

Welcome to Villa Assumpta

by Sister Stella Maris

Villa Assumpta, the Motherhouse of the Eastern Province at 6401 North Charles Street means many things to many people. To the pupils and to friends of the Order, it is the place from which the Province is governed and from which at one time or another each Sister emerged as a full-fledged religious.

To the Sisters, it is something more. To each it is a place of memories of her formative years, of intense scholastic and spiritual endeavor, of comradeship with her profession class; it is the place where she pronounced the vows that forever set her apart as a spouse of Christ.

But the Motherhouse is not only a place nor even just a way of life. Seen as an organization, it is the

nucleus around which the whole Province develops. Each type of work done in the congregation is reproduced here, and from this vantage point one may witness every phase in the evolution of a School Sister of Notre Dame.

The first structure one sees upon driving into the Motherhouse property from Bellona Avenue consists of an old villa and a modern well-equipped building. This is the home of the Aspirants. Here a home-like atmosphere prevails as the 115 Aspirants pursue a balanced schedule of high school classes, play, and prayer. The Aspirants have their own teachers, their own mistresses, Sister Mary Gregoria and Sister Marie Claire, their own classrooms and refectory, and even their own chapel.

If, after graduation an Aspirant wishes to join the congregation, she, like all other School Sisters, applies for admission to the Candidature.

Across a wide lawn from the Aspiranture and located in the Motherhouse itself is the Candidature which, with its classrooms, community rooms, cafeteria, and gym, occupies one whole wing of the building. Besides being intro-

duced by Sister Mary Berlindis, Candidature Mistress, into some of the practices of the religious life such as silence, meditation, and recitation of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, the Candidates take a full schedule of college courses prescribed for freshmen at Notre Dame College. Most of the 48 Candidates are working for their B.A. in Elementary Education. The College sends its

The view of Villa Assumpta from Charles Street shows the wide sweep of its beautiful buildings and grounds.





Christmas comes to Villa Assumpta as portresses Sister Marietta and Sister Charity deck the doors with wreaths of holly.

Sister Christopher shows her knack for making pretty things to Sister Flora as they arrange articles for the Gift Shop.



teachers daily to the Motherhouse which is designated by accrediting agencies as the Bellona campus of Notre Dame College. Physical education and music round off the scholastic program.

Strategically placed in the center of the building, the Novitiate houses the young Sisters who are preparing in heart and in mind for the great day of profession. Novices see no externs and even communication with other Sisters in the house is strictly limited. Under the tutelage of their Novice Mistress, Sister Denis Marie, they learn to live a life of perfection within the framework of the rule. Light housework and the

important recreation hours after dinner and before Compline fill up their day.

Besides Aspirants, Candidates, and Novices there are two groups of professed Sisters, the Junior professed and the Senior Sisters. The Junior professed are those who within the last year or two took their first vows and now remain at the Motherhouse to continue their work. These Sisters have their own mistress, Sister Mary Maurice, who is responsible for their spiritual growth and temporal welfare. The Senior Sisters of the community with their Mistress, Sister Mary Hermes, are engaged in the various types

Switchboard operator and portress, Sister Clementine has everything under control—no crossed wires in this organization!!





Bibliophiles Mary Louise Talarovich, Libby Baker, Mary Steedman, and Russell Phillips seem to have found that there's a royal road to learning after all! Of course, Sister Concessa, librarian, just could have something to do with it.

of work necessary to administer to the temporal needs of 236 members of the community. Besides those needed to cook, bake, operate the laundry, sewing department, and switch board, there are infirmarians, portresses, and a librarian.

The Motherhouse also houses the group which is known as "the Chancery" or Provincialate to the 1050 Sisters of the Eastern Province. Included in the Provincialate are Mother Mary Vitalia and her Counselors, Sister Mary Patrick and Sister Mary Matrona. Also associated with the Chancery in other capacities, one may find Sister Mary Gerald, the Admonitrix, and Sister Marie Celine, Provincial Bursar.

Life at Villa Assumpta



Sticks and stones, and sometimes baseballs may break your bones, and other ailments assail you, but Sister Ernest has a remedy for them all.

"O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house!" And because Sister Benigna and her assistants care so well for the altar, its furnishings and vestments, they are always in spotless readiness for the many Masses and ceremonies that give meaning and purpose to Motherhouse life.





It's just possible that pancakes are going to pour forth on that griddle. Just how many will Sister Maria Felipe and Sister Emeria have to prepare?

Those lovely motherhouse guimpes and veils get that way under the smiling supervision of Sister Siegfried who is evidently pleased with the guimpe she has just taken from the famous pinpress.



"A place for everything, and everything in its place," says Sister Alphonsa as she puts away the pyrex serving dishes in a corner of her huge kitchen.



"The night has a thousand eyes," and so do the potatoes for the five refectories. But pleasant company takes the drudgery out of any task as Sister Janice of the Novitiate Department chats with Mrs. Joseph Daniels.



What is more delicious than the fragrance of Sister Materna's freshly baked bread? Absolutely nothing, unless it could be the haunting smell of Sister Materna's spicy apple pies.





Sisters Aventina and Montana look as if they actually enjoy sewing. It's a good thing they do, because there is plenty of it. Many of the missions order convent clothing from the motherhouse sewing department.

Please don't go! As with vegetables, fruits, flowers, and poultry, Custodian Mr. Dalton also has a way with dogs, especially Perry.



Motherhouse of the Eastern Province

Eager aspirants lend a helping hand to Sister Philona whose cafeteria does a rushing business on visiting days.





Is it important official business that claims the interest of Mother Mary Vitalia and Sister Mary Patrick? On close view it seems to be just the first issue of *The Notre Dame Sister*.



How does she do it? Nothing ever seems to ruffle the gracious Chate-laine of the motherhouse, Sister M. Matrona.

In her ultimate responsibility for the spiritual, intellectual, and physical welfare of each of the Sisters of her Province, Mother Mary Vitalia is immediately aided by those closest to her in authority, her Counselors. In her position as first Counselor, Sister Mary Patrick serves as secretary to Mother Provincial; as second Counselor, Sister Mary Matrona is Superior of the Motherhouse. To anticipate the question, "Isn't

there anyone to advise Mother Provincial what to do?", it must be added that there is — Sister Mary Gerald, Mother's official Admonitrix.

The Motherhouse of the Eastern Province means many things to many people. It is a place for scholastic endeavor. It is a place for spiritual formation. It is a place where peace and happiness dwell. But to all who live there, and to all the members of the Eastern Province, it is essentially a convent home.



So you think you have problems! How would you like to be bookkeeper for an organization such as the Eastern Province Incorporated? Sister Marie Celine must have just turned over a new leaf because she doesn't seem worried at all!

She's got your number—of credits, course certificates, degrees, years of teaching, and special talents. Sister Mary Nicholas as Director of Sister Education has the job of finding the Sister for the task, and the task for the Sister.

