

1918 Epidemic Continued

We recently reported on the effects of the 1918 Spanish Influenza epidemic in St. Louis and Philadelphia, contrasting the effects on the two cities, one in effective quarantine and the other not. Here we continue with two more influenza stories, one from Menlo in California, which was heavily stricken, the other from Clifton in Cincinnati, where the declaration of the end of World War I on November 11 was more deeply felt than the epidemic.

House Journal, Menlo Academy of the Sacred Heart, 1918

Sept. 11. The children returned in large numbers with the best dispositions and every prospect for a profitable year.

Sept. 20

The Mass of the Holy Ghost was said by His Grace Archbishop Hanna with his usual earnest appeal to the Children of the Sacred Heart to be worthy of their vocation.

The children continued to arrive and a *congé* was looked forward to when the number reached 100. Coralia Figueras, who had been detained because of some work at length, arrived to complete the desired number and all the children were jubilant. During the night, Rosaria Moran a child of the Superior Class was called away by the sudden death of her father. So in the morning there were but 99 pupils in the house. Before other expected arrivals came, Coralia, the latest, was struck down by the dread Influenza from which our whole school had been so free before.

Soon others were attacked but less violently and the dear little Coralia 15 years old returned to God October 24. None of her family could come to see her because her mother and one brother were not expected to live and another brother had died a few days before Coralia. The mother alone recovered, but it was several weeks before she was permitted to know the sacrifice God asked of her. The younger sister Edelmira, who had insisted on coming back at the beginning of school, was told only after her sister's remains were taken away. She too, was attacked by the dread disease but it did not prove serious.

The parents of the children were all warned and many desired us to keep their children so great was the epidemic outside, considering they would be safer even though exposed, in the convent. We continued the classes in the open air with most wonderful weather until November 9. Many of the children had slight attacks but by great care were cured, but Our Lord chose one more victim, Rosalia Cobian from Mexico, a bright ardent lovable girl of the 2nd Class. Her spirit of mortification prompted her to conceal her symptoms till it was too late, and nothing could be done to arrest the course of the malady till finally after much suffering God claimed this second victim from Menlo's Altar. Like Coralia she had a sister here but she was too ill to know her sorrow and it was only after three weeks she was well enough to be told. Rosalia had been with us for two years and before that for some time at our house in the City of Mexico.

Nov. 9. All the parents were then requested to withdraw their children till the epidemic ceased which happened about

Dec. 1. Some of the children whose parents were within easy reach were allowed to return.

House Journal, Clifton, Cincinnati, November 6, 1918

The epidemic of Spanish Influenza which rages everywhere obliges the authorities to prohibit all meetings, all gatherings. Churches and schools are closed. We invited the day students to come and isolate themselves with us, and all communication with the outside has been cut off. In spite of these precautions, during the month of October, some of our children had a light attack that kept them two or three days in bed.

November 11. Since the 7th, peace has been hoped for. The sirens had already given the alert—too early—but during the night of the 10th to 11th, about 2 :30 in the morning, all the sirens were heard. It was truly the peace, or at least the request for armistice by Germany, defeated and humiliated. The war is really over. The sirens continued until almost noon. The thought that there is no more fighting, that the horrible conflict is over, fills all hearts with unspeakable joy. At Mass, a song of thanksgiving and free morning to celebrate the peace, the abdication of the Kaiser!

November 13. Our quarantine is lifted. The day students are returning.

N.B. There were false reports of peace coast to coast on November 7. Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated November 9.

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