

# TAKING THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ROAD

On January 28, 1921, Sister Teresa O'Connor (Sister Dolores' successor in the position of Superior for the Sisters of the Holy Family) received a letter from the Director of Catholic Charities from the Diocese of Los Angeles. In part, it reads as follows:

"I have been talking with the Right Reverend Bishop regarding the possibility of bringing the Sisters of the Holy Family to Los Angeles. I feel that if a start could be made there would be a very bright future here for your work....Do you feel that you could start the Order down here? How many Sisters could you send?...We need an Order such as yours."



Bishop Cantwell, foreground with first Los Angeles Sisters: Marcella, Perpetua, Casimir, Edward, Anselm. Bishop Hanna stands with the sisters.

This letter was followed in February by one from Bishop John J. Cantwell of Los Angeles, who had been a priest in San Francisco for many years. He knew the Sisters from working with them at the Cathedral and throughout the Archdiocese in which two of his brothers were also priests. Archbishop Hanna had been in San Francisco only two years at this time, but Cantwell seems to have some affection for him. He had to ask San Francisco for permission to install the Sisters in his own diocese. At this time Holy Family was not yet a Pontifical Order and answered directly to the Archbishop of the diocese in which they had been founded.

"Before asking Father Corr to invite you, in my name, to the diocese of Los Angeles, I had consulted the Archbishop, who was only too glad to share with me the good things that he himself possesses."

Arrangements were made over the ensuing months, and on Friday, November 11, 1921, six Sisters invited everyone to the blessing of their house at 811 Beacon Avenue. In one year three more had come from the north to join them. Bishop Cantwell was especially concerned for the children of immigrants coming into Los Angeles by the thousands, fleeing the religious persecution in Mexico. The needs of the poor and neglected were overwhelming.

The Sisters dedicated themselves to the service of those not participating in Catholic School Education including children, their parents, catechists and other adults seeking Catholic faith education or the Sacraments. Home visiting and aid to the poor was a big part of their ministry.



The first catechism classes were held at St. Basil's, Santa Rita Settlement House (Our Lady Queen of the Angels' Parish, also called "La Plazita"), Brownson House (St. Anthony's Parish), Dolores Mission and St. Martha's. By 1971, their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the Los Angeles area, the Sisters were servicing the field of Religious Education, including the religious needs of the developmentally disabled, and caring for the poor in 57 parishes, as well as serving in the

diocesan office of Religious Education extending their expertise in catechetical methods in teacher training courses throughout the **Archdiocese**. (Top photo: Homevisiting in the early 1950's; bottom photo: Confirmation in 1962 of the developmentally disabled, Sr. John Minetta SHF with His Excellency Most Reverend Timothy Manning.)

Sisters still serve in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. For Holy Family, the great south is regarded with affectionate eyes, because it was the first place to which the Community was missioned beyond the Archdiocese of San Francisco, its birthplace.

Besides the parishes listed above, here is a partial list of other parishes served.

St. Vibiana's Cathedral (where they also cared for the decorations, vestments, ceremonies and altars as sacristans)

Ascension

All Saints

Assumption

Blessed Sacrament

Holy Cross

Immaculate Conception

Santa Isabel

Santa Teresita

Holy Family, Artesia

St. Gertrude, Bell Gardens

St. Bernard, Bellflower

Holy Trinity, Burbank

Holy Cross

La Purisima

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Rosehill

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Fisher Street

Our Lady of Guadalupe Sanctuary

Our Lady Help of Christians

Our Lady of Loretto

Our Lady of Lourdes

Our Lady of the Rosary of Talpa

El Carmelo Mission

Precious Blood

St. Ann

St. Anselm

St. Anthony (Croatian)

St. Kevin

St. Lucy

St. Malachy

St. Odelia

St. Sebastian

St. Peter (Italian)

## SHF LOS ANGELES SCRAP BOOK



First graduates, Brownson House, St. Anthony, 1922



Class at Santa Rita House, Los Angeles, 1927



Communion Class and Breakfast, La Plazita, Los Angeles, 1922



Sisters Winifred and Annunciata at St. Odelia Church, Los Angeles, 1939



Class inside the church of Our Lady of Talpa, 1951



Our Lady of Talpa, May Crowning, 1948



Our last Confirmation at St. Sebastian with Bishop Manning, 1950



Outdoor class in Pasadena, 1950



Sr. Beatrice Ann Rojas, Presentation Parish, 1986