent and to extend themselves further.

This was in line with the policies adopted by the Congregation in accepting additional women responding to the call of Christ. “We see ourselves as a community of people not already transformed, but always in a process of ongoing formation”<sup>8</sup> Welcoming women as future Sisters of Saint Ann, the Congregation stressed the need for an ongoing education reaching into all areas of one’s being. Education in truth, liberty, and life was a challenge, an entering into a mystery with daring and awe. Emphasis in preparing for ministry reminded potential sisters that the following of Christ would be one lived out, as His was, in particular cultures with unique social mores and values. Aware of this, the Congregation had arranged for Sister Dawn Mahara, before her temporary vows, to get to know better the people of Holy Cross. In their mutual interchange of giftedness, both Sister Dawn and the Native people continued their transformation into a greater, freer life.

To summarize this evolution in religious life-style and ministry: whereas before, the Native people had been asked to leave home, enter into a different culture at, for example, a boarding school, grow through insecurity and experience, the sisters were now asked to leave protectedness, enter with respect into varied cultures, and grow.

Recognizing that for Native people transition to the city was especially difficult, Sister Dorothy identified some of the changes they faced, differences between village and city life that made the transition traumatic. Most of the students in the boarding home program had left their villages of from thirty to three hundred people to be immersed in the sea of the city population. City homes were, by and large, of a different style from the village homes. Small village schools were familiar; the large city schools were threatening. Villages had one church—or, at most, a few, readily identifiable. In the city, churches were everywhere and the various Christian denominations were but vaguely understood by uprooted Native people. Culture and language patterns found little recognition in the non-Native pulse of the city.

In 1975 the Cook Inlet Native Association (CINA) organized the Urban Survival Program to help Natives moving into Anchorage. The program explained such things as housing, rent, transportation, job opportunities,



school locations, city laws, and similar concepts and possibilities beyond the limited local life-style of the villages.

Sister Dorothy, as her commitment to urban Native youth evolved, interceded with welfare and health officials, consoled the sick at the Native hospital, was introduced to the elderly and other long-term residents in extended care facilities: Careage, Glenmore, and Ridgeview. Sister was in liaison with the Alaska Homemakers Service. She joined the National Council on Alcoholism and was on the board for the Alcohol and Drug Research Demonstration Center which operated Studio Club, a halfway house. Her insight and vision took her back to studies in counseling and guidance. As part of her program, she counseled at the Anchorage Social Development Center.

Accent on reaching out to the Native people continued when, in 1970, Sister Rose Cantin—previously in Holy Cross and Nulato—joined Sister Dorothy in availability to the Native people. Sister Rose gave special attention to the Alaska Native Medical Center. In time, she assisted Catholic Charities in supportive ways, visited families, and strengthened early steps of the developing organization, Birthright.

If the closing of Copper Valley School in May 1971 had given new emphases to future years of ministry of the Sisters of Saint Ann, that same year brought a major thrust into the Native peoples' future. The passage on 18 December 1971 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) propelled the Native people into a world of lawyers, business magnates, investment brokers, and bankers. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act resolved disputed land rights and gave the people legal title to 40 million acres of land and \$962.5 million, in addition. The 1971 act reaffirmed the basic principle of Native self-determination and guaranteed the people the means to do so: land, money, and mechanisms for administering their affairs.

With the coming of non-Native explorers, traders, miners, and settlers into Alaska, the Native way of life had undergone many adaptations. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act took that adaptation, built on it, and gave back to the Native people control of their lives in twentieth century exigencies and circumstances. The Native people took their place among the investors of the world. With property and money status, Native people came into prominence as people to be reckoned with in a developing industrial and internationally bonded world.

Thirteen regional corporations were formed: twelve covered the entire state of Alaska, one comprised all Natives living outside Alaska.<sup>9</sup> Leaders in all the groups were called to the fore. As in other challenges, the Native people responded. Some ventures would fail, some trusts be violated, some experiments succeed. But the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act marked a coming of age of the Alaska Natives. Justice replaced paternalism. Often enough, currying Native favors began to replace the slantings of prejudice.

Much of the success in achieving the adoption of the ANCSA milestone legislation came from the Alaska Federation of Natives, headed by Emil Notti, and given much audacious force and planning by Byron Mallot and Larry Mercurieff. The bonding of the Alaska Federation of Natives, rising from the Alaska Native Brotherhood in 1966, had launched a remarkable era in the history of the Natives. That continued unification of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) ensured a pulling together to achieve what was best



and provided a bulwark against unscrupulous efforts to rob the people of what had, with struggle, been attained. After 1991, after a twenty-year prohibition of land sales, there was fear that advantage would be taken of Natives by entrepreneurs.

Therefore, education became more important for Natives than it had been in the past. It was through education that their current leaders had received their expertise and that future leaders were being formed. The struggle for an education now seemed to hold out sure rewards, for through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the people had a base, other than in subsistence living (constantly threatened), for security, dignity, and growth. In the first years following the passage of ANCSA, Copper Valley graduates and those from other mission and state schools were remarkably ready to assume leadership and to engage productively in organizations and regional corporation offices.

When Sister Margaret Cantwell came to Anchorage in 1971 and Sister Ida Brasseur in 1973, the Sisters of Saint Ann, like the Native people, seemed to be accepting new roles and establishing themselves firmly in archdiocesan soil. A convent opened, first on North Star Street and then, in 1974, on Stanley Drive. Many of the items stored after the closing of Copper Valley School were reclaimed and put into use in the Anchorage convent.<sup>10</sup>

Sister Eileen Kelly, Provincial Superior, approved the idea of a coordinated Native apostolate as the four sisters had all had previous experiences in the villages and were known by the Native people. Sister Ida was asked to be coordinator. She began her efforts by contacting former students and organizing social events. A support group, the North Star Minority Board, was drawn together, for the archbishop believed that other minority groups in the city should also be supported in their groping through the maze of city life. The cover name for the apostolate of the Sisters of Saint Ann was changed from that of Native Ministry to that of Urban Ministry. The archbishop envisioned that, although the city of Anchorage itself would be a focal point, activities were to extend to other localities: Cordova, Valdez, Glennallen, the Kenai Peninsula, the Matanuska Valley, Talkeetna, the Bristol Bay area. Visiting these places meant considerable travel. The lot fell to Sisters Ida and Margaret. Promoting parish life and religious education were named as priorities.

Recognizing that two of the Urban Ministry sisters were more and more sharing their gifts outside the city of Anchorage, the official name of the ministry of the Sisters of Saint Ann was again changed to give a truer identification to what was really happening. Thus, the Urban and Rural Ministry came into being. Sisters Ida and Margaret represented the rural half; Sisters Rose and Dorothy, the urban half. Coinciding with the adoption of this new title was a mission seminar hosted in Fairbanks. Part of the conferences and workshop sessions dealt with finances, adaptation to modern technology, transportation, recruitment, liturgies—all pertinent to the burgeoning urban and rural ministries.

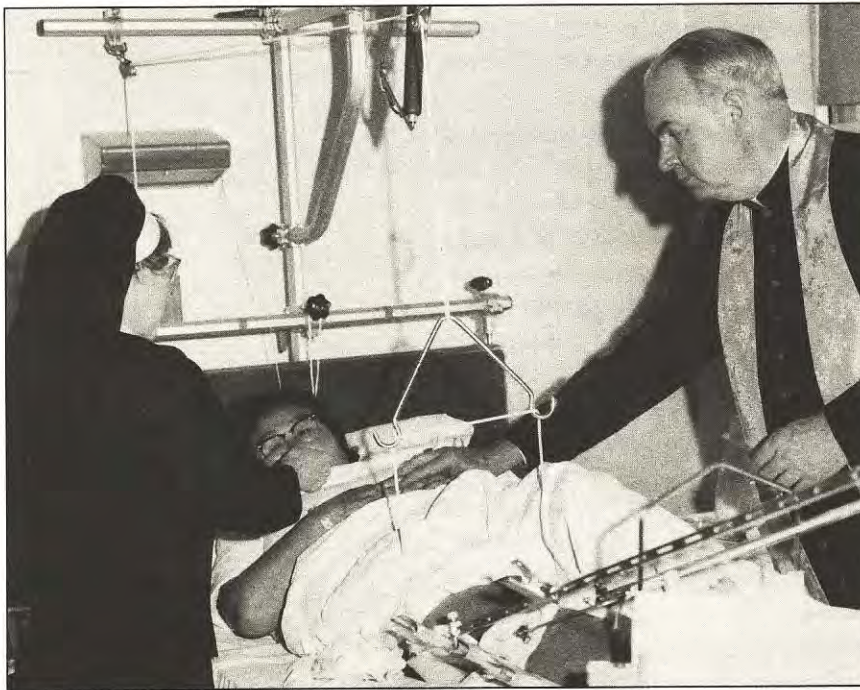
Today's society is marked by individualism and subjectivism, a rejection of absolutes. Technology and efficiency, situation ethics, a craze for novelty, a diminution of silence and time for personal thoughtful questioning—all of these factors create an environment in which Natives and non-Natives alike struggle to find their way. Perhaps the Native people with their present goals,





Above: *Sister Rose Cantin in the Anchorage convent in 1981. (SPA)*

Top Left: *Sisters Margaret Cantwell, M. Ida Brasseur, Kathleen Cyr (Provincial Superior) walk toward the church at Clarks Point, Oct. 1980. (OSA/SPA)*  
(Photo credit: R. K. Smith, O.S.A.)



*Sister Dorothy Forest, newly installed Eucharistic Minister, gives Holy Communion to an Eskimo patient at the Alaska Native Medical Center, Anchorage. Archbishop Joseph T. Ryan accompanied sister on her first visits for this purpose in order to put everyone's mind at ease. Having sisters give Holy Communion was an innovation in Alaska in 1973. (SPA)*

(Photo credit: Anchorage Photos)

as expressed in part by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, can help swing the pendulum back to a more balanced view of life. For the Natives find simplicity, tradition, cultural values, communion with Nature and philosophical elders to be assets magnified in value by the paucity of such innate treasures in the society around them.

In the Archdiocese of Anchorage in the early 1970s, there was little evidence of the use of Native culture in the liturgies or paraliturgies of the parishes and mission stations. Most of the Native people indigenous to the area were either Moravian or Orthodox. Some had adopted less traditional churches. The Catholic Native people in Anchorage came from a diversity of cultural customs. In 1974, respect for elders, Native art, continuity with the past, and the people themselves were uniting elements and significant factors



in the sisters' concepts of Native culture.

The main population of Alaska by the 1970s was made up of Caucasians, many of whom had homesteaded, been transients, and fought discouragement. Some lived in isolated areas and had traveled long distances in search of a fulfillment of ideals. Many of these non-Native people were oftentimes economically poorer than the Native. To these non-Natives the Church wanted to reach out through the Urban and Rural Ministries. A gathering in honor of St. Ann was a help in reaching out to friends, former students, and co-workers. The get-togethers began at St. Ann's Convent in 1974 and became an annual event, highlighted by an outdoor Mass usually celebrated by the archbishop. A potluck buffet in the yard followed, with exchanges of memories and renewals of friendships. Different people came every year, but there was always a core of old-timers to welcome them. Native people from the villages, in town for one reason or another, were especially welcome. On one of the yearly get-togethers, Monsignor John A. Lunney<sup>11</sup> offered the sisters an outdoor statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas. That statue, a memorial to Monsignor's family, arrived the next year and became another focus for the July reunions. The statue itself was a sign of commitment to minority groups, as Guadalupe recalled the native-born Juan Diego as well as the growing Hispanic population of Anchorage.

As autumn gave way to the deep chill of winter in 1975, the archbishop announced that he had been named Coadjutor Archbishop to the Military Vicar, Terence Cardinal Cooke, of New York City. The archbishop assumed his new duties in New York early in January 1976. In the months immediately preceding the appointment by Rome of the second archbishop of Anchorage, Archbishop Jean Jadot, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, sought recommendations from the clergy and representative laity of the archdiocese. On 4 May 1976, the news was released that Bishop Francis T. Hurley of Juneau was the new archbishop-elect.

Archbishop Ryan, who returned to Anchorage for the installation of his successor, came to St. Ann's to reminisce and visit with Sister George Edmond, renamed to Alaska, who had timed her coming to Anchorage to coincide with the installation. Sister George looked forward to being part of the Church in Alaska again. One of the purposes for her coming was that she had accepted to type and index the history project, compiled by Sister Margaret at the request of Archbishop Ryan, concerning the origin and growth of the Church within the Archdiocese of Anchorage.

Archbishop Hurley asked that the Apostolic Delegate, in Anchorage for the installation ceremonies, meet representative Native people at St. Ann's Convent. About a dozen former students or friends living in Anchorage came for



*St. Ann's Convent, 7538 Stanley Drive, sits on a corner lot. This view is of the back of the house. On this lawn, gatherings were held every summer. (SPA)*



an afternoon reception. Archbishop Jadot, talking to the assembled group, used the symbol of the tree to depict the Church rooted in Alaska and trying to grow. He had observed the scraggly “pipe-cleaner” trees as he had been driving in parts of Anchorage and had been told about the permafrost in the ground.

As a sequel to this meeting, Archbishop Hurley called together concerned people to hear about what was being done in the archdiocese for Native people. The archbishop was receptive, encouraged openness, but drew his own conclusions. He and the Apostolic Delegate had met people at St. Ann’s who had successfully coped with cultural change. Everyone, though, was aware of the vast number of Native people living within the archdiocese who were caught in poverty, loneliness, and frustration.

Part of the help for families living in Anchorage was St. Theresa’s Camp in Soldotna, where the Redemptorists had summer programs inviting personal growth for young people. Sister Dorothy, who drove some children there, considered the trips as pleasant adjuncts to her Urban Ministry commitment. That dedication also led her to begin weekly visits to the Eagle River Correctional Camp, a state jail. She clearly saw the incarcerated as people with hopes, fears, uncertainties, and dreams. Getting to know well the men and women leaving penal institutions made her extremely aware of the factors militating against the successful readjustment of these marginalized people into the normal life of society. Through workshops, interventions, seminars, prayer, and personal contacts, Sister Dorothy increased her awareness of problems connected with what was becoming uppermost in her service to others, the prison apostolate.

During the summer of 1982, Sister Dorothy was hospitalized. Her absence from her prison ministry was much felt. Although cancer was diagnosed, sister wanted to continue her involvement with helping prisoners. Preferring to die in Alaska, she declined the invitation of the Congregation to return to Victoria or to her home state, Massachusetts. She wished to share of herself in the North as long as she could. The archbishop arranged for her to coach two deacons of the archdiocesan fledgling diaconate program that they might be prepared to continue the prison ministry and be equipped with some of her skills and insights. Nurses at Providence Hospital were startled, at first, but then came to accept matter-of-factly the presence of handcuffed people by Sister Dorothy’s door as they waited, in turn, for a chance to say goodbye to her.

If Archbishop Seghers’ visits to Alaska in the 1870s and 1880s set the stage for a flowering of Catholicity, Pope John Paul II’s visit to Anchorage on 26 February 1981 gave invigorating apostolic impetus to the People of God. Archbishop Seghers’ death had given shape to the future of the Alaska missions: the Jesuit involvement, the coming of the Sisters of Saint Ann to the Yukon River villages, the deep concern for Native people. The stopover of Pope John Paul II, flying from Japan to Rome, in 1981 brought to the forefront the history of the Church in Alaska, of its growth, and an awareness of the approaching centennial (1986) of the arrival of the Jesuits and sisters in Alaska. The pope was received by civic and church authorities and people of various church affiliations. His visit brought out the best of ecumenism and of church-state relationships.

Sister Rose Cantin was the Sister of Saint Ann singled out to receive Holy



Communion at the Mass celebrated by the Pontiff on the Ninth Avenue park-strip. It seemed appropriate that she, who through rain, snow, windstorm, darkness, or summer brightness brought spiritual aid and a caring hand to the Native patients, should receive this privilege. She had seen her constant service to the Alaska Native Medical Center grow steadily from its tentative beginnings to an appreciative recognition of her volunteer sharing. She continued to witness as a strong woman of faith until the deterioration of her own health caused her to leave Alaska.

Early in 1977, while the Rural Ministry team was in Glennallen, Archbishop Hurley joined the sisters for a dinner planned by the parishioners, who wanted to discuss with the archbishop future directions of the parish. The memory of the visit remained with the sisters, for not many ever have the privilege to speak informally, but spiritually, with their archbishop, nor to pray the Office with him as they did before the Holy Eucharist housed in the parish safe. Parishioners at Glennallen remember the visit because of discussions about enlarging the church, plans for acquiring property, suggestions for liturgies, concerns for the pastor, and other business. For Sisters Ida and Margaret these things receded with time, leaving only the memory of a prayer, a Eucharist, and an archbishop.

Traveling, as the Rural Ministry team did, was costly to the archdiocese and physically draining to the sisters themselves. Yet the presence of two women regularly showing up in outlying parishes brought life to lifeless places, touched the young, inspired church attendance, kept a lifeline open nourishing people with faith, hope, and renewed love for each other and God. The roles of nurturing and empowering, natural to women, were lived out by the Rural Ministry team. In turn, the sisters received new energies, new graced moments of "at homeness" with the struggling People of God. Yet, often, the fire kindled when the sisters were in a parish flickered and then died because of no further feeding. To prevent this, the Rural Ministry team recommended that, when possible, sisters be based permanently in Dillingham, the Kenai Peninsula, Valdez, and Palmer-Wasilla. Each of these places could serve as centers for the areas around them. Much of this was implemented in the 1980s. As a preference, the Sisters of Saint Ann opted for Dillingham, to which parish Sister Ida was named administrator in 1977.

Father Richard K. Smith, O.S.A., of the California Province of the Augustinian Order, responded in 1977 to an opportunity to serve in the Bristol Bay area. A different facet of Rural Ministry activities began with the arrival of Father Smith. The California Augustinians had contributed the use of an aircraft for Father Smith, a capable priest-pilot. With him, the sisters flew in "66 Yankee," the green and white Cessna, on regular visits to Naknek and Clarks Point. More and more of Rural Ministry sojourns were in the Dillingham area. Father Smith became part-time chaplain for the King Salmon Air Force Base. Many a Saturday night, the sisters watched "66 Yankee" lift off from the dark runway at Dillingham and wink its red light across the sky toward King Salmon. With a plane and pilot available, more areas held out possibilities for ministry. In answer to an

*Fr. Frank Chambers, O.S.A., a family from Eagle River, and Fr. Richard K. Smith, O.S.A., join Sr. Anne Eveline in front of the church at Clarks Point in 1982. (OSA/SPA)*

(Photo credit: R. K. Smith, O.S.A.)







*Mary Olsen (center with rolled collar) was responsible for inviting the Rural Ministry team— Sister Margaret (left), Sister Ida (right), and Father Smith, O.S.A. (far right)— to Sand Point. This groups gathers for the second Mass offered in Sand Point. It was a Lenten Mass and the children all have souvenir cards of the Pieta. (OSA/SPA)  
(Photo credit: R. K. Smith, O.S.A.)*

*“Peace on earth . . .” The Sisters of St. Ann in Alaska gather at St. Ann’s, Anchorage, for a Christmas meeting, Dec. 1980. From l. to r. (standing): Sisters Anne Eveline Paquette, Joyce Snyder, M. Ida Brasseur, Dorothy Forest, Alice Legault, George Edmond (Babin), Rose Cantin. Seated: Sisters Jeannette LaRose and Agnes Marie (Hanks).  
(Photo credit: Anchorage Photos)*



urgent request from Mary Olsen, Father Smith and the sisters flew to Sand Point on Popof Island, near the end of the Alaska Peninsula. Mary Olsen opened a formal extension of Catholic Church ministry into that area. Many cannery workers there were Catholic. Periodic visits meant flights over Mt. Veniaminof and instrument landings in fog, snow, or darkness.

When Sister Margaret left Alaska and the Rural Ministry, help came for Sister Ida from various women until the arrival in Anchorage in 1981 of Sister Anne Eveline Paquette, who had spent many years in Nulato and taught at Copper Valley School. Having just completed a year at the Maryknoll Mission Center, she was an able asset to the Rural Ministry endeavor, until growth in the number of priests in the archdiocese, as well as development of lay ministries among parishioners, terminated the need for a traveling Rural Ministry team.

Other sisters who came to share in the life of the Church in Anchorage were Sister Therese Dion and Sister Ida Gaetana Cincotta. Sister Therese was a specialist in ecumenical work and immediately looked into possibilities suggested by Archbishop Hurley for furthering ecumenism in Anchorage among the churches and at Alaska Pacific University. Barely settled in her ecumenical position, sister was recalled to Massachusetts for other responsibilities.



Sister Gaetana, on mission earlier in Skagway and Copper Valley, complemented the ministry being done by other sisters among the Native people. Associations with Catholic Social Services involved her with the Clare House project, a temporary shelter for abused, battered, or homeless women and children. Sister coordinated transportation, supplies, and hot meals. She became interested in the center for handicapped children and participated in other Catholic Social Services activities. Along with this, she maintained a strong, visible presence in St. Benedict's parish and entered into ministries there. This parish sharing of herself and her skills also nourished her spirit, for she found herself drained by the responsibilities inherent in being Volunteer Coordinator for Clare House and the Special Needs Day Center (1983 to 1986) and Manager of Volunteers (1986 to 1989). This work meant that she recruited, interviewed, screened, placed, followed up, reported on, and kept files about the many volunteers responding to various church-related centers and groups: Brother Francis Shelter (for street people), Clare House, Day Care Center for Handicapped Children, Immigration Program, McAuley Manor (for girls needing a home), St. Francis House (thrift shop), Counseling Department. In August 1989, Sister Gaetana resigned from Catholic Social Services and entered into a ministry as teacher assistant at the Center for Child Development at Providence Hospital, where she shared her accumulation of wisdom and personal skills with young children and their caregivers.

Much of the involvement of the Sisters of Saint Ann with the people of Anchorage, of the archdiocese, amounted to women helping women. Often this was on a one-to-one basis. In 1987, Sister Yolande Vachereau (Sister Bernard) came North from an assignment in Quebec following the closing of Copper Valley School. In Anchorage, her ministry became that of Director of St. Francis House, designed to provide food and clothing for the needy, for the street people of all races, and for families in emergency situations. Sister had the help of volunteers, but appreciated being in personal contact with the people who came. St. Francis House catered to the needs of women, especially, and because of this, Sister Yolande met many. When the thrift shop was relocated to bigger quarters, additional staff members came to work at sorting and distributing clothing, at receiving and bagging in the food room, at keeping financial records. Sister Yolande became assistant manager in 1989. St. Francis House, part of the whole complex of Catholic Social Services, was a concrete expression of the injunction of sharing.

As the decade of the 1980s unrolled, the Church revealed itself as not stagnant, but ever moving, ever responding to the winds, currents, tides in the lives of the People of God. Evolving from the first efforts of Sister Dorothy in 1969 to the Ministry of Caring (visits to the sick and infirm at home, in hospitals, and extended care facilities) that Sister Ida and Fran Barkshire coordinated, the Sisters of Saint Ann had responded, as women of the Gospel, to the basic physical and spiritual needs of diverse and varied people in diverse and varied ways. The Anchorage convent had proved to be a center where women religious imbued with the spirit of Mother Mary Ann could be at home. So it was true for the other sisters ministering in the archdiocese. So



*Sister Gaetana Cincotta types the monthly newsletter and phones for meal arrangements from her desk at Catholic Social Services. The picture resting on her desk is of workers who put together an outdoor playground for the Day Care Center for Developmentally Disabled Children*



*Sister Gaetana Cincotta unloads supplies at Clare House. Dental supplies are in the boxes. The child's wheelbarrow will keep a child in the shelter happy.*





*Sister Patricia Richard, Ken (Edwardson) Fournier, and Sister Jeannette LaRose meet at Chefnak, April 1985. (SPA)*

*Bishop-pilot Michael J. Kaniecki, S.J., ordained bishop of Fairbanks in 1984, removes the engine warmer from the Cessna 207 he is about to fly as he visits villages in roadless areas of the 409,849-square-mile missionary diocese.*

*Most of the travel in the diocese has to be done by air. The bishop's ability to fly the mission plane is a help in limiting travel expenses, annually more than \$300,000. There is a special "Bush Travel Fund" to which mission-minded benefactors donate. (Photo credit: Don Doll, S.J. Bishop Kaniecki, S.J., collection)*



it was true, also, for those Sisters of Saint Ann serving in the diocese of northern Alaska, but traveling into Anchorage on occasion. This was an asset for Sisters Jeannette LaRose and Patricia Richard as they began a five-year ministry in 1983 to the Central Yup'ik settlements of Chefnak and Nightmute near the Bering Sea coast.

Bishop Robert L. Whelan, S.J., of Fairbanks, arranged that the sisters live half the time at Nightmute and the other half at Chefnak. The sisters' responsibilities were not to initiate, but to support, for both villages already had catechists, ordained Native deacons, parish councils, and other ministering people. Nightmute, about eighty-five miles west of Bethel, was in that part of western Alaska assigned to Father Richard D. Case, S.J. In order to be more at home with the people, the sisters began a study of the Central Yup'ik language and familiarized themselves with local cultural customs. Chefnak was not far from Nightmute and could be reached by snowmachine in a few hours. With church services in both places in Yup'ik, the sisters had good examples of the way the Good News of Christ, which the Congregation had been helping to bring to the people of Alaska for the past hundred or so years, was finally conveyed in the language of the people.

Father Norman E. Donohue, S.J., pastor at Chefnak, died suddenly in Anchorage before the sisters had had a chance to meet him in Chefnak. The village parish council asked that the sisters come immediately to Chefnak. On arriving, the sisters found a woman making altar bread in the parish house. This, she explained, was her ministry. As the sisters settled in, other villagers came to get acquainted and express their sorrow at Father Donohue's death. Smiles and welcoming cups of tea helped overcome language hurdles.

In the evening, Sister Jeannette was surprised by the visit of Elmer Manook. She had taught his brother, Alvin, in Pius X Mission, Skagway. Elmer's job was to repair electric generators in Alaskan villages. His early schooling had been at Nulato. He praised the work of the sisters there. His education had helped him all his life and he was trying to teach his children the values he had learned. Sister Jeannette noted<sup>12</sup> in her diary later: "This convinced me again of Mother Mary Ann's charism possessed by her daughters to 'empower' others."

When the sound of the plane bringing Father Donohue's body back to Chefnak was heard, the sisters walked with the villagers over the light snow to the airstrip. Various pieces of freight were unloaded from the plane first. Then Father's casket was seen, raised, and carried out. The crowd sang in Yup'ik "How Great Thou Art." Eight pallbearers carried the casket along the boardwalk to the church. Measurements of the coffin were taken, the grave dug, and a large cross made. All was ready when Bishop Whelan and a number of priests of the Diocese of Fairbanks flew in for the funeral Mass and burial. Afterward the whole village and the many guests assembled in the community hall for a party of soup, chicken, fish, and the ever-welcome



*akutaq*, (a-goo-duk), Eskimo ice cream. As the sisters sat on the floor with the other people, they found that being in Chefnak was good.

Indeed, being in Alaska, for the Sisters of Saint Ann, has been good. Whether through urban or rural ministries, there has been much reaching out, much inter-change, much being with people and meeting of their needs. Great challenges yet remain. Locales vary as do Anchorage, Chefnak, Nightmute. So do the ways of giving and receiving. However, the commitment of 1886 lives on, in the caring of those women known as the Sisters of Saint Ann, who truly in diverse ways, have shared their lives with the people of the North.

\* \* \* \* \*

Green is the color for Anchorage. It is the color of summer foliage, of trees that Archbishop Jean Jadot saw as representing the Church rooted in Alaska. The Sisters of Saint Ann had helped to nurture, protect and strengthen the Tree of Faith. Green is for the Pentecostal season of Hope. Anchorage uses the anchor as a symbol; the anchor represents the virtue of Hope. Green is for the grass around St. Ann's Convent, the outdoor Masses, the lilac leaves and strawberry plants. Green is for the hills of Manokotak and Aleknagik in back of Dillingham, for the shingles on the parish house, for the distinctive coloring of "66 Yankee." Green is for the cotton prints and bias tape of overparkas at Chefnak, for the humming snowmobiles at Nightmute.

Green is for the youth, the strength, the suppleness of the Church in Anchorage, of the people of Alaska, of the people of the North.

*Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Nightmute is a focal point for the village. Living quarters for the sisters are part of the complex. (SPA)*



*In an effort to show how aspects of Eskimo culture could be brought into church services at Nightmute, the sisters prepared an adapted rendition of "The Drummer Boy," for Christmas 1984. Dick Anthony, Parish Council President, made the Eskimo drums pictured here. The drums were played by Simeon Jumbo, Gregory George, Jacob Mark, and Mark Tulik. The ceramic crib set was made by former Holy Cross student, Lily (Fox) Teske.*



# Time Line for Chapter 8

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| 1778 | Captain Cook in Southcentral Alaska   |      |   |
| 1794 | Russian Orthodox clergy in Kodiak   |      |   |
| 1795 | Russian Orthodox clergy evangelize along Cook Inlet   |      |   |
| 1867 | U.S. purchases Alaska   |      |   |
| 1912 | Alaska Native Brotherhood organized   |      |   |
| 1953 | 400-bed Alaska Native Medical Center (ANS Hospital) in Anchorage  |      |   |
| 1958 | Alaska achieves statehood   |      |   |
| 1959 | (Jan.) Alaska statehood proclaimed  |      |   |
| 1962 | <i>Tundra Times</i> founded by Howard Rock as vehicle for Native news and interests   |      |   |
| 1964 | Cook Inlet Native Association (CINA) organized in Anchorage   |      |   |
| 1966 | Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is formed; Emil Notti, president<br>Alaska Natives claim aboriginal rights to 372 million acres<br>Arctic Slope Native Association files claims to 96 million acres on North Slope; Eben Hopson, spokesperson and agitator<br>Alaska land freeze on public domain pending settlement of Native ownership claims; Secretary of the Interior Udall | 1966 | Archdiocese of Anchorage is formed<br>Archbishop Ryan becomes first Archbishop of Anchorage   |
| 1968 | Oil discovered on North Slope   | 1969 | Sister Dorothy in Anchorage at Providence Hospital convent<br>Native apostolate in Anchorage  |
|      |   | 1970 | Sister Rose in Anchorage at Providence Hospital convent<br>Ministry accented at Alaska Native Medical Center (ANS)  |
| 1971 | University of Alaska offers four courses on Native culture<br>Efforts of Donald R. Wright and Emil Notti for ANCSA<br>Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act endorsed by Governor Egan; favored by President Nixon and Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton; passed by Congress on 18 December  | 1971 | Copper Valley School closes<br>Sister Margaret in Anchorage at Retreat House  |
| 1972 | Twelve regional corporations formed in the state<br>Alaska Native Language Center established at University of Alaska<br>One regional corporation formed "outside"  |      |   |
|      |   | 1973 | Sister Ida in Anchorage<br>North Star Convent opened<br>Urban and Rural Ministry teams formed<br>Sisters of Saint Ann become Eucharistic Ministers: Alaska Native Medical Center (ANS), Cordova, Glennallen |
|      |   | 1974 | Rural Ministry team begins Sunday services in priestless parishes: Cordova, Glennallen, Dillingham<br>Stanley Drive convent opens   |



- |      |  |      |  |
|------|--|------|--|
| 1975 | Cook Inlet Native Association (CINA) organizes Urban Survival Program to help Natives moving to the city | 1975 | Archbishop Ryan transfers to New York, becomes Coadjutor Military Vicar of U.S. Armed Forces   |
| 1977 | Circumpolar Conference (Alaska, Canada, Greenland) held in Barrow  | 1976 | Archbishop Hurley is installed as second Archbishop of Anchorage<br>Sister George Edmond returns to Alaska, begins hospitality and typing ministries   |
|      |  | 1977 | Sister Ida named pastoral administrator in Dillingham  |
|      |  | 1979 | Sister Joyce (Hispanic Ministry) in Fairbanks  |
|      |  | 1980 | Sister Ida receives Lumen Christi award (home missionary) from the Catholic Church Extension Society<br>Sister George receives papal Pro Ecclesia et Pro Pontifice award from Bishop Gleeson<br>Sister Kevin in Anchorage for nursing<br>Sister Margaret leaves Anchorage          |
|      |  | 1981 | Sister Anne Eveline joins Stanley Drive<br>Sister Kevin leaves   |
|      |  | 1982 | Pope John Paul II visits Anchorage<br>Sisters George and Kevin leave<br>Sister Dorothy dies at Providence Hospital   |
|      |  | 1983 | Sisters Alice and Joyce leave Fairbanks<br>Sister Therese Dion arrives in Anchorage for ecumenical work<br>Sister Gaetana Cincotta arrives to assist in social needs<br>Sister Patricia Richard joins Sister Jeannette LaRose for Nightmute-Chefornak ministry on Bering Sea coast |
|      |  | 1987 | Sister Yolande arrives in Anchorage<br>Sisters Anne Eveline and Margaret at Holy Cross for pastoral ministry   |
|      |  | 1988 | Sister Ida leaves Anchorage<br>Sisters Kateri Mitchell and Jeannette LaRose at St. Mary's<br>Sister Kateri travels as Coordinator of Rural Ministries (Fairbanks)  |
| 1990 | Alaska Natives obtain stay on 20-year land sale interdiction of ANCSA                                    | 1989 | Stanley Drive convent closes<br>Anchorage sisters move to 34th Avenue  |
|      |  | 1991 | Sister Jeannette at Mountain Village/Pilot Station   |



## Sisters of Saint Ann Who Served in the North

<b>Alarie, Flore (Flora Alary)</b>	<b>Beaulieu, Elizabeth</b>	<b>Boudreau, Clarisse</b>
Sister M. Madeleine	Sister M. Bernardi	Sister M. Claire of the Trinity (Clarita)
Koserefski 1909 to 1914	Dawson 1953 to 1961	Juneau 1949 to 1955
Holy Cross 1922 to 1930	Holy Cross 1965 to 1966	Juneau 1962 to 1963
<b>Allard, Elmire</b>	<b>Belanger, Clarisse</b>	Juneau 1965 to 1968
Sister M. of Good Counsel	Sister M. Dolora	<b>Brassard, Caroline</b>
Juneau 1903 to 1909	Juneau 1950 to 1951	Sister M. Didace
Skagway 1938 to 1939	Juneau 1959 to 1961	Koserefski 1899 to 1900
<b>Arel (Harel), Josephine</b>	<b>Bell, Marjorie C.</b>	Nulato 1900 to 1903
Sister M. Theophile of Rome	Sister M. Walter	Whitehorse 1903 to 1904
Juneau 1914 to 1916	Dawson 1947 to 1951	Nulato 1904 to 1907
<b>Arel (Harel), Marie Jeanne</b>	<b>Bellerose, Hermine</b>	<b>Brasseur, Marie Ida</b>
Sister M. Jeanne of the Visitation	Sister M. Angilbert	Sister M. Ida of the Eucharist
Dawson 1912 to 1924	Holy Cross 1891 to 1896	Holy Cross 1946 to 1954
Dawson 1935 to 1939	<b>Benoit, Indiana</b>	Juneau 1954 to 1955
<b>Aubuchon, Jacqueline</b>	Sister M. Antonia of Jesus	Holy Cross 1956 to 1957
Sister Denise Marie	Holy Cross 1892 to 1899	Glennallen 1957 to 1971
Glennallen 1957 to 1961	Nulato 1899 to 1901	Anchorage 1973 to 1988
Glennallen 1962 to 1963	Holy Cross 1901 to 1906	<b>Brasseur, Valentine</b>
<b>Audette, Yvonne</b>	Dawson 1906 to 1926	Sister M. de la Garde
Sister M. Anne Dolores	Holy Cross 1926 to 1930	Dawson 1906 to 1910
Juneau 1946 to 1947	Dawson 1930 to 1935	<b>Brault, Alphonsine</b>
Holy Cross 1947 to 1949	<b>Berlinguette, Theona</b>	Sister M. Archangel
<b>Aumont, Rosanna</b>	Sister M. Vincent	Juneau 1903 to 1904
Sister M. Josaphat	Douglas Island 1917 to 1919	Douglas Island 1904 to 1906
Dawson 1906 to 1912	<b>Bernard, Josephine Annette</b>	<b>Brault, Delima</b>
Dawson 1939 to 1942	Sister M. John Bernard	Sister M. Pauline
<b>Babin, Lucienne</b>	Holy Cross 1923 to 1933	Koserefski 1888 to 1894
Sister M. George Edmond	Nulato 1933 to 1934	Akulurak 1894 to 1897
Holy Cross 1946 to 1955	Juneau 1947 to 1957	Koserefski 1897 to 1898
Glennallen 1956 to 1962	Juneau 1960 to 1963	Dawson 1898 to 1900
Glennallen 1965 to 1967	<b>Bertrand, Blanche</b>	Nulato 1900 to 1901
Anchorage 1976 to 1982	Sister M. Esther	Koserefski 1901 to 1903
<b>Baldwin, Catherine</b>	Dawson 1913 to 1921	Nulato (Dawson) 1903 to 1904
Sister Mary Martha	<b>Bessette, Malvina</b>	Koserefski 1904 to 1905
Juneau 1892 to 1895	Sister M. Barbara	Dawson 1905 to 1906
<b>Barry, Mary Margaret</b>	Douglas Island 1912 to 1913	Fairbanks 1906 to 1907
Sister Mary Angelus	Juneau 1913 to 1919	<b>Brault, Rose de Lima</b>
Juneau 1941 to 1943	Douglas Island 1919 to 1920	Sister M. Ralph (Raoul)
Juneau 1965 to 1968	Juneau 1920 to 1929	Dawson 1910 to 1924
<b>Beauchamp, Julienne</b>	Juneau 1930 to 1941	Nulato 1924 to 1927
Sister M. Eloise	<b>Bissonette, Evelina</b>	<b>Brazeau, Aldina</b>
Holy Cross 1893 to 1896	Sister M. Louise of Florence	Sister M. Michel of Florence
<b>Beaudoin, Marie Louise</b>	Koserefski 1902 to 1928	Juneau 1933 to 1934
Sister M. Evariste	<b>Bleau, Eugenie</b>	Holy Cross 1934 to 1940
Nulato 1899 to 1900	Sister M. Jules of the Sacred Heart	<b>Brophy, Joan Barbara</b>
Holy Cross 1901 to 1902	Dawson 1899 to 1901	Sister M. Gonzaga
<b>Beaulieu, Alma</b>	Holy Cross 1901 to 1939	Juneau 1966 to 1967
Sister M. of the Eucharistic Heart	<b>Boucher, Elise</b>	<b>Brouillette, Marie</b>
Nulato 1912 to 11/13	Sister M. Gedeon	Sister M. Francis
	Nulato 1902 to 1903	Douglas Island 1901 to 1902
	Koserefski 1903 to 1904	Juneau 1902 to 1903
	Dawson 1904 to 1950	



<b>Brousseau, Theresa</b>		<b>Cavanagh, Irene</b>		<b>Daigneault, Antoinette</b>	
Sister Rita Marie		Sister M. Ethelbert		Sister M. Dositheus	
Juneau	1957 to 1959	Juneau	1943 to 1948	Juneau	1932 to 1934
<b>Cantin, Rose</b>		<b>Charbonneau, Aurore</b>		Dawson	1934 to 1936
Sister M. Rose of the Child Jesus		Sister M. Corona		<b>Daigneault, Simone</b>	
Holy Cross	1942 to 1947	Dawson	1914 to 1915	Sister Carmen Marie	
Juneau	1947 to 1959	Juneau	1915 to 1916	Dawson	1950 to 1955
Nulato	1961 to 1964	<b>Chisholm, Catherine</b>		Juneau	1955 to 1956
Anchorage	1970 to 1987	Sister M. Donald		<b>Daly, Margaret</b>	
<b>Cantwell, Margaret</b>		Douglas Island	1918 to 1920	Sister M. Anna	
Sister Kathleen Mary		<b>Christian, Cecilia</b>		Juneau	1924 to 1925
Holy Cross	1946 to 1956	Sister M. Deborah		<b>Daoust, Georgianna</b>	
Nulato	2/56 to 6/56	Dawson	1960 to 1961	Sister M. Stanislas Kostka	
Juneau	1956 to 1960	<b>Cincotta, Ida Gaetana</b>		Douglas Island	1910 to 1912
Glennallen	1960 to 1968	Sister M. Felicia		Juneau	1916 to 1927
Glennallen	1970 to 1971	Skagway	1949 to 1952	<b>Darche, Rosanna</b>	
Anchorage	1971 to 1980	Glennallen	1964 to 1965	Sister M. Joseph Agapit	
Holy Cross	1987 to -	Anchorage	1983 to -	Juneau	1942 to 1954
<b>Cardinal, Irene</b>		<b>Colbert, Manuella</b>		<b>De Ruyter, Euphrasie</b>	
Sister M. Emma		Sister M. Emmanuella		Sister M. Joseph Calasanctius (Calasanz)	
Juneau	1961 to 1964	Juneau	1936 to 1939	Koserefski	1888 to 1899
Glennallen	1968 to 1970	<b>Colford, Eva</b>		Dawson	1899 to 1900
<b>Carmel, Imelda</b>		Sister M. Alfreda		Holy Cross	1901 to 1905
Sister M. Epiphane		Juneau	1931 to 1935	<b>Deas, Anne</b>	
Dawson	1916 to 1928	Juneau	1941 to 1947	Sister Miriam Anne	
Holy Cross	1928 to 1929	<b>Colliard, Gabrielle</b>		Juneau	1952 to 1954
Holy Cross	1930 to 1937	Sister M. Gabriella		Juneau	1965 to 1967
Dawson	1937 to 1940	Juneau	1939 to 1940	<b>Demientieff, Margaret Mary</b>	
Holy Cross	1940 to 1941	<b>Conlin, Mary Ellen</b>		Sister M. of the Holy Cross	
Juneau	1942 to 1947	Sister Joan Marie		Sister M. Holy Cross	
Dawson	1948 to 1950	Juneau	1967 to 1968	(known both ways)	
Holy Cross	1950 to 1952	<b>Cormier, Pauline</b>		Dawson	1929 to 1937
Juneau	1952 to 1955	Sister M. Charles of Jesus		Juneau	1937 to 1938
Nulato	1/55 to 8/55	Dawson	1957 to 1958	<b>Denis, Ida</b>	
Dawson	1955 to 1963	Juneau	1959 to 1961	Sister Joseph de Marie	
<b>Caron, Mary Corrine (Alice)</b>		<b>Corneau, Helene</b>		Juneau	1933 to 1935
Sister M. Claude		Sister M. Rose Estelle		<b>Denomme, Anna</b>	
Nulato	1927 to 1942	Skagway	1954 to 1955	Sister M. Barnabé	
Skagway	1942 to 1948	Skagway	1959 (2 mos.)	Douglas Island	1901 to 1904
Nulato	1949 to 1955	Nulato	1981 (2 mos.)	Juneau	1925 to 1927
<b>Carriere, Clorinde</b>		<b>Cote, Adelina</b>		Dawson	1927 to 1935
Sister M. Theresa of Avila		Sister M. Thomas of Florence		Juneau	1938 to 1939
Douglas Island	1898 to 1900	Juneau	1904 to 1909	Dawson	1939 to 1951
<b>Carriere, Yvonne</b>		Juneau	1910 to 1920	<b>Desrosiers, Gilberte</b>	
Sister M. Joseph des Anges		<b>Coubeaux, Madeleine</b>		Sister M. Clementia	
Dawson	1940 to 1942	Sister M. Berthilda		Dawson	1939 to 1950
Juneau	1964 to 1965	Juneau	1939 to 1941	Juneau	1956 to 1958
<b>Carroll, Eleanor</b>		<b>Coutu, Rose Anna</b>		<b>Dickinson, Patricia</b>	
Sister M. Ethelind		Sister M. Edward of Jesus		Sister M. Antonius	
Juneau	1921 to 1926	Juneau	1914 to 1932	Dawson	1956 to 1957
Juneau	1953 to 1956	Dawson	1932 to 1935	Dawson	1958 to 1959
<b>Cashen, Catherine F.</b>		Juneau	1935 to 1941	<b>Dion, Therese</b>	
Sister M. Philippa		Holy Cross	1941 to 1956	Sister M. Louis Richard	
Skagway	1935 to 1947	Glennallen	1956 to 1957	Anchorage	1983 to 1984
Holy Cross	1948 to 1952				
Skagway	1952 to 1959				



**Doogan, Ann Marie**  
 Sister M. Joseph Raphael  
 Skagway 1949 to 1958  
 Juneau 1958 to 1960

**Doogan, Marjorie Loretta**  
 Sister M. Kevin  
 Skagway 1955 to 1956  
 Dawson 1960 to 1961  
 Holy Cross 1966 to 1969  
 Kananak 1971 to 1972  
 Anchorage 1980 to 1981

**Doogan, Theresa Frances**  
 Sister Miriam Jude  
 Holy Cross 1950 to 1956  
 Juneau 1963 to 1965

**Dooly, Annie**  
 Sister M. Victor  
 Juneau 1886 to 1889

**Down, Grace Barbara**  
 Sister M. Faustina  
 Dawson 1936 to 1942  
 Skagway 1945 to 1947  
 Juneau 1960 to 1964

**Downey, Rita**  
 Sister Miriam Rita  
 Juneau 1959 to 1960  
 Dawson 1961 to 1963

**Doyle, Denise**  
 Sister Denise Doyle  
 Fairbanks 1971 to 1972

**Doyle, Kathleen**  
 Sister M. Kathleen  
 Juneau 1958 to 1959

**Doyle, Veronica**  
 Sister Joseph Mary  
 Fairbanks 1970 to 1971

**Dozois, Flora**  
 Sister M. Ludovic  
 Dawson 1919 to 1925  
 Juneau 1925 to 1931

**Dumas, Doris**  
 Sister M. Therese Bernadette  
 Juneau 1954 to 1955  
 Holy Cross 8/55 to 9/55  
 Juneau 1955 to 1956  
 Holy Cross 1956 to 1957  
 Glennallen 1957 to 1958  
 Nulato 1958 to 1960  
 Juneau 1960 to 1963

**Duncan (Stack), Florence**  
 Sister M. Agnes  
 Juneau 1931 to 1936

**Dunn, Anna**  
 Sister M. Alexandre  
 Douglas Island 1911 to 1912

**Dupuis, Eva**  
 Sister Clarence Marie  
 Dawson 1951 to 1956  
 Nulato 1956 to 1969

**Edwards, Marion Elinor**  
 Sister M. Ambrose  
 Dawson 1929 to 1932  
 Juneau 1932 to 1938  
 Juneau 1940 to 1944  
 Skagway 1945 to 1947  
 Juneau 1947 to 1950

**Ethier, Adrienne**  
 Sister M. Madeleine of Calvary  
 Douglas Island 1903 to 1920

**Farly, Annonciade**  
 Sister M. Sylvina  
 Nulato 1902 to 1903  
 Dawson 1903 to 1910

**Farmer, Mary Dorothy**  
 Sister M. Serena (Seraphina)  
 Holy Cross 1954 to 1956

**Felker, Antoinette**  
 Sister M. Rose Antoinette  
 Dawson 1942 to 1944  
 Juneau 1944 to 1945  
 Skagway 1945 to 1946

**Fife, Regina**  
 Sister M. Antonius  
 Juneau 1925 to 1927

**Filion, Marie**  
 Sister M. Peter in Chains  
 (Pierre aux Liens)  
 Juneau 1927 to 1928

**Fischer, Frances Mary**  
 Sister M. Frances Louise  
 Dawson 1959 to 1962

**Fitzgerald, Mary Josephine**  
 Sister M. Baptista  
 Skagway 8/59 to 12/59

**Fitzpatrick, Marie-Louise**  
 Sister M. Benedict (Benoit)  
 Koserefski 1893 to 1894  
 Akulurak 1894 to 1897  
 Koserefski 1897 to 1898  
 Dawson 1898 to 1906

**Foisy, Eutichienne**  
 Sister M. Mathias  
 Douglas Island 1897 to 1898  
 Juneau 1898 to 1899  
 Douglas Island 1899 to 1903  
 Juneau 1903 to 1906

**Fontaine, Emma**  
 Sister M. Zenon  
 Juneau 1886 to 1898  
 Dawson 1899 to 1909  
 Juneau 1910 to 1917

**Fontaine, Philomene**  
 Sister M. Bruno  
 Juneau 1896 to 1901  
 Douglas Island 1901 to 1910  
 Juneau 1913 to 1918

**Forcier, Emelie**  
 Sister M. Noemi  
 Douglas Island 1916 to 1917  
 Nulato 1917 to 1918  
 Skagway 1945 to 1947

**Forest, Dorothy**  
 Sister Dorothy Marie  
 Nulato 1952 to 1962  
 Glennallen 1965 to 1966  
 Holy Cross 1968 to 1969  
 Anchorage 1969 to 1982

**Frenette, Antoinette**  
 Sister M. Marlena  
 Dawson 1955 to 1959

**Freney, Catherine**  
 Sister M. Alena  
 Juneau 1941 to 1947

**Gabriel, Margaret (See Jarmy)**

**Gareau, Marie-Louise**  
 Sister M. Adolphe  
 Juneau 1898 to 1899

**Gareau, Rose Anna**  
 Sister M. Henrietta of Jesus  
 Dawson 1939 to 1945  
 Skagway 1945 to 1947  
 Juneau 1947 to 1956

**Godin, Zenobie**  
 Sister M. John Leonard  
 Juneau 1926 to 1927

**Golden, Mable C.**  
 Sister M. Gertrude of the Eucharist  
 Juneau 1915 to 1917

**Gouin, Alexandrina**  
 Sister M. Gerard  
 Juneau 1914 to 1918

**Goulet, Anna**  
 Sister M. du Coeur de Jésus  
 Dawson 1900 to 1902  
 Dawson 1904 to 1906  
 Fairbanks 1906 to 1907  
 Nulato 1907 to 1908  
 Koserefski 1908 to 1909  
 Nulato 1909 to 1914  
 Nulato 1926 to 1930

**Goulet, Anna**  
 Sister M. Jeanne of the Sacred Heart  
 Dawson 1901 to 1903



<b>Goulet, Marie</b>		<b>Harel, Josephine (See Arel)</b>		<b>Kirwan, Catherine</b>	
Sister M. Madeleine of the Sacred Heart		<b>Harel, Marie Jeanne (See Arel)</b>		Sister Mary Luca	
Koserefski	1897 to 1901	<b>Hassen, Jane</b>		Juneau	1959 to 1965
Dawson	1901 to 1904	Sister M. Victor		<b>Laferriere, Exilia</b>	
Koserefski	1904 to 1926	Juneau	1913 to 1914	Sister M. Roch	
Juneau	1927 to 1960	Douglas Island	1914 to 1915	Douglas Island	1898 to 1901
<b>Granger, Augustine</b>		Dawson	1919 to 1923	<b>Lagace, Beatrice Antoinette</b>	
Sister M. Pudentienne		Holy Cross	1923 to 1926	Sister M. Marcellus	
Akulurak	1897 to 1898	Juneau	1926 to 1927	Skagway	1937 to 1944
Dawson	1898 to 1916	<b>Hebert, Emma</b>		Juneau	1944 to 1947
Dawson	1923 to 1926	Sister M. Modeste		Juneau	1948 to 1952
Juneau	1927 to 1932	Juneau	1923 to 1952	Skagway	1952 to 1958
Skagway	1932 to 1941	<b>Hemond, Berthe</b>		Dawson	1961 to 1963
Dawson	1941 to 1953	Sister M. Aimée of the Precious Blood		<b>Lalande Eva</b>	
<b>Granger, Clara</b>		Skagway	1939 to 1944	Sister M. Reparatrice	
Sister M. Bernadette		Skagway	1945 to 1960	Dawson	1930 to 1939
Koserefski	1906 to 1914	<b>Hervieux, Marie</b>		<b>Lambert, Marie Rose Eva</b>	
<b>Granger, Eva</b>		Sister M. Constantine		Sister M. Rose Eva	
Sister M. Olympe		Juneau	1931 to 1933	Dawson	1913 to 1939
Douglas Island	1900 to 1901	<b>Hortie, Lea</b>		Juneau	1940 to 1955
Juneau	1911 to 1912	Sister M. Amée		Dawson	1955 to 1960
<b>Gray, Annie</b>		Dawson	1918 to 1927	Dawson	1961 to 1963
Sister M. Thomas of the Rosary		Juneau	1927 to 1937	Juneau	1963 to 1964
Juneau	1905 to 1909	Dawson	1937 to 1955	<b>Landry, Helena</b>	
Douglas	1909 to 1910	<b>Houle, Bernadette</b>		Sister M. Thomasina	
Juneau	1910 to 1912	Sister M. Rose Alida		Juneau	1923 to 1924
<b>Greff, Catherine</b>		Holy Cross	1924 to 1928	Holy Cross	1926 to 1928
Sister M. Bonsecours		<b>Hughes, Katherine</b>		Holy Cross	1929 to 1934
Juneau	1886 to 1887	Sister Mary Freda		<b>Langevin, Ellen (Nellie)</b>	
Juneau	1889 to 1892	Nulato	1955 to 1956	Sister M. Geraldine	
<b>Grimm, Anna</b>		Glennallen	1956 to 1957	Juneau	1908 to 1909
Sister M. Wilhelmina		<b>Janelle, Elizabeth</b>		Juneau	1936 to 1937
Juneau	1910 to 1911	Sister Elizabeth Marie		<b>Langlois, Simone</b>	
<b>Grimm, Elizabeth</b>		Juneau	1957 to 1958	Sister M. Anna of Jesus	
Sister M. Amelia		Skagway	1959	Juneau	1965 to 1966
Nulato	2 years c. 1914	<b>Jarmy (Gabriel), Margaret</b>		<b>LaPerle, Eugenie</b>	
(no other dates available)		Sister M. Edna		Sister M. Georgie	
<b>Hagan, Margaret</b>		Skagway	1941 to 1942	Dawson	1903 to 1905
Sister M. Thecla		<b>Jolie, Antoinette</b>		Douglas Island	1911 to 1913
Douglas Island	1902 to 1903	Sister M. Joanne		Douglas Island	1913 to 1915
Juneau	1903 to 1908	Holy Cross	1939 to 1956	<b>Lariviere, Eulalie</b>	
Koserefski	1909 to 1914	Skagway	1956 to 1959	Sister M. Eulalia of Barcelona	
Koserefski	1922 to 1923	Juneau	1960 to 1968	Holy Cross	1920 to 1956
<b>Hamelin, Martine</b>		<b>Kelly, Agnes May</b>		Glennallen	1957 to 1970
Sister M. William		Sister M. Dunstan		<b>LaRose, Jeannette</b>	
Dawson	1901 to 1907	Juneau	1922 to 1925	Sister M. Agatha of the Angels	
<b>Hanks, Agnes</b>		Juneau	1939 to 1942	Skagway	1948 to 1954
Sister Agnes Marie		<b>Kelly, Kate</b>		Glennallen	1956 to 1959
Glennallen	1965 to 1971	Sister M. Georges		Glennallen	1962 to 1965
Nulato	1972 to 1973	Juneau	1900 to 1902	Nulato	1979 to 1981
Holy Cross	1973 to 1974	Douglas Island	1911 to 1915	Galena	1981 to 1982
St. Mary's	1974 to 1982	<b>King, Mary Dorothy</b>		Nulato	1982 to 1983
<b>Hanley, Helena</b>		Sister Mary Dorothea		Chefornak/	
Sister M. Fintan		Juneau	1918 to 1919	Nightmute	1983 to 1988
Juneau	1938 to 1940			St. Mary's	1988 to 1991
				Mountain Village	1991 to 1992



**Lascelle, Marie Raissa**  
 Sister M. Donalda  
 Douglas Island 1909 to 1911

**Latendresse, Regina**  
 Sister M. Gustave  
 Holy Cross 1901 to  
 (date not available)  
 Holy Cross 1909 to 1937

**Latour, Emerentienne**  
 Sister M. Anne of Sion  
 Juneau 1918 to 1920

**Laurin, Bertha**  
 Sister M. Clementina  
 Juneau 1925 to 1928  
 Skagway 1944 to 1945  
 Juneau 1956 to 1958  
 Glennallen 1966 to 1968

**Laurin, Marie Louise**  
 Sister M. of the Passion  
 Koserefski 1898 to 1909  
 Juneau 1909 to 1924

**Laurin, Vitaline**  
 Sister M. Perpetual Help  
 Juneau 1918 to 1924  
 Dawson 1924 to 1930  
 Holy Cross 1930 to 1942

**Lavigne, Virginie**  
 Sister M. of the Infant Jesus  
 Juneau 1906 to 1909

**Lavoie, Julie**  
 Sister M. Hippolyte  
 Juneau 1898 to 1899  
 Douglas Island 1906 to 1913

**Leahy, Elizabeth**  
 Sister M. Stephen (Etienne)  
 Holy Cross 1888 to 1899  
 Nulato 1899 to 1906  
 Fairbanks 1906 to 1907  
 Nulato 1907 to 1908

**LeBoeuf, Marguerite**  
 Sister Mary Rosalia  
 Juneau 1945 to 1946  
 Skagway 1946 to 1947  
 Holy Cross 1947 to 1950  
 Juneau 1950 to 1951  
 Juneau 1958 to 1960

**LeClair, Mary Agnes**  
 Sister M. Rosalita  
 Juneau 1933 to 1936  
 Skagway 1945 to 1946

**Ledoux, Adelaide**  
 Sister M. de la Garde  
 Dawson 1906 to 1910

**Lefebvre, Marie Louise**  
 Sister M. Yolande  
 Douglas 1915 to 1917  
 Juneau 1919 to 1921

**Lefebvre, Rosalie**  
 Sister M. Leo  
 Douglas Island 1917 to 1919  
 Juneau 1922 to 1926  
 Dawson 1926 to 1930

**Legault, Alice**  
 Sister M. Alice Therese  
 Holy Cross 1952 to 1956  
 Glennallen 1956 to 1968  
 Fairbanks 1969 to 1977  
 Fairbanks 1978 to 1983

**Lemire Angela**  
 Sister M. Anne Cecilia  
 Dawson 1958 to 1961  
 Juneau 1961 to 1962

**Lemire, Rita**  
 Sister M. Claire Rita  
 Nulato 1960 to 1963  
 Juneau 1963 to 1966  
 Nulato 1966 to 1968

**Levasseur, Leontine**  
 Sister M. Xaverine  
 Dawson 1906 to 1919  
 Dawson 1935 to 1939  
 Skagway 1939 to 1940  
 Juneau 1941 to 1945

**Levesque, Marguerite**  
 Sister M. Angel Guardian  
 Dawson 1952 to 1958

**Loiselle, Dora**  
 Sister M. Florent (Florentius)  
 Juneau 1896 to 1899  
 Juneau 1903 to 1904  
 Douglas Island 1905 to 1909

**Lorteau, Helen**  
 Sister M. Pascal Baylon  
 Nulato 1964 to 1967  
 Holy Cross 1967 to 1968

**Lutz, Olive**  
 Sister M. Olive Ann  
 Juneau 1938 to 1941

**Lyons, Josephen**  
 Sister M. Ethelreda  
 Douglas Island 1898 to 1908

**Lyons, Mary**  
 Sister M. Romuald  
 Juneau 1893 to 1898  
 Douglas Island 1898 to 1902

**MacDonald, Agnes**  
 Sister M. Mercedes  
 Juneau 1937 to 1939

**MacIntyre, Dolina**  
 Sister M. Donna  
 Glennallen 1969 to 1971

**MacIntyre, Mary Catherine**  
 Sister M. Abigail  
 Juneau 1917 to 1918  
 Douglas Island 1918 to 1919  
 Juneau 1919 to 1925  
 Nulato 1927 to 1948  
 Skagway 1948 to 1949

**Mahoney, Colleen**  
 Sister M. Colleen Ann  
 Nulato 1963 to 1966  
 Juneau 1966 to 1968

**Mailhot, Delia**  
 Sister M. Frances of Chantal  
 Juneau 1907 to 1909  
 Douglas Island 1909 to 1911

**Mailhot, Rosa**  
 Sister M. Madeleine of Jesus  
 Douglas Island 1909 to 1910

**Mainville, Alphonsine**  
 Sister M. Emilienne  
 Douglas Island 1914 to 1915  
 Douglas Island 1916 to 1917

**Mainville, Mariette**  
 Sister M. Eugene of Rome  
 Dawson 1953 to 1955

**Malo, Laurette**  
 Sister M. Anne Rita  
 Holy Cross 1949 to 1955  
 Juneau 1955 to 1958  
 Skagway 1958 to 1959  
 Glennallen 1959 to 1962  
 Nulato 1962 to 1965  
 Holy Cross 1965 to 1967

**Malone, Bridget**  
 Sister M. Hildegard  
 Juneau 1931 to 1933

**Marcotte, Anita**  
 Sister M. Antonia of the Sacred Heart  
 Nulato 1934 to 1956  
 Juneau 1956 to 1968

**McAleer, Mary**  
 Sister M. Cassilda  
 Dawson 1904 to 1913

**McCaffrey, Mary**  
 Sister M. Francis of Jesus  
 Nulato 1916 to 1917

**McCann, Elizabeth Agnes**  
 Sister M. Lambert  
 Dawson 1959 to 1962

**McCullough, Anne**  
 Sister M. Lucinda  
 Juneau 1924 to 1938



**McCullough, Mary**  
 Sister M. Malachy  
 Douglas Island 1919 to 1920  
**McDonald, Isabella**  
 Sister M. Rita  
 Douglas Island 1896 to 1897  
**McDonald, Mary Eva**  
 Sister M. Adolphus  
 Juneau 1899 to 1901  
 Skagway 1932 to 1935  
**McGarrigle, Mary Josephine**  
 Sister M. Lucita  
 Skagway 1946 to 1947  
 Juneau 1947 to 1949  
**McGauvran (McGovern), Ronalda**  
 Sister M. Ronalda  
 Juneau 1954 to 1956  
**McGrory, Hazel**  
 Sister M. Isaac Jogues  
 Skagway 1942 to 1946  
 Juneau 1964 to 1965  
 Holy Cross 1965 to 1969  
**McIntyre, Mary Ann**  
 Sister Mary Aurelius  
 Skagway 1937 to 1955  
 Juneau 1956 to 1958  
 Skagway 8/59 to 12/59  
**McKenna, Marion**  
 Sister M. Fernando  
 Juneau 1916 to 1922  
**McKenna, Suzanne**  
 Sister M. Pius  
 Holy Cross 1927 to 1942  
 Nulato 1942 to 1952  
 Holy Cross 1952 to 1957  
**Meloche, Blanche**  
 Sister M. Xavier  
 Dawson 1931 to 1948  
 Dawson 1949 to 1950  
**Meloche, Emerentienne**  
 Sister M. Febronia  
 Juneau/Douglas Isl. 1895 to 1910  
 Douglas Island 1910 to 1913  
**Michaud, Lea**  
 Sister M. Angela  
 Holy Cross 1933 to 1948  
 Nulato 1948 to 1949  
 Holy Cross 1949 to 1956  
 Skagway 1956 to 1959  
**Mitchell, Delia**  
 Sister M. Kateri  
 St. Mary's 1988 to 1992

**Morin, Antonia**  
 Sister M. Anne Elise  
 Juneau 1928 to 1931  
 Skagway 1932 to 1933  
**Morin, Elizabeth**  
 Sister M. Joseph of Arimathea  
 Dawson 1903 to 1906  
 Dawson 1907 to 1918  
**Morin, Judith**  
 Sister M. Josephine  
 Fairbanks 1969 to 1974  
**Morin, Theophanie**  
 Sister M. Placide  
 Juneau 1898 to 1906  
**Munn, Virginie**  
 Sister M. Rogatien  
 Juneau 1892 to 1893  
**Murphy, Ann Jane**  
 Sister M. Michael Archangel  
 Koserefski 1910 to 1914  
 Nulato 1911 to  
 (no other date available)  
**Needham, Lorraine**  
 Sister M. Walburga  
 Skagway 1948 to 1951  
**Nyland, Agnes Cecilia**  
 Sister M. Rosalinda  
 Juneau 1930 to 1931  
 Skagway 1935 to 1937  
**O'Connor, Bernice**  
 Sister M. Florence  
 Juneau 1939 to 1944  
 Skagway 1944 to 1952  
 Skagway 1954 to 1959  
 Juneau 1959 to 1968  
**O'Meara, Mary**  
 Sister M. Zenaide  
 Dawson 1901 to 1905  
**O'Riley, Winifred**  
 Sister M. Sylvester  
 Juneau 1898 to 1900  
 Nulato 1903 to 1904  
**O'Riordan, Kathleen**  
 Sister M. Joyce  
 Juneau 1934 to  
 (date not available)  
**Ouimette, Agnes**  
 Sister M. John Damascene  
 Koserefski 1892 to 1898  
 Dawson 1898 to 1899  
 Dawson 1902 to 1908  
 Juneau 1909 to 1910  
 Dawson 1910 to 1923

**Paiement, Alexina**  
 Sister M. of the Sacred Heart  
 Douglas Island 1916 to 1917  
**Paquette, Eveline**  
 Sister M. Anne Eveline  
 Glennallen 1957 to 1960  
 Juneau 1960 to 1961  
 Juneau 1964 to 1965  
 Nulato 1965 to 1969  
 Glennallen 1969 to 1971  
 Nulato 1972 to 1980  
 Anchorage 1981 to 1987  
 Holy Cross 1987 to -  
**Paré, Josephine**  
 Sister M. Theresa of the Sacred Heart  
 Juneau 1891 to 1903  
**Parker, Elizabeth**  
 Sister M. Ignatia  
 Dawson 1954 to 1963  
**Parsons, Mary**  
 Sister M. Augustine  
 Whitehorse 1903 to 1904  
**Pellerin, Adele**  
 Sister M. Josaphat  
 Holy Cross early years  
 (no dates available)  
**Persson, Barbara**  
 Sister M. John Robert  
 Glennallen 1968 to 1969  
**Peterson, Mary E.**  
 Sister M. of the Cross  
 Holy Cross 1897 to 1898  
 Dawson 1898 to 1899  
**Pigeon, Zepherina**  
 Sister M. Armenia  
 Juneau 1912 to 1913  
**Pilon, Mary**  
 Sister M. Edith  
 Dawson 1901 to 1904  
 Douglas Island 1904 to 1909  
 Juneau 1909 to 1911  
 Juneau 1917 to 1918  
**Pineault, Victoria**  
 Sister M. Theodore  
 Juneau 1887 to 1888  
**Plante, Eva**  
 Sister M. Liliose  
 Skagway 1940 to 1941  
**Poncelet, Matilda**  
 Sister M. Ethel  
 Juneau 1933 to 1954  
**Powell, Mary**  
 Sister M. Laurena  
 Dawson 1944 to 1953  
 Juneau 1956 to 1959



**Quenneville, Berthe**  
 Sister M. Elie Anicet  
 Dawson 1942 to 1951  
**Racette, Ernestine**  
 Sister M. Prosper  
 Juneau 1898 to 1903  
**Richard, Lavinia**  
 Sister M. Albert  
 Dawson 1931 to 1934  
 Juneau 1937 to 1939  
 Skagway 1945 (2 mo.)  
 Dawson 1948 to 1952  
**Richard, Patricia Marie**  
 Sister Christine Marie  
 Glennallen 1961 to 1965  
 Juneau 1965 to 1968  
 Cheformak/  
 Nightmute 1983 to 1988  
**Riel, Emma**  
 Sister M. Bertholde  
 Juneau 1928 to 1930  
 Juneau 1943 to 1950  
**Riel, Irene**  
 Sister M. Irene Theresa  
 Juneau 1931 to 1932  
 Juneau 1952 to 1956  
 Juneau 1965 to 1968  
**Riopelle, Lumena**  
 Sister M. Prudence  
 Koserefski 1891 to 1894  
 Akulurak 1894 to 1898  
 Koserefski 1898 to 1899  
 Dawson 1899 to 1904  
 Juneau 1906 to 1907  
**Robillard, Virginie**  
 Sister M. Annonciade  
 Holy Cross 1941 to 1946  
**Rondeau, Julia**  
 Sister M. Julien  
 Dawson 1909 to 1912  
 Juneau 1918 to 1932  
 Skagway 1932 to 1937  
**Rondeau, Theobalda**  
 Sister M. Zenobia  
 Douglas 1917 to 1918  
**Roy, Olivina**  
 Sister M. Sidonia  
 Holy Cross 1929 to 1949  
**Sally, Helen**  
 Sister M. Frances  
 Juneau 1895 to 1900  
 Juneau 1902 to 1903  
 Douglas Island 1905 to 1906

**Sally, Mary**  
 Sister M. Winifred  
 Koserefski 1892 to 1899  
 Dawson 1899 to 1901  
 Koserefski 1901 to 1906  
 Nulato 1909 to 1914  
 Nulato 1922 to 1924  
**Saunders (Sanders), Antoinette**  
 Sister M. Zephyrin  
 Juneau 1888 to 1891  
 Holy Cross 1891 to 1894  
 Akulurak 1894 to 1898  
 Dawson 1898 to 1899  
 Holy Cross 1899 to 1900  
**Scheffer (Sheffer), Ellen**  
 Sister M. Mark  
 Dawson 1904 to 1919  
 Dawson 1945 to 1951  
**Schildts, Margaret Emely**  
 Sister M. Pascal Baylon  
 Juneau 1911 to 1914  
**Scott, Sylvia**  
 Sister M. Verona  
 Dawson 1957 to 1958  
**Senecal, Albina**  
 Sister M. Seraphine of the Sacred Heart  
 Koserefski 1897 to 1900  
**Sheffer (See Scheffer)**  
**Sinnott, Mary**  
 Sister M. Martin of Tours  
 Skagway 1932 to 1935  
**Smith, Cordelia**  
 Sister M. Margaret of the Sacred Heart  
 Douglas Island 1901 to 1903  
 Koserefski 1903 to 1907  
 Douglas Island 1912 to 1917  
 Holy Cross 1922 to 1926  
**Smith, Maggie**  
 Sister M. Lidwine  
 Koserefski 1906 to 1909  
 Dawson 1909 to 1910  
**Snyder, Joyce**  
 Sister M. Irene of the Cross  
 Fairbanks 1979 to 1983  
**Soul, Doreen M.**  
 Sister M. Audrey  
 Dawson 1933 to 1935  
**Specken, Mary Anna**  
 Sister M. Justa  
 Holy Cross 1930 to 1933  
**Specken, Mary Regina**  
 Sister M. Adelaide  
 Dawson 1956 to 1957

**St.-Germain, Cecile**  
 Sister M. Claire Cecilia  
 Nulato 1956 to 1960  
**Stack, Johanna Aurelia**  
 Sister M. Loyola  
 Juneau 1936 to 1939  
**Surprenant, Agnes**  
 Sister M. Addée  
 Nulato 1910 to 1912  
**Sylvestre, Florida**  
 Sister M. Marcienne  
 Dawson 1909 to 1916  
**Sylvestre, Philomene**  
 Sister M. Flore  
 Juneau 1900 to 1903  
**Tevini, Alice**  
 Sister M. Anthony  
 Dawson 1946 to 1956  
 Dawson 1962 to 1963  
**Therien, Evelina**  
 Sister M. Francis Joseph  
 Douglas Island 1918 to 1920  
**Therien, Odile**  
 Sister M. Alberic  
 Holy Cross 1918 to 1924  
**Torpey, Ellen (Helen)**  
 Sister M. Druscilla  
 Juneau 1959 to 1960  
**Tougas, Angele**  
 Sister M. Peter  
 Juneau 1887 to 1891  
 Juneau 1898 to 1903  
 Juneau 1909 to 1914  
 Juneau 1935 to 1940  
**Tougas, Eleonore**  
 Sister M. Jean  
 Dawson 1915 to 1921  
 Dawson 1926 to 1946  
 Dawson 1951 to 1957  
**Tougas, Emma**  
 Sister M. Aza  
 Skagway 1933 to 1938  
 Holy Cross 1938 to 1947  
**Tourigny, Anne**  
 Sister M. Stella  
 Juneau 1919 to 1921  
 Juneau 1926 to 1931  
**Trinque, Florida**  
 Sister M. Thomas Joseph  
 Douglas Island 1915 to 1920  
 Juneau 1920 to 1925  
**Trudeau, Germaine**  
 Sister M. Dolorosa  
 Juneau 1961 to 1964



**Vachereau, Yolande**  
 Sister M. Bernard of Siena  
 Glennallen 1966 to 1971  
 Anchorage 1987 to -

**Valois, Adele**  
 Sister M. Virginia  
 Juneau 1915 to 1917  
 Douglas Island 1917 to 1918

**Vincelette, Marie Parmelia**  
 Sister M. Itha  
 Douglas Island 1911 to 1912  
 Douglas Island 1913 to 1914  
 Holy Cross 1914 to 1923  
 Dawson 1923 to 1926  
 Holy Cross 1926 to 1929  
 Dawson 1929 to 1934  
 Holy Cross 1937 to 1946  
 Juneau 1947 to 1963

**Wadkin, Catherine Mary**  
 Sister Mary William  
 Skagway 1947 to 1948

**Wambeke, Agnes Beatrice**  
 Sister M. Beatrice  
 Skagway 1945 to 1947  
 Juneau 1951 to 1952

**Weimer, Gertrude**  
 Sister M. Armella  
 Juneau 1914 to 1919  
 Juneau 1928 to 1929  
 Holy Cross 1929 to 1938

**Weimer, Teresa**  
 Sister M. Hilda  
 Juneau 1911 to 1912  
 Douglas Island 1912 to 1920

**Welch, Mary Eloise**  
 Sister M. Anne Eloise  
 Skagway 1947 to 1949

**Welsh, Anna**  
 Sister M. Mildred  
 Skagway 1945 (2 mos.)

**Wheldon, Irene**  
 Sister Miriam Theresa  
 Juneau 3/46 to 9/46  
 Dawson 1961 to 1962

**Williams, Lanita**  
 Sister M. Clement Joseph  
 Nulato 1931 to 1932  
 Holy Cross 1932 to 1936  
 Dawson 1936 to 1937  
 Skagway 1937 to 1938

**Wilson, Mary Jane**  
 Sister M. Milburge  
 Juneau 1931 to 1933  
 Skagway 1933 to 1959

## Sisters of Saint Ann Listed According to Mission

### Akulurak

Brault, Delima  
 Sister M. Pauline

Fitzpatrick, Marie-Louise  
 Sister M. Benedict (Benoit)

Granger, Augustine  
 Sister M. Pudentienne

Riopelle, Lumena  
 Sister M. Prudence

Saunders (Sanders), Antoinette  
 Sister M. Zephyrin

### Anchorage

Babin, Lucienne  
 Sister M. George Edmond

Brasseur, Marie Ida  
 Sister M. Ida of the Eucharist

Cantin, Rose  
 Sister M. Rose of the Child Jesus

Cantwell, Margaret  
 Sister Kathleen Mary

Cincotta, Ida Gaetana  
 Sister M. Felicia

Dion, Therese  
 Sister M. Louis Richard

Doogan, Marjorie Loretta  
 Sister M. Kevin

Forest, Dorothy  
 Sister Dorothy Marie

Paquette, Evelyn  
 Sister M. Anne Eveline

Vachereau, Yolande  
 Sister M. Bernard of Siena

### Chefornak/Nightmute

LaRose, Jeannette  
 Sister M. Agatha of the Angels

Richard, Patricia Marie  
 Sister Christine Marie

### Dawson

Arel (Harel), Marie Jeanne  
 Sister M. Jeanne of the Visitation

Aumont, Rosanna  
 Sister M. Josaphat

Beaulieu, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Bernardi

Bell, Marjorie C.  
 Sister M. Walter

Benoit, Indiana  
 Sister M. Antonia of Jesus

Bertrand, Blanche  
 Sister M. Esther

Bleau, Eugenie  
 Sister M. Jules of the Sacred Heart

Boucher, Elisa  
 Sister M. Gedeon

Brasseur, Valentine  
 Sister M. de la Garde

Brault, Delima  
 Sister M. Pauline

Brault, Rose de Lima  
 Sister M. Ralph (Raoul)

Carmel, Imelda  
 Sister M. Epiphane

Carriere, Yvonne  
 Sister M. Joseph des Anges

Charbonneau, Aurore  
 Sister M. Corona

Christian, Cecilia  
 Sister M. Deborah

Cormier, Pauline  
 Sister M. Charles of Jesus

Coutu, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Edward of Jesus

Daigneault, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Dositheus

Daigneault, Simone  
 Sister Carmen Marie

De Ruyter, Euphrasie  
 Sister M. Joseph Calasanctius (Calasanz)

Demientieff, Margaret Mary  
 Sister M. of the Holy Cross  
 (M. Holy Cross)

Denomme, Anna  
 Sister M. Barnabé

Desrosiers, Gilberte  
 Sister M. Clementia

Dickinson, Patricia  
 Sister M. Antonius

Doogan, Marjorie Loretta  
 Sister M. Kevin

Down, Grace Barbara  
 Sister M. Faustina

Downey, Rita  
 Sister Miriam Rita

Dozois, Flora  
 Sister M. Ludovic

Dupuis, Eva  
 Sister Clarence Marie



Edwards, Marion Elinor  
 Sister M. Ambrose  
 Farly, Annonciade  
 Sister M. Sylvina  
 Felker, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Rose Antoinette  
 Fischer, Frances Mary  
 Sister M. Frances Louise  
 Fitzpatrick, Marie-Louise  
 Sister M. Benedict (Benoit)  
 Fontaine, Emma  
 Sister M. Zenon  
 Frenette, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Marlana  
 Gareau, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Henrietta of Jesus  
 Goulet, Anna  
 Sister M. Jeanne of the Sacred Heart  
 Goulet, Anna  
 Sister M. du Coeur de Jésus  
 Goulet, Marie  
 Sister M. Madeleine of the Sacred Heart  
 Granger, Augustine  
 Sister M. Pudentienne  
 Hamelin, Martine  
 Sister M. William  
 Harel, Marie Jeanne  
 Sister M. Jeanne of the Visitation  
 Hassen, Jane  
 Sister M. Victor  
 Hortie, Lea  
 Sister M. Amée  
 Lagace, Beatrice Antoinette  
 Sister M. Marcellus  
 Lalande Eva  
 Sister M. Reparatrice  
 Lambert, Marie Rose Eva  
 Sister M. Rose Eva  
 LaPerle, Eugenie  
 Sister M. Georgie  
 Laurin, Vitaline  
 Sister M. Perpetual Help  
 Ledoux, Adelaide  
 Sister M. de la Garde  
 Lefebvre, Rosalie  
 Sister M. Leo  
 Lemire Angela  
 Sister M. Anne Cecilia  
 Levasseur, Leontine  
 Sister M. Xaverine  
 Levesque, Marguerite  
 Sister M. Angel Guardian  
 Mainville, Mariette  
 Sister M. Eugene of Rome  
 McAleer, Mary  
 Sister M. Cassilda  
 McCann, Elizabeth Agnes  
 Sister M. Lambert

Meloche, Blanche  
 Sister M. Xavier  
 Morin, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Joseph of Arimathea  
 O'Meara, Mary  
 Sister M. Zenaide  
 Ouimette, Agnes  
 Sister M. John Damascene  
 Parker, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Ignatia  
 Peterson, Mary E.  
 Sister M. of the Cross  
 Pilon, Mary  
 Sister M. Edith  
 Powell, Mary  
 Sister M. Laurena  
 Quenneville, Berthe  
 Sister M. Elie Anicet  
 Richard, Lavinia  
 Sister M. Albert  
 Riopelle, Lumena  
 Sister M. Prudence  
 Rondeau, Julia  
 Sister M. Julien  
 Sally, Mary  
 Sister M. Winifred  
 Saunders (Sanders), Antoinette  
 Sister M. Zephyrin  
 Scheffer (Sheffer), Ellen  
 Sister M. Mark  
 Scott, Sylvia  
 Sister M. Verona  
 Smith, Maggie  
 Sister M. Lidwine  
 Soul, Doreen M.  
 Sister M. Audrey  
 Specken, Mary Regina  
 Sister M. Adelaide  
 Sylvestre, Florida  
 Sister M. Marcienne  
 Tevini, Alice  
 Sister M. Anthony  
 Tougas, Eleonore  
 Sister M. Jean  
 Vincelette, Marie Parmelia  
 Sister M. Itha  
 Wheldon, Irene  
 Sister Miriam Theresa  
 Williams, Lanita  
 Sister M. Clement Joseph

**Douglas Island**

Berlinguette, Theona  
 Sister M. Vincent  
 Bessette, Malvina  
 Sister M. Barbara  
 Brault, Alphonsine  
 Sister M. Archangel  
 Brouillette, Marie  
 Sister M. Francis

Carriere, Clorinde  
 Sister M. Theresa of Avila  
 Chisholm, Catherine  
 Sister M. Donald  
 Daoust, Georgianna  
 Sister M. Stanislas Kostka  
 Denomme, Anna  
 Sister M. Barnabé  
 Dunn, Anna  
 Sister M. Alexandre  
 Ethier, Adrienne  
 Sister M. Madeleine of Calvary  
 Foisy, Eutichienne  
 Sister M. Mathias  
 Fontaine, Philomene  
 Sister M. Bruno  
 Forcier, Emelie  
 Sister M. Noemi  
 Granger, Eva  
 Sister M. Olympe  
 Gray, Annie  
 Sister M. Thomas of the Rosary  
 Hagan, Margaret  
 Sister M. Thecla  
 Hassen, Jane  
 Sister M. Victor  
 Kelly, Kate  
 Sister M. Georges  
 Laferriere, Exilia  
 Sister M. Roch  
 LaPerle, Eugenie  
 Sister M. Georgie  
 Lascelle, Marie Raissa  
 Sister M. Donalda  
 Lavoie, Julie  
 Sister M. Hippolyte  
 Lefebvre, Marie Louise  
 Sister M. Yolande  
 Lefebvre, Rosalie  
 Sister M. Leo  
 Loiselle, Dora  
 Sister M. Florent (Florentius)  
 Lyons, Josephen  
 Sister M. Ethelreda  
 Lyons, Mary  
 Sister M. Romuald  
 MacIntyre, Mary Catherine  
 Sister M. Abigail  
 Mailhot, Delia  
 Sister M. Frances of Chantal  
 Mailhot, Rosa  
 Sister M. Madeleine of Jesus  
 Mainville, Alphonsine  
 Sister M. Emilienne  
 McCullough, Mary  
 Sister M. Malachy  
 McDonald, Isabella  
 Sister M. Rita



Meloche, Emerentienne  
 Sister M. Febronia  
 Paiement, Alexina  
 Sister M. of the Sacred Heart  
 Pilon, Mary  
 Sister M. Edith  
 Rondeau, Theobalda  
 Sister M. Zenobia  
 Sally, Helen  
 Sister M. Frances  
 Smith, Cordelia  
 Sister M. Margaret of the Sacred Heart  
 Therien, Evelina  
 Sister M. Francis Joseph  
 Trinque, Florida  
 Sister M. Thomas Joseph  
 Valois, Adele  
 Sister M. Virginia  
 Vincelette, Marie Parmelia  
 Sister M. Itha  
 Weimer, Teresa  
 Sister M. Hilda

### **Fairbanks**

Brault, Delima  
 Sister M. Pauline  
 Doyle, Denise  
 Sister Denise Doyle  
 Doyle, Veronica  
 Sister Joseph Mary  
 Goulet, Anna  
 Sister M. du Coeur de Jésus  
 Leahy, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Stephen (Etienne)  
 Legault, Alice  
 Sister M. Alice Therese  
 Morin, Judith  
 Sister M. Josephine  
 Snyder, Joyce  
 Sister M. Irene of the Cross

### **Galena**

LaRose, Jeannette  
 Sister M. Agatha of the Angels

### **Glennallen**

Aubuchon, Jacqueline  
 Sister Denise Marie  
 Babin, Lucienne  
 Sister M. George Edmond  
 Brasseur, Marie Ida  
 Sister M. Ida of the Eucharist  
 Cantwell, Margaret  
 Sister Kathleen Mary  
 Cardinal, Irene  
 Sister M. Emma  
 Cincotta, Ida Gaetana  
 Sister M. Felicia  
 Coutu, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Edward of Jesus

Dumas, Doris  
 Sister M. Therese Bernadette  
 Forest, Dorothy  
 Sister Dorothy Marie  
 Hanks, Agnes  
 Sister Agnes Marie  
 Hughes, Katherine  
 Sister Mary Freda  
 Lariviere, Eulalie  
 Sister M. Eulalia of Barcelona  
 LaRose, Jeannette  
 Sister M. Agatha of the Angels  
 Laurin, Bertha  
 Sister M. Clementina  
 Legault, Alice  
 Sister M. Alice Therese  
 MacIntyre, Dolina  
 Sister M. Donna  
 Malo, Laurette  
 Sister M. Anne Rita  
 Paquette, Eveline  
 Sister M. Anne Eveline  
 Persson, Barbara  
 Sister M. John Robert  
 Richard, Patricia Marie  
 Sister Christine Marie  
 Vachereau, Yolande  
 Sister M. Bernard of Siena

### **Holy Cross**

Alarie, Flore (Flora Alary)  
 Sister M. Madeleine  
 Audette, Yvonne  
 Sister M. Anne Dolores  
 Babin, Lucienne  
 Sister M. George Edmond  
 Beauchamp, Julienne  
 Sister M. Eloise  
 Beaudoin, Marie Louise  
 Sister M. Evariste  
 Beaulieu, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Bernardi  
 Bellerose, Hermine  
 Sister M. Angilbert  
 Benoit, Indiana  
 Sister M. Antonia of Jesus  
 Bernard, Josephine Annette  
 Sister M. John Bernard  
 Bissonette, Evelina  
 Sister M. Louise of Florence  
 Bleau, Eugenie  
 Sister M. Jules of the Sacred Heart  
 Boucher, Elisa  
 Sister M. Gedeon  
 Brassard, Caroline  
 Sister M. Didace  
 Brasseur, Marie Ida  
 Sister M. Ida of the Eucharist

Brault, Delima  
 Sister M. Pauline  
 Brazeau, Aldina  
 Sister M. Michel of Florence  
 Cantin, Rose  
 Sister M. Rose of the Child Jesus  
 Cantwell, Margaret  
 Sister Kathleen Mary  
 Carmel, Imelda  
 Sister M. Epiphane  
 Cashen, Catherine F.  
 Sister M. Philippa  
 Coutu, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Edward of Jesus  
 De Ruyter, Euphrasie  
 Sister M. Joseph Calasanctius (Calasanz)  
 Doogan, Marjorie Loretta  
 Sister M. Kevin  
 Doogan, Theresa Frances  
 Sister Miriam Jude  
 Dumas, Doris  
 Sister M. Therese Bernadette  
 Farmer, Mary Dorothy  
 Sister M. Serena (Seraphina)  
 Fitzpatrick, Marie-Louise  
 Sister M. Benedict (Benoit)  
 Forest, Dorothy  
 Sister Dorothy Marie  
 Goulet, Anna  
 Sister M. du Coeur de Jésus  
 Goulet, Marie  
 Sister M. Madeleine of the Sacred Heart  
 Granger, Clara  
 Sister M. Bernadette  
 Hagan, Margaret  
 Sister M. Thecla  
 Hanks, Agnes  
 Sister Agnes Marie  
 Hassen, Jane  
 Sister M. Victor  
 Houle, Bernadette  
 Sister M. Rose Alida  
 Jolie, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Joanne  
 Landry, Helena  
 Sister M. Thomasina  
 Lariviere, Eulalie  
 Sister M. Eulalia of Barcelona  
 Latendresse, Regina  
 Sister M. Gustave  
 Laurin, Marie Louise  
 Sister M. of the Passion  
 Laurin, Vitaline  
 Sister M. Perpetual Help  
 Leahy, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Stephen (Etienne)  
 LeBoeuf, Marguerite  
 Sister Mary Rosalia



Legault, Alice  
 Sister M. Alice Therese  
 Lorteau, Helen  
 Sister M. Pascal Baylon  
 Malo, Laurette  
 Sister M. Anne Rita  
 McGrory, Hazel  
 Sister M. Isaac Jogues  
 McKenna, Suzann  
 Sister M. Pius  
 Michaud, Lea  
 Sister M. Angela  
 Murphy, Ann Jane  
 Sister M. Michael Archangel  
 Ouimette, Agnes  
 Sister M. John Damascene  
 Paquette, Eveline  
 Sister M. Anne Eveline  
 Pellerin, Adele  
 Sister M. Josaphat  
 Peterson, Mary E.  
 Sister M. of the Cross  
 Riopelle, Lumena  
 Sister M. Prudence  
 Robillard, Virginie  
 Sister M. Annonciade  
 Roy, Olivina  
 Sister M. Sidonia  
 Sally, Mary  
 Sister M. Winifred  
 Saunders (Sanders), Antoinette  
 Sister M. Zephyrin  
 Senecal, Albina  
 Sister M. Seraphine of the Sacred Heart  
 Smith, Cordelia  
 Sister M. Margaret of the Sacred Heart  
 Smith, Maggie  
 Sister M. Lidwine  
 Specken, Mary Anna  
 Sister M. Justa  
 Therien, Odile  
 Sister M. Alberic  
 Tougas, Emma  
 Sister M. Aza  
 Vincelette, Marie Parmelia  
 Sister M. Itha  
 Weimer, Gertrude  
 Sister M. Armella  
 Williams, Lanita  
 Sister M. Clement Joseph

### Juneau

Allard, Elmire  
 Sister M. of Good Counsel  
 Arel (Harel), Josephine  
 Sister M. Theophile of Rome  
 Audette, Yvonne  
 Sister M. Anne Dolores  
 Baldwin, Catherine  
 Sister Mary Martha

Barry, Mary Margaret  
 Sister Mary Angelus  
 Belanger, Clarisse  
 Sister M. Dolora  
 Bernard, Josephine Annette  
 Sister M. John Bernard  
 Bessette, Malvina  
 Sister M. Barbara  
 Boudreau, Clarisse  
 Sister M. Claire of the Trinity (Clarita)  
 Brasseur, Marie Ida  
 Sister M. Ida of the Eucharist  
 Brault, Alphonsine  
 Sister M. Archangel  
 Brazeau, Aldina  
 Sister M. Michel of Florence  
 Brophy, Joan Barbara  
 Sister M. Gonzaga  
 Brouillette, Marie  
 Sister M. Francis  
 Brousseau, Theresa  
 Sister Rita Marie  
 Cantin, Rose  
 Sister M. Rose of the Child Jesus  
 Cantwell, Margaret  
 Sister Kathleen Mary  
 Cardinal, Irene  
 Sister M. Emma  
 Carmel, Imelda  
 Sister M. Epiphane  
 Carriere, Yvonne  
 Sister M. Joseph des Anges  
 Carroll, Eleanor  
 Sister M. Ethelind  
 Cavanagh, Irene  
 Sister M. Ethelbert  
 Charbonneau, Aurore  
 Sister M. Corona  
 Colbert, Manuella  
 Sister M. Emmanuella  
 Colford, Eva  
 Sister M. Alfreda  
 Colliard, Gabrielle  
 Sister M. Gabriella  
 Conlin, Mary Ellen  
 Sister Joan Marie  
 Cormier, Pauline  
 Sister M. Charles of Jesus  
 Cote, Adelina  
 Sister M. Thomas of Florence  
 Coubeaux, Madeleine  
 Sister M. Berthilda  
 Coutu, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Edward of Jesus  
 Daigneault, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Dositheus  
 Daigneault, Simone  
 Sister Carmen Marie  
 Daly, Margaret  
 Sister M. Anna

Daoust, Georgianna  
 Sister M. Stanislas Kostka  
 Darche, Rosanna  
 Sister M. Joseph Agapit  
 Deas, Anne  
 Sister Miriam Anne  
 Demientieff, Margaret Mary  
 Sister M. of the Holy Cross  
 (M. Holy Cross)  
 Denis, Ida  
 Sister Joseph de Marie  
 Denomme, Anna  
 Sister M. Barnabé  
 Desrosiers, Gilberte  
 Sister M. Clementia  
 Doogan, Anna Marie  
 Sister M. Joseph Raphael  
 Doogan, Theresa Frances  
 Sister Miriam Jude  
 Dooly, Annie  
 Sister M. Victor  
 Down, Grace Barbara  
 Sister M. Faustina  
 Downey, Rita  
 Sister Miriam Rita  
 Doyle, Kathleen  
 Sister M. Kathleen  
 Dozois, Flora  
 Sister M. Ludovic  
 Dumas, Doris  
 Sister M. Therese Bernadette  
 Duncan (Stack), Florence  
 Sister M. Agnes  
 Edwards, Marion Elinor  
 Sister M. Ambrose  
 Felker, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Rose Antoinette  
 Fife, Regina  
 Sister M. Antonius  
 Fillion, Marie  
 Sister M. Peter in Chains  
 (Pierre aux Liens)  
 Foisy, Eutichienne  
 Sister M. Mathias  
 Fontaine, Emma  
 Sister M. Zenon  
 Fontaine, Philomene  
 Sister M. Bruno  
 Freney, Catherine  
 Sister M. Alena  
 Gareau, Marie-Louise  
 Sister M. Adolphe  
 Gareau, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Henrietta of Jesus  
 Godin, Zenobie  
 Sister M. John Leonard  
 Golden, Mable C.  
 Sister M. Gertrude of the Eucharist



Gouin, Alexandrina  
 Sister M. Gerard  
 Goulet, Marie  
 Sister M. Madeleine of  
 the Sacred Heart  
 Granger, Augustine  
 Sister M. Pudentienne  
 Granger, Eva  
 Sister M. Olympe  
 Gray, Annie  
 Sister M. Thomas of the Rosary  
 Greff, Catherine  
 Sister M. Bonsecours  
 Grimm, Anna  
 Sister M. Wilhelmina  
 Hagan, Margaret  
 Sister M. Thecla  
 Hanley, Helena  
 Sister M. Fintan  
 Harel, Josephine (see Arel)  
 Hassen, Jane  
 Sister M. Victor  
 Hebert, Emma  
 Sister M. Modeste  
 Hervieux, Marie  
 Sister M. Constantine  
 Hortie, Lea  
 Sister M. Amée  
 Janelle, Elizabeth  
 Sister Elizabeth Marie  
 Jolie, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Joanne  
 Kelly, Agnes May  
 Sister M. Dunstan  
 Kelly, Kate  
 Sister M. Georges  
 King, Mary Dorothy  
 Sister Mary Dorothea  
 Kirwan, Catherine  
 Sister Mary Luca  
 Lagace, Beatrice Antoinette  
 Sister M. Marcellus  
 Lambert, Marie Rose Eva  
 Sister M. Rose Eva  
 Landry, Helena  
 Sister M. Thomasina  
 Langevin, Ellen (Nellie)  
 Sister M. Geraldine  
 Langlois, Simone  
 Sister M. Anna of Jesus  
 Latour, Emerentienne  
 Sister M. Anne of Sion  
 Laurin, Bertha  
 Sister M. Clementina  
 Laurin, Marie Louise  
 Sister M. of the Passion  
 Laurin, Vitaline  
 Sister M. Perpetual Help

Lavigne, Virginie  
 Sister M. of the Infant Jesus  
 Lavoie, Julie  
 Sister M. Hippolyte  
 LeBoeuf, Marguerite  
 Sister Mary Rosalia  
 LeClair, Mary Agnes  
 Sister M. Rosalita  
 Lefebvre, Marie Louise  
 Sister M. Yolande  
 Lefebvre, Rosalie  
 Sister M. Leo  
 Lemire, Angela  
 Sister M. Anne Cecilia  
 Lemire, Rita  
 Sister M. Claire Rita  
 Levasseur, Leontine  
 Sister M. Xaverine  
 Loiselle, Dora  
 Sister M. Florent (Florentius)  
 Lutz, Olive  
 Sister M. Olive Ann  
 Lyons, Mary  
 Sister M. Romuald  
 MacDonald, Agnes  
 Sister M. Mercedes  
 MacIntyre, Mary Catherine  
 Sister M. Abigail  
 Mahoney, Colleen  
 Sister M. Colleen Ann  
 Mailhot, Delia  
 Sister M. Frances of Chantal  
 Malo, Laurette  
 Sister M. Anne Rita  
 Malone, Bridget  
 Sister M. Hildegarde  
 Marcotte, Anita  
 Sister M. Antonia of the Sacred Heart  
 McCullough, Anne  
 Sister M. Lucinda  
 McDonald, Mary Eva  
 Sister M. Adolphus  
 McGarrigle, Mary Josephine  
 Sister M. Lucita  
 McGauvran (McGovern), RONALDA  
 Sister M. RONALDA  
 McGrory, Hazel  
 Sister M. Isaac Jogues  
 McIntyre, Mary Ann  
 Sister Mary Aurelius  
 McKenna, Marion  
 Sister M. Fernando  
 Meloche, Emerentienne  
 Sister M. Febronia  
 Morin, Antonia  
 Sister M. Anne Elise  
 Morin, Theophanie  
 Sister M. Placide

Munn, Virginie  
 Sister M. Rogatien  
 Nyland, Agnes Cecilia  
 Sister M. Rosalinda  
 O'Connor, Bernice  
 Sister M. Florence  
 O'Riley, Winifred  
 Sister M. Sylvester  
 O'Riordan, Kathleen  
 Sister M. Joyce  
 Ouimette, Agnes  
 Sister M. John Damascene  
 Paquette, Eveline  
 Sister M. Anne Eveline  
 Pare, Josephine  
 Sister M. Theresa of the Sacred Heart  
 Pigeon, Zepherina  
 Sister M. Armenia  
 Pilon, Mary  
 Sister M. Edith  
 Pineault, Victoria  
 Sister M. Theodore  
 Poncelet, Matilda  
 Sister M. Ethel  
 Powell, Mary  
 Sister M. Laurena  
 Racette, Ernestine  
 Sister M. Prosper  
 Richard, Lavinia  
 Sister M. Albert  
 Richard, Patricia Marie  
 Sister Christine Marie  
 Riel, Emma  
 Sister M. Bertholde  
 Riel, Irene  
 Sister M. Irene Theresa  
 Riopelle, Lumena  
 Sister M. Prudence  
 Rondeau, Julia  
 Sister M. Julien  
 Sally, Helen  
 Sister M. Frances  
 Saunders (Sanders), Antoinette  
 Sister M. Zephyrin  
 Schields, Margaret Emely  
 Sister M. Pascal Baylon  
 Stack, Johanna Aurelia  
 Sister M. Loyola  
 Sylvestre, Philomene  
 Sister M. Flore  
 Torpey, Ellen (Helen)  
 Sister M. Druscilla  
 Tougas, Angele  
 Sister M. Peter  
 Tourigny, Anne  
 Sister M. Stella  
 Trinque, Florida  
 Sister M. Thomas Joseph



Trudeau, Germaine  
 Sister M. Dolorosa  
 Valois, Adele  
 Sister M. Virginia  
 Vincelette, Marie Parmelia  
 Sister M. Itha  
 Wambeke, Agnes Beatrice  
 Sister M. Beatrice  
 Weimer, Gertrude  
 Sister M. Armella  
 Weimer, Teresa  
 Sister M. Hilda  
 Wheldon, Irene  
 Sister Miriam Theresa  
 Wilson, Mary Jane  
 Sister M. Milburge

### **Kanakanak**

Doogan, Marjorie Loretta  
 Sister M. Kevin

### **Mountain Village/Pilot Station**

LaRose, Jeannette  
 Sister M. Agatha of the Angels

### **Nulato**

Beaudoin, Marie Louise  
 Sister M. Evariste  
 Beaulieu, Alma  
 Sister M. of the Eucharistic Heart  
 Benoit, Indiana  
 Sister M. Antonia of Jesus  
 Bernard, Josephine Annette  
 Sister M. John Bernard  
 Boucher, Elisa  
 Sister M. Gedeon  
 Brassard, Caroline  
 Sister M. Didace  
 Brault, Delima  
 Sister M. Pauline  
 Brault, Rose de Lima  
 Sister M. Ralph (Raoul)  
 Cantin, Rose  
 Sister M. Rose of the Child Jesus  
 Cantwell, Margaret  
 Sister Kathleen Mary  
 Carmel, Imelda  
 Sister M. Epiphane  
 Caron, Mary Corrine (Alice)  
 Sister M. Claude  
 Corneau, Helene  
 Sister M. Rose Estelle  
 Dumas, Doris  
 Sister M. Therese Bernadette  
 Dupuis, Eva  
 Sister Clarence Marie  
 Farly, Annonciade  
 Sister M. Sylvina

Forcier, Emelie  
 Sister M. Noemi  
 Forest, Dorothy  
 Sister Dorothy Marie  
 Goulet, Anna  
 Sister M. du Coeur de Jésus  
 Grimm, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Amelia  
 Hanks, Agnes  
 Sister Agnes Marie  
 Hughes, Katherine  
 Sister Mary Freda  
 LaRose, Jeannette  
 Sister M. Agatha of the Angels  
 Leahy, Elizabeth  
 Sister M. Stephen (Etienne)  
 Lemire, Rita  
 Sister M. Claire Rita  
 Lorteau, Helen  
 Sister M. Pascal Baylon  
 MacIntyre, Mary Catherine  
 Sister M. Abigail  
 Mahoney, Colleen  
 Sister M. Colleen Ann  
 Malo, Laurette  
 Sister M. Anne Rita  
 Marcotte, Anita  
 Sister M. Antonia of the Sacred Heart  
 McCaffrey, Mary  
 Sister M. Francis of Jesus  
 McKenna, Suzanne  
 Sister M. Pius  
 Michaud, Lea  
 Sister M. Angela  
 Murphy, Ann Jane  
 Sister M. Michael Archangel  
 O'Riley, Winifred  
 Sister M. Sylvester  
 Paquette, Eveline  
 Sister M. Anne Eveline  
 Sally, Mary  
 Sister M. Winifred  
 St.-Germain, Cecile  
 Sister M. Claire Cecilia  
 Surprenant, Agnes  
 Sister M. Addée  
 Williams, Lanita  
 Sister M. Clement Joseph

### **St. Mary's**

Hanks, Agnes  
 Sister Agnes Marie  
 LaRose, Jeannette  
 Sister M. Agatha of the Angels  
 Mitchell, Delia  
 Sister M. Kateri

### **Sitka**

Down, Grace Barbara  
 Sister M. Faustina  
 Edwards, Marion Elinor  
 Sister M. Ambrose  
 Forcier, Emelie  
 Sister M. Noemi  
 Gareau, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Henrietta of Jesus  
 McGarrigle, Mary Josephine  
 Sister M. Lucita

### **Skagway**

Allard, Elmire  
 Sister M. of Good Counsel  
 Caron, Mary Corrine  
 Sister M. Claude  
 Cashen, Catherine F.  
 Sister M. Philippa  
 Cincotta, Ida Gaetana  
 Sister M. Felicia  
 Corneau, Helene  
 Sister M. Rose Estelle  
 Doogan, Anna Marie  
 Sister M. Joseph Raphael  
 Doogan, Marjorie Loretta  
 Sister M. Kevin  
 Down, Grace Barbara  
 Sister M. Faustina  
 Edwards, Marion Elinor  
 Sister M. Ambrose  
 Felker, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Rose Antoinette  
 Fitzgerald, Mary Josephine  
 Sister M. Baptista  
 Forcier, Emelie  
 Sister M. Noemi  
 Gareau, Rose Anna  
 Sister M. Henrietta of Jesus  
 Granger, Augustine  
 Sister M. Pudentienne  
 Hemond, Berthe  
 Sister M. Aimée of the Precious Blood  
 Janelle, Elizabeth  
 Sister Elizabeth Marie  
 Jarmy (Gabriel), Margaret  
 Sister M. Edna  
 Jolie, Antoinette  
 Sister M. Joanne  
 Lagace, Beatrice Antoinette  
 Sister M. Marcellus  
 LaRose, Jeannette  
 Sister M. Agatha of the Angels  
 Laurin, Bertha  
 Sister M. Clementina  
 LeBoeuf, Marguerite  
 Sister Mary Rosalia  
 LeClair, Mary Agnes  
 Sister M. Rosalita



Levasseur, Leontine  
 Sister M. Xaverine  
 MacIntyre, Mary Catherine  
 Sister M. Abigail  
 Malo, Laurette  
 Sister M. Anne Rita  
 McDonald, Mary Eva  
 Sister M. Adolphus  
 McGarrigle, Mary Josephine  
 Sister M. Lucita  
 McGrory, Hazel  
 Sister M. Isaac Jogues  
 McIntyre, Mary Ann  
 Sister Mary Aurelius  
 Michaud, Lea  
 Sister M. Angela  
 Morin, Antonia  
 Sister M. Anne Elise

Needham, Lorraine  
 Sister M. Walburga  
 Nyland, Agnes Cecilia  
 Sister M. Rosalinda  
 O'Connor, Bernice  
 Sister M. Florence  
 Plante, Eva  
 Sister M. Liliose  
 Richard, Lavinia  
 Sister M. Albert  
 Rondeau, Julia  
 Sister M. Julien  
 Sinnott, Mary  
 Sister M. Martin of Tours  
 Tougas, Emma  
 Sister M. Aza  
 Wadkin, Catherine Mary  
 Sister Mary William

Wambeke, Agnes Beatrice  
 Sister M. Beatrice  
 Welch, Mary Eloise  
 Sister M. Anne Eloise  
 Welsh, Anna  
 Sister M. Mildred  
 Williams, Lanita  
 Sister M. Clement Joseph  
 Wilson, Mary Jane  
 Sister M. Milburge

### Whitehorse

Brassard, Caroline  
 Sister M. Didace  
 Parsons, Mary  
 Sister M. Augustine

## The Sisters Who are Buried in the North

At	Name	Age	Date of Death
<b>Holy Cross</b>			
1896	Sister M. Angilbert Hermine Bellerose	27	19 May 1896
1900	Sister M. Seraphine of the Sacred Heart Albina Senecal	33	24 July 1900
1942	Sister M. Perpetual Help Vitaline Laurin	69	24 April 1942
1957	Sister M. Pius Susanna McKenna	66	7 June 1957
<b>Nulato</b>			
1913	Sister M. of the Eucharistic Heart Alma Beaulieu	28	2 November 1913
<b>Dawson, Y.T.</b>			
1909	Sister M. Lidwine Maggie Smith	26	20 September 1909
1923	Sister M. John Damascene Agnes Ouimette	59	22 April 1923
1935	Sister M. Antonia of Jesus Indiana Benoit	65	4 October 1935
1950	Sister M. Gedeon Elise Boucher	78	10 January 1950
<b>Juneau</b>			
1917	Sister M. Zenobia Theobalda Rondeau	56	9 October 1917
1920	Sister M. Malachy Mary McCullough	35	3 March 1920
<b>Anchorage</b>			
1982	Sister Dorothy Marie Dorothy Forest	62	17 November 1982



## Notes for Chapter One

### A Call to Alaska: Juneau and Douglas

Archdiocese of Anchorage Archives	AAA
Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus	OPA
Sisters of Saint Ann, Montreal, Mother House Archives	SMA
Sisters of Saint Ann, Victoria, Provincial House Archives	SPA
British Columbia Archives	BCA

French references have been noted under their original title to avoid confusion with similar works with English titles. An effort to obviate spelling inconsistencies has been made. Pertinent quotations from French works have been included in the note section, but much of the material has been translated into English and incorporated either into the text or the notes.

1. Down, Mary Margaret, S.S.A., *A Century of Service*, Morriss Printing Company, Ltd., Victoria, B.C., 1966, pp. 66, 98.
2. Gauthier, Mary Angele, S.S.A., Journal 1858, p. 12. Sisters of Saint Ann Provincial Archives, B.C., henceforth identified as SPA.
3. Down, *A Century of Service*, p. 37. This researched account follows the growth and services of the Sisters of St. Ann in the West and North.
4. Register of Pupils, Saint Ann's Academy, Victoria, B.C., 1858-1923. SPA.  
Register of Pupils, Saint Ann's Academy, Cowichan, Vancouver Island, 1864-April 1929. SPA. (See listings at end of Chapter 1 notes.)
5. Early accounts of these visits are recorded in the early journals, or chronicles, of the time. SPA.
6. Hulley, Clarence C., *Alaska: Past and Present*, "Early Missions and Schools," Binfords & Mort, Portland, Oregon, 1958, p. 236.
7. Cantwell, Margaret, S.S.A., "History of the Archdiocese of Anchorage," Part I: Ch. 1, p. 20, MS. Archives of the Archdiocese of Anchorage, henceforth identified as AAA.  
On his return to Victoria in 1878, Bishop Seghers brought back from Unalaska, Tatiana Romanoff, aged 5, to begin her formal education at Saint Ann's Academy. Tatiana was the acknowledged delight of the prelate. Many a time, when his work allowed, he stopped at the school, asked for Tatiana, and took her for a walk in the nearby park. People meeting the pair smiled at the spectacled clergyman and the "wild flower from Alaska." Seeing Tatiana nurtured in the Faith answered a great need Bishop Seghers had of seeing all of Alaska so graced.
8. Auclair, l'abbé Elie-J., *Histoire des Soeurs de Sainte Anne*, Montréal, 1922, p. 245.
9. Down, p. 90.  
In 1879 John Baptist Brondel was consecrated Bishop of Vancouver Island in succession to Bishop Charles Seghers who was named Co-adjutor Archbishop of Oregon.  
In 1884, however, Bishop Brondel was transferred to the Diocese of Helena in Montana. This freed the Diocese of Vancouver Island (Victoria) for the return of Archbishop Seghers.
10. Régistre des Actes de Délibérations du Conseil Majeur de la Communauté des Filles de Ste. Anne, (sept. 11, 1883 à mai 4, 1906), (Victoria record: p. 21, 6 June 1886):  
Refus d'une fondation à Fort Wrangle - Ce 24 mars, 1884, dans une assemblée régulière, le conseil majeur . . . a été décidé à l'unanimité, de refuser la demande de fondation du Rév. Père Jonckau au Fort Wrangle . . .  
Sisters of Saint Ann, Mother House Archives, Montreal (Lachine), Quebec, henceforth identified as SMA.
11. Orth, Donald J., *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, Geological Survey Professional Paper, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971, p. 374. Juneau was the also first American settlement in Alaska.
12. Régistre des Actes de Délibérations du Conseil Majeur de la Communauté des Filles de Ste. Anne:  
Lecture a été faite d'une lettre de S. M. Anne de Jésus, supre. vicariale, demandant l'autorisation de Conseil de la nomination de S. M. Zénon, comme supre de Juneau et donnant quelques explications



concernant les oeuvres de ce nouvel établissement. La nomination de S. M. Zénon a été approuvée et la fondation de Juneau ayant été consentie par notre Rév. Mère lors de sa visite à Victoria, à la place de Fort Wrangle que l'on prétendait avoir été acceptée par la communauté: bien que le présent registre fasse foi du contraire, le Conseil n'a eu qu'à sanctionner la décision déjà prise pour Juneau et à discuter sur la question des oeuvres à embrasser, spécialement la charge des enfants masculins. Il a été décidé d'écrire à la Supérieure Vicariale que les Conseillères sont unanimes à rejeter la charge des garçons, c'est-à-dire leur surveillance au dortoir, au réfectoire, etc. En un mot, à les prendre comme pensionnaires dans notre future maison de Juneau.

Autre chose de leur faire la classe où le Catéchisme comme il se pratique dans nos écoles des Etats-Unis.

13. Cantwell, MS., Part I: Ch. 1, p. 67. AAA.
14. Mondor, Mary Anne Eva, S.S.A., *A History of the Sisters of Saint Anne*, Vantage Press, N.Y., 1961, p. 328. A translation of *L'Histoire des Soeurs de Sainte Anne, 1850 à 1900*, by Sr. M. Jean-de-Pathmos, S.S.A. Also Down, p. 101.
15. It is through her faith and courage that the Sisters of St. Ann agreed to support Archbishop Seghers' zeal for Alaska. She successively supported the subsequent efforts of the Prefects Apostolic of Alaska.  
Crimont, Joseph Raphael, S.J., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, Provincial Superior at Victoria, 20 September 1913, on the death of Mother Mary Anastasia:  
Au nom de l'Alaska, dont elle peut à juste titre être appelée l'Apôtre avec Monseigneur Seghers, je répands sur son tombeau mes larmes, ma reconnaissance et mes prières. SPA.
16. Althoff, John, letter from Juneau to Mother Mary Anastasia in Victoria 19 Feb. 1886. The letter makes five points:
  - 1) The establishment of a religious community in Alaska would bring about spiritual good.
  - 2) The maintenance of a community could be realized by educating Native students, as the U.S. government was setting up grants for the education of Native children. Education was the primary ministry of the Sisters of Saint Ann.
  - 3) Before the school, the good will of the people of Juneau was necessary. Opening a hospital would respond to many needs, including that of gaining good will. A building would be available. Doctors were in the area. Planed lumber was being sent to Juneau by the Archbishop to add to the hospital building.
  - 4) The maintenance of the hospital could come from monthly donations by contributors who would, when sick, have right of admission.
  - 5) Proposed steps for the Juneau ministry would be a) hospital, b) day school, c) boarding school (girls only).
17. In founding her Congregation, Mother Mary Ann drew together dedicated women who studied diligently in order to open and staff French Canadian schools. The new Congregation also received permission to teach boys, as expressly requested by Mother Mary Ann. This was an innovation in 1850. Having older boys as boarders, however, was always strictly forbidden.  
From its opening in November 1886, St. Ann's School, Juneau, always numbered boys among those enrolled.
18. Down, p. 73. The 35-bed hospital opened on 27 June 1876.
19. Anonymous, *A Chaplet of Years 1858-1918*, S.S.A. publication, p. 15.  
Also Necrology 12 February 1915, Sister Mary de Bonsecours.
20. Berchmans, Journaux de Victoria (1886-1887).
21. Annales de la Communauté 7 septembre 1886.  
Prayers for a safe journey were well answered. The *Ancon* was wrecked at Glacier Bay shortly after the sisters disembarked at Juneau.
22. Welsh, Mary Mildred, S.S.A., *The Apostle of Alaska*, St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N.J., 1943, p. 213, a translation of *Vie de Monseigneur Seghers* by Maurice DeBaets.
23. Althoff, John, letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 19 February 1886: "I want to welcome the Sisters of Saint Ann to Alaska."
24. Pineault, Mary Theodore, S.S.A., "The Sisters of Saint Ann in North Pacific Lands, 1886-1936," MS. SPA.
25. Mondor, p. 329.



26. Pineault, p. 3.
27. Juneau Chronicles (St. Ann's Hospital), 1886. SPA.
28. Pineault, p. 4.
29. Ibid. p. 9.
30. Ibid.
31. Necrology (Sister Mary Zenon), 5 May 1932.
32. Mondor, p. 329.  
Also Juneau Chronicles list the personnel as Sr. Mary Zenon, superior; Sr. M. de Bonsecours, nurse; Sr. M. Victor, cook.
33. Necrology (Sister M. de Bonsecours), 12 February 1915. The necrology gives the departure date from Juneau as of October. Chronicles of 1887 give departure date as 3 December 1887. Sister left with two Hollyhood children from Sitka.
34. Pineault, p. 5.  
Also Juneau Chronicles.
35. DeArmond, Robert, *Southeast Alaska Empire*, 3 March 1980.
36. Ibid. 31 March 1980.
37. Ibid. 9 April 1980.
38. Undated card, SPA.
39. Fortune, Robert, M.D., *Chills and Fevers, Health and Disease in the Early History of Alaska*, U. of Alaska Press, 1989, pp. 125- 140.
40. "Alaska's Health," a Survey Report, The Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh, 1954.  
Also Dmytryshin, Basil and E. A. P. Crownhart-Vaughan, *The End of Russian America, Captain P. N. Golovin's Last Report 1862*, Oregon Historical Society, 1979, pp. 65, 68.  
A translation of *Obzor Russkikh Kolonii V Severnoi Amerike* by Pavel N. Golovin, Sankpeterburg, 1862. British Columbia Archives, Victoria, B.C., henceforth identified as BCA.
41. Fortune, pp. 141-157.
42. Ibid. pp. 157-160.
43. Fontaine, Mary Zenon, S.S.A., letter 12 December 1886.
44. Mr. and Mrs. Sunny. (Mrs. Sunny was the former Marion Murphy.)
45. Naske, Claus-M. and Slotnick, Herman E., *Alaska, A History of the 49th State*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979, pp. 62-63.
46. Juneau Chronicles.
47. Ibid.
48. Pineault, p. 10. The bazaar brought a profit of \$640. Mentioned as generous and active contributors were: Mrs. Brady, Mrs. McGrath, and Mrs. Reid.
49. Pineault, p. 5.
50. Anonymous Sister of Saint Ann, "Alaska's First Resident Priest," *Ave Maria*, Vol, XXIII (new series), No. 15, 10 April 1926. SPA.
51. Letter in French, 17 April 1888.
52. Pineault, pp. 11, 12.
53. Cantwell, Part I: Ch. 1, p. 60.
54. Pineault.  
Also Juneau Chronicles.
55. Annales de la Communauté (typed), 17 novembre 1886.  
Also Journal from Lachine sent to Victoria 20 November 1886.  
Also Régistre "Chroniques" (1885-1892), p. 50. SMA.
56. Gruening, Ernest, *The State of Alaska*, Random House, N.Y., 1954, p. 61.



57. Tougas, Mary Peter, S.S.A., notebook. SPA.
58. Pineault, p. 10.
59. Pineault, letter, 12 September 1887.
60. Gruening, *The State of Alaska*, p. 74.
61. Swineford, Governor Alfred P., 1885-1899, Report of the Secretary of the Interior (1887).
62. Chronicles. SPA.
63. DeArmond, *Southeast Alaska Empire*, "Gastineau Bygones," 7 December 1979, 18 April 1980.  
Also Fontaine, Mary Zenon, letter to Mother Provincial, 4 January 1913. SPA.  
Also Jubilee Booklet (1886-1936), p. 35.  
Also Down, p. 101.  
Also School Registers.
64. Emma Fontaine is the legal name (civil name) of Sister Mary Zenon.
- True Copy  
In the United States Commissioner's Court, at Juneau, For the District of Alaska, in probate.  
In the Matter of the application of Emma Fontaine, to adopt the infant child of Pauline Gunderson  
The petition of Emma Fontaine, praying leave to adopt the infant child of Pauline Gunderson, born October 17, 1895, together with the consent in writing of said Pauline Gunderson, consenting to said adoption, having been duly filed and the Court being fully satisfied of the identity and relation of said Pauline Gunderson to said child, and that the petitioner, Emma Fontaine, is a suitable person and possessed of sufficient ability to bring up said child and furnish suitable nurture and education for the same and that it is fit and proper that such an adoption should take effect, and the Court being fully advised in the premises, it is hereby ordered adjudged and decreed that from and after the date of the decree said child shall to all legal intents and purposes become the child of said petitioner, Emma Fontaine, who shall have the right to give to such said child such name as to her shall seem proper.
- Done in open Court, this 4 day of November, 1895.  
(Signed) H. W. Mellen Ex Officio Probate Judge  
I hereby certify that the foregoing is a copy of an order of this Court as appears on the records thereof.  
(Signed) H. W. Mellen Ex Officio Probate Judge
65. Maisons Fermées, Douglas, pp. 5-7. SMA.
66. Juneau newspaper clipping, 3 October 1896.
67. Maisons Fermées, Douglas.
68. Anonymous, "Alaska's First Resident Priest," *Ave Maria*, p. 454.
69. Gruening, *The State of Alaska*, pp. 96, 124, 151-152, 176.
70. René J. B., S.J., College of St. Francis, N.Y., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, General Superior, no year given. Context suggests 1898. SMA.
71. Letters between Mother Mary Anastasia, 12 November 1910, and Very Reverend Father Crimont, 9 December 1910. SMA.
72. Fontaine, Mary Zenon, letter, 4 January 1913.
73. Decisions included:  
a) it would be a parochial school and the responsibility of the parish,  
b) salary would be \$25 a month for each teacher,  
c) parish would furnish fuel, light, janitorial services.  
The building was demolished in 1991.
74. Bishop Crimont asked for Sisters of Saint Ann for Ketchikan. In a letter, 6 February 1928, from Mother Mary Gabriel, Provincial Superior, the Congregation declined.
75. Crimont, Bishop J. R., S.J., letter to Mother Mary Leopoldine, General Superior, 15 December 1920:  
I cannot but add that I regret deeply that you cannot see your way clear to move the two establishments



to Ketchikan. The people there have great need of such services, and have lately refused the services of the Methodist group because of an enduring hope that sisters will eventually come. SMA.

76. *Maisons Fermées*, Douglas, pp. 41-42.  
Also Mondor, p. 333.
77. Down, p. 156.  
In 1943, religious vacation classes were organized in areas of British Columbia, the Yukon and Alaska where Catholic schools did not exist and where demands were sufficient to warrant carrying out this work.  
The Juneau-Douglas effort predated this ministry.
78. Juneau Chronicles name the following graduates:  
1921: Madeline Valentine  
1931: Leonard Forrest, Mabel Ritter, Lucile Norton.  
1936: Anna Marie Doogan, Dorothea Johnson, Elaine Martinsen.  
1937: Elizabeth Mary Goodman.
79. "Golden Jubilee," brochure, *Daily Alaska Empire*, p. 39. SPA.
80. Doogan, Mary Kevin, S.S.A., interview 1982.
81. Cantwell, Part II: Ch. 2, p. 71a.
82. Crimont, Bishop Joseph R., S.J., letter to Mother Mary Leopoldine, General Superior, 1941.  
The bishop referred to the sister as Sister Mary Gabriella. But in the response, the name of Sister Mary Emmanuella appears.  
"It would be no small privilege and glory to initiate this new form of apostolate in Alaska," wrote the bishop. SMA.
83. DeArmond, Robert, *Southeast Alaska Empire*, "Gastineau Bygones," 18 April 1980. Original date: 23 May 1933.  
To make room for the new addition to St. Ann's Hospital, a building erected in 1900 is being torn down. It was put up by the Sisters of St. Ann to serve as a boarding school and was completed in March, 1900. After the school closed in 1911, it served as a residence for members of the order.
84. Poncelet, Mary Ethel, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
85. Barry, Sister Angelus, S.S.A., responses (oral and written), October 1983.
86. Freney, Sister Alena, S.S.A., interview October 1983.
87. Community records: Sister M. Edward of Jesus, 24 years in Juneau (1914 to 1932) and (1935 to 1941). Sister M. Modeste, 29 years in Juneau (1923 to 1952).
88. Hospital Records.  
Members of the Hospital Board at the time of the building of the 1954 wing were: Ernest Gruening, Waino Hendrickson, Wallis George, Don Wilson, Thelma Engstrom, C. A. Carroll, B. F. Dunn, Bess O'Neill, J. F. Mullen, B. Frank Heintzleman, Robert Boochever, Kathryn Nordale, Mark Jensen, Bob Druxman, Sister Mary Henrietta, S.S.A., and Sister Mary Rose Eva, S.S.A.
89. Jones, H. Wendy, *Alaska's Dynamic Women*, Detail Quality Printing, Newport Beach, CA, 1977, p. 43.
90. Alaska State Hospital Association (ASHA) in 1965.
91. Northern Care, Vol. III, #2, 15 December 1962.
92. Fortier, Ed, *Northern Care*, editorial "An Era Is Ending," Vol. V, #5, December 1965:  
Both spiritually and physically, the Sisters of Saint Ann have assisted in the growth of the Territory of Alaska and the birth of the State of Alaska. As a force for good, an essential institution in the life of Alaska's Capital City, the contribution of the Sisters of Saint Ann and their hospital is beyond reckoning.  
It is to the credit of the Sisters of Saint Ann that in announcing their intentions to the Juneau City Council, they stated simply that the cost of needed remodeling or rebuilding would be "prohibitive." No dramatics, no histrionics, just a plain statement of fact.
93. Barry, Sister Angelus, S.S.A., brief, October 1983.  
Also Richard, Sister Christine Marie, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.



94. Barry, Sister Angelus, S.S.A., brief, October 1983.  
Mr. James Burns, formerly with the Department of Health in Juneau, was administrator and negotiated the transfer of patients and equipment to the new hospital (built at Salmon Creek and completed in July 1971). The new hospital was named Bartlett Memorial Hospital, in honor of Senator Bob Bartlett, a longtime resident of Alaska.
95. Barry, Sister Angelus, S.S.A., brief, October 1983.  
Sisters Mary Antonia of the Sacred Heart, Clarita and Angelus were the last sisters of Saint Ann to leave Juneau.
96. Catholic Commentary, The Anchorage Times, 4 November 1977, p. 28.
97. Ibid.



**Register of Pupils, 1858 to 1923, St. Ann's Academy, Victoria, B.C.  
Students from Alaska and the Yukon Territory**

Christine Spiritana, 7	Entered 6 Sept. 1869	from Sitka
Emma Chisemore, 3	Entered 20 March 1874 (stayed 4 years/later returned)	from Fort Tongass
	Entered 1 Sept. 1881	from Alaska
Agnes Choquette, 3	Entered 1 Jan. 1875	from Stikine
Tatiana Romanoff, 5 (born 11/18/73)	Entered 13 Sept. 1878	from Alaska
Mary Lafiere, 7	Entered 29 Oct. 1878	from Sitka
Anna Burns (no age given)	Entered 1 Sept. 1881	from Sitka
Lizzie Burns (no age given)	Entered 11 Jan. 1879	from Sitka
Ophelia Baronovitch, 17	Entered 29 April	from Ft. Wrangell
Nathalie Kasheveroff, 15	Entered 9 Sept. 1879	from Kodiak
Annie Allen (no age given)	Entered 1 Sept. 1881	from Alaska
Katie Allen, 9	Entered 21 Aug. 1882	from Alaska
Della Caplan, 10	Entered 18 Aug. 1884	from Alaska
Julia Haley (no age given)	Entered 1 Sept. 1885	from Alaska
Lettie Pavet (no age given)	Entered Sept. 1886	from Alaska
Annie Alberstone, 9	Entered 1887	from Alaska
Mamie Lear, 13	Entered 1887	from Sitka
Mary McMahan, 13	Entered 1894	from Juneau
Nora Hammond, 14	Entered 1897	from Juneau
Frances Hammond, 10	Entered 1897	from Juneau
Maria Reda, 14	Entered 1898	from Juneau
Rosa Reda, 12	Entered 1898	from Juneau
Frank Reda, 6	Entered 1898	from Juneau
Janet Robertson, 10	Entered 1898	from Juneau
Gertie Robertson, 8	Entered 1898	from Juneau
Maggie Shotter, 21	Entered 1900	from Juneau
Irene Martin, 9	Entered 1904	from Whitehorse, YT
Margaret Mitchell, 18	Entered 1904	from Dawson, YT
Ann Sylvester, 8	Entered 1904	from Wrangell
Mary McLaughlin, 16	Entered 1905	from Dawson, YT
Nellie Shea, 12	Entered 1906	from Skagway
Clemence Hetherington, 16	Entered 1906	from Juneau
Valerie Quinn, 17	Entered 1906	from Seward
Winnie Williams, 16	Entered 1906	from Dawson, YT
Albert Pearl (no age given)	Entered 1907	from Dawson, YT
Catherine Strong (no age given)	Entered 1910	from Fairbanks
Edna Tremblay, 9	Entered 1908	from Dawson, YT
Nellie Flynn, 16	Entered 1910	from Skagway



Amanda Jussula, 12	Entered 1911	from Juneau
Mary Louise Kane, 16	Entered 1911	from Hoonah
Rose Isabelle Kane, 17	Entered 1911	from Hoonah
Mamie McGee, 11	Entered 1911	from Juneau
Rose Penglass, 21	Entered 1911	from Douglas
Hazel Studebaker, 13	Entered 1911	from Juneau
Mrs. Barnhill, 27	Entered 1913	from Juneau
Frances Barnhill, 7	Entered 1913	from Juneau
Grace Edgren, 8	Entered 1913	from Cordova
Helen Fox, 23	Entered 1913	from Juneau
Opie Harris, 15	Entered 1913	from Dawson, YT
Mamie Halm (no age given)	Entered Aug. 1915	from Treadwell
Goldie Halm (no age given)	Entered 1915	from Treadwell
Margaret Gladwin, 15	Entered 1918	from Dawson, YT
Frances Tystogi, 14	Entered 1919	from Dawson, YT
Carroll Webster, 18	Entered 1920	from Juneau
Frances Cashen, 16	Entered 1920	from Douglas
Esther Cashen, 19	Entered 1920	from Douglas
Mary Faulkner, 18	Entered 1920	from Dawson, YT
Kath. B. Martin, 15	Entered 1921	from Whitehorse, YT
Mary McCann, 15	Entered 1921	from Skagway
Pauline McCann, 14	Entered 1921	from Skagway
Hilda M. Telford, 20	Entered 1920	from Dawson, YT

### Register of Pupils, 1864 to April 1929, St. Ann's Convent, Cowichan, Vancouver Island Students from Alaska and the Yukon Territory

Georgianna Devost (no age given)	Entered 1876	from Stikine
Mary Maxim, 10	Entered 1883	from Sitka (died 9/5/85)
Mary Hollyhood, 9	Entered 1887	from Sitka
Catherine Hollyhood, 7	Entered 1887	from Sitka
Mary Beaudoin, 9	Entered 1888	from the Yukon River
Katie Cameron, 9	Entered 1888	from Juneau
Maggie Nole, 2	Entered 1888	from Juneau
Bessie Bowls, 5	1894	from Juneau
Mary Bowls, 2	1894	from Juneau
Mary Kate McClinchy, 9	Entered 1896	from Juneau
Lena Campbell, 9	Entered 1895	from Alaska
Helen Quinlevin, 7	Entered 1903	from Sitka
Melvin Keegan, 6	Entered 1903	from Juneau
Edwin Keegan, 5	Entered 1908	from Juneau
Dan Popovich, 5	Entered 1909	from Douglas



Harold Anderson, 7	Entered 1913	from Wrangell
George Anderson, 5	Entered 1913	from Wrangell
Jesse Walton, 8	Entered 1915	from Wrangell
William Manthy, 11	Entered 1915	from Cordova
Joe Wolfe, 5	Entered 1918	from Dawson, YT
Willie Williamson, 5	Entered 1918	from Dawson, YT
Charles Hoffmeier, 12	Entered 1920	from Douglas
Emmet Hoffmeier, 9	Entered 1920	from Douglas
Gordon Humphrey, 8	Entered 1920	from Douglas
Billy Humphrey, 6	Entered 1920	from Douglas
Ernest Gilligan, 11	Entered 1920	from Douglas

## Notes for Chapter Two

### A Call to New Reaches: Holy Cross, Akukurak, St. Mary's

1. Of the five trips (1873, 1877 to 1878, 1878, 1885, 1886) made by Archbishop Seghers to Alaska, two of them saw him actually on the Yukon River.
2. Seghers, Archbishop Charles John, letter to Father J. M. Cataldo, S.J., 12 February 1886. Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus, henceforth identified as OPA.  
Also, Perron, Joseph, S.J., "Alaska's First Missionary Martyr," *Catholic Missions*, March 1911, p. 50:  
Not having succeeded in obtaining missionaries in Europe, the archbishop, upon his return to America, applied a second time to Father Cataldo, S.J., Superior of the Rocky Mountain mission, who, although not wishing to assume any permanent obligations in the matter before consulting the Father General of the Society of Jesus, sent the Reverend Father Tosi, S.J., and the Reverend Father A. Robaut, S.J., to His Grace, to act as his companions during the new journey. SMA.
3. Seghers, Archbishop, letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, General Superior, 10 July 1886. SMA.
4. Victoria Chronicles, 3 August 1886. SPA.
5. *Catholic Sentinel*, Portland, Oregon, 15 July 1886.
6. The usual date given is 28 November, but 27 November is used in *The Apostle of Alaska, Vie de Monseigneur Seghers*, and in other writings based on Maurice DeBaets' work. The archbishop's diary ends on 25 November.
7. Hinckley, Ted C., *The Americanization of Alaska, 1867-1897*, Pacific Books Publishers, Palo Alto, CA, 1972, p. 154.
8. Perron, p. 54:  
After mature deliberation, they concluded not to abandon the country, but decided that one of them should return to the United States, inform their religious superiors of what had happened and confer with the latter as to the possibility of establishing a mission in Alaska, where, meanwhile, the other missionary would remain.
9. Father John J. Jonckau was administrator until his own death in 1888.  
Also refer to Down, p. 112.  
Most Reverend J. N. Lemmens was appointed to the episcopal see of Victoria and consecrated bishop on 5 August 1888.
10. Dmytryshin, Basil and E. A. P. Crownhart-Vaughan, *The End of Russian America, Captain P.N. Golovin's Last Report, 1862*, Oregon Historical Society, 1979, p. 54.  
. . . when they [Catholic missionaries] set out to convert, they are not frightened by hard work, deprivation or danger. When one dies, several others take his place. BCA
11. Jonckau, 16 February 1888:  
What shall we do? The Jesuits count on sisters. A boarding school will be built this summer in a place where no religion has yet penetrated. If we don't open a school, the Presbyterians will, for the American government pays generously all expenses.



The government lets us understand that if we do not act, this year, our chances are finished.

That means that Catholicism for Alaska will be lost. However, thousands of natives there wish for no other priests than those of Monsignor Seghers.

I'm not asking you to send sisters from Canada; just send one- -or even two—from Juneau or from any place in this diocese, but, for the love of God, send two sisters to the Yukon!

12. Acts of Council, Victoria (translation):

This February 16, 1888, at a regular meeting, the Council considered Father Jonckau's proposition regarding a foundation of a mission at Nulato, next May.

The Council favors this foundation but it sees that this is impossible if we do not receive from the Mother House competent subjects to replace those who will be named for Nulato. Therefore, we are asking that three sisters be sent to us next month if the Major Council endorses this foundation.

(Signed) Sr. M. Anne of Jesus

Vicar Superior

Sr. M. Providence, Sec.

13. Régistre des Actes de Délibérations du Conseil Majeur de la Communauté des Filles de Ste. Anne, 11 avril 1888, (translation):

. . . after taking knowledge of Father Jonckau's letter to his Grace, the Archbishop of Montreal [Edward Fabre], then of a second and a third letter to Reverend Mother Mary Anastasia, General Superior, in which new and strong arguments are presented in favor of having sisters in Nulato, and in which the most persuasive reasons are offered, especially that of the formal will of the Holy Father relative to the evangelization of Alaska, the councillors, unanimously decided to abide by the decision of the Archbishop who will be for us, the voice of God in this very important resolution. His Grace, the Archbishop of Montreal, having been consulted the next day, is of the opinion that this mission of sacrifices belongs to the Sisters of Saint Ann, and that it is God's Will that we accept it. Therefore, it is accepted. SMA.

Also Mother Mary Anastasia, letter to Father Jonckau, 15 April 1888:

You will have sisters for the Yukon, Father. A telegram has advised you of that. May Heaven grant that we faithfully accomplish what the Lord has measured out for us! SMA

Also Annals of the Community, 25 April 1888, p. 15 (typed copy):

Bishop Fabre granted General Communion to ask Divine protection on the missionaries of Alaska. SMA.

14. Notes: Mission d'Alaska sur le Youkon—Koserefski—1888, typed in French, beginning with the transcript of Father Jonckau's letter, 1 April 1888. SMA.

French telegrams read:

Missions d'Alaska sur le Youkon acceptées. Dix millions de remerciements et plus!

15. The solemnity was touched with sadness, for the sisters believed they would give their lives in the North, or return only after many years.

Anonymous, "Extraits de journaux," "To Alaska's Regions":

. . . this rule of leaving for good has been modified so that changes are made in these far-off missions every ten years. SMA.

16. De Ruyter, Mary Joseph Calasanz (Calasanctius), S.S.A., *The Voice of Alaska*, St. Ann's Press, Lachine, Quebec, 1947, p. 55.

From a letter, 30 April 1888, of Sister Mary Joseph Calasanctius to Mother Mary Anastasia, the name of the ship they were then on was the *Mexico*, (Bateau *Mexico*). However, *The Voice of Alaska* notes that the sisters left Victoria on the *Umatilla*.

*The Colonist* (Victoria, B.C.), 28 April 1888, p. 4, records that the *Mexico* left Victoria at 1:00 P.M. with Sisters Stephen, Pauline, and Joseph for San Francisco.

17. Notes of 1900, 1901, 1902, p. 69, a few handwritten pages beginning with p. 65:

When Father Jonckau died, the jurisdiction of Alaska fell to the Jesuits, who immediately took the sisters of the Far North missions under their care. They had belonged until then to the Vicariate of Victoria, for sustenance. SMA.



18. De Ruyter, p. 60:  
The storm was so wild that Captain Erskine, who had sailed these waters for a quarter of a century, had never before experienced anything like it.
19. *The Yukon*, captained by C. Peterson.
20. De Ruyter, p. 68:  
“You are three,” he [Father Tosi] said. “That is a perfect number! But you have come too soon: nothing is ready for you!” And again joy shone out — “But, how I welcome you!”
21. The cross was made by the father of Tatiana Romanoff, whom Archbishop Seghers had met. Tatiana had traveled with the prelate to school in Victoria.
22. Leahy, Sister Mary Stephen, S.S.A., *Journal* 1888 to 1889.
23. Perron, “Holy Cross Station, Alaska,” *Catholic Missions*, July 1911, p. 122:  
All through the previous winter, he had searched for an ideal mission location, one that was wooded and had suitable water. Witnessing these searches, a youth from Koserefski secretly showed Father Robaut an area avoided by the Indians who feared the presence of spirits there since it was near an Indian burial ground.  
The site to which Father Robaut was led was a natural amphitheater, about a mile downstream from Koserefski and across the river. A steep north hill, well-timbered with spruce, birch, and cottonwood gave shelter from the north wind. Other sloping hills, equally well-timbered, curved to the west. A slough stretched for ten miles directly in front of the site and beyond that, the Yukon River flowed. A clear stream ran through the flat base of the amphitheater. Father Robaut could foresee the mission: the sisters’ house near the stream, the church diagonally across from the convent, the Jesuit house near the church. There was room, too, for a village to grow along the slough and the priest dreamed that the Koserefski Indians would, little by little, lose their fear of the site and move close to the mission.
24. Osgood, Cornelius, *Ingalik Material Culture*, Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 22, reprinted by Human Relations Area Files Press, New Haven, 1970, p. 37.
25. Zagoskin, Lt. Lavrentiy, *Lieutenant Zagoskin’s Travels in Russian America, 1842-1844*, The First Ethnographic and Geographic Investigations in the Yukon and Kuskokwim Valleys of Alaska, edited by Henry N. Michael, *Translations from Russian Sources*, No. 7, published for the Arctic Institute of North America, University of Toronto Press, Canada, 1967, p. 193.  
We located Anilukhtakpak by observation at 62° 13’ 33” N, and the longitude by chronometer at 159° 49’ 38” W. Below this point the river comes together in one stream not over 200 sazhen [2.1 meters] in width, and for this reason the current is extremely rapid.  
Before the smallpox epidemic the native houses were in a little ravine near the river bank, but now they have been moved a short way downstream into another valley. The summer houses are built in a straight line along the bank and appear from a distance to have the regularity of a European settlement. The population I estimate at 150. The kazhim in the older settlement is a remarkable building, 12 sazhen square and over 6 sazhen high, with three tiers of benches made of pine planks that are 34 feet wide and have obviously been split and hewn with stone axes. In the journal of his first trip Glazunov tells of being received in this kazhim with over 700 adult natives. I am sure there must have been a festival or memorial ceremony in Anilukhtakpak at that time; otherwise how are we to explain a so much smaller population at present? It is known that the smallpox epidemic was not so devastating here as at Nulato. We were able to verify this fact by examining the memorials which are still being kept up and renewed by the relatives of the dead, since the time has not yet elapsed when they will finally be abandoned.  
Anilukhtakpak is the last settlement of the Tynay [Ingalik] on the Yukon: farther downstream and on all the branches of this river, on the Kuskokwim flats, and along the coast to the Alaska Peninsula the people are of the Kang-yulit tribe.  
The editor, Henry N. Michael, observes in a footnote that Anilukhtakpak is very probably present-day Gost (Ghost) Creek near Holy Cross village.
26. Netsvetov, Iakov, *The Journals of Iakov Netsvetov, The Yukon Years: 1845-1863*, Introduction, Alaska State Library and Archives, Juneau, Alaska, p. xvii.
27. Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, p. 246.



28. Baptismal records, Holy Cross, Alaska, Liber Baptizatorum in Statione S.S. Cordis Jesu in loco indianice dicto Tereoyichèt ad flumen Eterhè (Shaḡeluk) sita, & ad S. Crucis Residentiam (Yukon) adnexa in missione Alaskaensi, S.J.
29. VanStone, James W., *Fieldiana Anthropology*, E. W. Nelson's Notes on the Indians of the Yukon and Innoko Rivers, Alaska, Vol. 70, Publication 1281, published by Field Museum of Natural History, April 28, 1978, p. 9. (map)
30. FY 1888 Report of the Secretary of the Interior, Appendix C, pp. 1010-1011. Letter dated August 12, 1888. Alaska State Library and Archives: J87 .A41 1884-1896.
31. FY 1888 Report, p. 1011.
32. De Ruyter, Mary Joseph Calasanctius, S.S.A., Journal 1888. SPA.
33. Robaut, Aloysius, S.J., letter from St. Michael, 15 August 1888, to Father Jonckau. SMA.
34. De Ruyter, Journal 1888. SPA.
35. Fortuine, Robert, M.D., *Chills and Fever, Health and Disease in the Early History of Alaska*, University of Alaska Press, 1989, pp. 315-316.
36. Osgood, pp. 44-47.
37. Welsh, Mary Mildred, S.S.A., *The Apostle of Alaska*, St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N.J., 1943, p. 149.  
The Indians here have perfect rhythm in two-time and three-time. Their voices are so true that one can easily transcribe the tune—a difficult thing to do with the Indians of Vancouver Island. These have a well-developed musical taste and easily retain a melody, but they particularly like loud, noisy music.
38. A few incidents exemplify this:  
A crippled girl, sixteen years old, who could move around only on her hands and knees, came as a boarder. The sisters, happy to have her, named her “Josephine,” in honor of St. Joseph whose month [March] was being celebrated. When this girl, overcome by loneliness and a longing for the old ways and fish-camp days left, she spread stories about the sisters having visits from ghosts at night.  
De Ruyter, *The Voice of Alaska*, 1935 edition, p. 123.  
One little child, having heard about the “bad things” at Holy Cross, confided that when she had first come, she had looked all over for the box in which the sisters, supposedly, kept the devil. “I was afraid of being eaten,” said the child.  
There is a note in the Sisters’ 1894 journal saying that the Nulato people came for their children so they would not be put in barrels and made into salt pork.
39. De Ruyter, Journal 1888:  
There were three hills to drive down to the river, and down these hills the dogs would have taken free rein, but about fifteen men held them in check till we were in, safely. After that it was pure joy. It was the first time in my life I was in such a vehicle and drawn by such a team. Oh, what a wonderful trip it was.
40. Anastasia, Mother Mary, letter to Father J. Cataldo, S.J., Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, 23 February 1889.  
Despite my desire, despite the good will of the General Council, it is absolutely impossible to send any more sisters to Alaska this year: we have been greatly tried by sickness and death has taken several sisters in the prime of their life during this past year: in a word, we lack subjects and above all, subjects who have a command of English.
41. De Ruyter, p. 140.
42. De Ruyter, p. 142.
43. Nickolai (Nikolai) Demientieff (Dement'ev) lived at Kolmakof (Kolmakovskii Redoubt), where a Russian American trading post had been established in 1832. He also lived in Vinasale, where a trading post was reported in 1842-1844.  
Nickolai Demientieff's children were:
- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Ephrem      | who married several times                   |
| Evan (Ivan) | who married Mary Elizabeth Newman (Neumann) |
| Aniska      | who married Nikolai Savage                  |
| Tatiana     | who never married                           |



Petruska	who married Nathalia Clark
Lizzie	who married James Walker
Nick (adopted into the Whitley family)	who married Lucy Newman (Neumann)

This information came from Mrs. Frances Demientieff, October 1982. The Kuskokwim settlements are spelled here as found in Orth's Dictionary of Alaska Place Names.

Frances Demientieff was married to Elia (Eluska) Demientieff, one of Ephrem's sons.

Nick Demientieff (who married Nellie) was another of Ephrem's sons.

Frances was the daughter of Frank and Amelia Hawley, storekeepers at Bettles. She came to Holy Cross in 1903 at the age of eight.

44. Age finally required that Tatiana be hospitalized at a more comfortable place than Holy Cross. Through the influence of the sisters at Holy Cross, Tatiana spent her last days with the Sisters of Providence in Port Townsend, Washington. While there, she would say to the sisters taking care of her, "You are good, but not holy, like the Sisters of Saint Ann!"
45. Fitzpatrick, Mary Benoit (Benedict), S.S.A., Journal 1893. SMA.
46. In 1894, Koserefski village was destroyed by ice. By that time, a village was growing adjacent to the mission, for when adults were baptized, they were encouraged to set up homes near the mission.
47. Holy Cross Journal 1893. SMA.
48. Fitzpatrick, Mary Benoit, S.S.A., Journal 1893. SMA.
49. Barnum, F., S.J., "Life on the Alaska Mission." MS. OPA.
50. Tosi, Pascal, S.J., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, General Superior, 17 July 1894.  
Hoffman's Directory for 1894 also lists Akulurak under missions of the Eskimo tongue and St. Joseph Mission as a mission staffed by two Jesuit priests and one brother. A convent of the Sisters of Saint Ann is also listed. Kanilik is given as an Indian Industrial School. (Kanilik was for the Eskimos.) The Sisters of Saint Ann were never stationed in Kanilik.
51. Maisons Fermées, Akulurak. SMA.
52. Maisons Fermées, Akulurak. SMA.
53. Tosi, Pascal, S.J., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, 17 July 1894. SMA.
54. Tosi, from Saint Michael, letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, 20 July 1896. SMA.
55. Tosi, letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, 25 July 1895:  
. . . You suggested I apply to others. I will have them for other places of Alaska in future but St. Michael must be for the Sisters of Saint Ann for many reasons, and sisters up here agree with me, so also all the fathers. So make an effort to send them as soon as possible to start a school and in time, we will see about the hospital. SMA.  
Also Tosi, letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, 20 August 1895:  
. . . and send up more help. We will not open any new school, though the fathers and people of Nulato and Kotzebue Sound beg and bother me incessantly for schools and to give them sisters. The only thing we could do if possible to satisfy the people of St. Michael or Circle City, to have a hospital employing the big girls for the work—we have a number of large girls who will stay with the sisters. Having a hospital we could engage the Company to give us a doctor and medicines and they would be a blessing for us and for our people. For my part, I am not inclined to have any other sisters, but of St. Anne. We all are very satisfied with the work of your daughters, and these we all like to have (exclusively??) in preference to others. Besides it would be very inconvenient in so far a country to have a few houses of different communities. So I hope that your community will make the sacrifice of sending two Sisters next spring, but three would be more satisfactory. SMA
56. Angel Guardian, Mother Mary, letter to P. Tosi, S.J., Prefect Apostolic, Juneau, 7 December 1895.  
Unless unforeseen circumstances prevent it, we are preparing two or three religious to open the hospital at St. Michael next spring.  
That will be all we can do for a few years. We hope other generous souls will be eager to join themselves with your apostolic works. We would be happy to have other sisters with us in that vast region that we embrace sincerely in desire, but we have no means to fill. SMA.



Also Tosi, P., S.J., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, 22 September 1896:

. . . I hope that after having heard all what Sister Superior Stephen has to say about Alaska, you will not refuse to send at least half a dozen subjects by next spring. Rev. Sister Superior will explain why I insist so much on your community to send Daughters up here and not accept others. I have no objection that others may take Circle City or Forty Mile, as these places are too far up and separated from here. SMA.

Angel Guardian, Mother Mary, letter to Father P. Tosi, S.J., 10 May 1897:

. . . the community will do the impossible and send three new missionaries full of good will and courage, but not as strong as she would have liked. Next August, two others will join the present recruits. No more missions in the territory of Alaska: Holy Cross, Akulurak, and St. Michael are enough of a strain to hold. Other communities would be welcome. SMA.

57. Journal 1897. SMA.

58. Régistre des Actes de Délibérations du Conseil Majeur de la Communauté des Filles de Ste. Anne, 1893 à 1906, 5 mai 1905:

Register of Deliberative Acts of the Major Council (1893-1906), 5 May 1905:

The Ursuline Sisters are offering themselves for the missions of Alaska. His Reverence Very Reverend Joseph Raphael Crimont, Prefect Apostolic of Alaska, will not accept them unless the Sisters of Saint Ann are not available. He appreciates the zeal and devotion of the Sisters of Saint Ann.

It is resolved to advise the Apostolic Prefect that we would be very willing to see the Ursuline Sisters in Alaska, especially so because we are short of personnel even for the maintenance of the works we have already initiated. SMA.

59. Hanks, Agnes Marie, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.

60. Jackson, Sheldon, Dr., General Agent of Education in Alaska, Education Reports to the Commissioner of Education, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Alaska Division, Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1897.

These reports and similar ones are in the James Wickersham Collection, State Library, Juneau.

Excerpts below are from sections entitled: Teachers and Employees in Church Mission Schools and Stations. (Spellings have been left as in the records.)

#### Roman Catholic Missions

1895 to 1896, p. 1446

No complete report has been received of their operations. They have a mission school and hospital at Juneau, Alaska; also at Nulato, Koserefski, Akulurak, and Cape Vancouver. They are talking of establishing a mission and hospital at Circle City; also a school at St. Michael. At Koserefski they report 79 boarders in the mission school and 26 day scholars. At Akulurak they report 25 boarders in the mission home. Their work has a force of 1 vicar apostolic, 9 priests, 6 lay brothers, and 13 sisters of the Order of St. Ann.

p. 1451

#### Roman Catholic

Kosyrevsky.—Rev. Paschal Tosi, S.J., prefect apostolic of Alaska; Rev. R. Crimont, S.J.; and Brothers Rosati, S.J.; Marchesio, S.J.; Cunningham, S.J.; Sisters M. Stephen, M. Joseph, M. Winfred, M. Anguilbert, M. Heloise, and M. Damascene.

Nulato.—Rev. A. Ragaru, S.J.; Rev. F. Monroe, S.J., and Brother Giordano, S.J.

Shageluk.—Rev. William Judge, S.J.

Urhamute, Kuskokwim River.—Rev. A. Robant, S.J.

St. Josephs, Yukon Delta.—Rev. J. Treca, S.J.; Rev. A. Parodi, S.J.; Rev. F. Barnum, S.J.; Brothers Twohigg, S.J., and Negro, S.J., and Sisters M. Zypherine, M. Benedict, M. Prudence, and M. Pauline.

Juneau.—Rev. J.B. Rene and Sisters Mary Zeno, M. Peter, and M. Bousecour.



1896 to 1897, p. 1615

### Roman Catholic

Kosyrevsky.—Rev. R. Crimont, S.J., and Brothers Rosati, S.J.; Marchesio, S.J.; Cunningham, S.J.; Sisters M. Stephen, M. Joseph, M. Winfred, M. Anguilbert, M. Heloise, and M. Damascene.

Nulato.—Rev. A. Ragaru, S.J.; Rev. F. Monroe, S.J., and Brother Giordano, S.J.

Shageluk.—Rev. William Judge, S.J.

Urhamute, Kuskokwim River.—Rev. A. Robant, S.J.

St. Josephs, Yukon Delta.—Rev. J. Treca, S.J.; Rev. A. Parodi, S.J.; Rev. F. Barnum, S.J.; Brothers Twohigg, S.J., and Negro, S.J., and Sisters M. Zypherine, M. Benedict, M. Prudence, and M. Pauline.

Juneau.—Rev. J.B. Rene and Sisters Mary Zeno, M. Peter, and M. Bousecour.

1897 to 1898,  
pp. 1761-1762 (Note the  
inclusion of Dawson, then  
part of the Northwest  
Territories)

### Roman Catholic

Dawson, Northwest Territory.—Rev. William Judge, S.J., chaplain of the hospital and of the Sisters of St. Ann; Brother Bernard Cunningham, lay brother.

Koserefski (Holy Cross Mission).—Rev. R. J. Crimont, S.J. (superior); Rev. John Lucas, S.J.; Rev. A. Robaut, S.J.; Rev. F. Monroe, S.J.; Rev. J. B. Post, S.J.; Brothers V. O'Hare, S.J.; B. Marchisio, S.J.; J. Twohigg, S.J.; P. Brancoli, S.J.

Nulato.—Rev. J. Jetté, S.J. (superior); Rev. A. Ragaru, S.J.; Rev. J. Perron, S.J.; Brothers C. Giordano, S.J., and J. Negro, S.J.

Dawson Hospital.—Sisters of St. Ann: Mary Zepherine (superior), Mary of the Cross, Mary Pauline, Mary Joseph, Mary John Damascene, Mary Prudentia.

Koserefski (Holy Cross Mission, girls' school).—Sister Mary Stephen (superior), Mary Prudence, Mary Seraphine, Mary Winifred, Mary Benedict, Mary Antonia, Mary of the Passion, Mary Magdalen.

In 1897-1898 there were fourteen Sisters of Saint Ann sharing their lives in various ways with the people of the North.

This last excerpt does not include the Juneau and Douglas hospitals and schools where still other Sisters of Saint Ann were present.

## Notes for Chapter Three A Yukon Territory Saga: Dawson and Whitehorse

1. Mondor, Mary Anne Eva, S.S.A., *A History of the Sisters of Saint Ann*, Vantage Press, N.Y., 1961, p. 349. A translation of *L'Histoire des Soeurs de Sainte Anne 1850 à 1900* by Sister M. Jean-de-Pathmos.
2. De Ruyter, Mary Joseph Calasanctius, S.S.A., Journal 1899. SMA. Gold had been discovered at Forty Mile in 1886.
3. Hôpital Ste. Marie Historique, pp. 1-2. SMA.
4. Angelina, a mature young student at Holy Cross, went as a helper, but changed her mind at her home village and stayed with her mother.  
Father Joseph R. Crimont, S.J., missioned at Holy Cross since 1894, accompanied the group part way upriver.
5. De Ruyter, Journal 1897, p. 2. SMA.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Father John B. René, S.J., succeeded Father Pascal Tosi, S.J., in 1897, when, because of ill health, Tosi resigned as Prefect Apostolic.



9. Pineault, Mary Theodore, S.S.A., "The Spell of the Yukon, Introduction to Dawson, 1898"; Part II of an unpublished manuscript, p. 236. SMA.
10. De Ruyter, Journal 1897. SMA.
11. Three other steamers were met and the sisters attempted passage on them for Dawson. The *Bella* at Fort Hamlin refused even to consider the effort because of the narrow pass. The captains of the *St. Michael* and the *Victoria* anchored at Minook (a tent settlement people believed would surpass Dawson), categorically stated that their vessels had no chance of making it to Dawson.
12. Pineault, MS.
13. Leahy, Mary Stephen, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, written from Holy Cross, (Koserefski), 6 June 1898. SMA.
14. The captain gave sister two paintings: "The *Alice* at Rampart" and "Venice." Mother Mary Angel Guardian, who visited Dawson in 1899, took the first back to Lachine with her. At Victoria, Sister Mary Osithe, community artist, copied it for one of the parlors. An artist using bear fur brushes had worked on "Venice" at Andreefski and given the unfinished painting to the captain of the *Alice*. "Venice," 4 feet by 3 feet, hung in the Dawson Hospital.
15. De Ruyter, Journal 1898.
 

While Father Judge's church was on fire, a sympathizer had tried to console the priest, but the latter replied that he had promised God a better church some time and the fire was probably God's way of being sure of the "better" church.

Also from an unsigned report, written on letterhead paper: C.H. Higgins, Special Agency, The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States, The Edward A. Woods Company, General Agent, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. SMA.
16. Barrett, W. T., M.D., "Reminiscences of Early Klondyke Days." SMA.
 

In May 1898, on his first visit to a patient in the hospital, W. T. Barrett, M.D., met Father Judge who showed the doctor through the hospital and with him visited many patients, especially those with scurvy. Raw potatoes brought quick relief when and if there were any in Dawson. Father Judge told the doctor he was expecting the sisters so the nursing would be taken care of, but two American physicians who had been regular attendants throughout the winter were leaving since they were not licensed to practise in Canada. A few days later, Dr. Barrett accepted Father Judge's offer to be Medical Advisor and head of the medical services at the hospital. . . . Doctor Macfarlane, M.D., was his partner. Doctor Barrett wrote in "Reminiscences": "The Sisters of Saint Ann arrived the following month and took charge of all hospital services. Father Judge remained as executive officer, advisor and chaplain."
17. Turenne, Edmond, O.M.I., "A Monument to a Man of God," July 1962. SMA.
18. Barrett, "Reminiscences."
19. Pineault, MS.
20. Mother Mary Angel Guardian, General Superior. *Récit de Voyage 1899*, Arbour & Laperle, Montréal, 1900, pp. 13-14. SMA.
21. De Ruyter, Journal 1898-1899. SMA.
22. Pineault, MS.
23. *Historique de Dawson*. SMA.
24. Berton, Pierre, *Klondike, The Last Great Gold Rush*, McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., Toronto, 1972.
 

A Scots Catholic, from Nova Scotia. His first claim was bought for a sack of flour and a side of bacon. Within a year, his shrewdness won him the title "King of the Klondike."
25. Turenne, "A Monument to a Man of God."
 

The church was proud to have a small statue of Mary, special patroness of St. Mary's Hospital and Saint Mary's Church. In 1901, the church was renovated and the bell "Maria" blessed.
26. Barrett, "Reminiscences."
27. *Ibid.*
28. Higgins, C. H., (possibly). See end of Note 15.
29. *Annales de la Communauté*, 28 février 1899.



30. Hulley, Clarence C., *Alaska: Past and Present*, Binfords & Mort, Portland, Oregon, 1958, pp. 259-260.
31. Mondor, p. 352.
32. Pineault, MS., p. 408. (Various segments copied from her MS have differing pagination.)
33. Ibid.
34. De Ruyter, Journal 1899. SMA.
35. Sister Mary Stephen, in Dawson for medical care, had also been asked to teach should that be necessary and she had agreed.
36. Stuart, Richard, "Duff Patullo and the Yukon Schools Question of 1937," *Canadian Historical Review*, LXIV, I, University of Toronto Press, 1983.
37. De Ruyter, Journal 1899. SMA.
38. *The Paystreak*, Vol. I, No. 5, 29 December 1899:  
     From 1897 to December 1899:  
     1151 patients . . . . . (520 were Catholic)  
     132 deaths  
     994 discharged patients  
     25 resident patients  
     The hospital owed the Alaska Commercial Company \$35,000.  
     The amount due the hospital for fees was \$67,494.
39. Ibid.
40. Awards at the school sometimes included gold nuggets. Some presentations had an advertising ring to them, but the sisters were glad of all incentives that encouraged scholastic success. Deportment and attendance were also awarded prizes.
41. Pineault, MS., p. 488 and accompanying notes. The name of the city was spelled "White Horse."
42. Maisons Fermées, Whitehorse 1903 to 1904, pp. 1,2. SMA.  
     Also Brassard, M. Didace, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Melanie, 7 Jan. 1904. Excerpts from Sr. M. Didace's letters were published in *Les Annales de la Communauté*.
43. Brassard, M. Didace, letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 2 May 1904.
44. Brassard, letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 8 Dec. 1903.
45. Brassard, letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 6 March 1904.
46. Maisons Fermées, Whitehorse, pp. 6-7.
47. Brassard, letter, 8 February 1904.
48. Brassard, letter, 6 March 1904.
49. Maisons Fermées, Whitehorse, pp. 8-9.
50. Coudert, Bishop Jean-Louis, O.M.I., to Mother Mary Mildred, Provincial Superior, 19 March 1942.
51. Down, Mary Faustina, S.S.A., interview 1983.
52. Barry, Mary Angelus, S.S.A., anecdote in a conversation 1984.
53. Turenne.
54. Pineault, MS., p. 247.  
     Sister Zenon wanted to varnish the wood throughout the new structures in order to make the hospital beautiful. The other sisters voted to paint the wood "... making everything look poorer." Some sisters even asked that grey paint be used.
55. Pineault, MS., p. 240. SPA.
56. Ibid.
57. Taken from a Dawson newspaper article. No date on clipping.
58. Pineault, MS., p. 241. SPA.
59. Father Judge's monument, placed over his grave in 1905, was of white marble, cross-shaped at the top, and inscribed in Latin. It was a gift of admirers.



60. *Dawson Daily News*, 23 April 1923.
61. Down, Mary Faustina, S.S.A., interview 1983.
62. Ibid.
63. Daigneault, Mary Dositheus S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
64. Down, Mary Faustina, S.S.A., interview 1983.
65. Powell, Mary Laurena, S.S.A., interviews, 1983, 1984.  
Also King, Mary Dorothea, S.S.A., newsletter, 15 February 1950.  
This account about Sister M. Gedeon is taken from the newsletter, the Dawson Chronicles, and the eye-witness report of Sister Mary Laurena.
66. *Dawson Weekly News*, Vol. 51, No. 2, 12 January 1950.
67. Coudert, Bishop Jean-Louis, O.M.I., letter to Sister Mary Mark, 12 January 1950.
68. Provincial Council Minutes, 16 February 1950.  
Suggestions were four:  
a) that possession of the Court House and adjoining property be a Free Gift for the fulfillment of hospital plans,  
b) that this building be set in readiness for patients by funds (Compassionate Grant) from the Federal or Territorial Government,  
c) that living quarters for the sisters and also laundry facilities be provided,  
d) that plans be made and adequate aid solicited from the government for the erection of a 35-50 bed hospital, complete with services, adjacent to the Court House nucleus. The old men would be hospitalized in the old building. Also, arrangements should be made for the Indian patients.
69. The modern 25 to 30 bed hospital had received patients on 7 December 1950.  
At the official opening of the "Court House Hospital," 6 January 1951, the mild weather favored a large attendance. The Catholic Women's League held a reception along with various other groups in Dawson, including the Graduate Nurses Association.  
The foundations of the building had been renewed, the interior lined with hardboard, and everything freshly painted.  
The total cost for repairing and remodeling both buildings was \$110,807.21, according to a report given by Sister Mary Mark to A. H. Gibson, Commissioner of the Yukon Territory and to the members of the Yukon Council, 2 May 1951.
70. Carmel, S.S.A., letter to Sister Mary Dorothea, 1962.  
Regarding her "International House," Sister Epiphane wrote:  
Imagine so many "Boys" of different nationalities, a big Swede, a Norwegian, an Irishman, a Scotchman, Czechoslovakian, Canadian, English, American. They get along well. Quite a few are good babysitters. When one is not able to dress himself, there is a generous Samaritan to help him. Good Francis, converted since five years, looks for miseries in others and gives a helping hand. Last winter, he shoveled snow and did odd jobs. Jim from Prince Edward Island helps me every summer in the garden. Sad to say, our good Pat, 88, is dying. He told me: "Sister, I prayed all my life to make a happy death. Make sure that I keep doing good till the end." Pat's brother, Pete, 72, is staying at the Residence to be near his dying brother. God help the dear brothers who passed their lives in this Northern Country.  
Eye witnesses attest to other facts about the residence. Captain Hansen played the harmonica, Victor tapped some "dead bones," Elmer joined in with a small mouth organ. Victor was senile, but always the gentleman. How old he was, no one knew. His two failings were spitting tobacco juice and wandering off toward the hills. Once on the way, he kept going for miles. A car sent out in haste to pick him up was accepted graciously for a ride back to the residence. "So glad! I was getting tired," he would say. Being fitted out with clothes, he would say: "Is this for me? I haven't any money." "Yes," was always sister's reply, "I have your money," and Victor would say: "The Lord looks after His own!"
71. Daigneault, Carmen Marie, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
72. Dupuis, Clarence Marie, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
73. Mainville, Mary Eugene of Rome, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.



74. Her seven years of dedication to the Japanese students had ended with the attack on Pearl Harbor. Sister Ignatia and her companions were interned in Japan until 1943 when they were brought home on the Swedish liner, the *Gripsholm*.
75. Baker, K. J., Territorial Engineer, to Commissioner G. R. Cameron, a memorandum, 25 February 1963.
76. Cormier, Pauline, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
77. Kelly, Eileen, S.S.A., Provincial Superior, Victoria, B.C.  
Circular letter, 15 November 1972. SPA.  
Newsletter, #26, 22 September 1975. SPA.  
Newsletter, #48, 5 September 1978. SPA.

## Notes for Chapter Four

### A Realization and New Calls: Nulato and Fairbanks

1. Osgood, Cornelius, *Ingalik Material Culture*, Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 22, reprinted by Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, CT, 1970, p. 33.
2. Osgood, p. 39.
3. Fortuine, Robert, J. D., *Chills and Fever, Health and Disease in the Early History of Alaska*, University of Alaska Press, 1989, p. 312.
4. Fortuine, p. 122.
5. Gruening, Ernest, *The State of Alaska*, Random House, N.Y., 1954, p. 21.
6. Lecorre, August, Oblate Annals, "Missions d'Amerique," septembre 1874, pp. 112-130.
7. Frederick Schwatka mentions a garden at Nuklukayet in *Along Alaska's Great River*, his 1885 chronicle, Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., Anchorage, Alaska, 1983, p. 84.  
Also Zagoskin, Lt. Lavrentiy, in his General Account of Nulato, mentions a gardening experiment. *Lieutenant Zagoskin's Travels in Russian America, 1842-1844*, p. 179.
8. Tosi, Pascal, S.J., letter from St. Michael, AK, 12 August 1888, to Governor Alfred P. Swineford.
9. For instance: Emma, Andrew, John, Germaine, Mathilda, etc., and now Euphrasia and Ellen.
10. Leahy, Mary Stephen, S.S.A., to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, General Superior, Journal in the form of a letter, 15 January 1900, p. 2. SMA.
11. Father Jetté's mother, Lady B. Jetté of Quebec, was a good friend of Mother Mary Anastasia. Lady Jetté, lacking direct news from her son, appreciated the news that was gleaned from the Mother House.
12. Leahy, Journal 1900, p. 3.
13. Leahy, Journal 1900, pp. 4-5.
14. Leahy, Journal 1900.
15. Ibid.
16. Leahy, Journal 1900, p. 18.
17. Ibid.  
Also Goulet, M. Coeur de Jésus, S.S.A., L'Historique de la Mission de Nulato 1899 à 1918, 21 juin 1918, p. 8. SMA.
18. Leahy, Journal 1900, p. 15  
Anonymous, Mission de Nulato, Aperçu historique (typed), p. 2. SMA.  
L'Historique de la Mission de Nulato 1899 à 1918, handwritten, pp. 6-8.
19. Leahy, Journal 1900.
20. Leahy, Journal 1900, pp. 25-26.
21. Leahy, Journal 1900, pp. 21-23.
22. Leahy, Journal 1900, p. 38.
23. Fortuine, p. 224.
24. René, J. B., S.J., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, 21 November 1900. SMA.



25. Jetté, Jules, S.J., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, 15 January 1901. SMA.
26. Ibid.
27. Fortune, pp. 279-299.  
Also George W. Rogers in *Alaska in Transition*, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1960, p. 221, cites Aurel Krause in *The Tlingit Indians* (translated by Edna Gunther from 1885 edition of original work, U. of Washington Press, 1956, p. 51).  
. . . the good influence which the teachers of the Christian Church have had was cancelled out by the damaging results of contact with civilization and intercourse with lawless whites who had no regard for the rights of natives.
28. FY 1892.
29. Fortune, p. 297.
30. Anonymous, Historique de Nulato—handwritten account, at the end of the document; another version in another handwritten account.
31. Jetté, Jules, S.J., letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 23 May 1904. SMA.
32. Les Annales de la Communauté, 1906, refer to the Journal of Sister M. Bernadette, Superior at Holy Cross, telling of a letter received from Dawson. SMA.
33. Goulet, L'Historique de la Mission de Nulato 1899 à 1918, MS, p. 22.
34. Goulet, L'Historique, p. 24.
35. Ibid.
36. Goulet, L'Historique, p. 25.
37. Leahy, Mary Stephen, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 25 August 1907, refers to a Doctor Cassels.
38. Goulet, L'Historique, p. 26.
39. Leahy, Mary Stephen, S.S.A., letter to Sister Mary Maurice, her sister, 13 December 1906. SMA.
40. Goulet, L'Historique.
41. Leahy, Mary Stephen, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 25 August 1907. SMA.  
In an effort to keep the Fairbanks hospital open, Father Crimont wired from Canada to Father Monroe asking him if Sister Zenon would be accepted as the Superior of the Fairbanks hospital. Father Monroe went to Dr. Cassels and asked him the same question. The doctor replied negatively, asserting that she was too much of a money grabber. Wrote Sister Mary Stephen on hearing this: "When I reflect on this fact—'Sister M. Zenon not fit to be Superior,' my senses fail to understand it."
42. *The Catholic Directory 1909*: Fairbanks, St. Joseph's Hospital, 7 Sisters of Saint Benedict: Sr. M. Catherine, Supr. Patients 400. The sisters were from Yankton, S.D.
43. Necrology, 22 February 1961.
44. Morin, Judith, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
45. Legault, Alice, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
46. Snyder, Joyce, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
47. Goulet, L'Historique.
48. Report of the U.S. Bureau of Education, Commissioner of Education, Chapter XXVI, "Education in Alaska," 1908, p. 1025:  
Steps have been taken to meet the pressing needs of the natives of Alaska for medical aid. E. O. Campbell, E. A. Norton, and H. O. Schlabele, the teachers of the schools on St. Lawrence Island, at Nulato and Iliamna, respectively, are physicians, and the treatment of the natives in the regions in which these schools are situated is included in their duties.  
Report of the U.S. Bureau of Education, Commissioner of Education, Chapter XXX, "Education in Alaska," 1909, p. 1298:  
In the summer of 1908 the erection of school buildings was commenced at . . . Mt. Village, Pilot Station, Russian Mission, Hamilton, Nulato, Koyukuk and Loudon on the Yukon River.
49. Leahy, Mary Stephen, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 21 July 1908. SMA.



50. Report of the U.S. Bureau of Education, Commissioner of Education, Chapter XXX, "Education in Alaska," 1909, p. 1303.  
Two teachers are listed for the school year 1908 to 1909 at Nulato:  
Nulato: Dr. E. A. Norton  
Eli W. Poesnecker
51. René, John B., S.J., letter to Mother Mary Angel Guardian, General Superior, 21 November 1910. SMA.  
She will have her name alongside the founders of our mission. I feel deeply her departure. May Saint Ann watch over her and heal her. My conviction is, that by her entire resignation to the Holy Will of God, she will do much yet for our mission and continue her apostolate among the children of Alaska.
52. Pineault, Mary Theodore, S.S.A., MS., p. 445. SPA.  
Also the U.S. Bureau of Education report for 1910, p. 1346, mentions the physician, Walter L. Barbour, M.D., as serving Nulato and the Lower Yukon Districts.  
Physician for the Tanana and Upper Yukon districts was C. M. Rosin, M.D., who was in Nulato the following year, 1910 to 1911.
53. FY 1890, p. 26.  
Also VanStone, James W., *Athapaskan Adaptations*, Ch. 7, p. 110.  
In Alaska, neither the Indians nor the Eskimos signed treaties with the United States government . . . .  
The relatively early advent of government educational and medical services in Alaska can be attributed to the efforts of a few humane, far-seeing individuals and to the fact that toward the close of the nineteenth century, the government assisted various Christian denominations in providing such services. Although this assistance was eventually withdrawn, it served to involve the government in the welfare of Alaska Indians at a relatively early date.
54. Rossi, Crispin, S.J., letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, General Superior, 2 January 1912. The permission requested was granted in a letter from Mother Mary Anastasia to Father Rossi, 3 January, 1912. SMA.
55. Rossi, 2 January 1912:  
Our school is the greatest consolation and hope we have: pupils are as numerous as we can expect; all the children of Nulato are attending most regularly and willingly, even the little ones: our "Christmas Tree" with songs and recitations spoken so well . . . proved to all the white men present . . . that our school is a great success. Needless to say that all our Nulatos are very glad and proud of their school now, and its good reputation is spreading up and down the river. . . .  
We also have a night catechism for both large and little ones, and to my wonder and pleasure, they all attend it and a number also of other big boys and girls from the village. So our school getting now such strong hold is not likely to be withdrawn from us so easily any more.
56. McCarty, Billy, Sr., *Billy McCarty, Sr.- Ruby-, A Biography*, Spirit Mountain Press, Fairbanks, Alaska, 1983, pp. 14-16.
57. Goulet, Mary Coeur de Jésus, S.S.A., a long report, June 1918. SMA.
58. Brault, Mary Ralph, S.S.A., to Mother Mary Irene, 30 December 1925. SMA.
59. Caron, Mary Claude, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Leopoldine, General Superior, 26 June 1942.
60. *The Anchorage Times*, "Preparation through Education," Sunday, 2 May 1982, p. B-7.
61. Forest, Dorothy Marie, S.S.A., 14 October 1956:  
For my part, I would never have entered the Sisters of Saint Ann if it had not been for the attractive pamphlet about our Alaskan and Japanese missions. Most of the Franco-American sisters are desirous of coming North. SMA.
62. Paquette, Mary Anne Eveline, S.S.A., Council Book of the Sisters of Saint Ann, Nulato, 13 June 1969, pp. 71-73.
63. MacKenzie, Carmelita, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
64. LaRose, Jeannette, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.



## Notes for Chapter Five

### A Continued Growth: Holy Cross

1. Granger, Mary Bernadette, S.S.A., letter to the General Superior, Lachine, 28 August 1906. SMA.
2. Granger, letter, 1906.
3. Granger, letter, 1906.
4. Gruening, Ernest, *The State of Alaska*, Random House, N.Y., 1954, p. 94.

House diaries kept at Holy Cross record difficulties about maintaining Reindeer Station and obtaining adequate herders because of the loneliness involved and other factors. The reindeer effort ended about 1930. See James W. VanStone, *Fieldiana: Anthropology*, Vol. 71, March 1979, pages 230-233, 251.

Reindeer River and Reindeer Lake are mentioned by Orth as local names for these Innoko Lowlands features and are about 11 miles east-southeast of Holy Cross near Paimiut Slough.
5. *Northern Echoes*, Holy Cross Mission booklet, 1938. SMA.
6. Education Report 1902, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., p. 1250, (James Wickersham Collection, State Library, Juneau).
7. *Annales de la Communauté*, 1907. SMA.
8. Lucchesi, John, S.J., letter to Mother Mary Anastasia, 30 November 1904.
9. Lucchesi, letters to Mother Mary Anastasia, 30 November 1904 and 18 September 1906. SMA.
10. Compiled Reports. (James Wickersham Collection, State Library, Juneau).
11. Weimer, Mary Armella, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
12. Babin, Mary George Edmond, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Liliane, General Superior, 1 July 1954. SMA.
13. Rogers, George W., *Alaska in Transition*, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1960, p. 221.
14. Fortune, Robert, M.D., *Chills and Fever, Health and Disease in the Early History of Alaska*, University of Alaska Press, 1989, pp. 255-256.
15. Dayton, Roger, *Koyukuk*, Hancock House Publishers, Blaine, WA, U.S.A.; Surrey, B.C., Canada; 1981, pp. 27-29.
16. Dayton, p. 33.
17. Sifton, John B., S.J., letter to Mother Mary Melanie, General Assistant, 10 January, 19--(Date illegible). SMA.
18. Jolie, Mary Joanne, S.S.A., letter 31 January 1943. SMA.
19. Babin, Mary George Edmond, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Liliane, General Superior, 31 October 1952.
20. Conwell, James U., S.J., Chancellor, letter to Fathers, Brothers, Sisters, Vicariate of Alaska, 31 January 1955.
21. Lariviere, Mary Eulalia, S.S.A., letter to her sister, Mrs. John (Parmelia) Aubuchon, 1 October 1954.
22. Babin, Mary George Edmond, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Liliane, General Superior, 3 February 1955. SMA.
23. Kirwan, Mary Luca, S.S.A., Provincial Superior, to Mother Mary Liliane, an undated brief. SMA.
24. Ibid.
25. Kirwan, Mary Luca, S.S.A., Report of Official Visitation of Holy Cross, March 1957. SPA.
26. Walker, James A., Senior, letter from Holy Cross to Mother Mary Liliane, 7 August 1957. SMA.
27. Frank S. Walker died in the Pioneer Home in Palmer, Alaska, in the early 1980s. In establishing the trust fund, he stated:

WHEREAS, the Sisters of Saint Ann received the Trustor [sic] as a child in ALASKA and reared, educated and cared for him, and gave him a start in life, particularly Mother Mary Stephens [sic], S.S.A., this Trust and its ultimate benefit is made to the Sisters of Saint Ann, in loving memory, and in honor of MOTHER MARY STEPHENS [sic], S.S.A. . . .
28. VanStone, James W., *Fieldiana: Anthropology: Volume 71, Ingalik Contact Ecology*, March 1979, pp. 239-254.

VanStone's studies give interesting insights into the devastation experienced by Holy Cross people at the closing of the mission boarding school and at subsequent Church decisions, as well as the changes brought about through the implementation of Vatican II directives. Fragmented life-styles occurred for many people despite their Catholic Faith and educational base. Rapid church, social, communication, and transportation developments obliged decision-making about life choices that sometimes continued fragmentation while, at the same time, the people tried to put together what they had learned and what



they were being pummeled with now from every side.

29. Hetu, Genevieve, letter to Mother Mary Liliane, 11 February 1958. SMA.
30. Doogan, Mary Kevin, S.S.A., interview 1982.
31. Forest, Dorothy Marie, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
32. Hanks, Agnes Marie, S.S.A., interview in the 1970s.

## Notes for Chapter Six

### A New Effort in Southeastern Alaska: Skagway and Sitka

1. Pineault, Mary Theodore, S.S.A., "Nineteen-Thirty: The Sunrise to the Sunset Land," "Pius X Mission, Skagway, Alaska," MS. SPA.
2. Orth, Donald J., *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, Geological Survey Professional Paper, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971, pp. 400, 290, 1044.
3. Swineford, Gov. A. P., Annual Report FY 1888, p. 989.
4. Orth, p. 772.
5. Orth, p. 636.
6. Andrews, C. L., *The Story of Alaska*, p. 294.
7. Swineford, Annual Report FY 1888, p. 988.
8. Orth, p. 883.
9. Orth, p. 290.
10. Orth, p. 400.
11. Orth, p. 883.
12. Chronicles of Pius X Mission, Skagway, Alaska, 1932 to 1933, introductory remarks. SPA.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Crimont, Bishop Joseph Raphael, S.J., letter to G. Edgar Gallant, 7 April 1924.
16. Doogan, Ann Marie, S.S.A., interview, 1978.  
Also Pineault, MS.
17. Chronicles, introductory remarks.
18. Doogan, Ann Marie.
19. Chronicles, description.
20. Chronicles, opening of the mission.

Conditions for acceptance of the school are described in the following contract.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP J. R. CRIMONT, S.J., D.D.,  
AND THE DIRECTOR OF PIUS X MISSION, OF SKAGWAY, ALASKA, AND THE SISTERS  
OF ST. ANN, INC., OF VICTORIA, B.C.

The Right Reverend Bishop J. R. Crimont, S.J., D.D., and the Director of Pius X Mission, of Skagway, Alaska, wishing to establish a Community of the Sisters of St. Ann, of Victoria, B.C., for the instruction and education of the native children of both sexes, in Skagway, shall bind themselves as follows:-

1. To pay the expenses of the foundation trips and other trips required by the interests of the mission.
2. To pay each Sister a monthly salary of thirty Dollars\* (\$30.00), or three hundred sixty Dollars (\$360.00) a year, in monthly or quarterly payments.
3. To provide all that is necessary for the shelter and board of the Sisters, and for the shelter, board and clothing of the children.

On the other hand, the Sisters of St. Ann agree to teach in the Pius X Mission, at Skagway, and give

---

\* The sisters agreed later to twenty dollars for that first year.



education to children of school age, provided:

1. That the foregoing conditions are fulfilled;
2. That the sisters will have full liberty to observe their rules and constitutions;
3. That the spiritual needs of the Sisters, viz: daily mass, communion, confession, annual retreat, spiritual exhortations, are regularly attended to by an appointed Priest;
4. That outside of class hours, boys over twelve years of age be under the supervision of a master or male prefect;

To ensure satisfactory results with the children, there should be mutual understanding between the Director and the Sisters in the administration of discipline in the school.

It will be understood that the present agreement will remain in force until a new contract be made between the said parties, and should such be necessary, notification will be given by either party at least three months before the close of the school-year.

+ Joseph R. Crimont, S.J., Vicar Apostolic of Alaska

G. Edgar Gallant, Director of Pius X Mission

Sister Mary Leopoldine, S.S.A., Provincial Superior of the Sisters of St. Ann

St. Ann's Academy, Victoria, B.C. November 21, 1932.

21. Chronicles, opening of the mission, continued description.
22. Chronicles, 1932.
23. Ibid.
24. Legace, Mary Marcellus, S.S.A., interview, October 1983.
25. Chronicles, 30 November 1932.
26. Crimont, J. R., S.J., letter to Mother Provincial, around 1933 to 1934, but undated. The letter reads in part:

I am sure that you know from the Sister Superior in Skagway that we have decided to reopen the school, but only for girls at present. Of course we limit their number to 25 in prevision and as a provision for admitting the boys, if circumstances permit.

Answering a telegram received from Fr. Gallant (then in Cleveland and announcing a check in his letter following the telegram) Sister Superior wired him to let the bishop know the amount of the check, in order to decide whether the school could be reopened for the boys. Father Gallant has not communicated with me, since he left Skagway, and I am in the dark as to his whereabouts and the results of his begging tour.

Father Monroe has been entrusted with the care of rounding up the pupils, with the cooperation of Fr. LeVasseur and Fr. Buckley. Fr. Buckley is sending three girls from Metlakatla.

The others have to come from Wrangell, Petersburg, Juneau, Douglas and Hoonah. . . . We have to take upon ourselves the expenses of the children's transportation.

If sufficient financial assistance from mission agencies and friends is forthcoming, I intend to call the boys to the school at Christmas.

. . . The results of the work of the Sisters last year were so extraordinarily good and encouraging that I firmly hope Heaven will not fail us. . . .
27. Pineault, "Pius X Mission," MS.
28. Nyland, Mary Rosalinda, S.S.A., "Autumn in Skagway."

From far and near men came here seeking gold,  
A rugged horde they were with but one end.  
In stream they sought,—on bench and bar and bend,  
On face of cliff, in every fault and fold.  
An army, they, of seekers, young and old;  
On ice-bound trails their waning strength they spend  
Where shining lure a living hope must lend  
Of precious store. 'Tis a tale full-often told.



But I have gold around me in great store.  
 For nature's power of alchemy is such  
 With wealth unrivalled yet on any shore  
 Each tree gleams goldenly at autumn's touch.  
 The hills along their slopes and so far up  
 Are lined with gold like some great holy cup.

29. Cashen, Mary Philippa, S.S.A., conversation, 1950s.
30. Brady, Jeff, "The St. Pius X Mission, 1933 to 1959," 1985 *Skaguay Alaskan*, Vol. VIII, No. 1880, pp. 11, 12.
31. Dick, Pearl Young, "Memories of 1938 at Pius X," *Inside Passage*, 9 January 1976, p. 3.
32. Pineault, "Pius X Mission," MS.
33. Ripley, Kate, "72 Years of Helping Others," *Juneau Empire*, 25 October 1991, p. 1.
34. Thomas, Margaret, "A Time for Reconciliation," *Juneau Empire*, 29 October 1991, p. 1.
35. Questionnaires, 1982, from the sisters involved.
36. Pineault, "Pius X Mission," MS.
37. Skagway Sanatorium Chronicles 1945, Introduction. SPA.  
 Official acceptance of the sanatorium was on 1 April 1945, Easter Sunday.
38. Skagway Sanatorium Chronicles 1945, Preliminary Movement.
39. Wambeke, Mary Beatrice, S.S.A., interview 1982.
40. Skagway Sanatorium Chronicles 1945, description of building.
41. *Ibid.*, topography of area.
42. Bishop Crimont asked Father Gallant, who was traveling in the States, to find sisters for a hospital on Kodiak Island. Father Gallant providentially met two Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart in a New York railroad station and learned from them that the Community was willing to staff a new mission. Kodiak was accepted and Father Gallant helped to install the sisters there. During a stopover in Juneau, the sisters visited Skagway.
43. Wambeke, Questionnaire and interview 1982.
44. McGarrigle, Mary Lucita, S.S.A., Questionnaire and interview 1982.
45. Barry, Mary Angelus, S.S.A., conversation, October 1983.
46. Skagway Sanatorium Chronicles. SPA.
47. Skagway Sanatorium Chronicles.
48. Peterson, Mary of the Cross, S.S.A., Journal: Dawson to Victoria, 20 September 1899 entry.
49. Sitka Sanatorium Chronicles 1947.
50. Foster, Donald C., letter to Sister M. Henrietta of Jesus, 24 June 1947. SPA.
51. Pius X Mission Chronicles, Skagway, 1945 to 1946, 16 November 1945. SPA.
52. *Ibid.*, 14 December 1945.
53. *Ibid.*, January 1946.
54. *Ibid.*, 10 May 1946.
55. *Ibid.*, 20 June 1946.
56. Pius X Mission Chronicles, 19 March 1948.
57. Pius X Mission Chronicles, 15 September 1947.
58. LaRose, M. Agatha of the Angels, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
59. Doogan, Mary Kevin, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
60. Cincotta, Mary Felicia, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
61. Provincial Superior, letter to Bishop Francis D. Gleeson, S.J., 12 July 1951. SPA.
62. Gallant, Rt. Rev. G. Edgar, Vicar General, letter to Mother Mary Liliane, General Superior, 11 September 1958: SMA.



I am deeply grateful to you for setting aside the indebtedness due on the salary of the Sisters from the year 1945 to the year 1952 amounting to \$12,059.00.

There is a probability that the property of Pius X Mission may become available to the Sisters of St. Ann. In that event the above amount must certainly be taken into consideration.

63. Possibly because of the imminence of the changes in ecclesiastical jurisdiction.
64. King, Mother Mary Dorothea, Provincial Superior, letter to Mother Mary Ludovic, General Councillor, 16 September 1952. SMA.  
Also King, letter to Father Gallant, December 1952. SPA.  
Also King, letters to Bishop Dermot O'Flanagan, April 1952; 15 December 1952. SPA.
65. Kirwan, Mother Mary Luca, Provincial Superior, letter to Bishop Dermot O'Flanagan, 15 June 1955. SPA.  
Also Kirwan, letter to Father G. Edgar Gallant, 15 June 1955.
66. Corneau, Mary Rose Estelle, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
67. "Domestic Prelate Status Bestowed on Skagway Priest," *Daily Alaska Empire*, Juneau, Alaska, 26 March 1958. SMA.
68. Michaud, M. Angela, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
69. Liliane, Mother Mary, General Superior, letter to Mother Mary Angelus, Provincial Superior, 8 August 1959. SPA.
70. Letter, 20 June 1959. SMA.
71. Chronicles, 29 September 1959. Note. SPA.
72. Written brief following interview with Father Francis Nugent.
73. Pius X Mission Chronicles, 18 September 1959.
74. Barry, Mother Mary Angelus, Provincial Superior, to Mother Mary Liliane, General Superior, letter and report, 30 September 1959.
75. Brady, 1985 *Skaguay Alaskan*, p. 12.
76. Pius X Mission Chronicles, 13 November 1959. SPA.
77. Barry, letter to Mother Mary Liliane, 28 January 1960. SMA.
78. Fitzgerald, Mary Baptista, S.S.A., letter to Mother Mary Liliane, 7 January 1960. SMA.
79. Liliane, Mother Mary, letter to Father Harley Baker, Anchorage. SMA.
80. Gallant, Msgr. G. Edgar, letter to Mother Mary Liliane, 4 May 1961.
81. Comments of those present at the jubilee dinner.

## Notes for Chapter Seven

### An Educational Experiment: Glennallen and the Copper River

1. Orth, Donald J., *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, Geological Survey Professional Paper 567, United States Government Printing Office, Washington: 1967, reprinted in 1971 with minor revisions, p. 238.
2. Ibid.
3. Allen, Lt. Henry Tureman, *Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska*, Washington Government Printing Office, 1900.
4. Such, for instance, were the ruins of an old church not far from the site of Copper Valley School. Fathers Paul B. Mueller, S.J., and Vsevolod (Rochcau) Roshko visited a community near Tok at Mentasta Lake in 1960 and noted the three-barred Orthodox crosses in the cemetery.
5. Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, pp. 510, 607.
6. Orth, p. 371.  
The settlement was originally called Glen Allen. Located two miles west of the Richardson Highway, this small village was named after Captain Edwin F. Glenn and Lieutenant Henry T. Allen, U.S. Army, both leaders in the early explorations of the Copper River Basin.
7. *Historical Resumé of CAM-FEGC, History of the Mission*, brochure, 1975. (Central Alaska Missions [CAM] merged with the Far Eastern Gospel Crusade [FEGC] in 1971.)



8. *Miracle of Copper Valley*, brochure, Copper Valley School, p. 1. AAA.
9. Buchanan, John R., S.J., newsletter, from Tok Junction, May 1952. AAA.  
 . . . Chitina is still holding the remains of the Christian religion among the old timers, the old natives, the Russian Orthodox. What a tremendous joy to see their old icons of Mary and their huge crucifixes on the walls and their immediate response to the word "priest." One of the extremely old Indians expressed it this way: "Ah, God good, at last the priest! We have real church again. . . ."
- Also Roshko (Rochcau), Vsevolod, "The Orthodox Church in Alaska," hectographed sheets, 1961. AAA.
10. Buchanan, newsletter, May 1952. "God willing, we will have a mission school. . . ."
11. *Miracle of Copper Valley*, p. 3.
12. Conwell, James U., S.J., letter from Fairbanks, to Priests, Brothers, Sisters, Vicariate of Alaska, 31 January 1955.
13. Babin, George Edmond, S.S.A., remembrances, 1983.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Fortier, Ed, "University in the Sun," *Catholic Digest*, December 1956.
18. Variant names had been: Copper Center Educational Project or Copper Center School. A "Catholic" name was avoided out of consideration for the many non-Catholic businesses that had donations to the school in their accounts.
19. Orth, p. 237:  
 With the establishment of a telegraph station by the U.S. Army Signal Corps about 1901, and being on the Fairbanks-Valdez trail, the village became the principal settlement and supply center in the Nelchigna-Susitna Region. Its population was 91 in 1910; 71 in 1920; 80 in 1930; 138 in 1939; and 90 in 1950.
20. Babin, George Edmond, S.S.A., remembrances, 1983.  
 It was decided that only a nucleus of staff and students would transfer from Holy Cross to the new site. Father Buchanan wanted new life and new spirit at Copper. The Sisters of Saint Ann were responsible for much of what Holy Cross stood for. They had been an integral part of this mission since 1888. Some of the Jesuits questioned the shadow side of discipline, a tinge of Jansenism and the seemingly incessant need for work. There was a strong indication that the Sisters of Saint Ann would not be welcomed at Copper. But Bishop Gleeson, himself, overruled the dissident voices of some of his priests and insisted that the Sisters of Saint Ann be partners with the Jesuits in the development of the new school.  
 Also Kirwan, Mother Mary Luca, Provincial Superior, letter to Mother M. Liliane, General Superior, 18 October 1955.
21. Babin, George Edmond, S.S.A., remembrances, 1983.
22. A battered poster, lettered "Mother Mary Ann Well," still exists (1983) and was attached to the well Brother John Hess, S.J., dug, 2 February 1957. AAA.  
 Mother Mary Ann is particularly known for her concern with plumbing problems of all kinds.
23. Babin, George Edmond, S.S.A., remembrances, 1983.  
 One day, as sister was struggling, Father James Spils came by. "How goes it, George?" he asked, with his concerned and friendly look. Sister's spirits were very low that day and she turned away to hide the tears. Emotion was overcoming her so she sought the sanctuary of her nearby room, a corner behind a butcher paper wall. Soon there was a knock on the 2 by 4s. "May I come in?" It was Father Spils, sensing something was wrong. After he had pushed aside the paper wall, he entered and said, "Sit down on that box! Do you remember the day you took your vows? How happy you were to give all to God!"  
 Then he went on to talk about Saint Peter and of how he had followed the Lord. Father recalled the Gospel incident where Jesus says: "Some day, Peter, your loins will be girded and you will be led where you do not wish to go." After assuring himself that Sister George was listening, Father exclaimed: "Well, damn it, this is it." He stomped out and Sister George shook off her discouragement and got on with the business she had had in hand.
24. This transfer, known as "Operation Snowbird," was filmed by Alaska Airlines. The film is in the archives of the Archdiocese of Anchorage.



25. Legault, Mary Alice Therese, S.S.A., statements, 1960.
26. Babin, George Edmond, S.S.A., reminiscences, 1983.
27. Ibid.  
Also report of the Official Visitation of Copper Center, Glennallen, Alaska, 5 to 10 March 1957.  
Copper Valley School remained staffed by the Sisters of Saint Ann, but the sisters withdrew that summer from Holy Cross.
28. Emily was originally from Railroad City and Holy Cross. Lucille was from McGrath.
29. Anna Maria College maintained an interest in Copper Valley all through the early years. Jesuit colleges, too, were concerned with furthering the goals of Copper Valley School.
30. Later the residence was on Birchwood Street, Anchorage. This house was home for people coming in from the outlying areas.
31. Father James Plamondon, S.J., missionary in the area, had invited the catechists.
32. *The Modern Millwheel*, published by and for the men and women of General Mills, January 1965.
33. Brother George Feltes, S.J., in Fairbanks arranged mission loads to be transported by barge lines during the summer.
34. Brasseur, Ida, S.S.A., remembrances, 1983.
35. LaRose, Agatha of the Angels, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
36. Legault, Alice Therese, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
37. Hanks, Agnes Marie, S.S.A., Questionnaire 1982.
38. Whelan, Robert L., S.J., D.D., Fact sheet to Father Louis Renner, S.J., 29 March 1984.

RE: The Closing of Copper Valley School

In 1969 there was concern about the necessity to close Copper Valley School for financial reasons. Archbishop Ryan called a meeting in Anchorage for his consultants and for personnel from the school. Father Bernard McMeel, the Jesuit Superior, and I, as Bishop of Fairbanks, were invited to the meeting.

Everyone present except Father McMeel and I expressed the thought that the closing of the school was necessary. Father McMeel and I expressed the hope that Copper Valley could continue in operation.

Subsequently, before the announcement was made, Archbishop Ryan offered Copper Valley School both to the Diocese of Fairbanks and to the Jesuit Fathers, debt free, offering us a free hand in the operation of the school.

Both Father McMeel and I, however, felt that we did not have the personnel available to accept this offer.

I want this information to be a matter of record because of the adverse criticism of Archbishop Ryan for the closing of Copper Valley.

Robert L. Whelan, S.J., Bishop of Fairbanks

39. Minutes of the meeting. AAA.
40. Ryan, Archbishop Joseph T., letter to the Benefactors of Copper Valley School, March 1971. AAA.  
In the past you have, from time to time, received news-notes concerning life at Copper Valley School. For the most part, these notes described various activities that made up part of the students' life. They also served as an expression of appreciation for your support of the School over the past fourteen years.  
Of late, however, I can not help but wonder if you have also learned of the many and grave problems that have beset the School — the rising cost of maintaining the School, the difficulties that have been encountered in securing the services of competent and trained Volunteers, the falling off in Religious Vocations of Sisters whose services are so needed everywhere, the failure of the greater number of students to pay tuition — just to mention some of the outstanding problems that we have had to face daily at Copper Valley School.  
As a result, as the Archbishop of Anchorage, I presided over an in-depth study of Copper Valley School—its present and its future status. Men and women known for their educational, financial, and moral expertise, had devoted many long weeks to the serious study of the School in all its phases of operation. This was made necessary by the fact that over the past several years Copper Valley School has been in great trouble financially, economically and educationally.



During this time, we have been faced with a great drop in enrollments in the student body, occasioned partly by the fact that the State has been opening new programs of education for the Natives and partly by the fact that many of the native children refuse to accept the isolation of Glennallen where the school is located. It might truly be said that "civilization" is catching up with our native population, and what pleased adults of years ago now finds little or no favor with their children who desire to be "where the action is."

As a result, my Advisors, both clerical and lay, have recommended the closing of Copper Valley School. This, I must emphasize, has been made necessary because we can no longer meet the financial, economic or educational requirements of the present times.

While I deeply deplore the necessity of closing the school, I must face the reality that it would be unwise to continue operating the school further. Every possible approach has been exhausted. And so I must inform you that Copper Valley School will permanently close at the end of this present term.

I do wish to express to you our lasting gratitude for all the help which you have given to Copper Valley school in the past. Your many sacrifices did make an education possible for native children at a time when without your generosity they would probably not have had the opportunity for an education. Please be assured of our prayers in return for all that you have done. God will surely reward you for your generosity and for your support.

41. Spils, James C., S.J., letter, March 1973, written in response to a questionnaire. Paraphrased.

## Notes for Chapter Eight

### Another Call for Women: Urban and Rural Ministries

1. Orth, Donald J., *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, Geological Survey Professional Paper 567, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington: 1967, reprinted in 1971 with minor revisions, p. 11.
2. Orth, p. 533.
3. The Sisters of Charity of Providence had accepted Nome in 1902 as a site for Holy Cross Hospital; Fairbanks in 1910, where they took over St. Joseph's Hospital; and Anchorage, where Providence Hospital on L Street opened in 1939.
4. Members came to Anchorage at the request of Archbishop Ryan in 1966 and were, at first, in a temporary retreat house in Eagle River, while waiting for Holy Spirit Retreat House in Anchorage to be readied.
5. Catholic Central Junior High School was the result of years of effort by Anchorage Catholics. There was controversy about the appropriateness of the junior high level. Its closing antagonized many against the archbishop.  
The school was reorganized as an elementary school. Much of the junior high equipment went to Copper Valley School.  
The elementary school was called Hubbard Memorial, after Fr. Bernard R. Hubbard, S.J., as a mark of appreciation toward the Jesuits.
6. Holy Family became a parish in 1917; a cathedral parish in 1966. Besides St. Anthony's and St. Benedict's, other parishes developed: St. Patrick's, Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Paul Miki (later absorbed into St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish), Holy Cross.
7. Kenai mission centers included the city of Kenai itself, Seward, Soldotna, Cooper Landing, Homer, Ninilchik, Seldovia.  
The Redemptorists (Oakland Province) had arrived at the request of Bishop O'Flanagan, when Anchorage and Southcentral Alaska belonged to the Diocese of Juneau.  
St. Theresa's Camp, Soldotna, became a major ministry for youth in the summer months. The Redemptorists initiated this camp apostolate.
8. Formation Directory, p. 1.
9. Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., *Implementing the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act*, Washington, D.C., 1972. (Prepared for the Alaska Native Foundation).
10. St. Ann's Convent on Stanley Drive was in the southern part of Anchorage. The house had been bought by the archdiocese from the Vance Uhlig family.



A smaller house on the property became a residence for priests: Fr. Richard Saudis and then Father Eugene P. Burns, S.J., who offered Mass at the convent. Archbishop Ryan supplied many items to furnish the convent. Chapel furnishings came from Cooper Landing.

11. From North Adams, Massachusetts. When there was question of the Sisters of Saint Ann taking residence in Anchorage, Monsignor Lunney spoke on their behalf. Due largely to his intervention, the sisters began ministering as a group in Anchorage.
12. Chefornek and Nightmute Chronicles, 1983-1984.



## Bibliography for *North to Share*

### Books:

- Allen, Lieutenant Henry Tureman. *Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900.
- Andrews, C. L. *The Story of Alaska*. Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1944.
- Anonymous. *A Chaplet of Years 1858-1918*. Victoria, B.C.: Sisters of Saint Ann publication, 1918.
- Auclair, Elie-J. *L'Histoire des Soeurs de Saint Anne*. Montreal: 1922.
- Berton, Pierre. *Klondike, The Last Great Gold Rush*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1972.
- Carrière, Gaston, O.M.I. *Dictionnaire Biographique des Oblats de Marie Immaculée au Canada*. Ottawa: Editions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1976.
- Catholic Directory*. 1894, 1909.
- Dayton, Roger. *Koyukuk*. Blaine, WA and Surrey, B.C., Canada: Hancock House Publishers, 1981.
- De Ruyter, Mary Joseph Calasanz (Calasanctius), S.S.A. *The Voice of Alaska*. Lachine, Quebec: St. Ann's Press, 1947.
- Dmytryshin, Basil and E. A. P. Crownhart-Vaughan. *The End of Russian America, Capt. P.N. Golovin's Last Report 1862*. Oregon Historical Society, 1979.  
A translation of *Obzor Russkikh Kolonii V Severnoi Amerike* by Pavel N. Golovin. Sankpeterburg, 1862.
- Down, Mary Margaret, S.S.A., *A Century of Service*. Victoria, B.C.: Morriss Printing Co., Ltd., 1966.
- Fortuine, Robert, M.D. *Chills and Fevers, Health and Disease in the Early History of Alaska*. University of Alaska Press, 1989.
- Governor of Alaska, Annual Reports of the Secretary of the Interior, FY 1884-1896. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Gruening, Ernest. *The State of Alaska*. New York: Random House, 1954.
- Henderson, Chester D. *Compiled Reports* (Education). James Wickersham Collection, Juneau, 1918-1920: Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Hinckley, Ted C. *The Americanization of Alaska, 1867-1897*. Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Books, 1972.
- Hulley, Clarence C. *Alaska: Past and Present*. Portland, Oregon: Binford's & Mort, 1958.
- Jackson, Sheldon, LL.D. *Report of the Commissioner of Education*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895 to 1896, 1896 to 1897, 1897 to 1898, 1898 to 1899, 1902. Other reports by the Commissioner of Education: 1908, 1909, 1910.
- Jones, H. Wendy. *Alaska's Dynamic Women*. Vol. II. Newport Beach, CA: Detail Quality Printing, 1977.
- Judge, Charles. *An American Missionary*. Maryknoll, New York: Macmillan, 1907.
- Llorente, Segundo, S.J. *Jesuits in Alaska*. Portland, Oregon: Service Office, Key Litho, 1969.
- McCarty, Billy, Sr. *Billy McCarty, Sr. - Ruby - A Biography*. Fairbanks, Alaska: Spirit Mountain Press, 1983.
- Mondor, Mary Anne Eva, S.S.A., *History of the Sisters of Saint Ann*. New York: Vantage Press, 1961.  
A translation of *L'Histoire des Soeurs de Sainte Ann, 1850-1900* by Sister M. Jean-de-Pathmos, S.S.A.
- Morgan, Lael, et al. *Alaska's Native People*. Edmonds, WA: Alaska Geographic, 1979.
- Naske, Claus-M., and Slotnick, Herman E. *Alaska, A History of the 49th State*. Grand Rapids, MI, W.B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1979. 2nd Ed.: University of Oklahoma Press: Norman and London, 1987.
- Nathan, Robert R. Associates, Inc. *Implementing the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act*. Washington, D.C., 1972.
- Nevins, Albert J. *The Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1965.
- Netsvetov, Iakov. *The Journals of Iakov Netsvetov, The Yukon Years: 1845-1863*. Juneau: Alaska State Library.
- Orth, Donald J. *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*. Geological Survey Professional Paper, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971.
- Osgood, Cornelius. *Ingalik Material Culture*. Human Relations Area Files Press, 1970.
- Ricks, Melvin. *Alaska Bibliography: An Introductory Guide to Alaskan Historical Literature*. Stephen W. and Betty J. Haycox, editors. Anchorage: U. of Alaska. Portland: Binford & Mort.
- Rogers, George W. *Alaska in Transition*. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins Press, 1960.
- Schoenberg, Wilfred P., S.J. *Paths to the Northwest: A Jesuit History of the Oregon Province*. Chicago: Loyola Press, 1982.
- Steckler, Gerard G., S.J. *Charles John Seghers, Priest and Bishop in the Pacific Northwest 1839-1886: A Biography*. Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1986.
- VanStone, James W. *Athapaskan Adaptations*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1974.
- . *Fieldiana Anthropology*, Vol. 70. E. W. Nelson's Notes on the Indians of the Yukon and Innoko Rivers, Alaska. Field Museum of Natural History, 1978.



- . *Fieldiana Anthropology*, Vol. 71. Ingalik Contact Ecology. Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, Publication 1295, March 1979.
- Welsh, Mary Mildred, S.S.A. *The Apostle of Alaska*. Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1943.  
A translation of *Vie de Monseigneur Seghers* by Maurice DeBaets.
- Young, S. Hall. *The Klondike Clan, A Tale of the Great Stampede*. Toronto: S.B. Grundy and New York: Revell Co., 1916.
- Zagoskin, Lt. Lavrentiy. *Lieutenant Zagoskin's Travels in Russian America, 1842-1844*. The First Ethnographic and Geographic Investigations in the Yukon and Kuskokwim Valleys of Alaska. Henry N. Michael, editor. Toronto: U. of Toronto, 1967.
- Zaslow, Morris. *The Opening of the Canadian North 1870-1914*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1971.
- Manuscripts:**
- Cantwell, Margaret, S.S.A. "The History of the Archdiocese of Anchorage." Archives of the Archdiocese of Anchorage. Anchorage, Alaska.
- Pineault, Mary Theodore, S.S.A. "The Sisters of Saint Ann in North Pacific Lands, 1886-1936." Archives of the Sisters of Saint Ann, Victoria, B.C., Canada.
- Loyens, William J., S.J. "The Changing Culture of the Nulato Koyukon Indians," (unpublished dissertation). University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1966.
- Community Documents:**
- Agreement between the Right Reverend Bishop J. R. Crimont, S.J., D.D., and the Director of Pius X Mission, of Skagway, Alaska, and the Sisters of Saint Ann, Inc., of Victoria, B.C., 1932.
- Agreement subject to the approval of His Excellency Msgr. Dermot O'Flanagan, Bishop of Juneau. Agreement between the Sisters of Saint Ann, Party of the First Part, and Msgr. Edgar Gallant, Party of the Second Part, 1959.
- Annales de la Communauté, 1904, 1907, 1985.
- Annals of the Community, 1900, 1903, 1906, 1918.
- Anastasia, Mother Mary, General Superior, Account of 1908 Travels.
- Angel Guardian, Mother Mary. *Récit de Voyage*, 1899. Arbour & Laperle, 1900.
- Chronicles:
- Anchorage, 1973 to 1985.
  - Chefornak and Nightmute, 1983 to 1984
  - Dawson
  - Juneau, 1886 to 1968
  - Nulato
- Pius X Mission, Skagway
  - Skagway Sanatorium.
- De Ruyter, Mary Joseph Calasanctius, S.S.A., Journals 1897, 1899.
- Essay. St. Marie's Province, Marlboro, Massachusetts, 1983, 1984.
- Fairbanks 1906 to 1907.
- Fitzpatrick, Mary Benedict (Benoit), S.S.A., Journals 1893, 1897.
- General Chapters of the Sisters of Saint Ann, Ninth, April 1902. Tenth, April 1908.
- Goulet, M. Coeur de Jésus, S.S.A. "L'Historique de la Mission de Nulato 1899 à 1918."
- Granger, Mary Pudenticienne, S.S.A., "Notes sur l'histoire Sainte-Marie, Dawson." Also diagrams of buildings as remembered in the 1950s.
- Historique de Dawson.
- Holy Cross Journals, 1893, 1889 to 1890, 1897.
- Hôpital Sainte-Marie Historique.
- "In This Seventy-Fifth Year," 1886 to 1961.
- Journal from Victoria 1886 to 1887.
- Kelly, Eileen, S.S.A. Circular letters. 15 November 1972, 22 September 1975, 5 September 1978.
- King, Mary Dorothea, S.S.A. Newsletter. 15 February 1950.
- Kirwan, Mary Luca, S.S.A. Undated brief to Mother Mary Liliane. Brief to General Council. March 1956.
- Report of Official Visitation of Holy Cross. March 1957.
- Leahy, Mary Stephen, S.S.A. Journals 1888 to 1889, 1900.
- Maisons Fermées:
- Douglas
  - Fairbanks
  - Whitehorse
- Mission de Nulato. Aperçu historique.
- Necrology 1932, 1981.
- Notes of 1900, 1901, 1902.
- Peterson, Mary of the Cross, S.S.A. Journal, Dawson to Victoria, 1899.
- Provincial Council Minutes. Victoria, 1888, 1960.
- Régistre des Actes de Délibérations du Conseil Majeur de la Communauté des Filles de Sainte Anne, 11 septembre 1883 à 4 mai 1906, 12 juin 1926 à 27 juillet 1945.
- Register of pupils:
- Cowichan, 1864 to 1929
  - Juneau, 1886 to —



Victoria, 1858 to 1923.

Report of the Official Visitation of Copper Center, Glennallen, Alaska. 5-10 March 1957.

Welsh, Mary Mildred, S.S.A. Diary, "In the Land of the Midnight Sun." 1933.

#### Other Documents

Barrett, W. T., M.D., "Reminiscences of Early Klondike Days."

Catholic Social Services (published reports and newsletters).

Holy Cross notebook. 1940-1956. (Lariviere, Sr. M. Eulalia, S.S.A.) c. 1950.

Liber Baptizatorum in Statione SS Cordis Jesu in loco indianice dicto Tereoyichét ad flumen Eterhè [Shageluk] sita, & ad S Crucis Residentiam (Yukon) adnexa in missione Alaskensi, S.J., 1887-1902.

Minutes of Meetings at Copper Valley School and in Anchorage regarding the closure of Copper Valley School.

#### Reports:

Anonymous. Report of Commission set up by J. E. Gibben. Jan. 1950.

Baker, K. J. Territorial Engineer, to Commissioner G. R. Cameron. 1963.

Gillian, Tom C. Chief Auxiliary Patient Services, Alaska Native Medical Center. 1985.

Remarks, Possibly C.H. Higgins, Special Agent, The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the U.S. The Edward A. Woods Co., General Agent. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Rural Ministry: 1973 to 1980.

Urban and Rural Ministry: 1973

Roshko, (Rochcau), Vsevolod. "The Orthodox Church in Alaska." 1961.

Walker, Frank S. Trust fund. 1969.

Whelan, Robert L., S.J., D.D. Official statement to Louis L. Renner, S.J. 1984.

#### Newspapers and Magazines:

*The Alaska Journal*. Vol. 9, No. 1, Winter 1979. Vol. 15, No. 2, Spring 1985.

*Anchorage Daily News*. Catholic Commentary pages.

*Anchorage Times*. Catholic Commentary pages. November 1977, May 1982.

*Arctic Anthropology*. 2 (2). 1964.

*Ave Maria*. 10 April 1926.

*Catholic Digest*. December 1956.

*Catholic Missions*. July 1911.

*The Catholic Sentinel*. Portland, Oregon. 1886.

*Corona Borealis* (school annuals). 1962 to 1971.

*Daily Alaska Empire*. Juneau, AK. March 1958. Special Hospital Week section, May 1962.

*Daily Colonist*. Victoria, B.C. 1885, April 1888.

*Daily Evening Star*. Whitehorse, Y.T. March 1904, Nov. 1906.

*Daily Standard*. Victoria, B.C. 1886.

*Dawson Daily News*. April 1923.

*Dawson Weekly News*. January 1950.

*Extension*. The Catholic Church Extension Society of the U.S., Chicago. 1980.

*Eskimo*. Fall-Winter 1980 to 1981. N.S. No. 20.

*Historical Resume of CAM-FEGC* (brochure). Glennallen, Alaska.

*Inside Passage*. Juneau, Alaska. January 1976, October 1977.

*Interior News*. Smithers, B.C. August 1969, February 1970.

*Jessen's Weekly*. Fairbanks, Alaska. January 1958.

*Juneau Empire*. Juneau, Alaska. 25 October 1991, 29 Oct. 1991.

*Klondike Nugget*. Dawson, Y.T. 1898, 1900, 1901.

*Miracle of Copper Valley* (brochure). Glennallen.

*Missions de la Congregation des Missionnaires Oblats de Marie Immaculée* Published c. 1900.

*Newswheel* (school newspaper). Copper Valley School.

*North/Nord*. Spring 1983.

*Northern Echoes* (jubilee booklet). Holy Cross. 1935, jubilee issue 1938.

*Northern Winds* (mission newspaper). Holy Cross, 1945, October 1947.

*North to the Future* (centennial study). 1967.

*Oblate Annals*. 1874, 1898 to 1900.

*Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. 1968.

*The Paystreak*. Dawson, Y.T. December 1899.

*Petites Annales des Missionnaires Oblats de Marie l'Immaculée*. 1901.

*Skaguay Alaskan*. 1985.

*Southeast Alaska Empire*. 1980.

*St. Ann's Journal*. October 1950.

*Tundra Drums*. 10 December 1981.

*Yukon Catholic*. Dawson, Y.T. 1902.

#### Letters:

Abbott, Alice P. 1985.

Althoff, John. 1886.

Anastasia, Mother M., S.S.A. 1910, 1911.

Angel Guardian, Mother M., S.S.A. 1895, 1899.



- Babin, M. George Edmond, S.S.A. 1952, 1954, 1955.  
 Barry, Mother M. Angelus., S.S.A. 1959 (including a report), 1960.  
 Baud, John B., S.J. 1941.  
 Bernard, M. John Bernard, S.S.A. 1923, 1924.  
 Bougis, Peter C., S.J. 1901.  
 Brassard, M. Didace, S.S.A. 1903, 1904.  
 Brasseur, M. Ida, S.S.A. 1957, 1985.  
 Brault, M. Pauline, S.S.A. 1888, 1906.  
 Brault, M. Ralph, S.S.A. 1925.  
 Buchanan, John R., S.J. 1950s.  
 Caron, M. Claude, S.S.A. 1942  
 Cincotta, M. Ida Gaetana, S.S.A. 1990.  
 Conwell, James U., S.J. 1955.  
 Coudert, Bishop Jean-Louis, O.M.I. 1942, 1944.  
 Crimont, Joseph Raphael, S.J. 1909, 1913. Bishop Crimont, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1924.  
 De Ruyter, M. Joseph Calasanctius, S.S.A. 1888.  
 Fitzgerald, M. Baptista, S.S.A. 1960 (part of a letter).  
 Fontaine, M. Zenon, S.S.A. 1913.  
 Forest, Dorothy Marie, S.S.A. 1956.  
 Foster, Donald C. 1947.  
 Gallant, G. Edgar, V. G. 1959.  
 Goulet, M. Jules of the Sacred Heart, S.S.A. 1926.  
 Granger, M. Bernadette, S.S.A. 1906.  
 Hetu, Genevieve. 1958.  
 Jetté, Lady B. 1906.  
 Jetté, Jules, S.J. 1901, 1904.  
 Jolie, M. Joanne, S.S.A. 1943.  
 Jonckau, John J. 1888.  
 King, M. Dorothea, S.S.A. 1952.  
 Kirwan, M. Luca, S.S.A. 1957.  
 Lariviere, M. Eulalia, S.S.A. 1954.  
 LaRose, Jeannette, S.S.A. 1964.  
 Leopoldine, Mother M., S.S.A. 1926, 1932.  
 Leahy, M. Stephen, S.S.A. 1888, 1900, 1906, 1907.  
 Liliane, Mother M., S.S.A. 1958, 1959.  
 Lucchesi, John L., S.J. 1904, 1906, 1909, 1910, 1918.  
 Melanie, M., S.S.A. 1913.  
 Melbourne, David. (undated letter).  
 Paquette, M. Anne Eveline, S.S.A. 1983.  
 Provincial Superior. 1951.  
 René, J. B., S.J. c. 1897 to 1898, 1898 to 1904, 1910.  
 Richard, M. Patricia, S.S.A. 1984.  
 Robaut, Aloysius, S.J. 1888.  
 Rossi, Crispin S., S.J. 1908, 1912.  
 Ryan, Archbishop Joseph T. 1971.  
 Seghers, Archbishop Charles J. 1886.  
 Sifton, John B., S.J. c. 1941.  
 Spils, James C., S.J. 1973.  
 Sulzman, F. Merrill. 1932.  
 Therien, M. Alberic, S.S.A. 1920.  
 Tosi, Pascal, S.J. 1894, 1895, 1896.  
 Vachereau, M. Yolande, S.S.A. 1990  
 Walker, James A., Senior. 1957.  
1982 Questionnaires to Sisters of Saint Ann  
 (Responses incorporated into text)
- Babin, M. George Edmond  
 Barry, M. Angelus  
 Brasseur, M. Ida  
 Cantin, M. Rose  
 Cincotta, M. Felicia  
 Cormier, M. Pauline  
 Daigneault, Carmen Marie  
 Daigneault, M. Dositheus  
 Doogan, M. Joseph Raphael  
 Doogan, M. Kevin  
 Dumas, Doris  
 Dupuis, Clarence Marie  
 Forest, M. Dorothy  
 Hanks, Agnes Marie  
 Hemond, M. Aimée of the Precious Blood  
 Jolie, M. Joanne  
 Kirwan, M. Luca  
 Lalande, M. Reparatrice  
 LaRose, M. Agatha of the Angels  
 Laurin, M. Clementina  
 LeBoeuf, M. Rosalia  
 Legault, M. Alice Therese  
 MacIntyre, M. Donna  
 MacKenzie, M. Carmelita  
 Marcotte, M. Antonia of the Sacred Heart  
 Mainville, Mariette  
 McGarrigle, M. Lucita  
 McGauvran, M. Ronald  
 McGrory, M. Isaac Jogues  
 Michaud, M. Angela  
 Morin, Judith  
 O'Connor, M. Florence  
 Paquette, M. Anne Eveline  
 Poncelet, M. Ethel



Richard, M. Patricia  
St. Germain, M. Claire Cecilia  
Snyder, Joyce  
Tevini, Alice  
Vachereau, Yolande  
Wambeke, M. Beatrice  
Weimer, M. Armella

#### Interviews:

Babin, M. George Edmond, S.S.A. 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986.  
Barry, M. S.S.A. 1983, 1985.  
Beaulieu, Elizabeth, S.S.A. 1983.  
Brousseau, Therese, S.S.A. 1984.  
Bradford, Jo Ann. Naknek. 1985.  
Brasseur, M. Ida, S.S.A. 1982, 1983, 1984.  
Cantin, M. Rose, S.S.A. 1984.  
Cashen, M. Philippa, S.S.A. in the 1950s.  
Catholic Church Extension Society, Chicago. 1980.  
Demientieff, Frances. Anchorage. 1986; Holy Cross, 1987.  
Demientieff, Martha (Aucoin). Anchorage, 1986, 1987.  
Demientieff, Mary (Dahlquist). Holy Cross, 1986, 1987, 1988.  
Dickinson, Patricia, S.S.A. 1984.  
Doogan, Ann Marie, S.S.A. 1978, 1983, 1985.  
Doogan, M. Kevin, S.S.A. 1983, 1984.  
Down, M. Faustina, S.S.A. 1983, 1984, 1985.  
Freney, M. Alena, S.S.A. 1983.  
Hanks, Agnes Marie, S.S.A. in the 1970s, 1984, 1985.  
Lagace, M. Marcellus, S.S.A. 1983.  
Landry, M. Thomasina, S.S.A. 1983, 1985.  
McGarrigle, Mary, S.S.A. 1982, 1983.  
Nyland, M. Agnes, S.S.A. 1982, 1983, 1984.  
Paquette, Anne Eveline, S.S.A. 1987.  
Poncelet, M. Ethel, S.S.A. 1985.  
Powell, M. Laurena, S.S.A. 1983, 1985.  
Renner, Louis L., S.J. 1985, 1986, 1991, 1992.  
Riel, M. Irene Theresa, S.S.A. 1983.  
Teske, Lily (Fox). Anchorage, 1986.  
Wambeke, Beatrice, S.S.A. 1982, 1983.  
Weimer, M. Armella, S.S.A. 1983, 1985.

#### Other Resources:

##### For Juneau:

Lived experiences of Kathleen Mary (Margaret Cantwell), S.S.A., 1956 to 1960.

##### For Holy Cross:

Experiences of M. George Edmond, S.S.A. (1946 to 1955).  
Experiences of Kathleen Mary, S.S.A. (1946 to 1956).  
Notes received from M. Eulalia, S.S.A. (1982, 1983).  
Recollections shared by M. Angela, S.S.A.

##### For Nulato:

An unnamed source during pastorate of George S. Endal, S.J., at Nulato.

Experiences of Kathleen Mary, S.S.A.  
Stories from Anne Eveline Paquette, S.S.A.

##### For Skagway:

Written report following interview with Father Francis Nugent, 1959.

Observations of Kathleen Mary, S.S.A.

##### For Glennallen:

"Operation Snowbird," 8-millimeter film.  
"Scuttlebutt" and "Spoke," daily news sheets.  
Sensitive materials in archives of the Archdiocese of Anchorage.

Conversations with concerned clergy, sisters, volunteers, other educators, benefactors, and students.

Experiences of M. George Edmond, S.S.A.  
Experiences of Kathleen Mary, S.S.A.

##### For Anchorage:

Chancery Office brochures and schedules.  
Award ceremonies.  
Observations at Alaska Native Medical Center.  
Testimonials about Dorothy Forest, S.S.A.  
Centennial celebrations (1886 to 1986) of Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska.  
Experiences of M. George Edmond, S.S.A.  
Experiences of Margaret Cantwell, S.S.A.



# Biographies

**Sister Margaret Cantwell** is of Irish lineage and is from Massachusetts. Her desire to be in Alaska was kindled in high school days by a talk by Father Bernard R. Hubbard, S.J., who spoke of the Sisters of Saint Ann at Holy Cross. Missioned there in 1946, Sister Margaret has spent thirty-seven years in schools or pastoral ministry in Alaska. Sister has written numerous articles for publication in community and Church periodicals. For a few years, Sister Margaret taught in Vancouver and Kamloops, B.C., and at Kakawis Family Development Centre, an alcohol rehabilitation center for Native families of British Columbia. She then went North again, in 1987, to Holy Cross.

**Sister Mary George Edmond** (Lucienne Babin) was born in Massachusetts and is of Franco-American heritage. After working as a secretary, she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Ann in Montreal, in 1928. Her first assignment was to type the French translation of *The Voice of Alaska*, written by Sister M. Joseph Calasanctius, a foundress of Holy Cross Mission. Before being named to Alaska in 1946, Sister George was attached to the Mohawk Reserve, Kahnawake, Quebec. After an absence from Alaska, during which time she was Provincial Superior of the New England Province, Sister George returned to Alaska to type and index archival material concerning the history of the Archdiocese of Anchorage. Later, while residing at Mount St. Mary, Victoria, B.C., sister collaborated in the research, editing, and typing of the manuscript resulting in this book.







# Index

## A

- Abigail, Sr. M. .... 127, 252, 255, 256, 257  
Abrams, Ned ..... 208  
Act Providing a Civil Government for Alaska ..... 5  
Addeé, Sr. M. .... 124, 256  
Adelaide, Sr. M. .... 104, 252  
Adolphe, Sr. M. .... 254  
Adolphus, Sr. M. .... 180, 181, 255, 257  
Aetna ..... 204 See Ahtna  
Agatha, Mother M ..... 94  
Agatha of the Angels, Sr. M. .... 194, 208, 209, 210, 219, 221, 222, 253, 256 See Sr. Jeannette LaRose  
Agnes Marie, Sr. .... 76, 133, 171, 222, 253, 256  
Agnes, Sr. Mary ..... 254  
Ahtna (Ahtena) ..... 2, 204  
Aimée of the Precious Blood, Sr. M. .... 184, 194, 199, 256  
Akulurak ..... 71-75, 83, 110, 120, 180, 183, 251  
Alarie, Flora (Alary) ..... 244 See Sr. M. Madeleine; also Sr. M. Magdalen  
Alaska Airlines ..... 211  
Alaska Boys State ..... 219  
Alaska Commercial Company ..... 56, 75, 91, 108, 113, 139, 169  
Alaska Crippled Children's Association ..... 161  
Alaska Dept. of Health and Welfare, Div. of Mental Health ..... 48  
Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) ..... 232  
Alaska Freight Lines ..... 206  
Alaska Highway ..... 6, 94, 208, 220  
Alaska Hospital Association ..... 47  
Alaska-Juneau Gold Mines ..... 24, 28  
Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) ..... 232  
Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) ..... 232-233, 234  
Alaska Native Medical Center (ANS) (Anchorage) .... 215, 229, 230, 232, 237  
Alaska Railroad ..... 217, 229  
Alaska, State of ..... 223  
Alaska, Territory of ..... 164, 180, 187  
Alberic, Sr. M. .... 143, 146, 254  
Albert, Sr. M. .... 189-190, 252, 255, 257  
Albrecht, Earl C., M.D. .... 44, 161  
Alcohol ..... 113-114, 115, 116, 232  
Alcohol and Drug Research Demonstration Center ..... 232  
Alena, Sr. M. .... 41, 254  
Aleut ..... 2, 4, 11, 187  
Aleutian Islands ..... 2, 23, 42, 55, 56, 187  
Alexander, Mrs. G. F. .... 40  
Alexandre, Sr. M. .... 252  
Alexie, Agnes ..... 168  
Alfreda, Sr. M. .... 39, 187, 254  
Alice (steamer) ..... 80, 81, 82  
Alice Island ..... 192  
Alice Therese, Sr. M. .... 165, 166, 208, 211, 222, 253, 254  
See Sister Alice Legault  
Allard, Elmire ..... 244 See Sr. M. of Good Counsel  
Allard, Rev. Elphege, O.M.I. .... 92  
Allard, Rev. Joseph, O.M.I. .... 183  
Allen, Lt. Henry T. .... 204  
Allen, Paulynne ..... 215  
Aloysius, Jake ..... 150  
Althoff, Rev. John .... 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 32, 42, 53, 54, 175  
Alyeska Pipeline Service ..... 225  
Ambrose, Audrey ..... 226  
Ambrose, Maryann ..... 131  
Ambrose, Sr. M. .... 189, 252, 254, 256  
Amée, Sr. M. .... 100, 102, 252, 255  
Amelia, Sr. M. .... 127, 256  
Anable, Edmund A., S.J. .... 167  
Anastasia, Mother M. .... 16, 17, 18, 55, 92, 94, 123  
Anchorage ..... 160, 164, 167, 183, 229-243, 241, 251  
*Ancon* ..... 19, 20  
Anderson, Sylvia ..... 40  
Andreafsky River ..... 71-72, 76, 117  
Andresen, Howard ..... 189, 193  
Angela, Sr. M. .... 154, 155, 162, 197, 254, 256, 257  
Angel Guardian, Mother M. .... 74-75, 88, 89, 90, 110, 115  
Angel Guardian, Sr. M. .... 248, 252 See Marguerite Levesque  
Angela, Olga ..... 142  
Angelus, Sr. M. .... 41, 48, 199, 254  
Angilbert, Sr. M. .... 69, 142, 253, 257  
Anglican ..... 5, 27 See Episcopalian  
Anilukhtakpak ..... 58, 59  
Anna Maria College ..... 170, 206, 207, 215  
Anna, Sr. M. .... 254  
Anna of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 255  
Anne, Sr. Miriam ..... 254  
Anne Cecilia, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
Anne Dolores, Sr. M. .... 253, 254  
Anne Elise, Sr. M. .... 255, 257  
Anne Eloise, Sr. M. .... 194, 257  
Anne Eveline, Sr. M. .... 107, 132, 133, 134, 171, 214, 224, 253, 254, 255, 256  
Anne of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 18, 55  
Anne of Sion, Sr. M. .... 255  
Anne Rita, Sr. M. .... 132, 163, 165, 170, 194, 214, 217, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257  
Annette Island ..... 4, 27, 177  
Annie ..... 73  
Annonciade, Sr. M. .... 137, 254  
Anthony, Sr. M. .... 101, 104, 252  
Antoinette, Mother M., O.S.U. .... 164  
Antonia of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 69, 97, 100, 110, 111, 114, 117, 130, 142, 251, 253, 256, 257  
Antonia of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 130, 131, 255, 256  
Antonius, Sr. M. (Dickinson) ..... 104, 251  
Antonius, Sr. M. (Fife) ..... 254  
Antoska, Andrew ..... 64  
Anvik ..... 54, 59, 109, 115, 169  
Archangel, Sr. M. .... 244, 252, 254  
Archbishop of Anchorage (first) ..... See Archbishop Joseph T. Ryan  
Archbishop of Anchorage (second) ..... See Archbishop Francis T. Hurley  
Archdiocese of Anchorage ..... 222-223, 235  
Arel, Josephine (Harel). .... 244 See Sr. M. Theophile of Rome



Arel, Marie Jeanne (Harel) ..... 244 See Sr. M. Jeanne of the Visitation  
 Armella, Sr. M. .... 147, 148, 151, 254, 256  
 Armenia, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Arteaga, Don Ignacio ..... 203  
 Ashby, George and Catherine ..... 204, 213  
 Askhomute ..... 59  
 Athabasca-Mackenzie ..... 15, 79, 109  
 Athabaskan ..... 2, 3, 115  
 Atna ..... 204 See Ahtna  
 Aubuchon, Jacqueline ..... 244 See Sr. Denise Marie  
 Aubuchon, John (family of) ..... 165  
 Audette, Yvonne ..... 244 See Sr. M. Anne Dolores  
 Audrey, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Augustine, Sr. M. .... 92, 93, 94, 257  
 Augustinian Order (California Province) ..... 237  
 Aumont, Rosanna ..... 244 See Sr. M. Josaphat  
 Aurelius, Sr. M. .... 185, 194, 199, 255, 257  
 Aza, Sr. M. .... 159, 183, 184, 254, 257

## B

Babin, Arthur ..... 208  
 Babin, Lucienne ..... 244 See Sr. M. George Edmond  
 Bagoy's Flower Shop ..... 213  
 Baker, Rev. Harley A. .... 183, 194, 199  
 Baldwin, Catherine ..... 244 See Sr. M. Martha  
 Baptista, Sr. M. .... 199, 256  
 Baranof, Alexander ..... 23  
 Barbara, Sr. M. .... 252, 254  
 Barbare, Craig ..... 215-216  
 Barbour, Walter L., M.D. .... 124  
 Barger, Dick, Dorothy and David ..... 215  
 Barkshire, Mrs. Fran ..... 239  
 Barnabé, Sr. M. .... 100, 102, 251, 252, 254  
 Barnard, Lt. John J., R.N. .... 108  
 Barnesley, Miss Douglas, R.N. .... 132  
 Barnum, Francis, S.J. .... 71  
 Barrett, W. T., M.D. .... 82, 86-87  
 Barrows, Don ..... 216  
 Bartles, Charles A., S.J. .... 134  
 Barry, Mary ..... 244 See Sr. M. Angelus  
 Bartlett Memorial Hospital ..... 48  
 Baud, John B., S.J. .... 129, 130, 132, 220  
 Beans, Deacon Patrick, Senior ..... 77  
 Beatrice, Sr. M. .... 187, 189, 256, 257  
 Beauchamp, Julienne ..... 244 See Sr. M. Eloise  
 Beaudoin, Emma ..... 64, 65, 70  
 Beaudoin, John ..... 64  
 Beaudoin, Marie Louise ..... 244 See Sr. M. Evariste  
 Beaudoin, Mary ..... 64  
 Beaulieu, Alma ..... 244 See Sr. M. of the Eucharistic Heart  
 Beaulieu, Elizabeth ..... 244 See Sr. M. Bernardi  
 Behrends, Bernard M. .... 21  
 Beierly, Andrew ..... 199  
 Belanger, Clarisse ..... 244 See Sr. M. Dolora  
 Bel'kov, Fr. Zakharii ..... 58  
 Bell, Marjorie C. .... 244 See Sr. M. Walter  
 Bellerose, Hermine ..... 244 See Sr. M. Angilbert  
 Benedict, Sr. M. .... 69-70, 71, 72, 75, 80, 94, 251, 252, 253  
 Benoit, Indiana ..... 244 See Sr. M. Antonia of Jesus

Bentley, R. Irvine, M.D. .... 41  
 Bergman, W. E., M.D. .... 41  
 Bering, Vitus ..... 4  
 Berlinguette, Theona ..... 244 See Sr. M. Vincent  
 Bernadette, Sr. M. .... 137, 142, 253  
 Bernard, Josephine P. .... 244 See Sr. M. John Bernard  
 Bernardi, Sr. M. .... 170, 251, 253  
 Bernard of Siena, Sr. M. .... 203, 223, 225, 253  
 Berryng ..... 152, 153, 159  
 Berthilda, Sr. M. .... 254  
 Bertholde, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Bertrand, Blanche ..... 244 See Sr. M. Esther  
 Bessette, Melvina ..... 244 See Sr. M. Barbara  
 Bethel ..... 157, 161, 162  
 Bill, Joan ..... 216  
 Birthright ..... 232  
 Bissonnette, Evelina ..... 244 See Sr. M. Louise of Florence  
 Blanton, William, M.D. .... 44, 47  
 Bleau, Eugenie ..... 244 See Sr. M. Jules of the Sacred Heart  
 Blondin, M. Esther Sureau ..... 162 See Mother M. Ann.  
 Also Venerable Marie Anne Blondin .....  
 Blue Bead (trailer) ..... 121, 122  
 Boardwell, Tim ..... 213  
 Bobka, Rosemary ..... 207, 210  
 Boileau, Most Rev. George T., S.J. .... 220-221, 226  
 Bompas, Mrs. William C. .... 80  
 Bonsecours, Sr. M. .... 19, 22, 255  
 Boucher, Elise ..... 244 See Sr. M. Gedeon  
 Boudreau, Clarisse ..... 244 See Sr. M. Clarita. Also  
 Sr. M. Claire of the Trinity  
 Bougis, Peter C., S.J. .... 32, 178  
 Brady, Rev. John G. .... 177  
 Brancoli, Peter, S.J. .... 123, 140  
 Brassard, Caroline ..... 244 See Sr. M. Didace  
 Brasseur, Mary Ida ..... 233, 237, 239, 244 See Sr. M.  
 Ida of the Eucharist  
 Brasseur, Valentine ..... 244 See Sr. M. de la Garde  
 Brault, Alphonsine ..... 244 See Sr. M. Archangel  
 Brault, Delima ..... 244 See Sr. M. Pauline  
 Brault, Rose de Lima ..... 244 See Sr. M. Ralph  
 Brazeau, Aldina ..... 244 See Sr. M. Michel of Florence  
 Brennan, Helen, S.P. .... 122  
 Breynt, Most Rev. Gabriel, O.M.I. .... 94  
 Briggs, Glen (family) ..... 224  
 Bristol Bay ..... 132, 217, 221, 237  
 British Columbia ..... 6, 16, 17, 27  
 Brocies, Rebecca ..... 216  
 Brockert, Mike ..... 215  
 Brooks, Beverly ..... 216  
 Brophy, Joan Barbara ..... 244 See Sr. M. Gonzaga  
 Brouillette, Marie ..... 244 See Sr. M. Francis  
 Brousseau, Theresa ..... 245 See Sr. Rita Marie  
 Brown, Edward H., S.J. .... 34  
 Brown, Ellie, O.P. .... 121  
 Brown, Jim and Larry ..... 206  
 Bruno, Sr. M. .... 32, 252, 254  
 Buchanan, John R., S.J. .... 159-160, 166, 167, 205, 208, 209,  
 212, 216, 217  
 Budde, Edward, S.J. .... 40  
 Buno, Emile, O.M.I. .... 95, 180



Bureau of Indian Affairs ..... 68, 187, 189  
 Byrne, George ..... 87  
 Byrnes, Mickey ..... 214

## C

Campus Ministry ..... 121  
 Canada ..... 5, 6  
 Cannon, Jack ..... 215  
 Cantin, Sr. Rose ..... 232, 234, 236-237, 245, 251 See Sr. M. Rose  
 of the Child Jesus  
 Cantwell, Sr. Margaret ..... 171, 232, 235, 237, 238, 245, 251  
 See Sr. Kathleen Mary  
 Capsul, John and Peter ..... 168  
 Cardinal, Irene ..... 245 See Sr. M. Emma  
 Cardinal, Kathleen ..... 221  
 Careage (extended care facility) ..... 232  
 Carmack, George ..... 79  
 Carmel, Imelda ..... 245 See Sr. M. Epiphane  
 Carmen, Marie, Sr. .... 251, 254  
 Caron, Marie Corinne (Alice) ..... 245 See Sr. M. Claude  
 Carriere, Clorinde ..... 245 See Sr. M. Theresa of Avila  
 Carriere, Yvonne ..... 245 See Sr. M. Joseph des Anges  
 Carroll, Eleanor ..... 245 See Sr. M. Ethelind  
 Carroll, Capt. James ..... 19, 21  
 Carter, A. R., M.D. .... 153  
 Case, Richard D., S.J. .... 240  
 Casey, Judy, R.N. .... 215, 217  
 Cashen, Catherine Frances ..... 37, 245 See Sr. M. Philippa  
 Cashen, Thomas (family) ..... 37  
 Cashman, Nellie ..... 85  
 Cassels, W. G., M.D. .... 41, 120  
 Cassilda, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Cataldo, Joseph, M., S.J. .... 53, 55  
 Catechists (lay) ..... 39  
 Catholic Central Junior High ..... 203  
 Catholic Charities ..... 230, 232  
 Catholic Church Extension Society ..... 171  
 Catholic Social Services ..... 239  
 Catholic Youth Organization ..... 230  
 Cavanagh, Irene ..... 245 See Sr. M. Ethelbert  
 Central Alaska Missions ..... 205  
 Chambered nautilus (metaphor) ..... 226  
 Chambers, Dr., M.D. .... 82  
 Champoux, Fred and Blanche ..... 213  
 Chapman, Rev. John W. .... 59, 115  
 Charbonneau, Aurore ..... 245 See Sr. M. Corona  
 Charbonneau, Most Rev. Joseph ..... 165  
 Charles of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 104, 251, 254  
*Charles Power* ..... 110  
 Chefornak ..... 134, 240-241, 251  
 Chilkats ..... 5, 175, 176, 177  
 Chilkoot Indians ..... 175, 176  
 Chilkoot Pass ..... 54, 89, 178  
 Chinnoek, Norman ..... 182  
 Chisholm, Catherine ..... 245 See Sr. M. Donald  
 Chitina ..... 204, 205, 231  
 Christian, Cecilia ..... 245, 251 See Sr. M. Deborah  
 Christine Marie, Sr. .... 253, 255 See Sr. Patricia Richard  
 Christ the King (crowning ceremony) ..... 97-98  
 Cincotta, Sr. Gaetana ..... 238-239, 245, 251 See Sr. M. Felicia

Civil Air Patrol ..... 219, 223  
 Claire Cecilia, Sr. M. .... 256  
 Claire Rita, Sr. M. .... 255, 256  
 Claire of the Trinity, Sr. M. .... 254 See Sr. M. Clarita  
 Clare House ..... 239  
 Clarence Marie, Sr. .... 103, 251, 256  
 Clarita, Sr. M. .... 254  
 Clarks Point ..... 217, 237  
 Claude, Sr. M. .... 127, 128, 186, 189, 256  
 Claver, Sr. Peter (mission) ..... 110  
 Clawson, Audrey ..... 166; Audrey and Jack 213  
 Clementia, Sr. M. .... 251, 254  
 Clementina, Sr. M. .... 186, 219, 253, 255, 256  
 Clement Joseph, Sr. M. .... 153, 185, 252, 254, 256, 257  
 Clements, John, M.D. .... 47  
 Clut, Most Rev. Isidore, O.M.I., ..... 15, 16, 109  
 du Coeur de Jésus, Sr. M. .... 118, 120, 123, 124, 126, 127,  
 252, 253, 256  
 Coffey, Robert M., M.D. .... 41  
 Colbert, Manuelle ..... 245 See Sr. M. Emmanuella  
 Colford, Eva ..... 245 See Sr. M. Alfreda  
 Colleen Ann, Sr. M. .... 255, 256  
 Colliard, Gabrielle ..... 245 See Sr. M. Gabriella  
 Collins, Michael B., S.J. .... 167  
 Commercial Course (Dawson) ..... 95, 96, (Glenallen) 203  
 Compulsory School Act ..... 124  
 Congdon, Commissioner, F.T. .... 93  
 Conlin, Mary Ellen ..... 245 See Sr. Joan Marie  
 Connell, Mother Frances, O.S.U. .... 166  
 Connor, Mamie ..... 92  
 Conrad, Y. T. .... 94  
 Constantine, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Convert, Jules M., S.J. .... 166, 167  
 Conwell, James U., S.J. .... 164, 166, 167, 206, 215, 217, 226  
 Cook, Captain James, R.N. .... 229  
 Cook Inlet Native Association (CINA) ..... 231  
 Cooke, His Eminence Terence Cardinal ..... 235  
 Cooper, Mr. William, S.J. .... 216  
 Copper Center (Jesuit educational project) ..... 166, 167, 168, 169  
 Copper Center (lodge) ..... 204, 213  
 Copper Center (village) ..... 205, 208  
 Copper River ..... 166, 203-204, 208; area 53, 166  
 Copper Valley Educational Project ..... 206  
 Copper Valley School ..... 203-228, 203, 204, 208, 218, 219, 225,  
 226, 229, 232, 233 See Sr. M. Agatha of the Angels. Also Sr.  
 M. George Edmond; also Sr. M. Ida. Also see Fr. John R.  
 Buchanan S.J., also Bishop Francis D. Gleeson, S.J., also Fr.  
 James C. Spils, S.J.  
 Copper Valley Teachers Association ..... 219  
 Corbeil, Fr. Ozias ..... 82, 92, 93  
 Cordova ..... 204, 217, 231  
 Cormier, Sr. Pauline ..... 245 See Sr. M. Charles of Jesus  
 Corneau, Sr. Helene ..... 134, 245, 250 See Sr. M. Rose Estelle  
 Corona, Sr. M. .... 251, 254  
 Cote, Adelina ..... 245 See Sr. M. Thomas of Florence  
 Coubeaux, Madeleine ..... 245 See Sr. M. Berthilda  
 Coudert, Most Rev. Jean-Louis, O.M.I. .... 95, 101, 104  
 Council, Walter W., M.D. .... 41  
 Court House (new St. Mary's Hospital, Dawson) ..... 103  
 Coutu, Rose Anna ..... 245 See Sr. M. Edward of Jesus



Cowgill, Rev. Francis ..... 197, 198  
 Cowichan ..... 16, 26  
 Craddick, Mrs. Don ..... 47  
 Crane, James (family) ..... 217  
 Cravens, Mary Jo ..... 216  
 Creole ..... 4, 58, 107  
 Crimont Hall ..... 180, 193  
 Crimont, Most Rev. Joseph Raphael, S.J. .... 38, 40, 41, 43, 69, 75,  
 81, 118, 119, 120, 138, 149, 153, 179, 180, 181, 184, 187,  
 188  
 Crisman, William ..... 38  
 Cristo, Dora ..... 148  
 of the Cross, Sr. M. .... 80, 82, 83, 86, 87, 88, 89, 191, 252, 254  
 Cunningham, Bernard I., S.J. .... 82  
 Cunningham, Thomas P., S.J. .... 167  
 Curtin, Suzanne ..... 221  
 Cusick, George ..... 216

## D

Daigneault, Antoinette ..... 245 See Sr. M. Dositheus  
 Daigneault, Simone ..... 245 See Sr. Carmen Marie  
 Dagouyuk, Willie ..... 160  
 Dall, William Healey ..... 108  
 Dalton Trail ..... 175  
 Daly, Margaret ..... 245 See Sr. M. Anna  
 Daoust, Cecile ..... 215  
 Daoust, Georgianna ..... 245 See Sr. M. Stanislaus Kostka  
 Darche, Rosanna ..... 245 See Sr. M. Joseph Agapit  
 D'Arco, Fr. Andrew P. .... 171  
 Davis, Mrs. Trevor ..... 40  
 Dawes, Leonard P., M.D. .... 41  
 Dawson ..... 43, 75, 79-106, 81, 99, 102, 105, 110, 113,  
 114, 116, 119, 120, 143, 180, 183, 191, 251 See William H.  
 Judge, S.J. Also St. Mary's Hospital; also St. Mary's School.  
 Also see Sr. M. John Damascene; also Sr. M. Zenon  
 Dayton, Roger ..... 155  
 Deas, Anne ..... 245 See Sr. Miriam Anne  
 Deborah, Sr. M. .... 104  
 Deg Hit'an ..... 2  
 Delon, Philip, S.J. .... 146, 157  
 Deloycheet ..... 59  
 Demers, Most Rev. Modeste ..... 14  
 Demientieff, Elizabeth (Newman) ..... 100  
 Demientieff, Frances ..... 171  
 Demientieff, Irene ..... 218  
 Demientieff, Ivan ("Cap") ..... 68, 100, 148  
 Demientieff, Margaret ..... 170  
 Demientieff, Margaret Mary ..... 143, 245 See Sr. M.  
 Holy Cross  
 Demientieff, Nick ..... 149  
 Demientieff, Petruska ..... 68, 111  
 Demientieff, Stanley ..... 146  
 Demientieff, Tatiana ..... 68-69, 70, 71, 148, 158  
 Demoski, Peter ..... 216  
 Dena Corporation (Fairbanks) ..... 134  
 Denis, Ida ..... 245 See Sr. Joseph-de-Marie  
 Denise Marie, Sr. .... 214, 253  
 Denomme, Anna ..... 245 See Sr. M. Barnabé  
 Department of Education ..... 93, 123, 132, 141, 171  
 Derabin, (Derzhavin) Vassili ..... 108

DeRuyter, Euphrasie ..... 245 See Sr. M. Joseph Calasanctius  
 Desmarais, Alphonse, O.M.I. .... 82  
 Desrosiers, Carol ..... 216, 221  
 Desrosiers, Gilberte ..... 245 See Sr. M. Clementia  
 DeVighne, Harry Carlos, M.D. .... 41  
 Diaz, "Pop," and "Mom" ..... 213  
 Dick, Les ..... 185  
 Dick, Pearl Young ..... 185  
 Dickinson, Patricia ..... 245 See Sr. M. Antonius  
 Didace, Sr. M. .... 92, 93, 94, 110, 111, 114, 115, 117, 130, 253,  
 256, 257  
 Dillingham ..... 217, 221, 237, 241  
 Dimond, Marie ..... 38  
 Dinneen, Mrs. Bea ..... 217  
 Diocese of Juneau ..... 42, 49, 222  
 Dion, Sr. Therese ..... 238, 245, 251  
 Dionne, Mr. .... 96  
 Dolora, Sr. M. .... 254  
 Dolorosa, Sr. M. .... 256  
 Donald, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Donald, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Donna, Sr. M. .... 224, 225, 248, 253  
 Donohue, Norman E., S.J. .... 167, 221, 240  
 Doogan, Ann Marie ..... 37, 246 See Sr. M. Joseph Raphael  
 Doogan, Marjorie ..... 37, 246 See Sr. M. Kevin  
 Doogan, Theodore (family) ..... 36-37  
 Doogan, Theresa ..... 37, 246 See Sr. Miriam Jude  
 Dooly, Annie ..... 246 See Sr. M. Victor  
 Dorothea, Sr. M. .... 47, 102, 255  
 Dorothy, Mother Mary ..... 180  
 Dorothy Marie ..... 131, 132, 165, 170, 171, 177, 253, 256, 257  
 See Sr. Dorothy Forest  
 Dositheus, Sr. M. .... 251, 254  
 Douglas Island ..... 17, 22, 23, 24, 27, 30, 252; (settlement) 30, 119  
 See St. Ann's Hospital (Douglas). Also St. Ann's School  
 (Douglas)  
 Douglas, Mike and Shirley ..... 213  
 Douville, Larry ..... 213  
 Down, Grace ..... 246, 256 See Sr. M. Faustina  
 Downey, Rita ..... 246 See Sr. Miriam Rita  
 Doyle, Sr. Denise ..... 122, 246, 253  
 Doyle, Kathleen ..... 246 See Sr. M. Kathleen  
 Doyle, Sr. Veronica ..... 122, 246, 253  
 Dozois, Flora ..... 246 See Sr. M. Ludovic  
 Druscilla, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Duffy, Mr. Bernard T., S.J. .... 160  
 Dufour, Leo A. (deacon) ..... 181, 182  
 Dugas, Mr. Justice, C. A. .... 92  
 Dumas, Auguste (Augustin), O.M.I. .... 82, 92  
 Dumas, Doris ..... 246 See Sr. M. Therese Bernadette  
 Duncan, Barrie, M.D. .... 102  
 Duncan, Rev. William ..... 27, 177  
 Duncan-Stack, Florence ..... 246 See Sr. M. Agnes  
 Dunn, Anna ..... 246 See Sr. M. Alexandre  
 Dunn, B. Fred, M.D. .... 44  
 Dunstan, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Dupuis, Eva ..... 246, 251, 256 See Sr. Clarence Marie  
 Durney, John ..... 47  
 Dyea ..... 89, 177, 178  
 Dyea (Chilkoot) Pass ..... 175



## E

- Eagle moiety ..... 15, 176  
Earthquake (27 March 1964) ..... 47, 220  
Edith, Sr. M. .... 252, 253, 255  
Edna, Sr. M. .... 186, 256  
Education ..... 18, 26, 27, 28, 32, 37, 38, 39, 59-60, 65-66, 68, 69, 70, 72, 76, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 109, 112, 114, 115, 116, 121, 123, 124, 126, 127, 130, 131, 132, 134, 138, 141, 143, 155, 159, 165, 171, 179, 181, 184, 194, 212, 217, 219  
Education Reports (Government) ..... 140-142  
Edward of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 43, 157, 158, 208, 211, 212, 213, 251, 253, 254  
Edwards, Marion Elinor ..... 246 See Sr. M. Ambrose  
Egan, Neva ..... 47  
Egan, Gov. William A. .... 47  
Eichelsbacher, Anthony Godfrey (Gottfried), O.M.I. .... 92  
Eielson Air Force Base ..... 213  
Eisenhower, Pres. Dwight D. .... 47  
Elevation of the Holy Cross (church) ..... 58  
Elie Anicet, Sr. M. .... 252  
Elizabeth Marie, Sr. .... 199, 255  
Ellen ..... 110, 114  
Elmendorf Air Force Base ..... 160, 162, 164, 213  
Eloise, Sr. M. .... 69, 70, 253  
Emilienne, Sr. M. .... 252  
Emma, Sr. M. .... 224, 253, 254  
Emmanuella, Sr. M. .... 254  
Endal, George S., S.J. .... 132  
Eordogh, Rev. Andrew ..... 170, 171  
Epiphane, Sr. M. .... 100, 251, 253, 254, 256  
Erussard, Pierre ..... 24  
Epidemics ..... 34-35, 65, 75, 107, 114  
Episcopalian ..... 54, 59, 115, 169 See Anglican  
Eskimo ..... 2, 4, 11  
Esmailka, Harold ..... 107  
Esther, Sr. M. .... 95, 251  
Ethel, Sr. M. .... 39, 193, 255  
Ethelbert, Sr. M. .... 254  
Ethelind, Sr. M. .... 38, 162, 254  
Ethelreda, Sr. M. .... 252  
Ethier, Adrienne ..... 246 See Sr. M. Madeleine of Calvary  
Eucharistic Heart, Sr. M. of the ..... 126, 256, 257  
Eugene of Rome, Sr. M. .... 103, 252  
Eulalia (of Barcelona) Sr. M. .... 144, 146, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 160, 161, 165, 214, 224, 253  
Euphrasia ..... 110, 114  
Evangelical Mission Union of Sweden ..... 177  
Evariste, Sr. M. .... 114, 253, 256  
Eyak ..... 2, 204  
Ezra, Karen ..... 222
- ## F
- Fabre, Most Rev. Edward ..... 55  
Fairbanks ..... 42, 118, 120, 121, 122, 204, 253 See Sr. Alice Legault. Also Sr. Judith Morin; also Sr. Joyce Snyder  
Fallert, Francis J., S.J. .... 212, 215, 220  
Fannie ..... 25  
Farley, Annonciade ..... 246 See Sr. M. Sylvina  
Farmer, Mary (Dorothy) ..... 246 See Sr. M. Serena  
Faroe, Cappy and Doris ..... 213  
Faustina, Sr. M. .... 44, 187, 190, 251, 254, 256  
Febronia, Sr. M. .... 253, 255  
Felicia, Sr. M. .... 196, 253, 256 See Sr. Gaetana Cincotta  
Felker, Antoinette ..... 246 See Sr. M. Rose Antoinette  
Feltcs, George, S.J. .... 157, 158, 213, 225  
Fernando, Sr. M. .... 255  
Fife, Regina ..... 246 See Sr. M. Antonius  
Filion, Marie ..... 246 See Sr. M. Peter in Chains (Pierre aux Liens)  
Filipino (families) ..... 48  
Fink, Louis B., S.J. .... 193  
Fintan, Sr. M. .... 43-44, 255  
Fischer, Frances Mary ..... 246 See Sr. M. Frances Louise  
Fisher, Leo (family) ..... 213  
Fishing ..... 59, 64, 108, 126, 148, 149, 150, 151  
Fisk, Thomas W., S.J. .... 134  
Fitzgerald, Mary Josephine ..... 246 See Sr. M. Baptista  
Fitzgerald, Most Rev. Walter J., S.J. .... 41-42, 130, 159, 192  
Fitzpatrick, Marie Louise ..... 246 See Sr. M. Benedict (Benoit)  
Flat ..... 164  
Fleming (family) ..... 213  
Flore, Sr. M. .... 255  
Florence, Sr. M. .... 186, 194, 199, 255, 257  
Florent (Florentius), Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
Foisy, Eutichienne ..... 246 See Sr. M. Mathias  
Fontaine, Annie ..... 27  
Fontaine, Emma ..... 246 See Sr. M. Zenon (Zeno)  
Fontaine, Philomene ..... 246 See Sr. M. Bruno  
Forcier, Emelie ..... 246 See Sr. M. Noemi  
Forest, Sr. Dorothy ..... 229, 230, 231, 232, 234, 236, 246, 251  
    See Sr. Dorothy Marie  
Fort Greely ..... 213  
Fort Hamlin ..... 80  
Fort Richardson ..... 164-165, 213  
Fort Selkirk ..... 5  
Fort Seward ..... 176, 177  
Fortuine, Robert, M.D. .... 154  
Fort Victoria ..... 14  
Forty Mile ..... 74-75, 79, 80  
Fort Yukon ..... 108, 109  
Foster, Daniel ..... 22  
Foster, Donald C. .... 189, 193  
Fox, Francis, S.J. .... 158, 163, 168  
Fox, John B., S.J. .... 168  
Fragmentation (VanStone theory) ..... 169-170  
Frances, Sr. M. .... 253, 255  
Frances Louise, Sr. M. .... 252  
Frances of Chantal, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
Francis, Sr. M. .... 252, 254  
Francis Joseph, Sr. M. .... 253  
Francis of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 127, 256  
Freda, Sr. M. .... 131, 208, 209, 210, 214, 253, 256  
French Canadian ..... 6, 7, 41, 146, 165  
French-Canadian ..... 7, 26, 43, 70, 99  
Frenette, Antoinette ..... 246 See Sr. M. Marlena  
Freny, Catherine ..... 246 See Sr. M. Alena  
Frie, Dennis ..... 215  
Friedsell, Rev. .... 193  
Fritz, Milo H., M.D. .... 161  
Fuller, Francis ..... 53, 54



Fur work ..... 64, 65, 138, 140, 154, 161

## G

Gabriel, Margaret (Jarmy) ..... 246 See Sr. M. Edna  
Gabriella, Sr. M. .... 41, 254  
Gagné, Philias, O.M.I. .... 100  
Galena ..... 130, 134, 253  
Gallagher, Mrs. John ..... 221  
Gallagher, Thomas, S.J. .... 211, 221  
Gallant, Msgr. G. Edgar ..... 179, 181, 182, 183, 186, 187, 193,  
194, 196, 197, 198, 199 See Pius X Mission  
Gambia (West Africa) ..... 222  
de la Garde, Sr. M. (Brasseur) ..... 251  
de la Garde, Sr. M. (Ledoux) ..... 252  
Gardening ..... 67, 109, 114, 140-141, 151-152  
Gareau, Marie-Louise ..... 246 See Sr. M. Adolphe  
Gareau, Rose Anna ..... 246 See Sr. M. Henrietta of Jesus  
Gedeon, Sr. M. .... 101, 102, 105, 116, 251, 253, 256, 257  
Gendreau, Pierre (Peter) Edmund, O.M.I. .... 82, 88, 90, 92  
General Mills ..... 220  
General Paint Corporation ..... 206  
Genna, Gaspar, S.J. .... 56  
George Edmond, Sr. M. .... 160, 161, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167,  
206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 219, 221, 235, 251,  
253 See Anchorage. Also Copper Valley School; also Holy  
Cross  
Georges, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
Georgie, Sr. M. .... 252  
Geraldine, Sr. M. .... 255  
Gerard, Sr. M. .... 255  
Germaine ..... 71  
Gertrude of the Eucharist, Sr. M. .... 254  
Giordano, Carmelo, S.J. .... 55, 109  
Glazunov, Andrei ..... 58  
Gleeson, Most Rev. Francis D., S.J. .... 42, 76, 101, 121, 166,  
167, 196, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 217, 221, 226  
Glenmore ..... 232  
Glennallen ..... 168, 203, 205, 208, 231, 237, 253  
Godin, Zenobie ..... 246 See Sr. M. John Leonard  
Godkin, Mae ..... 44  
Golden, Mabel C. .... 246 See Sr. M. Gertrude of the Eucharist  
Goldstein, Hon. Isadore, Mayor of Juneau ..... 40  
Gonzaga, Sr. M. .... 254  
Gonzaga University ..... 214-215  
Good Counsel, Sr. M. .... 185, 254, 256  
Goodman, Mrs. A. J. .... 40  
Goodman, Elizabeth (Betty) ..... 40  
Good Samaritan Hospital (Dawson) ..... 85, 99  
Gouin, Alexandrina ..... 246 See Sr. M. Gerard  
Goulet, Anna ..... 246 See Sr. M. du Coeur de Jésus  
Goulet, Anna ..... 246 See Sr. M. Jeanne of the Sacred Heart  
Goulet, Marie ..... 247 See Sr. M. Madeleine of the Sacred Heart  
Government House (Dawson) ..... 103, 104  
Granger, Augustine ..... 247 See Sr. M. Pudentienne  
Granger, Clara ..... 247 See Sr. M. Bernadette  
Granger, Eva ..... 247 See Sr. M. Olympe  
Granger, Joachim ..... 95  
Grant, Dr. Andrew ..... 85  
Gray, Annie ..... 247 See Sr. M. Thomas of the Rosary  
Greff, Catherine ..... 247 See Sr. M. (de) Bonsecours

Grey Ladies (Juneau) ..... 47-48  
Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart ..... 189, 230  
Grimm, Anna ..... 247 See Sr. M. Wilhelmina  
Grimm, Elizabeth ..... 247 See Sr. M. Amelia  
Grimm, Mr. and Mrs. .... 113  
Grinzell (family) ..... 213  
Grouard, Most Rev. Emile Jean Baptiste Marie, O.M.I. .... 82  
Gruening, Honorable Ernest ..... 187  
Gurr, John E., S.J. .... 38  
Gustave, Sr. M. .... 154, 253  
Gyllenhammer, Al ..... 211

## H

Haas, Rudolph, M.D. .... 189, 191, 193  
Hagan, Margaret ..... 247 See Sr. M. Thecla  
Hagel, Leonard ..... 215  
Haida ..... 2, 4, 15, 18, 176, 177, 187  
Haines ..... 177, 178, 179, 182, 184, 186  
Haines Mission ..... 177  
Haischer, Mary ..... 132  
Hall, Doctor, M.D. .... 120  
Hamelin, Martine ..... 247 See Sr. M. William  
Hammond, William, M.D. .... 41  
Hanks, Agnes ..... 247 See Sr. Agnes Marie  
Hanley, Helena ..... 247 See Sr. M. Fintan  
Harel, Josephine ..... 247, 255 See Josephine Arel  
Harel, Marie Jeanne ..... 247, 252 See Marie Jeanne Arel  
Hargreaves, Henry G., S.J. .... 230  
Harrington, Rev. Timothy ..... 207  
Harris, Richard ..... 16  
Harry, Raymond (family) ..... 217  
Hassen, Jane ..... 120, 247 See Sr. M. Victor  
Health care ..... 114, 115, 132, 154-155, 157, 158, 161, 162, 170,  
187, 212, 217  
Hebert, Emma ..... 247 See Sr. M. Modeste  
Heintz, Harry and Gladys ..... 213  
Hellan, Colleen and Eileen ..... 40  
Helphrey Freight Lines ..... 206  
Hemond, Berthe ..... 247 See Sr. M. Aimée of the Precious Blood  
Henderson, Chester D. .... 143  
Henderson, Harry ..... 220  
Hendrickson, Honorable Waino ..... 44  
Hennesey, Willow ..... 226  
Henrietta of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 44, 100, 101, 188, 190, 252, 254, 256  
Henry ..... 25  
Hervieux, Marie ..... 247 See Sr. M. Constantine  
Hess, John, S.J. .... 159, 211  
Hetu, Genevieve ..... 170, 218  
Hickel, Vernon (family) ..... 213  
Hickel, Walter J. (family) ..... 213  
Hilda, Sr. M. .... 34, 35, 253, 256  
Hildegard, Sr. M. .... 255  
Hinckley, Ted C. .... 54  
Hinshaw, Cecil and Millie ..... 211, 213  
Hippolyte, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
Hispanic Ministry ..... 122, 235  
Hoephner, Adolph (family) ..... 217  
Holikachuk ..... 59  
(Holman), Gloria and Margie ..... 158



Holy Cross Mission .....53-78, 57, 60, 63, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 76, 110, 114, 120, 137-174, 167, 169, 179, 183, 197, 203, 206, 207, 211, 226, 253 See Paimiut. Also Sr. M. Bernadette; also Sr. M. Eulalia; also Sr. M. George Edmond; also Sr. M. Joseph Calasanctius; also Sr. M. Pauline; also Sr. M. Stephen

Holy Cross, Sr. M. .... 100, 251, 254

Holy Family (church) (Anchorage) ..... 160, 198, 199, 230

Holy Rosary (mission) ..... 221

Holy Rosary (parish) ..... 217

Holy Spirit Retreat House ..... 230

Hoonah ..... 27, 37, 183

Hoover, Del ..... 216

Hoppin, Marsha ..... 161

Hortie, Lea ..... 247 See Sr. M. Amée

Horiuchi, Hiroka C. .... 122

Horwedel, Edward, S.J. .... 128

Hospital bylaws ..... 22-23

Hospital ministry .. 18, 25, 33, 37, 39, 41, 48, 84, 86, 87, 118-119, 120, 187-193

Hospitals (under Russian flag) ..... 23

Houle, Bernadette ..... 247 See Sr. M. Rose Alida

Hubbard, Bernard R., S.J. .... 38, 40, 44, 154, 182

Hudson's Bay Co. .... 5, 14, 108

Hughes, Katherine ..... 247 See Sr. M. Freda

Huhndorf, Maxie ..... 131

Huhndorf, Roy ..... 131

Hun ..... 3

Hurley, Most Rev. Francis T. .... 49, 235, 236, 237, 238

**I**

Ida of the Eucharist, Sr. M. ....160, 162, 168, 169, 214, 216, 217, 221, 225, 251, 253, 254 See Holy Cross. Also Anchorage; also Glennallen; also Rural Ministry; also Urban Ministry

Ignatia, Sr. M. .... 104, 105, 252

Ikogmiut ..... 58, 60, 169

Imlach, Rusty, (Mrs. William) ..... 213

Immigration ..... 165-166, 188

Infant Jesus, Sr. M. of the ..... 255

Influenza ..... 34-35, 65

Ingalik ..... 2, 57, 58, 59, 61, 64

Inland Tlingit ..... 3, 5

Innoko (region and river) ..... 57, 59, 140, 169

Inupiat ..... 2

Irene of the Cross, Sr. M. .... 250 See Sr. Joyce Snyder

Irene Theresa, Sr. M. .... 255

Irwin, Lillian, M.D. .... 41

Isaac Jogues, Sr. M. .... 170, 193, 254, 255, 257

Itha, Sr. M. .... 252, 253, 254, 256

**J**

Jackson, Billy ..... 182

Jackson, Samuel ..... 184

Jackson, Dr. Sheldon ..... 26, 48, 123, 139, 177

Jacobson, James E., S.J. .... 224, 225

Jacobsson, June ..... 226

Jador, Most Rev. Jean ..... 235, 236, 241

Jakes, Ignatius J., S.J. .... 168

James, Patricia ..... 213

Janelle, Elizabeth (Betty) ..... 247, 255, 256 See Sr. Elizabeth Marie

Jankowski, Steve ..... 207, 213, 220

Japonski Island ..... 192

Jarmy, Edythe ..... 30

Jarmy, Margaret ..... 30, 247 See Sr. M. Edna

Jean, Sr. M. .... 96, 252

Jeanne of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 252

Jeanne of the Visitation, Sr. M. .... 251

Jeng, Abdul and Baboucarr ..... 222

Jenkinson, Deanna ..... 216

Jenne, Mrs. C. P. .... 40

Jerue, Wilson ..... 216

Jesuit House ..... 215

Jesuit Order ..... 32, 223 See Joseph Cataldo, S.J. Also Most Rev. Joseph R. Crimont, S.J.; also George Feltes, S.J.; also Most Rev. Francis D. Gleeson, S.J.; also Jules Jetté, S.J.; also William Judge, S.J.; also John B. René, S.J.; also Aloysius Robaut, S.J.; also James C. Spils, S.J.; also Pascal Tosi, S.J.; also Akulurak; also Anchorage; also Douglas; also Glennallen; also Holy Cross; also Juneau; also Nulato

Jesuits ... 14, 37, 53, 54, 55, 57, 60, 61, 62, 68, 75, 79, 83, 95, 111, 116, 117, 119, 151, 168, 182, 225, 236

Jetté, Jules, S.J. .... 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 119, 130

Jimmie, Lee ..... 185

Joan Marie, Sr. .... 254

Joanne, Sr. M. .... 157, 165, 197, 203, 255, 256

John ..... 80

John, Sr., S.S.J. .... 207

John Bernard, Sr. M. .... 145, 193, 253, 254, 256

John Damascene, Sr. M. .... 69, 75, 79, 82, 86, 87, 99, 252, 254, 255, 257

John Leonard, Sr. M. .... 254

John Robert, Sr. M. .... 224, 253 See Barbara Persson (Johnson), Sybil ..... 158

Jolie, Antoinette ..... 247 See Sr. M. Joanne

Jonckau, Rev. John J. .... 16, 17, 54, 55, 56, 77

Jorgensen, Cecilia ..... 158, 212, 226

Jorgensen, Johnnie ..... 158

Jorgensen, Mary ..... 158, 226

Josaphat, Sr. M. (Aumont) ..... 251

Josaphat, Sr. M. (Pellerin) ..... 254

Joseph Agapit, Sr. M. .... 254

Joseph Calasanctius, Sr. M. .... 53, 55, 61, 62, 65, 66, 67, 69, 80, 81, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 91, 92, 117, 142, 251, 253

Joseph-de-Marie, Sr. .... 39, 254

Joseph des Anges, Sr. M. .... 251, 254

Josephine Marie, Sr. M. .... 249 See Sr. Judith Morin

Joseph of Arimathea, Sr. M. .... 252

Joseph Raphael, Sr. M. .... 197, 254, 256

Joy, Rev. Vincent ..... 205

Joyce, Sr. M. (O'Riordan) ..... 255

Jude, Sr. Miriam ..... 164, 253, 254

Judge, William Henry, S.J. .... 67, 68, 75, 80, 81, 83, 85, 87, 90, 99, 101 See Holy Cross. Also Dawson; also St. Mary's Hospital

Jules of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 91, 92, 251, 253

Julien, Sr. M. .... 180, 181, 252, 255, 257

Juneau 13-51, 16, 17, 18, 20, 24, 26, 28, 32, 41, 42, 43, 48, 53, 55, 119, 177, 179, 181, 189, 193, 198, 254

Juneau, Joe ..... 16

Juneau Native Hospital ..... 48



Justa, Sr. M. .... 153, 254  
 Justina ..... 113

## K

Kaiyuhkhotana ..... 107  
 Kalland, Virginia (Mrs. Edgar) ..... 132  
 Kaltag ..... 132, 134  
 Kanakanak Hospital ..... 256  
 Kaniecki, Most Rev. Michael J., S.J. .... 77  
 Kanilik ..... 71, 72  
 Kasgnoc, Rosemary ..... 203  
 Kaska ..... 3  
 Katalla ..... 204  
 Kathleen M., Sr. .... 160, 163, 164, 220, 253, 254, 256  
 Kathleen, Sr. M. .... 246, 254  
 Katie ..... 27  
 Kays, Melvin ..... 215  
 Keaton, Mildred, R.N. .... 219, 224  
 Kellogg, Fannie ..... 177  
 Kelly, Agnes May ..... 247 See Sr. M. Dunstan  
 Kelly, Sr. Eileen ..... 233  
 Kelly, Kate ..... 247 See Sr. M. Georges  
 Kelly, Marion ..... 221  
 Kennecott Mines Corporation ..... 204  
 Kennicott, Major Robert ..... 108  
 Kenny, Most Rev. Michael H. .... 49  
 Kent, Ann ..... 207, 208, 209, 210  
 Kenya (East Africa) ..... 222  
 Kerilka ..... 131  
 Kestler, Theodore E., S.J. .... 134  
 Ketchikan ..... 36, 37  
 Ketter, Mary Kay ..... 221  
 Kevin, Sr. M. .... 170, 196, 251, 253, 256  
 King, Mary Dorothy ..... 247 See Sr. M. Dorothea  
 Kirk, Margaret ..... 38  
 Kirwan, Catherine ..... 247 See Sr. M. Luca  
 Klein, J.M. .... 179  
 Klondike ..... 1, 6, 75, 99, 103, 104, 119, 178  
 Klondike City ..... 86  
 Klopp, Ed and Amber ..... 213  
 Kodiak ..... 15, 23, 185, 189  
 Kodiak Island ..... 4, 230  
 Koniag ..... 2  
 Koserefski Indians ..... 59-60, 70  
 Koserefski language ..... 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 70, 142  
 Koserefski (mission site) ..... 53, 57, 61, 109, 115  
 Koserefski village ..... 59, 60, 64, 66  
 Kowee, Chief ..... 16  
 Koyukon ..... 2, 107, 108, 109, 112, 117 See Ten'ah  
 Koyukuk (region and river) ..... 134, 155  
 Krause, Arthur ..... 177  
 Krause, Aurel ..... 153, 177  
 Kruljack, Larry ..... 215  
 Kunz, Mr. and Mrs. Hilary ..... 217  
 Kuria, Peter ..... 222  
 Kutchin ..... 2  
 Kvipak Mission ..... 169

## L

Laberge, Lake ..... 94

LaChapelle, J. Omer, M.D. .... 97  
 Ladd Field ..... 213  
 Laferriere, Exilia (Emilia) ..... 247 See Sr. M. Roch  
 Lagace, Beatrice Antoinette ..... 247 See Sr. M. Marcellus  
 Laird, Aloysius, S.J. .... 158, 166  
 Lalande, Eva ..... 247 See Sr. M. Reparatrice  
 Lambert, Marie Rose Eva ..... 247 See Sr. M. Rose Eva  
 Lambert, Sr. M. .... 104, 252  
 LAMBS (Lay Apostles Mission Board group) ..... 214-215  
 L and J Music Store ..... 219  
 Landry, Mary Helena ..... 247 See Sr. M. Thomasina  
 Langevin, Ellen (Nellie) ..... 247 See Sr. M. Geraldine  
 Langlois, Jacqueline ..... 207, 210  
 Langlois, Simone ..... 211, 247 See Sr. M. Anna of Jesus  
 LaPerle, Eugenie ..... 247 See Sr. M. Georgie  
 Lariviere, Eulalia ..... 247 See Sr. M. Eulalia of Barcelona  
 LaRose, Jeannette, Sr. .... 77, 134, 240, 247, 251, 253, 256  
     See Sr. M. Agatha of the Angels  
 Larsen, Mrs. Chris ..... 183  
 LaRue, Bart "Doc" and Elizabeth ..... 162  
 Lascelle, Marie Raissa ..... 248 See Sr. M. Donalda  
 Latendresse, Regina ..... 248 See Sr. M. Gustave  
 Latour, Emerentienne ..... 248 See Sr. M. Anne of Sion  
 Laurena, Sr. M. .... 44, 102, 252, 255  
 Laurin, Bertha ..... 248 See Sr. M. Clementina  
 Laurin, Marie Louise ..... 248 See Sr. M. of the Passion  
 Laurin, Vitaline ..... 248 See Sr. M. Perpetual Help  
 Lavigne, Virginia ..... 248 See Sr. M. of the Infant Jesus  
 Lavoie, Julie ..... 248 See Sr. M. Hippolyte  
 Lawlor, Mr. John W., S.J. .... 216  
 Leahy, Elizabeth ..... 248 See Sr. M. Stephen (Etienne)  
 Lebarge, Michael ..... 109  
 LeBlanc, Doctor, M.D. .... 82  
 LeBoeuf, Jeanne ..... 211  
 LeBoeuf, Marguerite ..... 248 See Sr. M. Rosalia  
 LeClair, Mary Agnes ..... 248 See Sr. M. Rosalita  
 Lecorre, Rev. Auguste ..... 109  
 Ledoux, Adelaide ..... 248 See Sr. M. de la Garde  
 Lefebvre, Camille, O.M.I. .... 82, 92  
 Lefebvre, Marie Louise ..... 248 See Sr. M. Yolande  
 Lefebvre, Rosalie ..... 248 See Sr. M. Leo  
 Legault, Sr. Alice ..... 121, 122, 248, 253 See Sr. M. Alice Therese  
 Lemire, Angela ..... 248 See Sr. M. Anne Cecilia  
 Lemire, Rita ..... 248 See Sr. M. Claire Rita  
 Leo, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
 Leopoldine, Mother M. .... 143, 180, 187  
 Letushkwin (Kootznahoo) ..... 115  
 Levasseur, Leontine ..... 248 See Sr. M. Xaverine  
 Levasseur, William, S.J. .... 38, 40  
 Levesque, Marguerite ..... 248 See Sr. M. Angel Guardian  
 Lewis, Louis-Victor, O.M.I. .... 97  
 Lidwine, Sr. M. .... 97, 137, 252, 254, 257  
 Liliane, Mother M. .... 165, 166, 198, 199  
 Liliose, Sr. M. .... 257  
*Little Flower* (mission boat) ..... 68  
 Loiseau, Dora ..... 248 See Sr. M. Florent (Florentius)  
 (Lonergan), Michael and Patsy ..... 158  
 Loony, Floyd ..... 215  
 Lootens, Most Rev. Louis ..... 57  
 Lopez, Emily ..... 215



Lopez, Esther ..... 158, 215  
 Lorteau, Helen ..... 248 See Sr. M. Pascal Baylon  
 Louise of Florence, Sr. M. .... 253  
 Louis Richard, Sr. M. .... 245 See Sr. M. Therese Dion  
 Loyens, William J., S.J. .... 117, 122, 132, 165, 214  
 Loyola, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Luca, Sr. M. .... 47, 169, 196, 212, 255  
 Lucchesi, John, S.J. .... 142  
 Lucinda, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Lucita, Sr. M. .... 190, 255, 256, 257  
 Ludovic, Sr. M. .... 102, 251, 254  
 Lukin, Ivan ..... 108  
 Lundowski, "Brother" Joseph ..... 132  
 Lunney, Msgr. John A. .... 217, 235  
 Luosey, Gertrude ..... 217, 221  
 Lutz, Olive ..... 248 See Sr. M. Olive Ann  
 Lyle and Green Construction ..... 206  
 Lyons, Josephen ..... 248 See Sr. M. Ethelreda  
 Lyons, Mary ..... 248 See Sr. M. Romuald  
 Lyschinsky, Michael ..... 208

## M

Macfarlane, R. R., M.D. .... 82, 90  
 Madeleine, Sr. M. .... 253  
 Madeleine of Calvary, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Madeleine of Jesus, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Madeleine of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 116, 252, 253, 255  
 Magdalen, Sr. M. .... See Sr. M. Madeleine  
 Magdalena, Sr. M. .... 165  
 Maggie ..... 27  
 Mahara, Sr. Dawn ..... 231  
 Mahle, Fred ..... 185  
 Mahon, Anna Jean ..... 220  
 Mahoney, Colleen ..... 248 See Sr. M. Colleen Ann  
 Mailhot, Delia ..... 248 See Sr. M. Frances of Chantal  
 Mailhot, Rosa ..... 248 See Sr. M. Madeleine of Jesus  
 Mainville, Alphonsine ..... 248 See Sr. M. Emilienne  
 Mainville, Marietta ..... 248 See Sr. M. Eugene of Rome  
 Malachy, Sr. M. .... 36, 252, 257  
 Malakov, Petr Vasilevich ..... 107  
 Malay, Betty, R.N. .... 217  
 Mallot, Byron ..... 199, 232  
 Malo, Loretta ..... 248 See Sr. M. Anne Rita  
 Malone, Bridget ..... 248 See Sr. M. Hildegard  
 Mandart, Rev. Joseph ..... 15, 109  
 Manfred, Joanne ..... 215  
 Mannix, Marge ..... 207, 208, 209, 210  
 Manook, Alvin ..... 240  
 Manook, Elmer ..... 240  
 Marcellus, Sr. M. .... 104, 185, 252, 255, 256  
 Marcienne, Sr. M. .... 97, 252  
 Marcotte, Anita ..... 248 See Sr. M. Antonia of the Sacred Heart  
 Margaret of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 253, 254  
 Marie ..... 73  
 Mark, Sr. M. .... 97, 101, 102, 252  
 Marlana, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Marois, Henry ..... 215  
 Martha, Sr. M. .... 254  
 Martin of Tours, Sr. M. .... 180, 183, 257  
 Mathias, Sr. M. .... 252, 254

Matilda ..... 71  
 Mayac, Teddy ..... 214  
 Mehrwalt (Meerwaldt), Capt. Frank ..... 22  
 Melbourne, Rev. David A. .... 183, 217  
 Meloche, Blanche ..... 249 See Sr. M. Xavier  
 Meloche, Emerentienne ..... 249 See Sr. M. Febronia  
 Menager, Francis, S.J. .... 146  
 Mercedes, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Mercier, François ..... 109  
 Mercurief, Larry ..... 232  
 Merryman, Dr. .... 81  
 Metlakatla ..... 4, 177  
 Metzgar, Mrs. Louis H. .... 40  
 Metzgar, Virginia ..... 38  
 Meyers, Frances ..... 56  
 Michael Archangel, Sr. M. .... 254, 256  
 Michaud, Lea ..... 249 See Sr. M. Angela  
 Michel of Florence, Sr. M. .... 253, 254  
 Milburge, Sr. M. .... 185, 194, 199, 256, 257  
 Mildred, Mother M. .... 94, 95, 187, 188, 190, 192, 257  
 Ministry of Caring ..... 239  
 Missionary Diocese of Fairbanks ..... 171, 222, 225, 240  
 Missionary Oblates of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary  
 11. See Oblates of Mary Immaculate  
 Mitchell, Sr. Kateri ..... 77. See also Mitchell, Delia; Sr. M. Kateri  
 249, 256  
 Mlarker, Marlene ..... 217  
 Modeste, Sr. M. .... 43, 255  
 Monica ..... 82  
 Monroe, Francis M., S.J. .... 81, 118, 120, 182  
 Moore, Capt. William ..... 177  
 Moosehide, Y.T. .... 84, 91, 104  
 Moravian ..... 221, 235  
 Moreno, Julia ..... 194  
 Morin, Antonia ..... 249 See Sr. M. Anne Elise  
 Morin, Elizabeth ..... 249 See Sr. M. Joseph of Arimathea  
 Morin, Sr. Judith ..... 121, 249, 253  
 Morin, Theophanic ..... 249 See Sr. M. Placide  
 Moroney, Sr. Kathleen ..... 132  
 Mosey, Rev. Raymond A. .... 183  
 Mosquitoes ..... 57, 66-67  
 Mother Mary Ann ..... 16, 28, 68, 105, 132, 149, 162, 167, 184,  
 191, 197-198, 199, 209, 210, 230, 239, 240  
 See Venerable Marie Anne Blondin  
 Mountain Village ..... 256  
 Mt. Angel ..... 179, 182  
 Mt. Edgecumbe (mountain) ..... 191  
 Mt. Edgecumbe (boarding school) ..... 180, 192, 223  
 Mueller, Lt. Col. .... 189  
 Mueller, Paul P., S.J. .... 216  
 Mukluks ..... 140  
 Mullen, John F. .... 40  
 Municipal Committee (of the Yukon Council) ..... 91  
 Munn, Virginie ..... 249 See Sr. M. Rogatien  
 Murphy, Ann Jane ..... 249 See Sr. M. Michael Archangel  
 Murphy, Augustus ..... 20  
 Murphy (family) ..... 25, 28  
 Murphy, Marion ..... 20  
 Murphy, Neil K., S.J. .... 163  
 MacDonald, Agnes ..... 248 See Sr. M. Mercedes



MacIntyre, Dolina ..... 248 See Sr. M. Donna  
 MacIntyre, Mary Catherine ..... 248 See Sr. M. Abigail  
 MacKenzie, Sr. Carmelita ..... 133  
 McAleer, Mary ..... 248 See Sr. M. Cassilda  
 McAuliffe, J. A. F., M.D. .... 41  
 McCaffrey, Mary ..... 248 See Sr. M. Francis of Jesus  
 McCann, Elizabeth ..... 248 See Sr. M. Lambert  
 McCarthy (town) ..... 204, 205  
 McCarty, Billy, Senior ..... 126  
 McCullough, Anne ..... 248 See Sr. M. Lucinda  
 McCullough, Mary ..... 249 See Sr. M. Malachy  
 McDonald, Alexander ..... 85  
 McDonald, Isabella ..... 249 See Sr. M. Rita  
 McDonald, Mary Eva Agnes ..... 249 See Sr. M. Adolphus  
 McDowell, Hon. Bert F., Mayor of Juneau ..... 44  
 McElmeel, Joseph, S.J. .... 101, 127, 128, 129, 130  
 McFarland, Amanda R. .... 177  
 McGarrigle, Mary ..... 249 See Sr. M. Lucita  
 McGauvran, RONALDA ..... 249 See Sr. M. RONALDA  
 (McGinty), Esther ..... 107  
 McGrath ..... 145, 160  
 McGrory, Hazel ..... 249 See Sr. M. Isaac Jogues  
 McIntyre, Mary Ann ..... 249 See Sr. M. Aurelius  
 McIntyre, William, S.J. .... 38, 162  
 McKenna, Marion ..... 249 See Sr. M. Fernando  
 McKenna, Suzanna ..... 249 See Sr. M. Pius  
 McKinnon, A. D., D.D.S. .... 162  
 McMeel, Bernard, S.J. .... 224-225  
 McNamee, Mr. .... 94

## N

Narusch, Frank ..... 216  
 National Hospital Week ..... 48  
 Native culture ..... 59, 60, 64, 66, 69, 72, 73, 74, 77, 90, 108, 111,  
 112, 113, 118, 124, 130, 133, 140, 145, 146, 154, 169, 176,  
 186, 235  
 Native dancing ..... 60, 64, 66, 117, 176  
 Native languages ..... 60, 64, 71, 109, 112, 130, 141, 142,  
 155, 186, 240  
 Native Ministry ..... 77, 230, 233  
 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (church) ..... 34  
 Needham, Lorraine ..... 249 See Sr. M. Walburga  
 Negro, John, S.J. .... 71  
 Nelson Act ..... 33  
 Nelson, Rev. Robert ..... 121  
 Nelson, Edward ..... 59  
 Netsvetov, Fr. Iakov ..... 58  
 Neumann, Anutka ..... 53, 60, 61, 66, 67  
 Neumann, Henry ..... 57, 60  
 Neumann, Rudolph ..... 56  
 Newman, Joe ..... 213  
 Ngige, Frederick ..... 222  
 Nichols, Lt. Col. H.E., U.S.N. .... 177  
 Nielson, Margaret ..... 226  
 Nightmute ..... 134, 240, 241, 251  
 Nigro, Armand M. S.J. .... 165  
 Noemi, Sr. M. .... 190, 193, 252, 256  
 Nome ..... 163  
 Norbert, Eileen ..... 219, 226  
 Nordstrom ..... 108

Norris, Col. E. W. .... 188  
 North American Trading and Transportation Co. .... 108  
*Northern Winds* ..... 158-159  
*North Star* (ship) ..... 191, 192  
 North Star Minority Group Board ..... 233  
 North West Mounted Police ..... 6, 103  
*Northwest Territories Ordinance* ..... 91  
 Norton, E. A., M.D. .... 123  
 Notti, Emil ..... 232  
 Nugent, Rev. Francis ..... 198  
 Nulagito ..... 107  
 Nulato ..... 15, 53, 54, 55, 67, 81, 107-136, 120, 134, 140,  
 168, 169, 240  
 Nyland, Agnes ..... 249 See Sr. M. Rosalinda

## O

Obat, Lorna ..... 222  
 Oblates of Mary Immaculate ..... 6, 11, 14, 82-83, 85, 90, 95, 100  
 O'Connor, Bernice ..... 249 See Sr. M. Florence  
 O'Connor, Paul C., S.J. .... 167  
 O'Dea, John ..... 179  
 O'Flanagan, Most Rev. Dermot ..... 42, 44, 196, 198, 199  
 Ogilvie, William ..... 90, 91, 92  
 O'Hare, Joseph V., S.J. .... 123  
 Old Irene ..... 165  
 Old Man Camp ..... 121  
 Olive Ann, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Olsen, Mary ..... 238  
 Olympe, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
 O'Meara, Mary ..... 249 See Sr. M. Zenaide  
 O'Neill, Edward C., C.Ss.R., ..... 217  
 "Operation Snowbird" ..... 211  
*1901 Ordinance Respecting Schools* ..... 91  
 Organic Act 1884 ..... 23  
 Organic Act 1912 ..... 33  
 O'Riley, Winifred ..... 249 See Sr. M. Sylvester  
 O'Riordan, Kathleen ..... 249 See Sr. M. Joyce  
 Orthodox faith ..... 18 See Russian Orthodox  
 Orton, John ..... 198, 199  
 Ouimette, Agnes ..... 249 See Sr. M. John Damascene  
 Our Lady of Grace (statue) ..... 156-157  
 Our Lady of Guadalupe (statue) ..... 235  
 Our Lady of Lourdes (statue) ..... 217  
 Our Lady of the Mines (church) ..... 32  
*Our Lady of the Mines* (painting) ..... 33, 36  
 Our Lady of the Snows (mission) ..... 15, 53, 109, 130, 132

## P

Pack River Lumber Co. .... 206  
 Paiement, Alexina ..... 249 See Sr. M. of the Sacred Heart  
 Paige, Ann ..... 213  
 Paige, Col. Harold W. .... 213  
 Paimiut ..... 53, 148, 150  
 Palmer ..... 164, 166, 217, 230, 231  
 Paquette, Eveline ..... 238, 249, 251 See Sr. M. Anne Eveline  
 Paré, Josephine ..... 249 See Sr. M. Theresa of the Sacred Heart  
 Parish Outreach Ministry ..... 122  
 Parker, Elizabeth ..... 249 See Sr. M. Ignatia  
 Parker, Rev. Octavius ..... 54, 59  
 (Parker), Willie ..... 158



Parsons, Mary ..... 249 See Sr. M. Augustine  
Pascal Baylon, Sr. M. (Lorteau) ..... 254, 256  
Pascal Baylon, Sr. M. (Schields) ..... 255  
Passion, Sr. M. of the ..... 71, 80, 142, 157, 253, 255  
Patrick, Sr. M. .... 180  
Patsy, Anna ..... 214  
Pauline, Sr. M. .... 55, 61, 66, 67, 71, 75, 83, 91, 114, 115, 116,  
117, 119, 120, 142, 251, 253, 256  
*Paystreak, The* ..... 91  
Pedro, Felix ..... 118, 119  
Pellerin, Adele ..... 249 See Sr. M. Josaphat  
Perpetual Help, Sr. M. .... 100, 157, 252, 253, 255, 257  
Perron, Joseph, S.J. .... 110, 111, 142  
Persson, Barbara ..... 104, 215, 249 See Sr. M. John Robert  
Peter, Sr. M. .... 28, 255  
Peter in Chains (Pierre aux Liens). Sr. M. .... 254  
Petersburg ..... 37, 181  
Peterson, Mary E. .... 249 See Sr. M. of the Cross  
Petroff, Ivan ..... 4, 58  
Philippa, Sr. M. .... 175, 183, 184, 253, 256  
Pickett, Margaret ..... 215  
Pigeon, Zepherina ..... 249 See Sr. M. Armenia  
Pigg, William J., M.D. .... 41  
Pilon, Mary ..... 249 See Sr. M. Edith  
Pilot Station ..... 256  
Pilz, George ..... 16  
Pineault, Victoria ..... 249 See Sr. M. Theodore  
Pius, Sr. M. .... 130, 131, 168, 169, 254, 256, 257  
Pius X Mission ..... 175-202, 177, 180, 183, 184, 185, 188, 189,  
193, 194, 196, 199, 240 See Pius X School. Also Msgr. G.  
Edgar Gallant; also Skagway  
Pius X School ..... 198, 199, 200, 203 See Pius X Mission.  
Also Sr. M. Baptista; also Msgr. G. Edgar Gallant  
Placide, Sr. M. .... 255  
Plante, Eva ..... 249 See Sr. M. Liliose  
Poncellet, Matilda ..... 249 See Sr. M. Ethel  
Poore, Jim ..... 213  
Pope John XXIII ..... 10  
Pope John Paul II ..... 236  
Pope Leo XIII ..... 16, 70, 86  
Pope Pius X ..... 179  
Port Chilkoot ..... 176  
Powell, Mary ..... 249 See Sr. M. Laurena  
Prangé, Francis B., S.J. .... 148  
Prefecture of Alaska ..... 32  
Presbyterian ..... 17, 18, 23, 26, 27, 48, 177, 181, 186, 193  
Presbyterian Boys' Boarding School ..... 177  
Prince, Joseph ..... 146  
Prison ministry ..... 236  
Prosper, Sr. M. .... 255  
Providence Hospital (Anchorage) ..... 160, 167, 230, 236, 239  
Provisional hospital (St. Mary's, Dawson) ..... 102  
Prudence, Sr. M. .... 69, 71, 73, 75, 90, 251, 252, 254, 255  
*Public School Act of the Northwest Territories (Section 11)* ..... 90  
Pudentienne, Sr. M. .... 71, 75, 83, 88, 101, 180, 181, 183, 251,  
252, 255, 256

## Q

Quebec ..... 14  
Quenneville, Berthe ..... 250 See Sr. M. Elie Anicet

## R

Racette, Ernestine ..... 250 See Sr. M. Prosper  
Ragaru, Aloysius, S.J. .... 55, 110, 111, 112, 114  
Rageotte, Aldor ..... 213, 220  
Rageotte, Jeannette ..... 207, 211  
Ralph, Sr. M. .... 96, 127, 251, 256  
Raven moiety ..... 15, 176  
Rawley, Mary, R.N. .... 170  
Raymond, Capt. Charles W. .... 108  
Redemptorists (C.Ss.R.) ..... 231, 236  
Regis College ..... 207  
Reindeer ..... 139-140  
Reisenauer, Larry and Tom ..... 213  
Religious education (summer sessions) ..... 37, 39, 130-131, 132,  
134, 184, 193, 214, 217  
René, John B., S.J. .... 32, 33, 75, 81, 84-85, 89, 114, 178  
Reparatrice, Sr. M. .... 252  
Richard, Lavinia ..... 250 See Sr. M. Albert  
Richard, Patricia ..... 240, 250, 251 See Sr. Christine Marie  
Richardson, W. .... 188  
Richards, Shirley ..... 207, 210  
Richmond, Major ..... 193  
Ridgeview ..... 229  
Riel, Emma ..... 250 See Sr. M. Bertholde  
Riel, Irene ..... 250 See Sr. M. Irene Theresa  
Riopelle, Lumena ..... 250 See Sr. M. Prudence  
Rita Marie, Sr. .... 254  
Rita, Sr. M. .... 32, 252  
Rita, Sr. Miriam ..... 104, 251, 254  
Robaut, Aloysius, S.J. .... 53, 54, 55, 57, 59, 61, 62, 71, 77, 109,  
148, 157  
Robillard, Virginie ..... 250 See Sr. M. Annonciade  
Rocatti, Aloysius J., S.J. .... 34  
Roch, Sr. M. .... 32, 252  
Rochcau, Fr. Vsevolod ..... See Roshko  
Rogatien, Sr. M. .... 255  
Roman Catholic Church 6, 18, 27, 32, 60, 169, 177, 181, 205, 235  
Romuald, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
Ronald, Sr. M. .... 255  
Rondeau, Julia ..... 250 See Sr. M. Julien  
Rondeau, Theobalda ..... 250 See Sr. M. Zenobia  
Rosalia, Sr. M. .... 161, 197, 253, 255, 256  
Rosalinda, Sr. M. .... 175, 183, 185, 255, 257  
Rosalita, Sr. M. .... 188, 190, 255, 256  
Rosati, John, S.J. .... 56, 61  
Rose Alida, Sr. M. .... 253  
Rose Antoinette, Sr. M. .... 188, 190, 193, 252, 254, 256  
Rose Estelle, Sr. M. .... 197, 199, 256 See Sr. Helene Corneau  
Rose Eva, Sr. M. .... 100, 252, 255  
Rose of the Child Jesus, Sr. M. .... 159, 253, 254, 256 See  
Sr. Rose Cantin  
Rose of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 222  
Roshko, Fr. Vsevolod ..... 205  
Rosin, C. M., M.D. .... 124, 126  
Rossi, Crispin, S.J. .... 122, 126  
Roy, Olivina ..... 250 See Sr. M. Sidonia  
Rufus, Howard C., M.D. .... 192  
Rural Ministry ..... 233, 237, 238  
Russell, Mother, S.M. .... 56



Russian America Commercial Co. .... 23, 107, 108, 169  
 Russian Orthodox ..... 15, 26, 48, 58, 60, 64, 66, 169, 177, 181,  
 191, 204, 205, 221, 235  
 Ryan, Most Rev. Joseph T. .... 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 229-230, 235

## S

Saalfeld, Charles A., S.J. .... 133, 134  
 Sacred Heart, Sr. M. of the ..... 253  
 Saho, Serign ..... 222  
*St. Ann Among the Miners* (painting) ..... See *Our Lady of the Mines*  
 St. Ann's Academy (Juneau boarding school) ..... 27, 30, 39  
 St. Ann's Academy (Victoria boarding school) .... 14, 15, 37, 53, 64  
 St. Ann's Avenue (Douglas) ..... 34  
 St. Ann's Convent (Anchorage) ..... 233, 235  
 St. Ann's High School (Juneau) ..... 38  
 St. Ann's Hospital (Douglas) ..... 32, 34, 36  
 St. Ann's Hospital (Juneau) ..... 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 30, 32, 33,  
 34, 36, 39, 41, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 131, 160  
 St. Ann's Hospital Guild ..... 47-48  
 St. Ann's Hospital Society ..... 22  
 St. Ann's Island ..... 96, 104  
 St. Ann's Nursing Home ..... 49  
 St. Ann's School (Douglas) ..... 32, 34, 36  
 St. Ann's School (Juneau) ..... 26, 28-29, 30, 34, 47, 48, 203  
*Saint Anthony* (Nulato chapel boat) ..... 128, 129  
 "Saint Anthony's Patient" ..... 90  
 St. Francis House ..... 239  
 St. Germain, Cecile ..... 250 See Sr. M. Claire Cecilia  
 St. Gregory Nazianzus Church ..... 193  
*Saint Joseph* (Holy Cross mission boat) ..... 68  
 St. Joseph's Hall (clinic) ..... 158  
 St. Joseph's Hospital (Fairbanks) ..... 119-120, 122, 127  
 St. Joseph's Hospital (Victoria) ..... 18, 41, 55  
 St. Joseph's Mission (Akulurak) ..... 72, 74, 75  
 St. Mark's (church) ..... 178, 183  
 St. Mary's (Andreafski) ..... 76, 77, 164, 170, 256 See Akulurak.  
 Also Sr. Agnes Marie; also Sr. Jeannette LaRose; also Sr. Kateri  
 Mitchell  
 St. Mary's (church) ..... 82, 89  
 St. Mary's Hospital (Dawson) ..... 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89, 96, 99,  
 103, 119 See William Judge, S.J. Also Dawson; also Sr. M.  
 Zenon  
 St. Mary's School (Dawson) ..... 90, 91, 92, 95, 96, 104  
 See Dawson; Also Sr. M. Joseph Calasanctius; also Pierre E.  
 Gendreau, O.M.I.; also William Ogilvie  
*St. Michael* (mission boat) ..... 68  
 St. Michael (village) 54, 57, 58, 67, 74, 89, 107, 108, 109, 110, 204  
*St. Patrick* (mission boat) ..... 77  
*St. Paul* (ship) ..... 56, 57  
 St. Peter Claver Mission ..... 110  
 St. Rose of Lima (parish) ..... 15  
 St. Terese (shrine of—Juneau) ..... 38-39, 43  
 St. Theresa's Camp (Soldotna) ..... 236  
 Sally, Helen ..... 250 See Sr. M. Frances  
 Sally, Mary ..... 250 See Sr. M. Winifred  
 Salvation Army ..... 121  
 San Francisco ..... 14, 55, 56, 62, 69  
 Saudis, Rev. Richard B. .... 225  
 Saunders, Antoinette ..... 250 See Sr. M. Zephyrin  
 Savage, Agatha ..... 216

Savage, Pius ..... 160  
 Scannell, Neil ..... 212  
 Scheffer, Ellen ..... 250 See Sr. M. Mark  
 Shields, Margaret Emely ..... 250 See Sr. M. Pascal Baylon  
 Schubert, Clare ..... 199  
 Schultheis, Henry J., S.J. .... 167  
 Schweiger, Paul ..... 216  
 Scott, Sylvia ..... 250 See Sr. M. Verona  
 Scurvy ..... 68, 73, 90  
 Seghers, Archbishop Charles John ..... 15, 16, 17, 19, 53, 57, 64,  
 69-70, 109, 110, 130, 131, 177, 178, 236 See Holy Cross.  
 Also *Our Lady of the Snows* (mission) .....  
*Seghers* (chapel boat) ..... 129  
 Senecal, Albina ..... 250 See Sr. M. Seraphine of the Sacred Heart  
 Seraphine of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 114, 142, 254, 257  
 Serena (Seraphina), Sr. M. .... 253  
 Servatius, Sylvia ..... 215  
 Seward, William H. .... 4  
 Shageluk ..... 59  
 Sheldon Jackson College ..... 177  
 Shelton, Joseph, M.D. .... 162  
 Shrine of St. Terese ..... 38-39, 43  
 Shulman, David, M.D. .... 191  
 Sidonia, Sr. M. .... 151, 153, 165, 254  
 Sifton, John B., S.J. .... 143, 157  
 Silverbow ..... 16, 119  
 Simpson, James Kidd, M.D. .... 22, 23, 34  
 Sinnott, Mary ..... 250 See Sr. M. Martin of Tours  
 Sipary, Daniel ..... 128  
 Sipary (family) ..... 213, 225  
 Sipary, George ..... 209, 210  
 Sipary, Tony ..... 213, 220, 225  
 Sr. Adorers of the Precious Blood ..... 230  
 Srs. of Charity ..... 17  
 Srs. of Charity of Providence ..... 18, 119, 120, 153, 160, 213, 230  
 Srs. of Mercy ..... 56, 230  
 Srs. of St. Ann (in general) ..... 6-10  
 Srs. of St. Benedict ..... 120  
 Srs. of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary ..... 230  
 Sitka ..... 15, 17, 26, 37, 47, 177, 191  
 Sitka Industrial Training School ..... 177  
 Sitka (Russian hospital) ..... 23  
 Sitka Sanatorium ..... 191, 192, 193  
 Skagway ..... 30, 89, 92, 175-202, 177, 185, 194, 197, 198, 200  
 Skagway Sanatorium ..... 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 193 See  
 Sitka Sanatorium  
 Sloane, Leonard O., M.D. .... 41  
 Smalley, Robert, M.D. .... 47  
 Smallpox ..... 107  
 Smario, Anton ..... 220  
 Smith, Cordelia ..... 250 See Sr. M. Margaret of the Sacred Heart  
 Smith, Margaret (Maggie) ..... 250 See Sr. M. Lidwine  
 Smith, Richard K., O.S.A. .... 237  
 Smithsonian Institution ..... 108  
 Snow, Lucille ..... 215  
 Snyder, Sr. Joyce ..... 122, 250, 253 See Sr. M. Irene of the Cross  
 Society of Friends ..... 26, 177  
 Society of Jesus ..... See Jesuit Order. Also see Jesuits  
 Sommer, John ..... 128  
 Soul, Doreen ..... 250 See Sr. M. Audrey



Sparks, Mrs. Vic ..... 181  
 Specken, Mary Anna ..... 250 See Sr. M. Justa  
 Specken, Mary Regina ..... 250 See Sr. M. Adelaide  
 Speerstra, Harry and Jean ..... 213  
 Spellman, His Eminence Francis Cardinal ..... 221  
 Spils, Dick ..... 213  
 Spils, James C., S.J. .... 160, 161, 166, 167, 206, 208, 209, 210,  
 212, 215, 216, 220, 226 See Copper Valley School. Also  
 Bishop Francis D. Gleeson, S.J.  
 Spiritana, Christine ..... 14  
 Stack, Johanna A. .... 250 See Sr. M. Loyola  
 Stanislaus Kostka, Sr. M. .... 252, 254  
 Stanley Drive (convent) ..... 233, 235  
 Stella, Sr. M. .... 38, 255  
 Stephen, Sr. M. .... 55, 61, 62, 65, 67, 70, 75, 81, 82, 110, 112,  
 114, 116, 118, 122, 123, 253, 256 See Holy Cross. Also  
 Nulato  
 Steve, Margaret Mary ..... 215  
 Stevens, Alex ..... 185  
 Stevens, Dennis ..... 213  
 Stewart River (area) ..... 54, 177  
 Stick Dance ..... 107  
 Stickman, Frederick ..... 131  
 (Stickman), Old Andrew ..... 107  
 Stone, Mrs. Cecilia ..... 217  
 Stone, Kenneth ..... 217, 224  
 Sugpiaq ..... 2  
 Sulzman, Rev. F. Merrill ..... 182, 183, 192  
 Surprenant, Agnes ..... 250 See Sr. M. Addée  
 Sutherland, J. A., M.D. .... 120  
 Swalling, Albert and Minnie ..... 213  
 Swedish mission ..... 27  
 Swineford, Gov. Alfred P. .... 23, 28, 59, 109, 115, 176, 177  
 Sylvester, Sr. M. .... 255, 256  
 Sylvestre, Florida ..... 250 See Sr. M. Marcienne  
 Sylvestre, Philomene ..... 250 See Sr. M. Flore  
 Sylvina, Sr. M. .... 116, 252, 256

**T**  
 Tagish ..... 3  
 Tam, J. L., M.D. .... 41  
 Tanaina ..... 2, 229  
 Tanana ..... 53, 119  
 Taral ..... 204  
*Teddy* (fishing vessel and ferry) ..... 36  
 Ten'ah (Tena) ..... 112, 130  
 Territorial Welfare Conference ..... 164  
 Tevini, Alice ..... 250 See Sr. M. Anthony  
*Thane* (boat) ..... 37  
 Thecla, Sr. M. .... 185, 252, 253, 255  
 Theodore, Sr. M. .... 28, 255  
 Theophile of Rome, Sr. M. .... 254  
 Theresa, Sr. Miriam ..... 252, 256  
 Theresa of Avila, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Theresa of the Sacred Heart, Sr. M. .... 255  
 Therese Bernadette, Sr. M. .... 168, 169, 253, 254, 256  
 Therien, Evelina ..... 250 See Sr. M. Francis Joseph  
 Therien, Odile ..... 250 See Sr. M. Alberic  
 Thibodeau, Mary ..... 38  
 Thomasina, Sr. M. .... 146, 253, 255

Thomas Joseph, Sr. M. .... 253, 255  
 Thomas of Florence, Sr. M. .... 254  
 Thomas of the Rosary, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
 Timmins, John ..... 23  
 Tlingit ..... 2, 4, 15, 18, 175, 176, 177, 187  
 Tok Missions ..... 205, 206  
 Tomas, Aurore ..... 216  
 Torpey, Ellen (Helen) ..... 250 See Sr. M. Druscilla  
 Tosi, Pascal, S.J. .. 32, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 70, 71  
 74, 75, 77, 109, 114, 141 See Mother Mary Anastasia. Also  
 Aloysius Robaut, S.J.  
*Tosi* (mission boat) ..... 68  
 Tougas, Angele ..... 250 See Sr. M. Peter  
 Tougas, Eleonore ..... 250 See Sr. M. Jean  
 Tougas, Emma ..... 250 See Sr. M. Aza  
 Tourigny, Anne ..... 250 See Sr. M. Stella  
 Treadwell, John ..... 24  
 Treadwell Mines ..... 24, 32, 34, 119  
 Treca, Joseph, S.J. .... 71  
 Trinique, Florida ..... 250 See Sr. M. Thomas Joseph  
 Trudeau, Germaine ..... 250 See Sr. M. Dolorosa  
 Tsimshian ..... 2, 4, 177, 187  
 Tuberculosis ..... 63, 97, 101, 154, 187, 189  
*Tundra Topics* ..... 130  
 Turino, Jeannette ..... 217  
 Turnell, Philibert, S.J. (Filiberto Tornielli, S.J.) ..... 178, 179  
 Turner, George ..... 163  
 Tutchone ..... 3  
 Twohig, John, S.J. .... 72  
 Typhoid ..... 80, 84, 114  
*Tyrell* (ship) ..... 89

## U

Unalakleet ..... 15, 107, 126, 204  
 Unalaska ..... 15, 56, 74-75  
 United Freight Lines ..... 206  
 U.S. Congress (petition to) ..... 206  
 U.S. Public Health Service, Div. of Indian Affairs ..... 48  
 University of Alaska ..... 121  
 Urban Ministry ..... 233, 236  
 Urban and Rural Ministry ..... 233, 235  
 Urban Survival Program ..... 231  
 Ursulines ..... 75

## V

Vachereau, Yolande ..... 239, 251 See Sr. M. Bernard of Siena  
 Valdez ..... 204, 215, 217, 220, 231  
 Valois, Adele ..... 251 See Sr. M. Virginia  
 Vancouver Island ..... 11, 14, 15, 175  
 Van Stone, James W. .... 169  
 Vatican Council I ..... 10  
 Vatican Council II ..... 10, 89, 148, 170, 171, 223  
 Velma, Mother M. .... 222  
 Venerable Marie Anne Blondin ..... ix See Mother M. Ann  
 Verona, Sr. M. .... 104, 252  
 Vesco, Vincent ..... 98  
 Vicar Apostolic ..... 38, 42  
 Vicariate of Alaska ..... 38, 42, (Northern) 164, 179  
 Victoria, B.C. .... 14, 16, 22, 53, 54, 109, 143, 145, 175, 180  
 Victor, Sr. M. (Dooley) ..... 19, 254



Victor, Sr. M. (Hassen) ..... 120-121, 252, 253, 255  
 Vincelette, Marie ..... 251 See Sr. M. Itha  
 Vincent, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Virginia, Sr. M. .... 253, 256  
 VISTA volunteers ..... 132  
 Vogel, Adolph, M.D. .... 162  
 Volunteer Alumni Association ..... 214  
 Volunteer movement ..... 132, 134, 170, 207  
 Vuntut-gwitch'in ..... 3

## W

Wadkin, Catherine Mary ..... 251 See Sr. M. William  
 Wagoner, S. R., M.D. .... 41  
 Walburga, Sr. M. .... 194, 196, 257  
 Waldron, Olga ..... 143  
 Walker, Carl ..... 168  
 Walker, Frank ..... 169  
 Walker, James A. .... 165, 169  
 Walker, Jerry (Gerald) ..... 170  
 Walsh, Rev. Joseph T. .... 160  
 Walsh, Leo, O.S.B. .... 183  
 Walsh, Leo A. (family) ..... 213  
 Walter, Sr. M. .... 251  
 Wambeke, Agnes Beatrice ..... 251 See Sr. M. Beatrice  
 Weimer, Gertrude ..... 251 See Sr. M. Armella  
 Weimer, Teresa ..... 251 See Sr. M. Hilda  
 Welch, Mary Eloise ..... 251 See Sr. M. Anne Eloise  
 Welsh, Anna ..... 251 See Sr. M. Mildred  
 Wenzel, Anna Z., R.N. .... 170, 217  
 Weokoluk, Bessie ..... 186  
 Western Union Telegraph Co. .... 108  
 Whalen, Mrs. Marie ..... 217  
 Wheeler, Jack and Irene ..... 213  
 Whelan, Most Rev. Robert L., S.J. .... 121, 134, 192, 224-225, 240  
 Wheldon, Irene ..... 251 See Sr. Miriam Theresa  
 Whitehead, William, M.D. .... 41  
 Whitehorse (White Horse) ..... 92-95, 104, 105, 178, 183, 189  
 White, John ..... 206  
 White Pass ..... 89, 175, 178  
 White Pass and Yukon Railroad ..... 89, 92, 178, 187  
 Whymper, Frederick ..... 108  
 Wien, Noel and Ralph ..... 127  
 Wilhelmina, Sr. M. .... 255  
 William, Sr. M. .... 194, 252, 257  
 Williams, Lanita ..... 251 See Sr. M. Clement Joseph  
 Wilson, Mary Jane ..... 251 See Sr. M. Milburge  
 Winchell, Oscar ..... 160  
 Winifred, Sr. M. .... 69, 124, 126, 127, 140, 142, 252, 254, 256  
 Witt, Lydia ..... 215  
 Wobser, Becky ..... 203  
 Wolfhead Point (Yissetlatoh) ..... 54, 110  
 Wolf moiety ..... 176  
 World War I ..... 34, 97  
 World War II ..... 6, 41, 94, 101, 130, 147, 155, 184, 187, 205  
 Wrangell ..... 15, 16, 17, 25, 30, 37, 177, 179, 181, 196  
 Wrangell Institute ..... 180, 196  
 Wrangell Residential School ..... 25  
 Wright, Most Rev. John ..... 165, 221  
 Wyman, Hugh G., M.D. .... 22, 23

## X

Xaverine, Sr. M. .... 185, 252, 255, 257  
 Xavier, Sr. M. .... 252

## Y

Yissetlatoh ..... 54  
 Yolande, Sr. M. .... 252, 255  
 Young Christian Students ..... 230  
 Young, Rev. S. Hall ..... 85  
*Yoyit Rokanaga* (booklet) ..... 130  
*Yukon* (steamer) ..... 58, 72, 108  
 Yukon Consolidated Gold Co. .... 99, 102, 104  
 Yukon River ..... 15, 54, 56, 57, 58, 66, 88, 103, 108, 109, 134,  
 143, 179, 204  
 Yukon River Medical Boat ..... 162  
 Yukon Territory ..... 1, 3, 5, 6, 14, 79, 91, 92, 175  
 Yup'ik ..... 2, 57, 58, 60, 71, 134, 240; (Central) 2

## Z

Zagoskin, Lt. Lavrentiy Alekseyevich ..... 58, 108  
 Zenaide, Sr. M. .... 252  
 Zenobia, Sr. M. .... 36, 253, 257  
 Zenon, Sr. M. .... 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 33,  
 34, 42, 89, 92, 96, 97, 101, 119, 120, 252, 254 See Dawson.  
 Also Juneau; also St. Ann's Hospital (Juneau)  
 Zephyrin, Sr. M. .... 55, 69, 73, 83, 87, 88, 251, 252, 254, 255  
 Zerbinos, Nick ..... 203, 219, 220, 225  
 Zerbinos, Rose ..... 219, 225





3° West from Greenwich 176°

172°

168°

164°

160°

156°

152°

148°

144°

140°

136°

100 0 100 200 300 400 500 Miles

100 0 100 200 300 400 500 Kilometers

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 1957





“ . . . a segment of Alaska’s history that is often overlooked . . . ” These words by Governor Walter J. Hickel, who wrote the foreword for this book, suggest that an unclaimed rich lode of northern lore is waiting to be mined, is waiting to be read. These pages tell the story of the first hospital in Alaska under American rule, of educational pioneering, of life in Yukon River villages, of Klondike challenges in the Yukon Territory. Here is the story of women who saw needs and responded. As Governor Hickel notes, although “. . . rarely armed with more than their faith in God and people . . . ,” these women dreamed, dared, and were undaunted by distance, unknowns, extreme temperatures, loneliness, personalities, floods or low waters — whatever the North had to offer.

The women drew courage from one who, in another milieu, had showed them how to dream, dare and do – Venerable Marie Anne Blondin, Mother Mary Ann, Foundress of the group of women this book is all about, the Sisters of St. Ann.



Sister Margaret Cantwell (left) was first missioned in Alaska in 1946 at Holy Cross. Since then, she has spent more than 37 years in Alaska schools or pastoral ministry. During this time she earned an M.A. at the University of Alaska. Sister Margaret has written numerous articles for publication in community and Church periodicals.

Sister Mary George Edmond (Lucienne Babin) entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Ann in Montreal, in 1928. Before being named to Alaska in 1946, Sister George was attached to the Mohawk Reserve at Kahnawake, Quebec. She was Provincial Superior in the New England states for a time but returned to Alaska to type and index archival material concerning the history of the Archdiocese of Anchorage.

