

THE SOCIETY OF MARY IN LOUISIANA

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

A half century of noble, inspiring work, in which the best of heart and mind and soul was given to the uplifting of the people and the glorious education of youth, was rounded on Sunday, June 8 (says the *New Orleans Morning Star*) when the Society of Mary opened the golden jubilee celebration of the advent of the Order in Louisiana. Fifty years is a long time, and from the humble beginning in the then small suburb of Algiers and the equally small parish of St. Michael at Convent Louisiana have grown a magnificent work of religion and education whose far-reaching and beneficent influence is felt, not only throughout our beloved State of Louisiana, but from North to South and East to West of this vast Republic of the United States.

It was meet, therefore, that the old Church of St. Michael and the famous Jefferson College at Convent should have sounded the golden note which brought to these historic centres distinguished prelates and priests from all parts of the union, missionaries and educators of Marist fame, whose work has borne such marvellous fruit, and most noted of all the three most illustrious representatives of the Order in the New World—the Most Rev. James H. Blenk, who in this jubilee year fills the ancient archiepiscopal throne of New Orleans; the Right Rev. John E. Gunn, Bishop of Natchez, and the Very Rev. Joseph F. Sollier, S.M., Provincial of the Marist Order in North America. It is indeed extraordinary to chronicle, that two such eminent Bishops from the same Order who fill such famous and ancient Sees in the same province should have simultaneously been present at such a celebration.

The jubilee was also honored by the presence of the Right Rev. Cornelius Van de Ven, the Bishop of Alexandria, and the Right Rev. J. M. Laval, the able Auxiliary-Bishop of New Orleans. Bishop Van de Ven and Bishop Laval have ever evinced the deepest interest in the Marist Order their early work as priests in the deanery of Baton Rouge having brought them into close and affectionate relationship. Men who have risen to the very front rank in the Order also distinguished the jubilee by attending. Among them were the Very Rev. R. H. Smith, S.M., president of Jefferson College; the Very Rev. Thos. J. Larkin, S.M., rector of the Church of the Holy Name of Mary, Algiers, and the Very Rev. Geo. S. Rapier, S.M.

The alumni of Jefferson College, numbering in their ranks many of the most distinguished men of our State and section, men who have made their mark in every department of professional, commercial, and social life, gathered in fidelity and loyalty to show their appreciation of the efforts of the Marist Fathers for fifty years of such forceful and earnest work in Louisiana. Prominent among these was the Hon. Paul Lambremont, the present able Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana, who delivered the address of welcome on the part of the college to his former professor, the Most Rev. James H. Blenk, Archbishop of New Orleans.

The celebration began on Saturday evening, June 7, when his Grace, the Most Rev. Archbishop, accompanied by Bishops Laval, Van de Ven and Gunn; Mayor Behrman and a number of prominent priests, arrived from New Orleans. An immense crowd was at the depot to receive the Archbishop and, preceded by a band of music, the distinguished prelates and priests were escorted in carriages to St. Michael's Hall, where a grand reception was given by the parishioners of the church.

The Lieutenant-Governor delivered an address of welcome to the Archbishop and the other prelates, to which his Grace in replying referred to the many happy years he had spent at Jefferson College in the midst of these friends so dear to him, and rejoiced that they appreciated so deeply the work of the Marist Fathers.

Sunday witnessed the opening of the jubilee proper. The imposing ceremonies, which will go down in the annals of the parish as the most memorable in its his-

tory, took place in the beautiful Church of St. Michael, in the presence of a vast assemblage which taxed seating and standing capacity to the utmost. His Grace the Archbishop presided at the Solemn High Mass, which was celebrated at ten o'clock. After Mass the prelates, clergy, and a number of the laity were entertained at a banquet in the parish hall. The celebrations were continued on the following Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

The *Morning Star*, in concluding its notice of the jubilee, said: 'The brilliant record of the devoted Marist Society in this first epoch of its labors among us is an indication and a preparation of still greater successes in the years to come.'

Miller's Flat

The annual social of the Miller's Flat Catholic congregation took the form of a concert, and was held in the Public Hall on Friday evening, July 18. For a considerable time a strong committee had devoted much energy to the preparations, and in making the meeting known far and wide throughout the district, the result was that a record attendance filled the hall, many taking advantage of the fine weather and moonlight to come long distances. The concert programme was a long and varied one, and was disposed of with great promptitude. The performers were all amateurs from Miller's Flat and Roxburgh, and their efforts were rewarded by frequent and hearty applause. Before asking the audience to join in the National Anthem, Father O'Connell, of Lawrence, thanked the committee and the performers for their services, particularly the non-Catholics, who had so willingly rendered assistance. A plentiful supply of refreshments, daintily served, was provided. It is pleasing to report that a handsome balance will remain after all expenses are paid.

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