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Joseph Rosati C.M.

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# Recollections of the Establishment of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States of America, II.

*By Joseph Rosati, C.M.*

*Translated and annotated by Stafford Poole, C.M.*

*(The first Vincentians depart for the United States. They arrive at Baltimore and journey to Bardstown, where they stay. June-November, 1816.)*

Passage was then booked for the missionaries on a two-masted American vessel called *Ranger*. The captain's room had the only space available. It was made into a room for the exclusive use of the missionaries. It was set up in such a way that a table placed at the end could serve as an altar and an agreement was reached with the captain who, like all the crew, was Protestant, that the missionaries would have full freedom to celebrate the holy mysteries and carry out all the functions of worship in their room. They were thirteen in number, that is, Mr. Deandreis, the Superior and Vicar General; Messrs. Acquaroni and Rosati, priests of the Congregation of the Mission; Messrs. Carretti and Ferrari, secular priests; Messrs. Deys, Dahmen, Tichitoli, and Gonzalez, clerics in minor orders; Brother Blanka and Francis Boramvaski, Medard de Lattre, Jean Flegifont, postulant brothers.

On the eve of their departure, Monseigneur Dubourg gathered all the missionaries together at his residence, delivered a touching discourse, gave them a letter of exchange, no. 1724:13, and some excellent advice. After

having embraced them all, he gave them his blessing. He took them to the Archbishop and the Venerable Monseigneur D'Aviau received them like a father. The missionaries, after having thanked that holy prelate for all that he had done for them, asked for his blessing, which he gave with tears in his eyes and he determined to escort them to the door of his house.

On June 12, Monseigneur Dubourg accompanied them to the launch that awaited them in the harbor and after he had made them the tenderest farewells, they left Bordeaux for Poliac, where their ship lay at anchor. They arrived at midnight and on the following morning, the feast of Corpus Christi, they went ashore. Mr. Deandreis celebrated Holy Mass and all the missionaries received Communion. After they had returned on board, the brig set sail and on the following morning, at eight o'clock, it reached the ocean.<sup>1</sup>

On the first day all the priests had the happiness of celebrating Holy Mass on board. The ordinary discomforts to which those who travel by sea are subject, however, very quickly made it impossible for them to recite their breviary and to say Mass and any other public exercise of religion. After these first jarrings, however, the majority were able to follow the rule which Mr. Deandreis had made out and to which they submitted with good will.

The hour of rising sounded at one o'clock exactly. Each one said morning prayer in private. At one-thirty, after rising, they assembled for meditation which was first read and then made in common and they concluded with the litany of the Holy Name of Jesus and the *Angelus Domini*. During meditation, which lasted one hour, the priests began to say their Masses on the altar which the

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<sup>1</sup>Except for a young Quaker from Baltimore, they were the only passengers on the ship.

young clerics had prepared. During the celebration of Mass the celebrant always had at his side another priest in surplice and stole who held the chalice to prevent the accidents that could be caused by the lurching of the ship. All the priests celebrated every day, at least those who were not prevented by seasickness. In the morning there were precise times for Little Hours, the reading of a chapter of the New Testament, study, a theological conference on the proofs of religion and controversy with Protestants and for recreation. Particular examen was made before dinner and supper. After dinner recreation was prolonged a little more than is customary in our Community. Afterwards the rosary was recited, there was a long spiritual reading, Vespers and Compline were recited, as were Matins and Lauds for the following day.

Whenever the weather was favorable, these exercises were made on the deck and the captain, who liked the missionaries very much, had a tent set up in order to shelter them from the sharp rays of the sun. He would come to sit next to them, listen with pleasure to the spiritual reading that was made in French and during the times of recreation he would give them dry fruit, cake, a little glass of his own wine. But what fascinated him was the singing at the end of the day of the litany with which they never failed to invoke her whom the Church calls the Star of the Sea. That singing was magnificent. Almost all the priests and clerics had very beautiful voices and very good taste in music. They sang them together in harmony and that song on the high sea, when the sun was on the point of touching the horizon, plunging its disk into the ocean's waters, had about it something of the enthralling. Finally, they finished the order of the day with night prayer and the reading of the following day's meditation.

On certain days there were modifications of the ordinary rule. On Sundays they sang a High Mass, at which

Mr. Deandreis would give a homily on the Gospel of the day and they would sing Vespers after dinner. Feast days were celebrated in the same way. On Tuesday, after the meditation, there was a spiritual conference on a subject that had been announced the night before. Mr. Deandreis always asked one of the group to speak and afterwards he would finish the conference himself, saying the most beautiful, the most touching, the most sublime things.

They made a novena in preparation for the feast of Saint Vincent. First Vespers were sung on the vigil and on the day itself the High Mass and Second Vespers. There was also a panegyric of the Saint and exposition of his relics during the entire trip. In the name of the entire group Mr. Deandreis made a vow that they had resolved to make to God in order to obtain by the intercession of Saint Vincent a happy outcome to their sailing.<sup>2</sup> They promised to make a novena and to fast on the vigil of September 27 and to celebrate the feast of Saint Vincent on that same day, which is that of his passage to the dwellings of the blessed. Their prayers were not without

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<sup>2</sup>Rosati does not mention two incidents of the journey that De Andreis included in his journal. The first was that of a Negro slave who

. . . for relapse into theft and drunkenness was to undergo the punishment which was customary in such cases, namely, to be thrown into the sea attached to a rope which passed under the ship. When it was drawn up on the other side the poor wretch was obliged to pass under the vessel, once or several times, at the imminent risk of losing his life in the process. We told the captain that it was a great festival for us [i.e., the feast of Saint Vincent on July 19] and begged him to pardon the unhappy delinquent for the sake of our Saint. We had the happiness to succeed in obtaining our request.

De Andreis' journal, quoted in *Life of the Very Rev. Felix de Andreis, C.M., First Superior of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States and Vicar General of Upper Louisiana: Chiefly from sketches written by the Right Rev. Joseph Rosati, C.M., First Bishop of Saint Louis, Mo.* (St. Louis, 1915).

The other omission was the fact that the ship was becalmed about three hundred miles from Baltimore and that novena was directed toward this emergency.

effect. The remainder of the sailing was made quickly and happily. On the 23rd, they saw the coasts of America and entered Chesapeake Bay. The following morning they celebrated a Mass *Pro Gratiarum Actione*, sang the *Te Deum*, and on the 26th they landed at Baltimore.

That city was and still is in a certain sense the cradle of the Catholic religion in the United States. The first episcopal see was erected there many years ago and Monseigneur Carroll had occupied it as Bishop.<sup>3</sup> Later, with the erection of the dioceses of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Bardstown, Baltimore became the metropolitan see of the new ecclesiastical province and Monseigneur Carroll was raised to the dignity of Archbishop. That great man had invited the Sulpicians to come to America and these gentlemen, under the direction of Mr. Nagot, had established the seminary of Saint Mary in the city of Baltimore.<sup>4</sup> Monseigneur Dubourg had joined the Sulpicians in that city and had founded there the college, also called Saint Mary's. He [Dubourg] possessed virtues, noble manners, distinguished talents, and a great reputation. His cares and labors were not, however, limited to the direction of the college during his stay in Baltimore. He had worked with great success for the salvation of souls and whether in the pulpit or the confessional, or in private conversations that charmed Catholics and Protestants alike, he had done much good

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<sup>3</sup>John Carroll (1735-1815) came from a wealthy Maryland Catholic family. After studying in France, he joined the Jesuits in 1753. In 1784 he was named head of the American Mission (former Jesuit property — they had been suppressed in 1773). In 1789 he was named Bishop of Baltimore, the first Roman Catholic Bishop in the United States. He was made an Archbishop in 1811 and is generally recognized as the organizer of the American Catholic Church.

<sup>4</sup>Charles Francis Nagot, S.S. (1734-1816) was the first founder and first rector of Saint Mary's Seminary, Baltimore.

there. His memory was still fresh there and held in blessing.

He had given to his missionaries some letters for his worthy confreres, the gentlemen of Saint Sulpice. Hence they went directly to Saint Mary's Seminary. Most of the directors and students were on vacation but they found in Mr. Brute, who at that time was President of the college and whose loss the church and diocese of Vincennes mourned for a long time, a man who was worth a thousand because of his zealous activity and truly apostolic charity.<sup>5</sup> This worthy son of M. Olier received the sons of Saint Vincent and their companions like his own brothers. He hurried to secure for them all the help necessary to recover from the sufferings of their sea voyage. He lodged them at the college, lavished all possible care on them and had them taste how sweet the fruits of Christian charity were. The other gentlemen soon returned from the country: the same care, the same friendship, the same anticipation of needs on the part of each one of them. *O quam bonum et quam iucundum habitare fratres in unum!* [Psalm 133]. Oh, how truly Catholic this charity is! It knows no distinction of persons, of country, of nations. It embraces all the earth. It shares in the immensity of him from whom it takes its origin. It makes of all nations one family and brothers of all men!

The newly arrived had no problems either with transportation or with the rights of entry of their baggage. Messrs. Brute, Haran (the treasurer of the house) and

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<sup>5</sup>Simon Brute de Remur, S.S. (1779-1839) was a native of Brittany. He studied medicine in Paris but in 1803 joined the Sulpicians. He was ordained in 1808. In 1810 he was recruited for the American mission by Flaget. He taught at Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore and Mt. St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, where he was spiritual director for Mother Seton. In 1834 he became the first Bishop of Vincennes where the hardships of the frontier hastened his death.

Vepres, then a young cleric and student at Saint Mary's Seminary, took charge of everything and it was all arranged in the most satisfactory and advantageous manner. Almost all the missionaries stayed at the college and the seminary. Mr. Moranville, a French cleric and formerly a missionary of the Holy Spirit at Cayenne, then pastor of Saint Patrick's [Fells Point, Md.], wished to have some of them with him. He obtained Mr. Ferrari and Brother Medard who lodged with him. Father Enoch Fenwick, a Jesuit, Vicar General of Monseigneur Neale, then Archbishop of Baltimore, and pastor of Saint Peter's, also wished to give lodging to two and Messrs. Carretti and Gonzalez were sent to him.<sup>6</sup> Thus one could not believe that he was in a foreign country and although on another continent, many thousands of miles from their fatherland, the missionaries, thanks to the charitable care of their brothers in Jesus Christ, were in a true sense at home with them in Baltimore. In a certain sense they touched with their own hands the truth of that saying of the Gospel, *Omnis qui reliquerit domum vel fratres aut sorores aut patrem aut matrem, etc., propter nomen meum centuplum accipiet* (in this world). [Matthew 19:29] They could also see verified what follows, *et vitam aeternam possidebit*.

According to the instructions that Monseigneur Dubourg had given to the missionaries on their departure from Bordeaux, they were to write to Monseigneur Flaget, Bishop of Bardstown in Kentucky, as soon as they arrived in Baltimore in order to have his [Dubourg's] letters forwarded to him and they were not to leave Baltimore until they had received the holy prelate's answer. Mr.

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<sup>6</sup>Leonard Neale (1746-1817) came from an old Maryland family. He joined the Jesuits in 1767 and after their suppression returned to Maryland. In 1798 he was named President of Georgetown College. He was made a Bishop in 1800 and in 1815 became the Second Archbishop of Baltimore.



Deandreis, having followed these instructions exactly, received after four weeks a letter from Monseigneur Flaget that instructed him to set out for Pittsburgh with all his company and to do so in such a way as to arrive there in time to take advantage of the first high water on the Ohio and to embark for Louisville. He had already forewarned Mr. Beelen, a Catholic merchant in Pittsburgh, and had instructed him to receive their effects and to provide for a boat to continue the voyage to Louisville, where he himself would be in order to meet the missionaries and to advise them on the course that should be followed.

Back there [Baltimore] Mr. Deandreis had Brothers Blanka, Delattre and Francis, together with Mr. Dahmen, leave in the company of the wagons that were transporting all their effects to Pittsburgh. He himself prepared to leave with the rest of the group on that kind of *diligence* which is called a "stage" in this country. Mr. Brute and Father Fenwick took up a subscription among their friends and the zealous Catholics of Baltimore and in that way procured a considerable sum that they gave to Mr. Deandreis for the expenses of the trip. They also received a large number of excellent books in English. Father Grassi, an Italian Jesuit and Superior of the college at Georgetown also sent some financial help to Mr. Deandreis. The missionaries always preserved the memory of all those gentlemen already named, to whom should be added Mr. Marechal, then professor of theology at Saint Mary's Seminary and later Archbishop of Baltimore; Tessier, Superior of the same seminary; Chevigne, former Knight of Saint Louis, retired at the seminary and professor of mathematics, a man of high piety; Debarthe and Luc Ternand, merchants and exemplary Catholics who rendered great services to the mission. One ought not to forget Doctor Chattard, a distinguished physician and pious Catholic who gave his services to all the missionaries

free of charge, or Madame de Saint-Martin whom her old friend, Madame Fournier, had charged to take her place with respect to the missionaries.

On September 10, after all the missionaries had first gathered at the seminary and three of them had celebrated Holy Mass, they left Baltimore on the "stage" at three o'clock in the morning in order to go to Pittsburgh. One of the postulant brothers, Jean Flegifont, did not have the courage to follow them and stayed in Baltimore with the intention of returning to France. There were eight of them, that is, five priests: Messrs. Deandreis, Acquaroni, Rosati, Carretti, and Ferrari, and three clerics: Messrs. Deys, Tichitoli, and Gonzalez.<sup>7</sup> The trip was very painful and dangerous. The stages that traveled at that time from Baltimore to Pittsburgh were very uncomfortable, being only small wagons without springs that had four rows of seats without backs, covered with oilcloth that was almost always torn and did not keep out the rain. The national highway was not yet built and the roads through the mountains were frightful. An enormous rock that on one occasion came loose from the top of a mountain just missed killing two of the young clerics who, like the other missionaries, were climbing it on foot. The stage broke down fairly often, it was upset several times, another time it fell into a small river on a dark night and the rain fell in such sheets that one was obliged to wear wet clothes for two days. Because heavy rains had caused the Juniata Rivera to rise, the bridge had been swept away, and the stage could not continue further on its route, it left the missionaries at a country inn where they were scarcely able to find a small wagon to transport their bags. They had to

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<sup>7</sup>Rosati omits the name of Jean-Baptiste Moranville, the nephew of the pastor of Fell's Point. He accompanied the group as a guide. After the arrival of the Vincentians at the Barrens Settlement, he elected to stay on and the name is still common in Perry County.

continue their journey across the Alleghenies on foot and to cover more than forty miles. They almost lost Mr. Carretti who, being in feeble health, was in no condition to put up with such hardships. Nevertheless, by means of a night of rest and a horse that they were able to procure for him, he was in good enough condition to reach Greensburg,<sup>8</sup> where they were fortunate enough to get some places on a coach and thus, after very many hardships, they arrived at Pittsburgh on the evening of September 19. Nowadays, the trip from Baltimore to Pittsburgh is less than three days. Nine days were needed for their trip.

Despite all these difficulties, the missionaries, encouraged by the example of their holy Superior, always followed their rule. In the morning, as soon as they were in the conveyance, they recited the *Itinerarium Clericorum*, as in the Roman Breviary, and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Then there was an hour of prayer. Mr. Deandreis supplied for the reading of the points of meditation that could not be read before daybreak by proposing them to the group himself and certainly nothing could have been more appropriate and more touching than the considerations that he suggested with so much unction. The meditation was followed by the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, followed by the *Angelus Domini*. Useful and pleasant conversations, of which Mr. Deandreis bore in large part the cost, were interspersed with the exercises of piety which had their own specified times. The Little Hours were recited in common. They made their reading from the New Testament and particular examen before noon. After dinner there was a time fixed for Vespers and Compline, spiritual reading, Matins and Lauds, the rosary,

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<sup>8</sup>Located about fifteen or twenty miles southwest of Pittsburgh.

particular examen and night prayer. In this way such a voyage was not the occasion for dissipation.

On their arrival in Pittsburgh, the missionaries saw Mr. Beelen who had already found them a flatboat to take them to Louisville. Mr. O'Brien, the pastor of the Catholic parish in that city, was away visiting the Catholics of the very far-flung area of which he was in charge. Because the missionaries did not have their effects with them, they could not at first say Mass for lack of a chalice. Someone gave them the keys to the sacristy to see if they could find one there. After much searching they found a kind of metal cup and were assured that it had formerly served as a chalice. They believed this easily enough in the circumstances in which they found themselves. They had not had the happiness of saying Holy Mass for almost two weeks. It was a Saturday and it pained them very much to be without Mass. The Catholics of Pittsburgh also wanted them to celebrate the holy mysteries. So they made use of this species of chalice and on September 22, a Sunday morning, all the priests celebrated Holy Mass. One of them was sung with solemnity and the church was filled, as also at Vespers.

On arriving in Pittsburgh, the missionaries had gone to an inn. But the costs were too great, so they sought lodging in the very modest house of a Catholic widow, where they had planks for beds and settled in as best they could. Mrs. O'Brien, the mother of the pastor, wanted to give them lodging at her place. Some good Irish Catholics also took some others into their homes. On all sides they received testimonies of esteem and kindness. A rich landowner, a Protestant by religion, invited them to spend a day at his house. On that occasion he gave a great dinner to which he invited very many of the most respectable gentlemen of the city. A Protestant lady wanted to pay all the expenses of their lodging during the long stay that they

were forced to make in Pittsburgh. On their arrival the waters were too high for navigation. But since their baggage had not yet arrived, they could not leave. This delay had been occasioned by the bad weather that had damaged the roads. One of the wagons had broken down and their effects had been landed at Brumsville.<sup>9</sup> When they finally got their baggage, the waters of the Ohio were too low to leave. They had to wait until October 27.

During that time they followed a rule which was very much like the one that had been followed at sea and although some were not lodged at the house where most of them were staying, they still came there regularly to follow the common exercises, to attend the spiritual conferences that were given once a week, the repetition of the meditation that was made every Sunday, the conferences on theology and controversy that were given every day. They also went daily to the church where one of the priests said Mass while the others assisted at it and went to Communion. On Sundays and feast days all the priests celebrated Holy Mass and all assisted at the public offices. They fulfilled the vow that they had made at sea and solemnly celebrated the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, the day of his death, September 27. After the trunks that contained their vestments arrived, they very often officiated on Sundays with deacon and subdeacon, something that was totally new in Pittsburgh where, up to that time, there had been only one priest. Both Catholics and Protestants were struck by the majesty of our holy ceremonies and the pious pastor of that parish, on his return, was enchanted by the opportunity that he had of having them carried out in his church. He profited from them frequently. He cherished the missionaries, rendered

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<sup>9</sup>The exact reference is not clear. It may be to the town of Brownsville, which is south of Pittsburgh but which is not on the direct route from Baltimore.

them all the services that he could, and even procured some financial help for them.

Pittsburgh was not then what it is now, although it promised to become so. Still, it had about two thousand Catholics who at that time had only a small church that could not hold them all within its walls. They had already chosen the beautiful site on the hill where the magnificent and spacious building that is admired there at the present time was later built. Mr. O'Brien's means were not great but his heart was and we missionaries will never forget the very sincere testimonies that he gave us of it. Only one thing afflicted this good priest with a very tender conscience in a special way: the missionaries had not thought to obtain from the Bishop of Philadelphia, in whose diocese Pittsburgh was situated, the faculties for confession and he could not take advantage of this opportunity to approach the tribunal of penance.

At last the waters of the Ohio began to rise, to the great joy of our missionaries who were ready to leave. The means that had been chosen to go down this lovely river to Louisville and cover a distance of more than seven hundred miles was that of the "flatboats" (*bateaux-plats*), called in French by the Creoles *chalands* [barges]. They have a flat bottom, the shape of a long square, three sides are elevated six or seven feet and covered with planks which are raised somewhat in the center so that the rain can run off. Two sides are spanned by an enormous curved oar that turns on a pivot and when placed at the rear end of the boat's roof acts as a rudder. Two other oars of the same caliber situated at a short distance from the front end serve to push these heavy machines through the water and make it go near to or far from the banks of the river and guide them in such a way as to avoid the sand bars, the tree trunks and other obstacles and keep them in the channel. They go no faster than the natural current of the river

waters, with which they descend. One cannot, however, use them to go back up the rivers. One sees a considerable number of them on the Ohio, the Mississippi and their tributaries, loaded with produce from the countryside that is being taken to the great market of the west, New Orleans. On them one makes a fireplace with an earthen hearth and there prepares meals and defends himself from the cold during the winter. Four or five men, sometimes even three, are enough to make the necessary maneuvers and they form the entire crew. This sort of boat was chosen for the missionaries' journey because it was the least expensive. For there was not then a great number of what are called in English *ked-boats* and in French *berges* that sailed the Ohio. In addition, there were already steamboats. But in 1816 the cost of the former was considerable and for the latter enormous and the finances of the mission could not permit them to do it.

Thus, having loaded their effects on one of these boats which was exclusively at their use, our missionaries took leave of the good Catholics of Pittsburgh and of their pious pastor and accompanied by the latter and a good number of his parishioners they went on the evening of October 27 to the landing and after very touching farewells they embarked on their barge. Here, at least, they were not tossed about by the waves nor bothered by other passengers nor even by the crew whom they did not even see. Their boat was lashed to two others which held the men who guided the little fleet. They had soon arranged the boxes and trunks of their baggage in such a way as to divide the boat into two rooms. The fireplace was in the first and it was destined to serve as kitchen and refectory. There were installed the Brothers who prepared the meals out of the provisions that, with foresight, had been obtained in Pittsburgh and that were added to during the trip. The second room served as a dormitory, chapel, and

hall for study, recreation, and spiritual exercises. In the morning an altar was set up and then taken down after Mass. In the evening the floor and trunks were covered with mats which were rolled up right after rising and put aside. They were soon being bothered by the smoke from the kitchen and by rain and snow. They soon became accustomed to all that, however.

The order of the day was fixed right after embarkation and observed with the greatest exactitude by the entire company with the best grace in the world. Rising was at six o'clock. Meditation at six-thirty. At seven-thirty Holy Mass (only one was said on weekdays, each priest taking his turn). At eight-thirty the Little Hours. At nine-thirty lunch. At ten o'clock the conference on matters of controversy, after which study until two. At two o'clock spiritual reading. At three o'clock, particular examen, then dinner, recreation and the practice of plain chant. At five o'clock Vespers and Compline, followed immediately by Matins and Lauds for the following day. At six-fifteen practice of the English language. At seven-thirty particular examen and supper, followed by recreation. At nine o'clock night prayer and rosary. In this way the barge became a floating seminary and nothing could equal the contentment of those seminarist-passengers who glided through the happy days almost without noticing that they were on a journey.

Sometimes they went ashore and walked along the charming banks of the beautiful river, while their house floated quietly on the water. They had more than one opportunity to see that this portion of the Lord's field that they had been called to cultivate was not an unpleasant one.<sup>10</sup> Once, some miles below Maricetta

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<sup>10</sup>Rosati, however, did complain that the singing of American birds was inferior to that of their European counterparts. (Letter to his brother Nicola, October 25, 1816, Archives Saint Mary's Seminary.) De Andreis, on the other hand, was much more worried about rattlesnakes. (Rosati, *Life of De Andreis*, p. 121.)



[Ohio], they ran into a hunter who appeared to be a very well bred and educated man (they later learned that he was a lawyer by profession). He asked them a thousand questions, after the manner of the country, was charmed by their answers, made them a present of his game, accompanied them to the boat, which had touched land, and invited them to his home, which was not far from the riverbank. They saw his wife who had been ill for sixteen years and a numerous family. They were asked if they professed any religion and when they admitted that they did not profess any, they talked about the need for religion, the obligation to search to know the true one, and to carry out one's duties, etc. The entire family broke into tears. Their head did his best to urge the missionaries, or at least one of them, to stay with him, assuring that they would do a great deal of good. He promised them that he would spare neither care nor money to help them instruct others. He expressed a desire to have some books on our holy religion. He wanted to know the names of all the missionaries, wrote them down in a book and gave them his name. He would assuredly have sought to keep them in his house and before their departure he begged them to pray for him. The missionaries knelt down. The good father of the family and his children did the same and sincere prayers were offered to God for this interesting family. On their departure he obliged them to accept some fruit and accompanied them together with a respectable old man as far as the boat. There he wanted to see the crucifix and removing his hat, kissed it respectfully, and having embraced each one of the missionaries, again recommended himself to their prayers and accepted with gratitude a catechism and some other books.

It often happened that when the boat stopped at the riverbank, the inhabitants from the surrounding countryside, led by curiosity, went to see them, got onto the craft,

entered into conversation with them and, struck with astonishment, asked them who they were, where they came from and why they were travelling. Rather often, also, they appeared very edified on learning all that, conceived a very favorable idea of the Catholic religion, and invited them to stop in their area.

On all Sundays and feastdays during this voyage, there was always on board a High Mass, sermon, solemn Vespers. On November 1, they arose at four o'clock and the five priests all said Holy Mass. On the next day, All Souls' Day, they sang the Office of the Dead and the Mass of Requiem. In this way this little moving church offered a beautiful spectacle that floated out over the waters of the beautiful river, edifying the Catholics who were encountered from time to time and the Protestants who were frequently drawn by curiosity.

At Gallipolis it was learned that more than forty French families were living without a priest, without a church, and without a means of practicing their religion. It was impossible to stop and they were obliged to yield to the will of those who were the masters of the boats. When the boats stopped at Maysville [Kentucky] to unload some merchandise, it was learned that there were among the inhabitants some Catholic families that had no priest, who came from forty miles away from this city in order to have their children baptized when Father Fenwick went there to celebrate the holy mysteries.<sup>11</sup> They had been given hope that Mass would be said at one of their homes if the boat stopped. But it left and those poor Catholics were deprived of this consolation.

On November 12, they landed at Cincinnati, now a

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<sup>11</sup>Edward Fenwick, O.P. (1768-1832) was a native of Maryland. He joined the Dominicans in 1790 and founded the establishment at Saint Rose in Kentucky. Later became first Bishop of Cincinnati.

very large city and a diocese, then rather small, and they stopped for some hours. A number of inhabitants visited the boat, asked, according to custom, a number of questions and invited the missionaries to establish themselves there. There was at that time a small number of Catholics but no church or priest. They were visited from time to time by Father Edward Fenwick, a Dominican, in residence at Saint Rose, near Springfield in Kentucky.

On November 19 the boat docked at Louisville, after having run some risk of being carried away by the current at the falls of the Ohio, for the fog had been so thick that it was impossible to see things even at a short distance. Prudently they stopped at a short distance until the fog had lifted and one was able to guide the boat. Two of the missionaries went into town and a Catholic, Mr. Mudd, gave them a letter for Mr. Deandreis from Monseigneur Flaget, Bishop of Bardstown.<sup>12</sup> That holy prelate had come intentionally to Louisville and had waited for the missionaries for several days. After returning to Bardstown, he had asked Mr. Mudd to take them into his home during the stay that they would make at Louisville. He invited Mr. Deandreis to send the four young clerics to Bardstown, where according to Monseigneur Dubourg's wish, he would place them in his seminary. And he also asked Mr. Deandreis to go there himself in order to work out together some way of continuing the journey to Saint Louis. They then left the boat and took lodging with Mr. Mudd.

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<sup>12</sup>Benedict Joseph Flaget, S.S. (1763-1850), a native of France, was orphaned at an early age. He joined the Sulpicians in 1783 and was ordained about five years later. In 1791 he fled the French Revolution and came to the United States where he joined the faculty of Saint Mary's, Baltimore. In 1808 he was named Bishop of Bardstown and founded Saint Thomas Seminary there. He resigned as Bishop in 1832 but was compelled to resume the post in 1835. He was one of the most influential and respected of the early missionary bishops.

At that period Louisville was far from being what it is now (in 1840). It had barely two thousand inhabitants. There were only one or two streets that were lined with homes. On the others, one found them scattered at intervals and they were for the most part of wood or of timbers (logs). Mr. Mudd's was of this last kind and rather poor. The missionaries were given a room where at night they stretched out a mattress on the floor, which was covered with beds. They set up an altar there in order to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The reason for this was that there was then a small brick church outside the town on the road to Shippingport but it was at a great distance from Mr. Mudd's house. There was no resident priest at Louisville. Mr. Aabrut came there once a month in order to minister. The missionaries thus had the consolation of saying or assisting at Mass every day during their stay in that town.

The Superior left for Bardstown where he received a truly fatherly welcome from the holy Bishop, with whom he consulted about the course that would be best for them to take. The instructions given by Monseigneur Dubourg were that they were to leave the four young clerics at the Bardstown seminary and that the five priests, together with the brothers, would leave for Saint Louis. No provision, however, had been made in that latter city for the colony that Monseigneur Dubourg was sending there. There was no reason to think that it was possible to find a house there that could receive the missionaries. They did not have enough money to procure what was necessary and to provide for their subsistence. Besides, it was necessary to learn French and English and it was very difficult for foreign priests living together and without a teacher to succeed in learning them. They then decided that everyone should remain in Kentucky, where they would work on English and French and that in the

meantime they would write to Saint Louis and take the steps necessary for preparing the establishment and that in that way success would come more easily. Monseigneur Flaget then said to Mr. Deandreis, "you see our situation and our poverty. If you are not frightened, you are welcome to share it with us." Mr. Deandreis, charmed by this proposal, thanked Monseigneur for his generous offer and answered that he would accept it with all his heart.

The cleric who had accompanied Mr. Deandreis to Bardstown was dispatched together with the seminary treasurer to Louisville and some horses were sent for the entire group's trip back. This decision gave pleasure to everyone and on December 4 they arrived at Saint Thomas Seminary, about four miles from Bardstown, where Monseigneur Flaget made his ordinary residence. Mr. David, a Sulpician priest and later Bishop of Maurienne (*sic!*) and Coadjutor of Bardstown, was at that time superior.<sup>13</sup> There were twenty young clerics. The seminary at that time was a large cabin of logs (*a log house* in English), chinked with kneaded earth. It served as a study hall and the attic, which had no other paneling than a rather poor roof of staves, served as a dormitory. A little removed from the seminary and on the same courtyard was the episcopal house of Monseigneur Flaget. It was also of wood but paneled and had two floors and a basement. On the first floor, it was divided by wooden partitions into three rooms. The largest, which was by the entrance and contained the stairway, served as a classroom and

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<sup>13</sup> John Baptist David, S.S. (1761-1841) joined the Sulpicians after studying at the diocesan seminary in Nantes. He was ordained in 1785. In 1791 he fled the French Revolution and came to the United States with Flaget. After several years in teaching positions, he went with Flaget to Kentucky. In 1819 he was named titular Bishop of Mauricastro (the Maurienne of Rosati's recollection) and Coadjutor of Bardstown. He became Bishop of Bardstown in 1832 but withdrew three years later to allow Flaget to resume the post.

refectory. The other two formed two small bedrooms, of which one was allotted to Mr. Deandreis and the other to Mr. Rosati. Monseigneur Flaget occupied one of the rooms on the second floor. Next to it was an office that served as a library and Monseigneur gave this to Mr. Carretti who, in order to reach it, had to pass through the holy Bishop's bedroom. The four young clerics were placed in the seminary. Mr. Acquaroni with a good Catholic of the neighborhood; Mr. Ferrari with Mr. Badin, a former missionary in Kentucky, the first priest ordained in the United States by Monseigneur Carroll.<sup>14</sup> The brothers also remained at the seminary.

The missionaries had good reason to thank Providence for having brought them to Saint Thomas, where they had the joy of making their apprenticeship in the holy ministry in the United States under two holy and great missionaries, that is, Monseigneur Flaget and Mr. David, who had spent so many years in the missions of America and had produced so much fruit there. They had the means of learning under such capable teachers how to exercise the functions in such a way as not to offend the customs of the country without, however, failing against the rules of the Church. Following their example, one could become accustomed to making sacrifices that one did not always think necessary and that, nevertheless, if they had always been self-imposed, would have forestalled the scandals that have afflicted the faithful and deprived the Church in the United States of a certain number of workers who were in the position of working with great success and which it [the Church] was nonetheless compelled to reject from its

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<sup>14</sup>Stephen Badin, S.S. (1768-1853) fled the French Revolution in 1792. He was ordained by Bishop Carroll the following year. From 1793 to 1811 he was Carroll's Vicar General for the west. He returned to France in 1819 and stayed until 1826. On his return he joined the Cincinnati Diocese under Fenwick and spent the rest of his long life as a frontier missionary.

bosom. Monseigneur Flaget and Mr. David had prescribed a total abstinence from strong liquor, the use of which was sometimes justified on the specious pretext of a kind of necessity of finding a substitute for wine, which is unavailable in this country. They banished it from their table and they had made a law for themselves, which they observed faithfully, never to accept it when it was offered to them elsewhere. Their example was followed by the priests and clerics of the seminary and their practice was an object of edification to the entire diocese. Mr. Deandreis and all his missionaries learned these beautiful lessons and they practiced them constantly from that time on.



*I have great affection for the propagation of the Church in infidel countries, through the fear I have that God may permit it to be slowly destroyed in our own. Blessed are they who may be able to cooperate in extending it elsewhere.*