

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CARONDELET
1884 Randolph Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

CHARLES MC CARTHY AND CSJ VOCATIONS FROM PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Prince Edward Island, a small maritime province of Canada is well known to the St. Paul Province of the Sisters of St. Joseph. For many years it was the source of many vocations to the priesthood and the religious life of the Archdiocese of St. Paul. Young men interested in becoming priests were invited by Archbishop John Ireland towards the end of the nineteenth century to come to this missionary area where they studied at St. Thomas College and later at the St. Paul Seminary. Among those priests who contributed in a significant way to the archdiocese were:

Monsignor James M. Reardon, editor of the CATHOLIC BULLETIN and pastor of the Basilica of St. Mary Church, Minneapolis; the Reverend Thomas E. Cullen who at one time was chaplain at old Holy Angels Academy and pastor of St. Stephen's Church, Minneapolis; the Reverend James Donahue who became a city missionary and wrote a book entitled PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND PRIESTS which contained biographical sketches of priests who labored outside the diocese of Charlottetown, PEI in 1912; the Reverend John P. Foley who taught for a number of years at St. Thomas College, and the Reverend Daniel Hughes who was a professor at the St. Paul Seminary. Other priests were ordained by Archbishop Ireland for the dioceses of Fargo and Winona.

It was a layman, Charles McCarthy who suggested that Mother Seraphine Ireland tap that small island for vocations to the religious life. McCarthy, a native and former teacher of Prince Edward Island, used to go with other men each summer to harvest the grainfields of western Canada. Many of these men became acquainted with Minnesota during these periods of travel. Mc Carthy decided to make St. Paul his home and he was hired by the archdiocese to run a religious shop, later to be known as McCarthy and Donnelly Undertakers and Religious Goods Store. He met Julia Ireland, youngest member of the Ireland family. She had married Thomas Prendergast who died of typhoid fever shortly afterwards. Charles McCarthy married Julia and they had nine children. Sister Annetta Wheeler who was interviewed by Monsignor Reardon and Sister Helen Angela Hurley for information for their respective published books just before the hundredth anniversary of the archdiocese, supplied the names of the McCarthy/Ireland relationship; however, from the short terse comments made about each child, Sister Annetta evidently did not keep in contact with these relatives.

It was Sister Lamberta Hegarty, a native of Prince Edward Island and the oldest Sister from that island in our CSJ community who gave the details of how so many young women came to join the Sisters of St. Joseph in St. Paul. In her interviews with a reporter from the CATHOLIC BULLETIN and with this writer, she gave the following account:

After I entered the convent on November 12, 1903, I taught at old St. Joseph's school during my second year novitiate. Sister Antoinette who was my principal often took me out as a companion. This particular day she took me to the religious store, and of course she told Charlie McCarthy that I was from Prince

Edward Island. He told me what I am telling you. He said that one day when Mother Seraphine Ireland was in the store, she talked about vocations and the need for girls. He said, "I know where you can get girls -- Prince Edward Island." Mother Seraphine and Mother Celestine went there in the fall of the year, armed with letters of introduction from the Archbishop. They went from parish to parish and the pastor would announce their arrival and purpose. They came to Fort Augustus where I lived. Sister Maura, my sister, went to enter, even though she was only fifteen years old at the time. She was among the first group to enter in 1899. Then four years later, I came. One of the reasons the girls wanted to enter our community was that the Sisters spoke English. There were only French-speaking Sisters at home.

Various Sisters came to Prince Edward Island to do more recruiting. The word spread among families, cousins, aunts, nieces, and friends. From 1899 until the early 1950's, sixty-seven young women entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet to become nurses, teachers, social service and domestic workers. When the Sisters of Martha came later to the island, girls desiring to enter the religious life joined that group because they spoke, taught and prayed in English. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Charles McCarthy for advising Mother Seraphine to go to PEI where our community was rewarded with "Prince Edward Islanders...credited with a super-abundant amount of energy".

The following women from Prince Edward Island were received into the congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph and persevered in that vocation:

- Reception of 1900: Sisters Hortensia Arsenault, Devota Doucet, Maura Hegarty, Augustine McInnis, Damian McIver, Mary Charles McIver, *
Amdeus Poirer, St. Alfred Reid, Adeline Whelan
- 1901: Sisters Gudilla Corcoran, Gerald Corcoran, Anselm Galvin, Prudentia Gavin, Gordia McLean, Rufina McQuaid, Firmina Malone, Bertille O'Brien, Grata Powers
- 1902: Sisters Borgia McDonald, Leonora McCarvill
- 1903: Sisters Etheline Arsenault, Lamberta Hegarty, Georgia Morrison
- 1904: Sisters Rachel Donnelly, Andrea O'Keefe, Cordelia Walker
- 1905: Sisters Amanda Butler, Leonard O'Shea, Ildephonse Lacey
- 1909: Sister Zoe O'Brien
- 1911: Sister Dorothy Kelly
- 1912: Sisters Camillus O'Brien, Ine Shreenen, Leonora Shreenan
- 1913: Sisters Cassis Brennick, James Marie Campbell, Mary Gerald Gleeson, Linus Groken, Aniceta McAvinn, St. Claire McRosy, Mary Robert McAuley
Franks Cousin
- 1914: Sisters Naomi Baker, Herbert O'Brien, Arilda Whelan
- 1915: Sisters Mida Glover, Joseph Eugene Kelly, Fortunata McAvinn, Electa Roberts

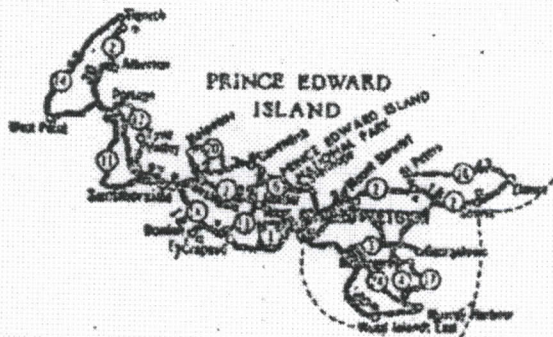
- 1917: Sisters Rosanna Deveraux, Dionysia Gillis, St. Hugh McIver, *Frances Marie Gallant*
- 1918: Sister Dorinda Hamill
- 1920: Sister Josephine Gleeson
- 1921: Sister Almeda Lambe
- 1922: Sisters Clerilla Foley, ~~Frances Marie Gallant~~
- 1923: Sister Carolinda Mulligan
- 1925: Sisters Catherine Rita Dalton, Georgetta Driscoll
- 1926: Sister Augusta Cassidy
- 1929: Sisters Paul Damien Grant, St. Leo Praught
- 1930: Sister Francis Borgis Larkin
- 1935: Sister Margaret Pierre McIver
- 1948: Sisters Rita O'Brien, Theresa O'Brien
- 1951: Sister Mary O'Brien

Of this list of Sisters, the largest family relationship is to be found in the O'Brien group: Sisters Zoe, Herbert and Camillus (sisters) and their nieces, Sisters Rita, Theresa and Mary O'Brien (sisters). The latter also had two aunts in the community: Sisters Bertille O'Brien and Prudentia Gavin.

The McIver family also have a large group who have contributed to our community: Sisters Demien and Mary Charles McIver (sisters) and their four nieces: Sisters St. Hugh McIver, Frances Marie Gallant, Georgetta Driscoll, Margaret Pierre McIver (first cousins).

---- Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson, CSJ

Sister Lambert's Hospitality



This article originated in St. Paul, Minnesota, and was brought to my attention by Margaret McIver, Borden, P.E.I.

R. McIver

For further information:

CSJ Archives, St. Paul Province: Records of Sisters who entered the
Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

Donahue, James, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND PRIESTS. St. Paul, 1912

Hurley, Sister Helen Angela, CSJ, "Mother Annetta Wheeler", unpublished
interview, CSJ Archives, St. Paul Province

Peter N. Paula, "Pioneering Nun Abp. Ireland's Import" - interview with
Sister Lamberta Hegarty, CSJ, CATHOLIC BULLETIN, September 2, 1977

Reardon, James, "The Ireland Family and its Connections", unpublished
interview with Mother Annetta Wheeler, CSJ Archives, St. Paul Province

Sampson, Sister Ann Thomassine, CSJ, unpublished tape recorded interviews:

- Sister Marie Agnese Arsenault about her aunt, Sister Devota Doucet
- Sister Dionysia Gillis about her entrance from Prince Edward Island
- Sister Lamberta Hegarty about her entrance from Prince Edward Island
and her sister, St. Maurn Hegarty
- Sister Margaret Pierre McIver about her entrance from Prince Edward
Island; her aunts, Sisters Damian and Mary Charles McIver; her
cousins, Sisters St. Hugh McIver, Frances Marie Gallant,
Georgetta Driscoll
- Sister Camillus O'Brien about her entrance from Prince Edward Island;
her sisters, Zoe and Herbert O'Brien; her nieces, Sisters Mary,
Rita and Theresa O'Brien
- Sister Mary O'Brien about her entrance from Prince Edward Island; her
sisters Sisters Rita and Theresa O'Brien; her aunts, Sisters
Camillus, Herbert, Zoe and Bertille O'Brien and Prudentia Gavin
- Sister Marietta Shreenan about her sisters, Sisters Ina and Leonora
Shreenan

Taped interviews and typed transcriptions in Community Oral History
collection, St. Paul Province, St. Joseph's Provincial House, St. Paul