



PRACTICE HOUSE—The Little House of Loretto practice house for home crafts students of St. Paul's Mission High School contains living and dining rooms, a kitchen, two bedrooms and a utility room. Behind it is a crafts shop.

At Indian Mission ...

Students Learn Housekeeping

By JANET S. ALLISON

CHINOOK — The Little House of Loretto and its "Christian family" at St. Paul's Indian Mission in Hays is a teaching unit unique among Montana high schools.

The Little House of Loretto is a 5-room practice house donated to Mission High School to give home crafts students experience in housekeeping.

Its original benefactors were the late Mrs. A. S. Lohman, prominent Blaine County resident, and her daughter, Mrs. Loretto Roberts, Great Falls. State Home Economics Supervisor Flora Martin, Helena, maintains a helpful interest in it. Although the school's homemaking department receives some vocational education funds, the house is largely self-supporting.

The House of Loretto is occupied by the "Christian family." Home crafts students, both boys and girls, under the direction of Sister M. Giswalda, take turns enacting the roles of the five Christians. In discharging the duties of each family member, students learn the skills of homemaking.

On a typical day, the student acting as Mrs. Christian is responsible for preparation of the family's noon meal, putting food away after the meal, cleaning the stove and refrigerator, sweeping and dusting. Mrs. Christian goes to the House of Loretto before her morning academic classes begin to start the meal preparation. The meal must then be completed, eaten and dining and kitchen areas cleaned up during the noon hour and the following homemaking class period.

Mr. Christian works on his homemaking workbook, washes the dishes and cleans the sink cabinet and kitchen table. Mary Alice Christian works on her workbook, dries dishes and cares for the used dish towels. Anne Marie Christian sets the table, clears the table and puts the clean dishes away. John Joseph Christian disposes of the garbage, empties wastebaskets and cleans walks around the house.

Three meals a week are prepared and served in the house, breakfast one day, lunch another and dinner the third. On days meals are not prepared, the 12:45-2:15 p.m. class period is used to work on homemaking projects or baking goods for sale.



Boys work on crocheted rug, another sands bowl

(Sister Giswalda, Gaylord Quincy, George Chandler and Peter Morin)

Boys and girls each have six projects to complete during the school year. Articles made as projects are sold on Mother's Day, the proceeds going to the House of Loretto for use by the next class. Over the years the earnings of each class have furnished the House of Loretto with furniture and equipment.

Each girl makes a quilt. This year, since there is no shop teacher, boys in the home crafts class are making rugs. Quilts and rugs will be sold at the annual spring quilt and style show. Animal cakes made by the students are a popular sale item at this show.

Students also bake and sell banana bread during the year. At Christmas, fruitcakes made by the home crafts students, boys and girls, were sold. A huge Thanksgiving bake sale rapidly disposed of 150 pies, more than 100 cakes and 125 pints of homemade cranberry-orange relish, a Mission School specialty. Students entered samples of their home crafts skills in the Fort Belknap Mid-Winter Fair, winning approximately \$30 in prize money to add to their house fund.

Though the house is tiny, it offers homemaking experience unavailable otherwise to some students. The effectiveness is noted in the comment of a former Blaine County nurse making public health calls on Fort Belknap Reservation, "I could always tell the moment I stepped into a home if the woman of the house had been trained in the Little House of Loretto."

St. Paul's Mission School, started in 1887, was a boarding school teaching eight grades until 1936 when the girls' dormitory was destroyed in the Little Rockies' forest fire. The school then was taken over by the School Sisters of St. Francis and converted to a day school offering 12 grades.

Accredited in 1941, Mission High still is the only high school on the reservation and has kept its accreditation despite ever-rising standards of education.

Ninety children are enrolled in the grade school this year and 26, in high school. About half the students are bused to and from school, the school priests driving the bus. School hot lunch is free.

The school is staffed by seven teachers, Sisters Giswalda, M. Clare, M. Benno, M. Jarento, M. Theresa and M. Janice Winger and Rev. Edmund Robinson and Rev. Joseph Brown, pastor of St. Paul's, teaches ethics. Sister M. Felix is the homemaker, doing the cooking for students and staff, laundry and ironing. She is assisted by Mrs. Mary Stiffarm Jones, a school alumna. Auto mechanic is Brother Ryan. James Stiffarm is custodian.



Girls display dish towels and quilt

(Kathy Hawley, standing, and Katherine Fox)