

SISTERS ADORERS OF THE ROYAL HEART OF JESUS SOVEREIGN PRIEST



PRESTON: "PRIEST TOWN"...

by a Sister Adorer from Preston

THERE was an unusual sight in Manchester airport the 11th of November. At the invitation of the Rt. Rev. Michael G. Campbell, Bishop of Lancaster, four Religious Sisters arrived in full-Religious habit. A suitcase in each hand, they were welcomed by a Canon of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest. A lively conversation about the weather and the history of the area sprung up as the car whistled off to Preston, their new home.

After what seemed a brief journey, the Sisters stood for the first time in front of Saint Augustine's Presbytery: a tall red-brick building solemnly standing next to Newman College. More than just a building, Saint Augustine's Presbytery has become the heart of activity for many generous benefactors. The Canons of the Institute, the parish priest and many friends had already been hard at work to prepare a clean convent already furnished



The Very Reverend Mgr Wach, Prior General of the Institute, with Mother Caroline-Marie of the Holy Trinity, Superior of the Sisters Adorers, and the Sisters.

... AND SISTER TOWN

with the essentials. Nothing had been overlooked. There was already a chapel with an altar embellished with an image of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour to welcome the Sisters. Henceforth, this convent would serve as the 'base' in which the community of Sisters would pray, work, sleep and eat. The following day, after a Solemn Benediction at English Martyrs, our new Shrine church in Preston, in the presence of Msgr. Wach, Prior General of the Institute, and a welcoming reception, the convent was blessed by Bishop Campbell. The Sisters' adventure was off to a good start.



Solemn Benediction at English Martyrs Shrine Church given by The Rt. Rev. Michael Campbell, Bishop of Lancaster, for the opening of the Convent.

Besides exploring the cupboards and matching the correct key with the many doors of the house, the Sisters have also been discovering the Church of Saint Thomas of Canterbury and the English Martyrs. Armed with their aprons and good will, the Sisters have set to tidying and polishing, not to mention the care of the sacristy and the preparation for Mass and Adoration. Having the grace to serve God in a church dedicated in honour of Saint Thomas of Canterbury and the English Martyrs, the Sisters attend with interest

the monthly talks given by the Canons on their lives. It is important to know these great saints under whose protection we all are.

The Sisters Adorers sing the proper of the Mass in Gregorian chant every Sunday, accompanied by a faithful organist. After each Sunday Mass, the Sisters are delighted to meet and chat over a cup of tea. At 4pm there is Rosary and Benediction at Saint Joseph Parish Church. Shortly afterwards, the Sisters are in Saint Walburge's Church for the Sunday devotions of Vespers, Rosary and Benediction.



Vespers and Adoration at St Walburge's Shrine Church.

The life of the Sisters here in Preston has not been confined to the walls of the convent and the church. By foot or by car, the Sisters are discovering the city such as the nearby parks, the Harris Museum, visiting the parish schools to speak of the religious life, singing Christmas carols for the elderly, and attending the annual Christmas Bazaar. Recognisable by their black and white habits as Religious Sisters, it often happens that the Sisters are stopped in the street by locals who wish to confide in them their troubles or express their joy at seeing Sisters again in Preston.

No apostolate is fruitful without God's assistance. The morning begins when the Sisters confide the day into the hands of Divine Providence, followed by the Consecration to the Royal Heart of Jesus and the Prayer to Jesus Christ Sovereign Priest. The Office of Lauds is sung and



Cleaning and decorating the altar of Our Lady with flowers at English Martyrs Shrine Church.

extended by an hour of mental prayer.

“Ora et Labora”, pray and work, says St Benedict, a patron saint of the Institute: the Sisters then have time dedicated to the household duties of cooking, laundry, cleaning, sewing, and other occupations depending on the necessities. At 11.30am it is time to leave the convent in order to lead the Rosary and assist at the midday Mass in the church of Saint Thomas of Canterbury and the English Martyrs. On their return and after the community lunch (in silence, during which they listen to an instruction or the life of a saint), the Sisters have a Gregorian chant practice to learn the next Sunday Mass, Religious instruction, as well as the continuation of the daily tasks. Every day at 5pm, the Sisters go to Saint Walburge's Church and join the Canons for the Office of Vespers, an hour of Adoration with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and the Office of Compline, which peacefully concludes a well-filled day. The last deed of the day is the preparation of the points for the next day's mental prayer. The day closes with these holy thoughts and “the Great Silence”.

The life of the Sisters is simple but beautiful, all centred on the Sacred Heart and the sacrifice of their own life. Their silent prayer for many, and in particular for priests, is vital in a secularised world. Their faithful witness in the Church is a token of Eternal life and certainly more efficient than any human publicity.



LIFE AT THE CONVENT



12th November: The Rt. Rev. Michael Campbell, Bishop of Lancaster, blessed the Convent, dedicated to St Augustine.



Thanks to your generosity, our empty convent was furnished before we arrived. One of the main groundfloor rooms before (top) and with the furniture (bottom).



29th November - 7th December: in union with the whole Institute of Christ the King, the Sisters attended and sang the traditional Novena in preparation of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.



Solemn High Mass of Midnight at English Martyrs Shrine Church. The Sisters helped with the choir.



Handwork: fitting a newly given bed, in one of the several bedroom of the house. Thank you to the generous benefactor!

Letter from the Sisters explaining their way of life in their own words

ADORERS of the Royal Heart of Jesus Christ Sovereign Priest, we are children of St. Francis de Sales, Doctor of Divine Love. In response to the infinite and merciful Love that pours forth from the pierced Heart of the Sovereign Priest, we desire to learn through Saint Francis de Sales, by the practice of the hidden virtues, to love and adore God in spirit and in truth. It is to this Heart that we are consecrated - as our motto, In Corde Regis ("In the Heart of the King"), indicates - so that we may render glory to God and intercede most particularly for the priests of the Institute and the souls entrusted to them.

Our spirituality is at the same time Salesian and Benedictine, according to the spirit of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest. The core of our spirituality is founded on the worship of God, to Whom supreme Adoration is due. At the heart of the life of the Church, and consequently, of the Institute is a great love of the holy Liturgy, as our holy patron St. Benedict teaches us. Through the Holy Liturgy we are led to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is "the open window to the Divinity" (St. Francis de Sales). It is the Holy Liturgy which, as primary source of our spirituality, establishes the rhythm of daily life in our community.

Building on the foundations established by the teachings of our third patron, St. Thomas Aquinas, we also benefit from time dedicated to study and intellectual formation. Through this life of adoration lived in the heart of the Church - life of prayer, study, and manual labour - we are ready to take on an apostolic way of life alongside the priests of the Institute, the nature of which Providence will reveal in due course.

As with the entire Institute, the Holy Virgin Our Mother, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, is our principal Patroness. Her Heart takes us along the luminous road that leads to the Royal Heart of her Divine Son to Which we desire to conform ourselves.

WONDERFUL NEWS:

On the 29th January 2018, five postulants,

Karen Arcile (France),
Bianca Brajuha (U.K. / Croatia),
Miriam McDermott (Ireland),
Jacinta Schmidt (U.S.A.),
Megan Silvey (U.S.A.),

will receive the religious habit, blessed by
the Rt. Rev. Bishop Michael Campbell, Bishop of Lancaster,
in our Church of Saints Michael & Cajetan, in Florence, Italy.

Thank you for your prayers,
especially for the first Sister Adorer from the U.K.

