

From the

IHM Archives...

April 1, 2023



Did You Know?

Many wonderful accounts and treasures in the Archives continue to tell the ongoing story of our IHM Congregation's charism of Love, Creative Hope, and Fidelity! Here are just a few of the inspiring examples.

The Rose Window over the Sanctuary of St. James Church in Falls Church, VA



Did you know that this window is in memory of one of our IHM Sisters, Sister Mary Callista Rehr? Born in Reading, PA on March 9, 1908, she was named Marie A. Rehr. She was baptized at St. Peter Church, Reading, where she subsequently received First Holy Communion and Confirmation, as well as attended St. Peter Elementary School. She entered the IHM Congregation in West Chester, PA on January 5, 1933, received the habit and the Religious name Sister Mary Callista on August 16, 1933, and professed her vows on August 24, 1935.

In 1941 Sister was assigned to Villa Maria, Falls Church, Virginia, where she was to remain for 10 happy years. She became a “dorm-mother” for the younger boarding school students and was delighted to teach her first grade students, who brought her joy each day at St. James School, just across the street from the convent. The students, in turn, loved her gentleness, enthusiasm, and energy.

Sister Callista underwent surgery during the year 1950 – 1951, returned to the classroom for a time, but her health began to fail considerably. On Easter Sunday evening, April 13, 1952, Sister Callista died in the infirmary at the West Chester Motherhouse, aged 44 and in the 19th year of her religious life.



Sister Callista, IHM, holding the statue of the Infant of Prague for which she fashioned beautiful clothes. St. James Parish Archives.

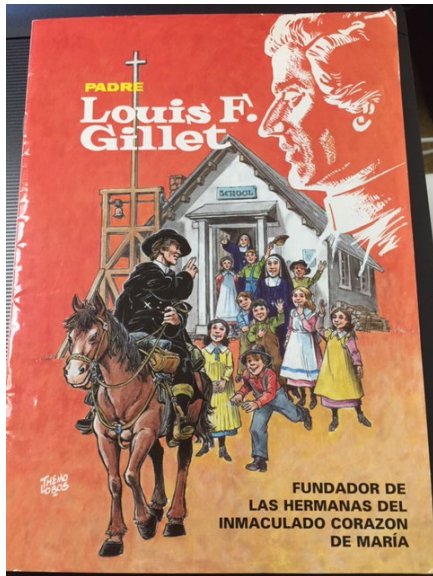
Sister Callista had endeared herself to the students and parents of St. James School, and the parishioners donated a rose stained-glass window behind the main altar in St. James Church in her memory. The cost was fully subscribed by the parishioners. The window was a token of their love for her. (*Information on Sister taken from Archival Records and Archival Menologies*)



An Account of Father Gillet and

Our IHM Foundation

Padre Louis F. Gillet: FUNDADOR DE LAS HERMANAS DEL INMACULADO CORAZON DE MARIA



Did you know that we have, in Spanish, this special account of Father Louis Florent Gillet and the foundation of our Congregation?

In the late 1960's, after the Second Vatican Council, it was evident that our Sisters in South America needed to teach the people more about our IHM Foundation and our Charism. At Villa Maria in Santiago, Chile, Sister Mary J. McGarrity accepted this challenge to tell the story, discovering a Chilean artist to create the illustrations. She told him the story -- he illustrated it. Subsequently, someone translated Sister Mary's English



text into Spanish. When Sister Mary was transferred in the early 1970s, she passed this partially completed project to Sister Maria Teresa Scudellari for its completion.

Guion, Deno y Dibujos: Themo Lobos

Asesoría: Hermanas Siervas del Inmaculado Corazon de Maria

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NOTA DE PRESENTACION

Al cumplirse 150 años de la fundación de la Congregación de las Hermanas Siervas del Inmaculado Corazón de María, hemos querido destacar por medio de esta historietta la figura de nuestro fundador el Padre Louis Florent Gillet. La similitud que él, junto con la Madre Teresa Masas, sembró en Maroon, Michigan, Estados Unidos de Norteamérica ha tenido un rápido y fructífero crecimiento que en este siglo significa también una importante presencia en Latinoamérica.

A pedido del Arzobispo de Lima, Monseñor Emilio Lisón, el Cardenal Dennis Dougherty, de Philadelphia invitó a las Hermanas a ir al Perú para crear un buen colegio católico donde las alumnas pudieran ser formadas en un auténtico espíritu cristiano y donde pudieran recibir una preparación íntegra en lo intelectual y moral. Las primeras hermanas llegaron al puerto de Callao, el 12 de Diciembre de 1922 y al año siguiente abrieron el Colegio Villa María. En 1940, invitadas por el Nuncio Apostólico y los Obispos de Chile, las Hermanas del I.C.M. llegaron a Santiago y fundaron el Villa María Academy.

Hoy, las Comunidades en Perú y Chile conforman la Región del Espíritu Santo, con seis casas religiosas y siete colegios en el Perú y tres casas, dos colegios, en Chile, donde trabajamos educando en la fe cristiana a los niños jóvenes y adultos de todos los niveles socio-económicos. Además, la bendición del Señor se ha hecho visible en las vocaciones latinoamericanas. Hoy contamos con hermanas peruanas, chilenas y bolivianas.

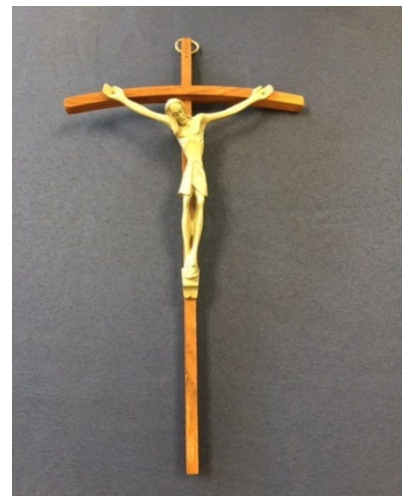
Damos gracias al Señor por toda su bondad y las bendiciones derramadas sobre nuestra comunidad y confiamos que con la poderosa intercesión del Inmaculado Corazón de María, de nuestros fundadores y de las muchísimas hermanas que ya están en la gloria del Señor, podremos continuar nuestra misión evangelizadora dando muchos más frutos para el mayor honor y gloria de Dios.

Hermanas Siervas del Inmaculado Corazón de María
Región del Espíritu Santo.

What an attractive and wonderful way to share the history of our Congregation! In addition, what an attractive and wonderful way currently to practice Spanish!

Special Crucifix from One of our IHM Convents That Has Closed

Did you know that we have the last item that was removed from one of our former convents? This Crucifix was the last item removed from the former Most Blessed Sacrament Convent in Philadelphia, PA. The convent was closed during the 1987-1988 school year and was rented to a hospital for a special



rehabilitation program. In the convent, the crucifix had been hanging in the Local Superior's bedroom, which adjoined the convent Chapel. The pastor, Rev. John Newns, presented it to the school principal to keep as a special memento, in appreciation for the many years of IHM presence, in what was once the largest elementary school in the country and perhaps in the world!

After the convent closed, we learn from the annals of *Most Blessed Sacrament School*, that the school remained open and several IHM Sisters remained on staff, serving as Principal and teachers. The sisters lived at Transfiguration Convent. Eventually the school also closed. The very last entry of the School Annals reads:

June 12, 2002:

*“So ends the 95-year-old legacy of
Most Blessed Sacrament School.”*

Thus, we appreciate even more, the significance of the Crucifix that our IHM Congregation still cherishes in our Archives!

In conclusion, as we ponder these three community memories, we once again thank our Provident God for the many graces and blessings He has bestowed upon our congregation down through the years!

*Praise, Love, Thanksgiving...
Our God to Thee!*

IHM Archival Records, Annals, and Menologies.

*Contributions to this Article from: The Staff of the
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