

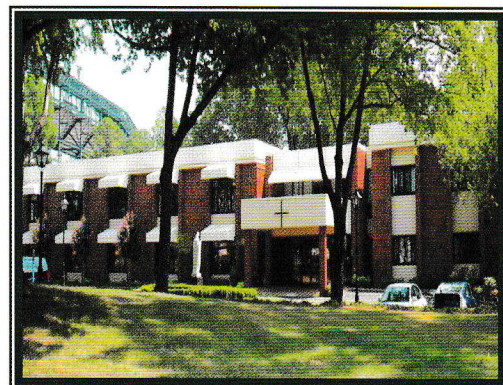
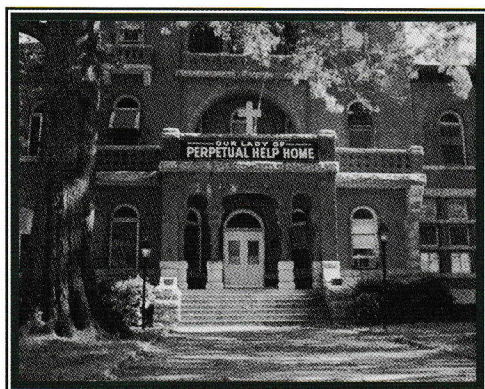


In His Love

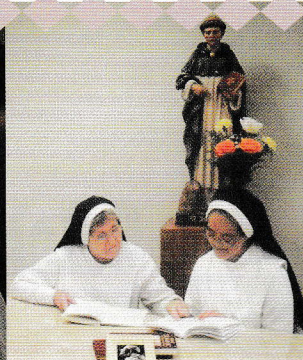
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Our Lady of Perpetual Help Home



Celebrating 75 years

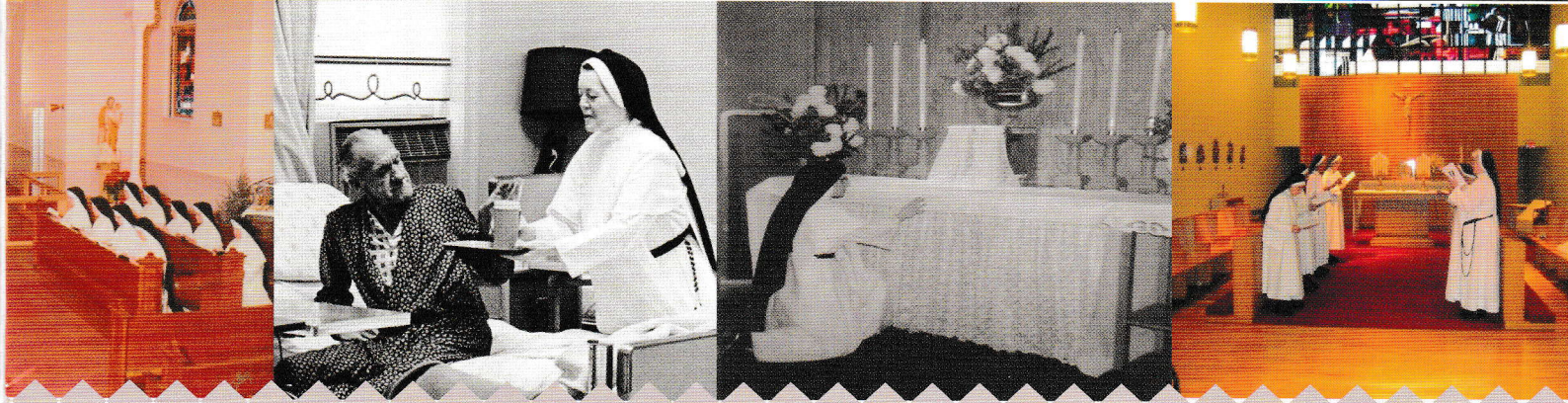


Mother Mary Alphonsa felt God's call so strongly that she stated in the beginning of her vocation that "a fire was lighted within my heart where it still burns. I will set my whole being to endeavor to bring consolation to the cancerous poor." This work began with so little material assets and so few to aid her, yet in her heart she trusted God completely, sure that His Divine providence would secure for these faithful "Servants of the poor," whatever was needed to care for those He would send. And the poor did come, but also God sent to her a faithful companion, Mother Mary Rose, who pledged after Mother Mary Alphonsa's death she would keep that "fire of Love" that lighted Mother's heart burning brightly in the hearts of the Sisters. "I will be faithful in instilling your wonderful spirit into the hearts of your sisters and will keep the work as you have founded it."

Mother Rose was faithful to that promise in many ways, one of which was opening new foundations. It was late in 1935 when Mother Mary Rose first had the inkling to pursue opening a Home in the South. She of course had a deep love for the area as she was born in Kentucky. She began to seriously consider Georgia as a site for a new foundation in 1936 and brought it to the attention of Cardinal Hayes who advised her to look for a location in Brooklyn, NY instead. She obediently began pursuing a foundation in Brooklyn with the quiet intention as she wrote in her journal, "If this is not to be, I will turn my attention to... Georgia as I know Bishop O'Hara. I am sure our work will help many in the neglected South".

As God always has His way, a suitable place in Brooklyn was never found, so in 1938 Mother Rose wrote in her diary "I will leave with Sr. Mary Angela for Atlanta, Georgia where we hope to make a foundation of our Work for the incurable cancerous poor. Bishop O'Hara will meet us and help to locate a suitable site"...and thus the site of the Hebrew Home for children was selected.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Home was opened in 1939. On the day of the dedication of the home, Bishop O'Hara highlighted the fundamental truth, "without love of God, it is impossible to have a real and constant love of our neighbor." Mother Mary Rose wrote in her journal that "the papers in Georgia were unanimous in a strong and sincere welcome for the Home, as it is badly needed. I hope all will turn out for the best and that the Home when started



in Atlanta will prosper and help many incurable cancerous poor." Not that there were never difficult times in the South, with the Sisters dealing with segregation, misunderstood concepts about the Catholic Church, an uncertainty of a new mission, and how women religious would be received in the Bible Belt. But all things in consideration, to have served God's poor for so many years, it has all turned out for the best and the Home has prospered.

To celebrate the courage of our Sisters and all who have helped make Our Lady of Perpetual Home a place of fruitful harvest in God's vineyard, on June 7th there was a Mass of thanksgiving to celebrate these 75 years serving Christ's Poor. The Mass was celebrated at St. Peter Chanel Catholic Church where the Sisters were joined by Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta, and Bishop Gregory Hartmayer of Savannah, 13 Priests and Deacons along with Fr. Paul Burke, who was master of ceremonies and is the current chaplain at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Home. Archbishop Gregory gave a heartfelt homily stating, "witnessing our faith has always been the most fruitful way to reveal what we believe." The love and admiration of the work of our Home and our community filled the church with such joy that it was an exercise of giving all glory to almighty God. The church was *filled* with religious, auxiliary members, staff, volunteers and many long time friends of the community. The Mass was beautifully sung by the choir of St. Peter Chanel Church.

After the final prayer Mother Mary Francis spoke and offered her most sincere thanks to Almighty God and all present, especially acknowledged the Sisters who have served there in the past and present. Mother also said in her letter on the occasion of the anniversary that "we are certainly grateful to God for His abundant blessings on our Home, for our vocation, for all the dear guests who have passed through our doors, for all the Sisters who have served so faithfully in the spirit of our Foundress, Mother Mary Alphonsa, and in the spirit of Mother Mary Rose, who opened the Home, and for all the wonderful people who have assisted us throughout these many years."

The Mass was followed by a reception at the hall at St. Peter Chanel Church where Sisters and friends of the community gave thanks for and reminisced on the accomplishments of the past, gave thanks for the present vocations in the community and their support in the diocese of Atlanta and looked toward the future. How many more years will the Sisters be given the honor to give witness to God's love in Atlanta? Time will tell, but as the Southern writer Flannery O'Connor said of the Sisters she knew in her time at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Home, "never underestimate them."

TO VIEW THE HOMILY FROM THE MASS VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.hawthorne—dominicans.org

