

DOMINICAN MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY

This new branch on the glorious and perennial tree of the Order of St. Dominic de Guzman is a most wonderful fulfillment of the Gospel parable of the grain of the mustard seed. When sown upon the earth, it is the smallest of all the seeds; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than any herb, and puts out great branches, so that the birds of the air can dwell beneath its shade," (Mark IV, 31-32)

The Congregation has grown in a short time. It extends over various continents and many birds of heaven, Virgins of Jesus, the Dominican Missionary Sisters, can rest under its shade.

It has for its Founders, the Most Rev. Mons. Ramon Zubieta O.P. and the Most Rev. Mother Ascension Nicol, O.P. In 1913 five Spanish Dominican Sisters from Huesca, Spain, in answer to the petitions of Mons. Zulueta, volunteered for work among the Indios of the "selvas" of Peru, South America. The Congregation was founded in 1918 and had its first house in Lima, Peru. On March 25, 1920 it was affiliated to the Order of St. Dominic by the Most Rev. Father General Louis Theissling. In this same year the Novitiate of Pamplona was founded. Here the Mother House was established. Its Constitution was temporarily approved on Dec. 22, 1931 and on May 21, 1940, His Holiness Pope Pius XII deigned in his benevolence to approve and confirm the Constitution of the Dominican Missionary Sisters of the Most Holy Rosary.

In accord with the desire of the Holy Church and with that of its own Founders the Congregation aspires to extend its apostolate throughout the whole world.

The members have for their general end, the glory of God and their own sanctification, by the practise of the three simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, the Rule of St. Augustine and their Constitution. Their special end is the Christian education of the youth with preference for places of greater need. As a secondary aim the members can also dedicate themselves to the corporal works of mercy in mission fields such as: hospitals, orphanages, nurseries, leprosariums, etc. Since they are affiliated to the Order of St. Dominic, the members may help and cooperate in the apostolic works of Dominican missionary priests wherever they are found.

At present the members dedicate themselves to different occupations. The majority are found in educational institutions. Others are in hospitals, clinics, maternities, dispensaries, leprosariums and even do house to house calls. Still others exercise their apostolate by running dormitories, caring for seminarians, giving catechetical instructions.

The General House is found in Madrid, Spain. By 1966, the Congregation had 83 houses with a total of 917 professed sisters scattered all over the world.

The statistics of 1966 show a total of 240,377 patients attended to in hospitals and dispensaries; 19,348 students in schools and institutions; and 57,273 persons were given spiritual, moral and material help.

Novitiates of the Congregation are found in six countries; Spain, Portugal, Peru, Central America, Philippines and Formosa. It also has a school for aspirants in Pamplona, Spain with a total of 69 aspirants as of 1966 statistics.

The Sisters came to the Philippines in 1953 at the petition of Rev. Father Faustino Fernandez, S.J. to work among the lepers of the Mindanao Central Sanitarium in Zamboanga City. At their arrival here, since the construction of the convent was not yet through, they were kindly received and housed by the Religious of the Virgin Mary Sisters. Almost a year after more Sisters arrived and with this new help the La Purisima Dispensary was opened in 1954. Since then hundreds of patients from all walks of life have been attended to in this dispensary. Aside from the work with the lepers and the patients, the Sisters also conduct catechetical instructions in a nearby barrio.

Children who would otherwise be spiritually orphaned come and avidly partake of the spiritual food proportioned by these Sisters. The Stella Maris Nursery was built for the children of the inmates of the Sanitarium. At present there are children ranging from new born babies to the age of nine.

In this same City the second house was founded in 1960 which is now the Novitiate. Here Filipino young women are formed so that afterwards they may bring the light of faith to their fellowmen in their own country or in other nations and thus fulfill Christ's command to go out and preach the Gospel to all nations and to spread Christian charity throughout the world.

In 1962 the Sta. Rosa de Lima Dormitory was founded in Manila. This is a dormitory for university students. But as usual, the Sisters' work is not limited to the bodily care of these girls. It is only a means to a higher end... that is, to imbibe in the minds and hearts of these young ladies the knowledge and love of God. For this reason too, they take charge of the catechetical instructions of the elementary school children in one of the public schools in this City.

The fourth house founded in 1964 is located in Suba-Nipa, Olu-tanga, Zamboanga del Sur. The apostolate here is more in consonance with the secondary aim of the Congregation which is the Christian education of the youth especially in places of greater need. The Sisters here work in collaboration with the Jesuit Fathers, and since this is the only high school in the whole island, the moral and spiritual formation of young boys and girls lay entirely in the hands of the Sisters.

Much yet to be done if we want to bring the "GOOD NEWS" to all men. The Gospel tells us that the "harvest is indeed great but the laborers are few". Let us therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into his vineyard.