

Sister Katherine,

12-21-04

Got through my first go-through of your book last night. Nice job!!! As I used to say to Talon writers, "we can use it but we will have to cut from the bottom. Limited space, you know." Wouldn't that just kill you?

I read it from my own special interests and these are a couple of items that attracted my attention:

Your sources:

John McGloin: he taught me California history during summer school at USF, 1957. He was impressed that I was from St Pauls parish, source of many vocations amongst the Irish inhabitants of the city. Originally, it started as a sub-parish of St Peter's where the Sisters of Mercy and Christian Brothers worked with school kids.

Stephen Avella: we met when I was working with Marquette. A fine person and good historian. I am sure he was helpful.

Brother Veronious Henry: "Baseball Hank" is his nickname, he knew every Big League and Coast League player. I see you used him as a resource.

Within the text:

Mother Russell speaks of "Peralta Park" a place she is considering for a residence or convalescent location. Alas she can't get it (no Bishop approval) but shortly after in 1903 the Christian Brothers purchased it and placed St Joseph's Academy there (see Called to the Pacific, Isetti, page 215-216). I boarded in this old building 1945-46 and we had classes there and lived in the 4-story former hotel. I was there when the top floors were destroyed by fire during those years, too. Small world.

"Silver Avenue": When Mother Russell gets kicked off the trolley (no car fare), she then gets a ride to her destination, Silver Avenue. That street is not far from where I was raised, St. Mary's park where the original college was built. In fact Brother Ronald's family lived on Silver Ave.

I also see a reference to Corbett, that's "Gentleman Jim" Corbett, heavy-weight boxing champion of the world, a graduate of the Christian Brothers Sacred Heart HS. Evidently Mother Russell didn't believe boxing was a Christian activity.

*Bishop Armstrong Alumna Writes
History of Mercy Founder*

By Patrick O'Brien

Sister Katherine Doyle, '62, former principal at Bishop Manogue High School, has written the life story of Mother Mary Baptist Russell, founder of the Sisters of Mercy. *Like a Tree by Running Water: The Story of Mary Baptist Russell, California's First Sister of Mercy* is the first authoritative history of the pioneering missionary to San Francisco and California.

The book covers the breadth of Mother Russell's vision of life which included "the healing of the whole fabric of society." Leaving her native Kinsale, Ireland and coming west shortly after the Gold Rush in 1854, Mother Russell and seven Sisters came 8,000 difficult miles to begin their mission in San Francisco; and spread their mercy throughout Northern California with hospitals, schools, orphanages, employment agencies, and even a home for the Aged. Citing over 100 of her letters, the author allows Mother Russell's voice to come through by using her own words.

Sacramento is especially blessed with numerous Mercy hospitals and schools. In 1954, at the urging of Brother Bertram, the Christian Brothers were also blessed with the presence of the Sisters of Mercy at the newly-constructed co-instructional Bishop Armstrong High School. The Sisters returned to the present campus in 1990 for the first co-educational Catholic high school in Sacramento.

As a high school student, Katherine was a feature writer on the *Talon* staff. And as such Sister Katherine is the second member of the 1960-1962 staff to be published. She joins Richard Rodriguez, former feature editor, author of *Hunger of Memory* and *Brown*, a regular essayist on the nightly *Leherer Newshour*. One of Richard's insightful essays, entitled *Sisters of Mercy*, pays tribute to the Sisters who taught him in elementary school at Sacred Heart School.

Pat O'Brien, retired counselor and the *Talon's* moderator, is still in communication with both former students.