

INSTITUTE HISTORY WORKSHEET

TOPIC: Mère Monica de la Passion (1937-1950)

Post war era; Chapter of 1947

Places:

Hawaii in 1946-Sisters from New England, later California takes responsibility for it.

(Hawaii is not a state until 1959)

Arizona: 1950 foundation in Glendale

Belgium: American communities focus on helping with rebuilding

England & Italy: Rebuilding efforts

China & Japan: American Sisters return as soon as possible

Africa: finally able to re-establish communication with Europe

People & Relationships between them:

- Mère Monica de la Passion
- Sr. Claude du. S.C. (British Councilor); Assistant Mother General
- Sr. Julie de la Ste Famille (American Councilor)
- Sr. Maura Lynch (American, General Secretary)
- 1947: Provincials finally relieved of duty
 - OH: Sister Teresa of the Passion succeeded by Sister Berchmans of Mary as Provincial Superior
 - MD: Sister Rosalia B. S. succeeded by Sister Mary Patrick Furndon as Provincial Superior
- Council elected in 1947:
 - Sister Julia of the Trinity (American)
 - Sister Hortense du Sacre Coeur (Belgian)
 - Sister Cecilia Josephine (English)
 - Sister Maura (American, belonging to the Belgian Province)
 - Sister Louise Marie de la Passion (General Secretary)
 - Sister Marie Julie de St. Benoit (General Treasurer)

Dates & Events:

- 1946: May/June: Sr. Claude visits Rome
- 1947: January: Sr. Claude dies
- 1947: Visitation to Rome; Delegates US Visitation to Srs. Julie of the Trinity & Maura
- 1947: May – General Chapter
- 1949: Revised rule published in English
- 1949: Visitation to England
- 1950: Mère Monica resigns due to ill health – she is the last mother general elected for life.
- 1963: October 28 - Mère Monica dies

Impact of War/Political Unrest:

- “It will be necessary to think of raising the ruins, to restore, to reorganize, to educate more christianly than ever children whose mentality has been particularly affected by these long and sad years of war. The work will be long and arduous and if not based on a solid foundation it will not withstand the broad, unhealthy doctrines with which current society is full.” Mère Monica – Quiet Revolution pg. 70
- 1945 held opportunities similar to after the French Revolution: new age with a higher material standard of living, speedier communications, new opportunities for work, a different view of careers for girls, a fresh evaluation of education
- 1945: congregation had 2 tasks: material rebuilding and long-term adaptation – Mère Monica sees to the 1st and has it done by 1951 so it is possible to tackle the 2nd – Quiet Revolution pg. 71
- China: Communist Revolution leads to closure of SNDdeN mission
- Southern Africa: European population grows as British Vets from WWII go to South Africa/Rhodesia
- Effects of colonization begins to break down as indigenous peoples begin to ask for independence (India, parts of Africa)

Relationship with Hierarchy & Clergy:

- Pius XII – candidacy opened in 1941 in Ohio (young women discerning in high school)
- Relationships broaden as new parishes open and ask for our Sisters

Primitive Spirit:

- Sharing resources: lists of materials sent from Maryland (Ohio)
 - Box 3:
 - 228 Dresses (Sizes 1-12)
 - 17 Skirts (Sizes 8-12)
 - 20 Baby Sweaters (Sizes 1-3)
 - 72 Girls Panties (Sizes 4-6)
 - 44 Boys’ Pants (Sizes 2-6)
 - 26 Boys’ Suits (Sizes 1-3)
 - 206 Blouses (Sizes 8-16)
 - Box 2:
 - Sheets 122 lbs
 - Pillow cases 19 lbs
 - Towels 9 lbs
 - Box 10:
 - 21 pr. Children’s Shoes
 - 35 Girls’ Dresses
 - 11 Boys’ Suits
 - 9 pr. Stockings
 - 30 Undervests
 - 22 boxes thread

- 18 rolls black braid
- England has funds to use for rebuilding (not sure when these ran out)
- Paralyzed Julie having the Vision of Compiègne – really? I’m supposed to do that?
Destruction in Belgium – Mère Monica does not allow it to paralyze her -
- Changes in customs – begin to see the impact on ability to keep primitive spirit after 25 years of a constitution based on imposition of canon law including deleting the 12 point section Françoise had written on the relationship between Sisters and Superiors. Those articles emphasized role of Superior as mentor, formator, concerned about happiness and welfare of her Sisters. Taken those out turned her into an administrator and enforcer.

Spirituality underpinning everything:

- Tremendous growth in sodalities in the U.S.A.
- Faith in God’s goodness and in one another
- Multiplication of the loaves and fish – everything rebuilt in 7 years (Motherhouse finished in 1952) as well as other needs seen to in USA and elsewhere

What touched your heart?

- Death of Sr. Claude
- Devotion of family members, current & former students (at all levels), etc. and their generosity

New insights?

- Vocations: down during the war & started to tick up immediately afterwards – Chapter of 1947 included address by Mère Monica on encouraging vocations everywhere (When she was dying in 1963, priest who anointed her asked her to offer her life for vocations and she did.)
- Chapter of 1947 – decisions feel very inconsequential after everything they have been through. After reading the list, re-read it from the perspective of Julie and Françoise and ask yourself: “How would their hearts react to this?”
 - Adding a line to acts of Faith, Hope, Charity and Contrition: ‘In this ____ I wish to live and die’
 - Don’t have to genuflect before and after receiving Communion
 - If a Sister is not able to kneel at the table when it is customary, she can sit – no standing
 - Superior should say certain prayers in chapel
 - Provincial should not go to Holy Family
 - Re-establishing order after Provincials/Superiors had to act on their own during war
 - Cloak underwent some change

- Games were permitted at recreation
- Only 1 favor requested by each 'king' at Epiphany (not many)
- A Sister visiting a sick/dying parent can take a meal with the family
- Rules about visiting sick/dying parents beginning to loosen
- Sisters professed 25 years or more need no longer present themselves for a turn with the local superior (shift of view of formation from life-long to just 6.5/7 years; leadership loses touch with membership?)
- The number on the veil can be placed anywhere
- Questionnaires to be filled out concerning Sisters who are to renew their vows/make perpetual vows are to be filled out by Superiors and Councillors independent of each other – no consulting (no sense of communal discernment)
- The Superior may make no local changes without consulting the Provincial
- **Suggestions from USA:**
 - 1 candidacy for 4 provinces (Ohio's opened in 1941) (would build unity)
 - 1 novitiate for 4 provinces (would build unity)
 - Interchange of Sisters in 4 provinces (would build unity)
 - Clarify who may pose for pictures/carry watches
 - May male costumes be used in plays on our stages?
 - Have day of recollection in Advent instead of Christmas vacation
 - Omit recreation at lunch on Sunday
 - Is much of the uneasiness and look of discontent on the faces of many Sisters not due to the fact that we have so many conflicting "primitive spirits." The spirit depends upon the Superior, it seems, and what one thought was correct at one time is denounced at another therefore we never know what we may do and what is "never done" (but which we have every reason to know has been done.) Could we look to our Rule and say 'It does not state it, therefore we shall do that which seems most charitable and sensible.' We are a great puzzle to outsiders – particularly to priests and to other religious since we never seem to know what we may do or why we are not permitted to do some things. Often they can cite cases in which they know it is done. (Lack of unity)
 - Our "Holy Family" and recreation periods are just two more burdens added to an already over-burdened day. Could anything be done to make it a pleasure to be looked forward to? (Was joy being lost?)
 - It is rare that Superiors take the initiative in granting favors to Sisters. As a consequence some Sisters receive many more favors than others. (Inequality?)
 - May Sisters be trained to practice courtesy, friendliness, and kindness towards all with whom they deal

- Teachers do not want to do common work. (We're supposed to be equal, not have choir & lay Sisters.)