

The St. Louis Review, Volume 1, Number 27, 4 July 1941 — ST. LOUIS NUN TAKES HER VOWS IN SOUTH CHINA [ARTICLE]

ST. LOUIS NUN TAKES HER VOWS IN SOUTH CHINA

Maryknoll, N. Y.—In the new Maryknoll convent in Kweilin, South China, which in its first year twice narrowly escaped burning when bombs set fire to nearby buildings, there occurred on June 30 the ceremony of the final profession of vows by Sister Rose Victor Mersinger of St. Louis, Mo. This new house was opened last summer in order that the Maryknoll Sisters might undertake much-needed work among the women and children in the city and in nearby refugee camps. Because of interrupted land communication, Sister Rose Victor and another nun were obliged to fly there from Hong Kong last summer.

In Heijo, Korea, final vows were pronounced on the same day by Sister Maria Talitha Yamagishi of Tokyo, Japan, herself a convert to Catholicism. Two other Maryknoll Sisters made final vows in the Phillipines, one in Hawaii, two in Los Angeles, and nine at the mother-house in Maryknoll, N. Y.

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Arrive in Free China

Refugee Priests, Nuns Safe After Hazardous Journey

Exiles of war, a band of refugee priests and sisters from Northern China, have arrived in safety at the Maryknoll mission in Kweilin, Free China, after a hazardous journey by boat, bus, bicycle, and foot, it was learned in an air-mail communication received in Maryknoll headquarters this week. The group included 10 Sisters of Charity (Gray Nuns) from Canada, together with the superior who is past 60 years of age, the report said. It was not announced to what order the priests belong.

After evacuating their mission in Lishiu, the missionaries made

their way south by way of North Fukien, Hunan, and Kwangsi, heading for Kweilin, which is considered somewhat of a haven of safety since the establishment of an American air base there. During the past six years of war in China the city of Kweilin had been an almost constant target for enemy bombs until the arrival of American aviators in that section shortly before our entrance into the war. Since then there have been sporadic air raids and frequent alerts. The mission buildings were completely demolished in 1939 and rebuilt the following year.

The Maryknollers in Kweilin, having received word of the evacuation from Lishiu, were awaiting the arrival of the northern missionaries and had beds ready for them when they arrived. The priests were taken into the rectory of the Maryknoll Fathers, while the Gray Nuns received a royal welcome in the tiny convent, which was built to house four Maryknoll Sisters. All the refugee missionaries are reported recovering from the rigors of their journey, the greatest hardship of which was the scarcity of food.

Another air-mail communication from Kweilin reports the rumor that American Dominicans, evacuated from the north, are now heading for Free China, presumably on their way to Kweilin.

Superior of the Maryknoll convent in Kweilin is Sister Rose Victor Mersinger, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Louis Mersinger, 3139 Arsenal street, St. Louis. She is a sister of the Rev. Arthur J. Mersinger, assistant pastor of Visitation parish, St. Louis. She made her first trip to Kweilin by air from Hong Kong in 1940, and is one of the first sisters assigned to the new mission, which was opened

that year. A graduate of St. Francis de Sales' elementary school and of St. Elizabeth's academy, St. Louis, Sister Rose Victor entered the Maryknoll sisters' postulate in 1935 and received the religious garb in 1936. After a two-year novitiate in preparation for foreign mission work, she made her first temporary vows in the motherhouse in New York and was almost immediately assigned to China. She pronounced her final vows in Kweilin last year.

Other sisters stationed at the mission are: Sister Antonia Maria Guerrieri of Stockbridge, Mass., who is a graduate physician in charge of the mission dispensaries. She is an alumna of Marquette university, having received her degree in medicine there before entering Maryknoll in 1935.

Sister Gabriel Marie Devlin of Long Island, N. Y., formerly stationed in the native novitiate conducted by the Maryknoll Sisters in Laipo, Kwangsi, a short distance from Kweilin.

Sister Mary de Ricci Cain of New Perth, Prince Edward Island, has recently arrived in Free China from Hong Kong, where she had taught for 15 years in one of the Maryknoll schools for girls, conducted by the sisters there.

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The St. Louis Review, Volume 4, Number 49, 1 December 1944 — Sr. Rose Victor Now Working in China War Area [ARTICLE]

Sr. Rose Victor Now Working in China War Area

Sister Rose Victor, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. O. L. Mersinger, 3139 Arsenal street, St. Louis, is one of the 15 Maryknoll Sisters now employed in or around China's war capital after having been driven from their Kungmoon and Kweilin mission posts during the present Japanese offensive.

In an air mail letter dated Oct. 21, recently received by the Maryknoll Sisters' mother-house in Maryknoll, N. Y., from Sister M. Eucharista who was in Kunming at the time, Sister Rose Victor is mentioned.

She writes: "Sisters Paul and Rose Victor came here a week ago from Chungking to wait for Sisters Antonia Maria, M.D., and St. Dominic, R.N. The latter will join Sister Monica Marie, R.N., and the American Sisters of Charity who are nursing at the Army hospital here. Sisters Antonia Maria, Paul, and Rose Victor will then go to Chau Tung where they expect to take over some Red Cross relief work."

The Rev. Arthur J. Mersinger, assistant pastor of St. Peter's parish, Jefferson City, is a brother of Sister Rose Victor.

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Meets 10 Nieces, Nephews

Nun Expelled From China Visits Parents in Diocese

Ten St. Louis children are delighted that "Aunt Barbara is home." To that many nieces and nephews she is "Aunt Barbara," but she is a religious, Sister Rose Victor, a Maryknoll Sister who lived for more than a year and one-half under Communists in China. She was expelled re-

cently and now is visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Otto L. Mersinger, 3139 Arsenal street, St. Louis.

It has been 13 years since Sister Rose Victor saw her family, when she visited her home on her way to China. But families have a way of doing things. Sister Rose Victor finds now a priest-brother, the Rev. Arthur J. Mersinger, stationed in Glennonville, Mo., and a nun-sister, Sister Dorothy Rose. Another brother is a seminarian, and four brothers and sisters are married. Hence there are 10 nieces and nephews to whom Aunt Barbara had been no more than a legend until now—and they are thrilled to see her at last.

Sister Rose Victor is almost a story-book character. From 1948 to 1951 she lived in China, speaking Chinese like a native and leading many to the faith. As mission superior of the Maryknoll Sisters in the Kweilin prefecture, she directed their dispensaries, native novitiates, school, and catechetical work. In the dispensaries alone, where a sister-doctor and two nurses were stationed, more than 10,000 patients were cared for each month.

One of her chief works was the training of Chinese girls to be sisters. She has trained a community of Chinese sisters who can now be counted on to continue the work. Sister Rose Victor lived under the Communists from November, 1949, until March, 1951, when she was expelled to Hong Kong. In World War II, when the Japanese occupied Kweilin, Sister Rose Victor was evacuated far into the interior of China to Chungking and Kunming. But, as soon as the fighting was over, she returned to her work in Kweilin.

Small wonder, then, that the small nieces and nephews, and the grownups as well, gather around their Maryknoll Sister-aunt to hear tales of China! To them she is more thrilling than Red Ridinghood or Snow White. She is a story-book character come to life.

Sister Rose Victor, as Barbara Mersinger, was graduated from St. Francis de Sales' grammar school and St. Elizabeth's academy in St. Louis. She entered

MARYKNOLL in December, 1935, and made her first profession of vows in 1938. That same year she was assigned to China and was stationed in Kweilin.



Sister Rose Victor

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