

Centenary of the Canossian Missions in the Far East Holy Father Imparts Apostolic Benediction

ON Tuesday, April 12, the Canossian Daughters of Charity will commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the day when the first Sisters of the Congregation landed in Hong Kong. The official celebration of the Centenary has been deferred to the first week in May when His Excellency the Internuncio, Mgr. Joseph Caprio, will open the celebrations in the Canossian Delegation, Caine Road.

His Holiness Pope John XXIII has imparted His Apostolic Benediction on the Canossian Daughters of Charity and on their work in the Foreign Missions.

Expressing his congratulations to the Sisters, His Lordship Bishop Bianchi said: "April 12, 1860, will be recorded in the Annals of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong as a memorable date, because on that day the first small group of Sisters of the Canossian Institute, founded by blessed Magdalen, arrived in the Colony. Mr. Leo D'Almada e Castro, a distinguished Portuguese resident, prepared for them a temporary residence in Caine Road, where a few days after their arrival, they were happy to open a little school which, for want of space, accommodated only 40 girls. That was the humble beginning of a great work; the tiny mustard seed that was to grow gradually into the large and stately tree of the Canossian Institutions, in Hong Kong and China.

CHARITY IN HUMILITY

"In January 1927, Pope Pius XI, in His allocution on the heroism of the virtues of Magdalen of Canossa, drew the world's attention to "the union and harmonious concord in her grand and magnificent life: Charity in Humility . . . Humility in Charity". The Foundress of the Canossian Sisters was truly born with the heart and feelings of a loving mother. Scorning abundant wealth, the glory of age-old ancestry, and the magnificencies of her social position, she embraced poverty and loved the poor and the unfortunate. And so, to her beloved daughters she could leave the inheritance of a humble and yet daring charity which knows no limits of time or space and never says 'enough'.

"In December 1941, Pope Pius XII, on the occasion of the Beatification of Blessed Magdalen, put new emphasis on the value and beauty of Christian Charity, which he called the strength of Christ and of His

Spouse, the Church. "It reaches," he said, "and conquers all men's hearts; it tenders to the young and to the old, to the abandoned and the outcasts of society, to the afflicted and the dying, a soothing balm such as neither knowledge nor medical or surgical science can ever give".

MANIFOLD ACTIVITIES

"These words of the saintly Pontiff clearly set forth the character of the manifold activities of the Canossian Sisters and point out the zeal and charity that animated them in Hong Kong during the past hundred years and will continue to inspire them in their future work.

"These centenary celebrations offer me the opportunity to ex-

press to the Superiors and Members of the Canossian Institute my thanks and those of my clergy and of all the Sisters' numberless friends. We may well say that more than five generations have received the benefit of the kind and generous services and of the laudable examples of the Canossian Sisters. We wish them every success in their schools, orphanages, hospitals and manifold institutions."

The centenary celebrations will open on May 2 with Mass celebrated by His Excellency the Internuncio and will continue throughout the week in all Canossian Institutions in the Colony. His Lordship Bishop Bianchi will conclude the celebrations with a solemn Te Deum on Saturday, May 7.



Rev. Mother Maria Cosma, Mother-Delegate of the Canossian Daughters of Charity.