



Barquilla de la Santa Maria

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Oct. 4: St. Francis of Assisi

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A Suggestion from Heaven:

How the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity
Came to the Diocese of Columbus

The 1870s were a very difficult time for many, a time of economic depression when jobs were hard to find. Some parents were unable to buy food or pay rent or otherwise care for their children. Other parents had lost a spouse and could not care for little children alone. Such little children were found abandoned at the Sacred Heart Academy in Columbus. The Dominican Sisters took these children in and clothed and fed them. Some remained in their care for a number of months, but in time the parents usually returned to claim them. Some little children also were cared for by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd on the west side, but this was not the main apostolate of either the Dominican or the Good Shepherd sisters. The question of how to provide for such children weighed heavily on the mind of Bishop Rosecrans until Divine Providence sent him an answer.

A Call to Buffalo

Buffalo, New York in 1873 had two German parishes. These had German Jesuit pastors but only English-speaking religious to teach in their schools. Hoping to reach the children and their parents better with German-speaking teachers, one of the pastors asked the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in Capellen, Germany and Heijthuisen, Holland to send members of their community to teach. Many of these sisters had been deprived of the worldly portion of their activities by Chancellor

Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* and the community was actively seeking work in foreign lands. The Sisters decided to accept the invitation to Buffalo. Mother Aloysia Lenders, Superior General, would lead the group, which would include three other sisters, namely Sister Veronica Conradi, Sister Felicitas Dues, and Sister Leonarda Hanappel. After some intense



Mother Aloysia Lenders, O.S.F.
(Courtesy of the Sisters of St. Francis)

study of English, the little group left the Motherhouse in Holland on May 15, 1874. Mother Aloysia and Sister Leonarda stopped at Aix-la-Chapelle to visit Ven. Mother Frances Schervier, foundress of the Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis. A remarkable friendship existed between the two superiors and Mother Frances asked her community in the United States to do everything possible for the travellers when they would reach the New World. The four sailed from Antwerp on May 18. They arrived in New York on June 5 and Mother Aloysia and Sister Leonarda set out for Buffalo on June 7 while their two companions settled temporarily in Newark, N.J.

On arriving in Buffalo, Mother Aloysia learned that Bishop Ryan of Buffalo would not welcome her Sisters into his diocese. The sisters whom they were to have displaced had laid their case before him and, feeling indebted to them, he had agreed that they should remain at the schools. He received Mother Aloysia coldly, told her he had quite enough sisters in his diocese, and quickly sent her away. A novena of Masses, prayers to the Sacred Heart on that great feast and on many other days, and a second visit to the bishop seemed not to help, for not only did Mother Aloysia not know where to turn, Sister Leonarda became ill and the doctor expected her to quickly depart for an eternal home.

Search for a Home

As Sister Leonarda did not improve, the Jesuit priests suggested that she be taken to Cincinnati, to the hospital of the Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis. Mother Aloysia accompanied her on the overnight railroad journey. (It seems likely that they passed through Columbus's Union Station on the Night Express of the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Indianapolis Railroad, with a brief stop at 1:30 a.m. Did a drowsy Mother Aloysia glance out the window at the city? Certainly, she had no idea of the work

Providence had ready for her Sisters in the Diocese of Columbus.) Mother Frances Schervier's sisters in Cincinnati, led by Mother Vincentia, warmly welcomed them at St. Francis Hospital and Sister Leonarda began a rapid recovery. Mother Vincentia offered to place her community's hospital at Quincy, Illinois at the disposal of Mother Aloysia and her companions, and Mother Aloysia did visit it, but since her three companions were all teachers, she refused this offer "and continued to storm Heaven to know God's Will as to the future."

"One evening, at the community recreation, Mother Vincentia asked her religious whether any one of them could suggest some opening for the sisters who had come over with Mother Aloysia. One of the youngest nuns said very timidly: 'Mother, there is no orphanage in Columbus, Ohio; could not the sisters open one there?' This suggestion seemed both to Mother Vincentia and to Mother Aloysia to come from Heaven. The next day they set out for Columbus and repaired to St. Francis Hospital. They sent over to the episcopal residence to request an audience of the Rt. Rev. Bishop Rosecrans, but the gracious Prelate replied that he would come to the Hospital himself, and in a short time he arrived. He listened with the greatest kindness to Mother Aloysia's story, and when he heard that she wished her sisters to be received into his Diocese and, if this were agreeable to him, to take charge of an orphanage, the good Bishop was very much pleased and at once engaged them for the one he intended to found in this city. His fatherly kindness fell like a balm on the heart of the anxious Superior, and seeing in these events, the Hand of God, she at once promised the Bishop that her nuns would take charge of the orphans."

Mother Aloysia returned to Cincinnati and wrote a letter to Buffalo, telling the Jesuit priest that she had decided to give up all thoughts of that city and settle her three sisters in Columbus. Meanwhile,

however, the Jesuit Fathers had succeeded in convincing Bishop Ryan of Buffalo to withdraw his refusal to admit the Franciscan Sisters, and the religious who had been teaching in the schools recognized the need for German teachers and retired from the scene of their own accord. The Fathers sent Mother Aloysia a telegram to come to Buffalo immediately, but said no further word. The Fathers had received her letter but had not opened it and on her arrival in Buffalo they were as stunned to learn that she had definitely decided upon Columbus as she was to learn that her Sisters now were expected to settle in Buffalo! The Jesuits protested the embarrassment that would result if the Sisters did not settle there, while their need for German teachers would go unfilled. After several days of prayer, consideration of the attitude of her Sisters in Germany, the prospects for her congregation in the Germany of the Iron Chancellor, the availability of candidates for the order whom the Jesuits had already recruited, the training of her three Sisters as teachers, and a brief meeting with Bishop Ryan, the decision was made: the Sisters would settle in Buffalo. Sister Veronica was named the first, temporary superior of the Sisters in Buffalo, Sister Leonarda would train the new candidates, and Sister Felicitas would look after their material needs. They settled into a little frame house while Mother Aloysia sent to Germany for six more Sisters and then departed to return to Europe. It had been three months since she had first landed in New York.

St. Vincent's Orphanage

Mother Aloysia, of course, never for a moment forgot the kindness of Bishop Rosecrans and her commitment to him. She had obtained from him a delay of six months. On her arrival in Germany, before the end of 1874, she sent three Sisters from Rheims to make the foundation in Columbus, Mother Euphrasia and Sisters Clotilde and Aquinas. They arrived on the

evening of December 22 and were received at the hospital by the Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis. They were not there long when Bishop Rosecrans and his Vicar General, V. Rev. Bernard Hemsteger, called upon them to bid them welcome and lay out their plans.

Bishop Rosecrans obtained from Louis Zettler his house and seven acres (mostly covered by orchards) at Rose and East Main Street for \$25,000, of which amount Mr. Zettler donated \$10,000 and took a note for the remainder. The two-story brick house, converted to accommodate the Sisters and orphans, contained nine rooms and a chapel, the latter furnished by Holy Cross Parish. On February 2, 1875 some 500 Catholics of the city, led by the St. Patrick's total Abstinence Society, St. Joseph's Mutual Benevolent Society, the St. Patrick's School Society, and the Pope Pius IX Cadets, assembled at St. Francis Hospital and with the three Sisters processed in silence to the new St. Vincent's Orphanage. The building then was dedicated by the Bishop, assisted by Fathers J. B. Hemsteger, J. B. Eis, J. Cassella, M. Meara, and the students of St. Aloysius Seminary. The first residents were eight little girls who until then had been cared for by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

St. Vincent's Orphanage was expanded and modernized through the years. By 1917 about 4,000 orphans had been received and over 300 were then in residence. About this number were cared for by the Sisters for many years thereafter. St. Vincent's was "the" charity of the whole diocese and was supported largely by the Christmas Day collection at all parishes and a Fourth of July festival. In 1973 St. Vincent's changed its mission and changed its name from "Orphanage" to "Children's Center." It became a mental health agency providing day treatment and educational and residential services for children. St. Vincent Children's Center formed an operating agreement and a single management structure with Diocesan Child Guidance and in

1996 formally merged with that Center to form the Columbus Family and Child Guidance Centers. The last Sister-employee at St. Vincent retired in 1989, but several remained in residence until 1994. The name was changed to St. Vincent Family Centers in 2000, so that its Catholic identity would be apparent.

Other Foundations

Mother Aloysia made two further foundations in the Diocese of Columbus. In 1875 Father John B. Eis, who spoke German and several other languages, invited her to staff the school at his new parish, Sacred Heart in Columbus. Mother Aloysia sent from Germany Mother Sophie, Sister Callista, and others. The Sisters added a two-year commercial high school there in 1892 and a four-year high school in 1957. Due to the declining Catholic population of the area and the opening of new diocesan high schools, Sacred Heart's high school was closed in 1966 and the elementary school in 1972, four years short of its centennial.

In 1870 a bare tract of land near New Lexington was given to Bishop Rosecrans on which to found a school. Four years later, the walls had been built but no further progress had been made.

Bishop Rosecrans asked the Franciscan Sisters to consider taking over the site and Mother Aloysia sent Mother Gonzaga Brexel with her community, who had just been expelled by Bismarck's government from the little town of Konitz near Danzig. Mother Gonzaga inspected the site and found it an ugly building surrounded by weeds, without a tree or a bit of lawn in sight. The neighboring clergy thought nothing could be done there, but Father Eis, who was secretary to the Bishop, guaranteed the Sisters' debts in starting the school, so the Sisters undertook the task. They opened St. Aloysius Academy, boarding school for girls, in 1876 that soon was flourishing. In the 1930s a military academy for

younger boys was added and in 1948 the high school was opened to males. Declining enrollment brought about the decision to close the academy in 1969.

Mother Aloysia served as Superior of her congregation until 1876, then retired to a very quiet life. She always considered all the anxiety and labors connected with the American foundation to be insignificant compared with the good done here. She died in 1883 at the age of just fifty-four.

Subsequent foundations in the Diocese of Columbus were made by the Motherhouse at Buffalo, later (and now) at Stella Niagara, N.Y. These were:

St. Peter Parish elementary school in Columbus (1899 to 1969)



*Sister M. Carolyn, O.S.F.,
at St. Peter School in Columbus, 1947.*

- St. Leo Parish elementary school in Columbus (1904 to about 1991)
- St. John the Evangelist Parish elementary school in Columbus (1906 to the mid-1970s)
- Holy Rosary Parish elementary school in Columbus (1906 to the early 1980s)
- St. Ann's Infant Asylum (later Hospital) in Columbus (1908)
- St. Rose Parish elementary school in New Lexington (1912 until 1987)
- St. Rita's Home for working girls in Columbus (1924 to the early 1950s)
- St. Charles Seminary in Columbus (housekeeping from 1927 to the late 1970s)
- St. Therese's Shrine in Columbus (1927 to the late 1970s)
- St. Francis de Sales High School (1960 until 2000)
- St. Anthony Parish elementary school in Columbus (1965 to the early 1980s)
- St. Bernadette Parish elementary school in Lancaster (1967 until the early 1980s)
- St. Francis Evangelization Center in McArthur (opened 1979).

In 1935 the Franciscan Sisters of Penance and Christian Charity had 156 Sisters on mission in the Diocese of Columbus. This number was second only to those in the Diocese of Buffalo; however, excluding the Sisters at the Motherhouse, those in the Columbus diocese outnumbered those in Buffalo by 156 to 115. This diocese, especially Perry County, was a rich source of vocations to the congregation. In early 2002 there were still some forty members of the congregation in the diocese. Bishop Rosecrans' kindness to Mother Aloysia and her promise to him have not been forgotten.

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Details of Mother Aloysia's days in the U.S. are given by Sister M. Ligouri Mason, O.S.F. in *Mother Magdalen Daemen and Her Congregation*; [Buffalo, c. 1935]

Photo Credits

The picture of Mother Aloysia Gonzaga is published courtesy of the Archives of the Sisters of St. Francis of Holy Name Province, Inc., Stella Niagara, N.Y. 14144.

The photo of Sr. Carolyn is from the Catholic Record Society's Bobby Nesser Collection.



Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Columbus Cathedral Section C, Lot Records, 1867-1926

(Continued, from Vol. XXVII, No. 9)

53-C east

p. 39, Dennis Clifford, 1873 Apr. 22, lot 53 east half. Graves: 1876 Sept. 11; 1889 Apr. 16 child; 1889 Apr. 22 child; 1910 Nov. 5; 1910 Dec. 19.

Matilda beloved wife of Dennis Clifford died Mar. 24, 1897 aged 44 y 1 m 19 d

(Father) Dennis Clifford died Dec. 19, 1910

Michael Clifford, born in Scabtaglen Parish Kerry Co. Ireland, Sep. 29, 1825 died in Columbus, O., Apr. 6, 1873

Katie dau. of M. & C. Clifford born in Athens Co. O., July 21, 1856 died in Columbus, O. Sep. 10, 1876

Catherine M. Clifford, 1823-1916

Michael

53-C west

p. 64, John Mangan, [no date; first payment made 1880 Nov. 27], half of lot 53. Graves: 1909 March 10; 1920 Feb. 19.

p. 295, ~~William-Murphy~~, John Mangan, 1883 Dec. 16, lot 53 west half, transferred by Wm. Murphy; 224 Miller Ave.

(Baby) Mary Gertrude Mangan, died Feb. 17, 1895

+John Clifford Mangan - Ohio. Mess Sgt. 336 Inf 81 Div. Oct. 4, 1942

(Mother) Anne wife of John J. Mangan died Mar. 10, 1909 May her soul r.i.p.

John J. Mangan, 1846-1920

MANGAN: Aloysius M. Sept. 13, 1935
Rosa M.

54-C north

p. 123, Thomas Hartnett, [no date of sale; first payment made 1881 July 4], lot 54 north half. Graves: 1887 Oct. 12; 1891 Sept. 10; 1891 Sept. 18; 1892 Dec. 5; 1914 Sept. 4; 1929 May 20. [no stones]

54-C south

p. 206, Patrick Ryan, 1881 Sept. 15, lot 54 south half. Graves: 1881 Sept. 15 child; 1888 Apr. (or March, overwritten) 3; 1903 Feb. 10; 1904 Apr. 21.

Michael A. Ryan 1872-1937

Eva J. Ryan, 1883-[blank]

Juliet Ryan Fleming June 24, 1876-Nov. 18, 1938

Bridget wife of Maurice Griffin, born 5,10,1828, died 2,10,1903

Ettie Ryan, born 10,9,1877 died 9,14,1881

55-C

p. 169, Thomas Agnew, 1874 Oct. 16, lot 55. Graves: 1879 Sept. 6; 1889 July 14 child; 1904 Aug. 20; 1904 Nov. 27; 1913 June 19.

(Father) August Burkley 1860-1916

(Mother) Elizabeth Burkley 1863-1934

(Mother) Anna Schwenker 1865-1904

Thomas P. Agnew 1860+1948

56-C

p. 179, James Morrison, ~~223-E-Lincoln-St.~~ 801 N. 4th St., 1875 Sept. 1, lot 56. Graves: 1879 Dec. 30 child; 1905 May 1; 1896 June 22; 1906 Sept. 28; 1910 July 15; [no year] Sept. 9; 1913 Sept. 29; 1918 Sept. 14.

Russell Richards Oct. 20, 1901-Sep. 8, 1910

John L. Richards born and died Sep. 27, 1907

57-C

p. 171, John Kelly, 1878 Apr. 8, lot 57. Graves: 1891 July 20; 1900 June 8; 1904 Dec.

27; 1909 March 29; 1910 March 4; 1914 June 6. "This lot transferred to Mrs. Mary Caito." p. 513, Mrs. Mary Caito, 1919 Oct. 20, half of lot 57 transferred to her by John Kelly. Grave: 1931 Jan. 5.

CAITO:

John A. Palumbo 1898-1934

(Daughter) Angela Palumbo 1898-1974

(Father) Gaetano 1862-1931

(Mother) Maria 1872-1958

(Grandson) Jude DiPiero 1947-1947

(Son) Michael A. May 22, 1900 - July 21, 1949

Margaret M. DiPiero 1908 -

Frank D. DiPiero S Sgt US Army World War II

Feb. 28, 1907+Mar. 2, 1982

Samuel T. Caito 1893-1986

Goldie C. Caito 1898-1982

Frank Peter Caito US Navy World War I Dec. 12, 1896+June 9, 1984

(Wife) Elva I. Caito Dec. 1, 1896 - Mar. 9, 1997

58-C north

p. 105, John Crawford, 896 Curtis Ave., 1878 Apr. 30, lot 58 north half. Graves: 1878 Apr. 30 child; 1913 Nov 10.

John Crawford 1851-1920

Ann his wife 1853-1913

William their son 1873-1878

58-C south

p. 105, Patrick Ready-Ruddy, ~~Belle-St.-154,~~ ~~276-W-Broad-St.,~~ Mary Ruddy, 375 S. Grant Ave., 1878 Apr. 30, lot 58 south half. Graves: 1878 Apr. 30 child; 1879 March 3; 1892 March 22; 1907 Dec. 9.

Nellie B. Ruddy died Mar. 17, 1947

John Ruddy died Aug. 15, 1880

Mary Ruddy died Feb. 28, 1895

Patrick Ruddy died Dec. 11, 1907

Mary Ann Ruddy died Nov. 23, 1936

59-C north

p. 107, Jeremiah Collins, 66 University St., 1878 June 11 lot 59 north half. Graves: 1878 June 11 child; 1881 Oct. 22; 1882 Oct. 2 child;

1889 Nov. 14; 1896 July 16; 1904 Mar. 4;
1909 July 31.

James W. Bailey 1860-1904

Jeremiah M. Collins 1835-1896

Margaret C. Dickinson 1861-1889

Nora A. Collins 1867-1881

Anna B. Collins 1869-1882

Jeremiah Collins 1872-1878

59-C south

p. 107, Mrs. Dominick Leonard, 28 West
Maple St., 1878 July 26, lot 59 south half.
Graves: 1878 July 20 child [use of vault prior
to purchase of lot]; 1881 Oct. 21 child; 1890
June 21 child; 1891 Sept. 11 child; 1903 Feb.
23 child; 1904 Jan. 27; 1909 Oct. 28; 1911
Apr. 8; 1912 Sept. 3; 1923 Apr. 23.

Ed Cosgrove 1898-1934

60-C east

p. 96, Patrick McCue, 1877 Nov. 7, lot 60 east
half. Graves: 1877 Nov. 7; 1881 May 23;
1881[?] Sept. 28.

**Charles, son of J. & L. McCue Apr. 11, 1893-Dec.
26, 1895**

60-C west

p. 102, Mrs. Sarah Hollis, 1878 Feb. 25, lot 60
west half. Graves: 1878 Feb. 25, two graves;
1881 Sept. 2 child; 1884 Sept. 19 child; 1888
Sept. 20 child; 1895 July 20 child.

(Mother) Sarah A. Hollis 1819-1902

**Tommy Hollis died Oct. 21, 1884[?], Aged 7 m 23
d.**

**+ James Hollis of Stockport [broken] Ireland late of
the 13 — Died Jan. 22 — aged 44 years also John
son of J[?] & S.A. Hollis Died May 16, 1860 Aged
16 yrs 4 m May their souls rest in peace.**

61-C

p. 169, John Costigan, 1877 Sept. 17, lot 61.
Graves: 1877 Sept. 17 child; 1908 March 16;
1917 Dec. 19; 1919 Oct. 4; 1930 May 5.

Kathrine Costigan 1880-1965

62-C south

p. 188, Catherine Gainey, Newark, 1880 Dec.
27, lot 62 south half. Graves: 1880 Dec. 27;
1890 Sept. 8 child; 1899 Jan. 12; 1902 June 2.
**Marg. Bresnahan In memory of our mother, may
her soul rest in peace, 1831-1895**

**Mary, wife of Charles L. Rader, 1848-1902. Pray
for me.**

62-C north

p 106, Frank McKenny, 1878 June 15, lot 62
north half. Graves: 1878 June 4 child [use of
vault prior to purchase of lot]. [Preceding all
was crossed out.] **Thomas McEvoy, rear 95
East Goodale St., 1899 Jan. 22 lot 62 north
half. Graves: 1899 Jan. 2; 1899 Jan. 27 to
raising two bodies; 1901 June 21 child; 1908
Apr. 13; 1909 Jan. 19; 1928 Nov. 26.**

**(Father) Albert De Matteis Jan. 19, 1907 + Oct.
30, 1975**

**(Father) Thomas McEvoy Dec. 31, 1849 - Nov.
26, 1928**

**(Mother) Lizzie McEvoy died Jan. 21, 1899: aged
37 yrs.**

**Mary wife of Thomas Dillon died Jan. 19, 1909
aged 55 years.**

Thomas Dillon died Apr. 13, 1908 aged 52 y.

63-C south

p. 98, ~~Daniel~~ Harrington; Robert Harrington
896 S. 4th St.; 1878 Jan. 27, lot 63 south.
Graves: 1878 Jan. 1 [charge for use of vault;
child buried on Jan. 27]; 1909 March 11; 1920
Jan. 27.

**Thomas Harrington, died Oct. 19, 1884
aged 21 y 6 m. Rest in Peace. Amen.**

HARRINGTON: (Son) Robert 1893 + 1909

(Son) Thomas 1891 + 1920

(Father) Robert 1858 + 1932

(Mother) Mary 1862 + 1940

(Daughter) Helen 1896 + 1931

My Jesus Mercy

63-C north

p. 97, John Connolly; Dennis
Connelly, 1877 Sept. 20, lot 63
north half. Graves: 1877 Sept. 20;
1899 Jan. 9; 1906 Jan. 12.

(Mother) Helen Pearce 1896-1931
+ John J. Crawford Ohio Co C 4 Regt
Ohio Inf Spanish American War May
18, 1875-Jan. 16, 1964
+ Rose Crawford 1863-1937

64-C west

p. 97, Mrs. Timothy Quinn, 351 W.
Goodale St., 1878 Jan. 11, lot 64
west half. Graves: 1878 Jan. 11
child; 1906 May 6; 1906 July 12;
1924 March 13 to raising remains.
Oct. 28, 1924 above lot transferred
to Charles Kintz.

p. 524, Charles Kintz, 2418 Pontiac
St., 1924, west half of lot 64
transferred from Mrs. Timothy
Quinn. Graves: 1924 Oct. 28; 1927
Feb. 9.

James H. Kintz 1911-1932
(Father) Charles O. Kintz 1877-1927
(Mother) Clara S. Kintz 1880-1924
Robert L. Johnson 1937-1953
Thomas D. Johnson 1951-1974



(To be continued)

*Side Altar -- But Where? Society member Jim Logsdon
thinks this was somewhere in the northeastern part of the
diocese. Does anyone recognize it?*