

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Kaikorai, supply the completed list of office-bearers for the ensuing year as follows:—President, Mrs. T. Hill; vice-president, Mrs. J. Ford; treasurer, Mrs. R. Winders; secretary, Miss Heffernan; wardrobe-keepers, Mrs. K. McConnell and Miss Garstang.

The concluding eucharistic-social in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul Society's Stall in connection with the St. Vincent's Orphanage Fair, will be held in St. Patrick's Schoolroom, South Dunedin, on next Tuesday evening, the 10th inst. Mr. T. Keohane has presented handsome prizes for competition, and an attractive programme has been arranged. It is hoped the function will be numerous patronised in view of the worthy object which it is to benefit.

Mrs. M. A. Jackson (president) and other ladies of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, will occupy the recognised Catholic stand (Government Life Insurance Corner, Princes Street) on the occasion of the annual street collection in aid of the Karitane-Harris Hospital (Plunket Society Nurses), which is to be held on Friday week, the 13th inst. Helpers and donations for the stall will be gratefully welcomed. A feature of the appeal will be the sale of spring flowers supplied by Mr. Hart, of Lawrence.

The mission for women at St. Joseph's Cathedral and St. Patrick's Basilica, conducted by the Marist Missioners, Fathers Herring and Eccleton respectively, was brought to a conclusion on last Sunday afternoon, when both of the sacred edifices were crowded to capacity. The week's mission for men was commenced at the eleven o'clock Mass in the Cathedral and Basilica. The Masses at 6, 7, and 9 o'clock are attended by large numbers, the daily Communion showing considerable increases from day to day. The devoted missioners' eloquent discourses each evening are listened to with the utmost attention and interest by splendid congregations of men. A fruitful result of the mission is the increased membership of the parish confraternities, the aim at the Cathedral being to bring the numerical strength of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Perpetual Succor (women) and the Sacred Heart Association (men) up to record figures. Already the membership of the former has been increased by over 500, while all efforts are being concentrated this week on bringing about as satisfactory a result in regard to the men's society. This is a work which is very dear to the heart of his Lordship the Bishop, who is using his utmost endeavors to enrol members.

A sale of work, combined with a children's entertainment, will be given at the Catholic schoolroom, Morpington, on next Saturday week, in aid of the St. Vincent's Orphanage Fund.

Recent letters received from the Right Rev. Mgr. Coffey, state that he is still in Ireland, and in good health.

The fortnightly meeting of St. Joseph's branch of the H.A.C.B. Society was held on Tuesday evening last, Bro. P. Walsh presiding. Owing to the mission now in progress urgent business only was transacted.

Invercargill

(From our own correspondent.)

October 2.

The quarterly Communion of the members of the Hibernian Society took place at the 7.30 o'clock Mass on Sunday, when there was a good attendance.

The members of the sodality of Children of Mary also approached the Holy Table in very large numbers.

Mr. J. S. McGrath, an old boy of the Marist Brothers' School, who has spent some ten years in the East, has been visiting his home in Invercargill. He leaves next week on his return to Burma.

Last week, Mrs. Fulton, of Waikiwi, gave a very enjoyable evening at her residence in aid of the bazaar funds. There was a large number of visitors, who were enjoyably entertained by the hostess.

The much-talked-of bazaar will commence in the Victoria Hall on Wednesday evening, the 4th inst., and will be continued until the following Saturday week. At the Masses on Sunday the people were exhorted to patronise the bazaar and generously assist it. The stall-holders have accomplished a great amount of preliminary work, and it only remains for parishioners to do their share by attending and liberally supporting the enterprise. It is hoped that the financial results will eclipse any similar effort in the past.

I understand that the tender for the erection of St. Joseph's School has been accepted, and that the work of erection will be gone on with immediately.

IRISH CHILDREN'S RELIEF FUND.

Articles (new) for above fund will be received up to October 16. Schools are particularly invited to help.—Honorary Secretary, c/o Catholic Supplies, Manners Street, Wellington.

Trouble not at the loss of thy bodily eyes. Thou hast the eyes with which the angels see, by which thou mayest behold God."—St. Anthony.

A Lourdes Year

There were certain timid souls who, shortly after the war, feared that the day of Lourdes was over, and that the great crowds of pilgrims would never come back. But the war, which devastated Europe for four years with its horrible carnage, has not stayed the tide of pilgrims to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes (writes Edmond Duthoit).

It became evident that the Catholics of the whole world, and particularly the Catholics of France, were impatient once more to renew their pilgrimages to the shrine. And the French bishops have made good their promises to lead their dioceses, in the pilgrimages of thanksgiving, to the steps of the Grotto.

On the morrow of the Armistice, as well as the year following, the difficulties of transportation were such as to prevent the bishops carrying out the fulfilment of their promises. Yet the pilgrims have come in ever increasing throngs: old soldiers who vowed the pilgrimage during the war came to fulfil their vows; widows and disconsolate mothers, who having lost husband or children, came for consolation to the Mother of the Afflicted.

Yet, in spite of the transportation difficulties, the diocese of Montpellier, headed by the late Cardinal Cabrières, its valiant Bishop, made its votive pilgrimage in 1919, and it was followed in 1920 by the dioceses of Paris, Angoulême, Angers, Nancy, Rouen, and Toulouse.

But it is the year 1921 that marks definitely the renewal of the pilgrimages. From April 15 until October 18 there was an unending flow of pilgrims. While during the three months of August, September, and October there was not a week with fewer than five or six pilgrimages at a time. And these pilgrims arrived from all parts of France. Normans and Bretons, Alsatians, and Lorrainers, Provençals and Bourguignons, Gascons and Auvergnese, passed day after day in throngs before the rock of Massabielle. It was like a picturesque and edifying vision of France, France Christian and religious.

And then the foreign pilgrimages began once more, as in the days before the war. As might be expected, faithful Belgium was the first to return with 13 pilgrimages, not counting the numerous small groups.

Spain came next that year, with its six imposing pilgrimages. Then followed Italy, with its great national pilgrimage that was headed by the Archbishop of Milan, the then Cardinal Ratti—*Pio XI., gloriosamente regnante!* Then there was the pilgrimage of the French Swiss, the two great pilgrimages from England, the pilgrimage of the Irish Catholics, one from Holland, and one from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

As to the total number of pilgrims for the year, let it suffice to point out that down to last October at the railway station of Lourdes alone there were 750,000 cards verified. Among the year's pilgrims to the Grotto the Princes of the Church are particularly to be distinguished; for the record of the year shows that more than one hundred archbishops and bishops and no fewer than seven cardinals passed the foot of the Grotto.

It is out of the question to say how many priests visited Lourdes. But here is the figure for the Masses celebrated in the Lourdes sanctuaries—45,500. And the number of Communion given approached something like 800,000.

Much structural progress has been made during this Lourdes year under review. The Interallied Monument of Thanksgiving, which is to commemorate the noble dead of the war, is going on well, thanks to the goodwill of the pilgrims. Above the subterranean crypt, now completely finished, have already been placed the marble slabs on which is represented a tableau both religious and military, and which doubtless will dominate the statue of Notre Dame de Lourdes. It is hoped that this work of art will be commensurate in dignity with the noble generosity of the heroic soldiers whose memory it honors.

The decoration of the Church of the Rosary goes ahead. The walls are gradually disappearing under the rich layers of Pyrenean rose marble, on which is to be inscribed in letters of gold the numerous witnesses of graces and cures accorded by Our Lady of Lourdes.

Last of all there is the grand project of enlarging the space at the Grotto. It will place more room at the disposal of the pilgrims, and provide more room for the sick who wish to be present at the Masses and other sacred ceremonies.

When the family circle is broken and scattered and we have but the memory of those whom we have "loved and lost awhile," in the heart's silent times we can hear again the dear, familiar words as potent as the "still small voice" at Horeb's cave. And the rarest treasure of the soul will be the sweet remembrance of this "practice of the presence of God" at the family altar.

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