

ORPHANAGE OPENED

Lady Grantham Performs Ceremony At Fanling

SISTERS OF PRECIOUS BLOOD

Lady Grantham opened the Sisters of Precious Blood Convent Orphanage at Fanling yesterday afternoon, in the presence of many distinguished guests, including General Sir Terence and Lady Airey.

Lady Grantham was presented with the ceremonial key and a bouquet by the orphans. She in turn gave to the Orphanage a picture of "The Adoration of the Magi" by Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo.

On her arrival Her Ladyship was received by Mother Superior Lucy Chan, and the Vicar General, the Rev. Fr Riganti.

After the opening ceremony the guests inspected the two storeyed building which is fitted with class-rooms, dining-room, recreation-room and quarters.

The building is situated among large flower and vegetable gardens on the Sha Tau Kok Road.

During tea Lady Grantham addressed the guests and her speech was translated into Chinese by Dr Ho.

Lady Grantham said:

"This orphanage is not the beginning nor the end of the activities of the Chinese Sisters of the Precious Blood, as the history of their organisation shows. They became an independent congregation 30 years ago. In the early days they had a very hard struggle, but they were sustained by the desire to help their fellow human beings. Inspired by this spirit, the number of sisters has more than doubled and they now operate in addition to their convent and orphanage at Shamshuipo, a hospital of 83 beds with some of the wards and beds reserved for the use of those too poor to pay for treatment. They have a school that is known as the Tak Ching Girls' Middle School with a primary school attached, also at Shamshuipo, which gives education to 3,000 girls and boys under the age of 12. Then they have another school in Wanchai Road with a further 80 students which has a branch school at Hennessy Road with 100 more students. There is also a branch convent in Macao, and now there is this new orphanage.

"Some people might be inclined to say that because the work they do is so vast it is done in a slipshod manner, but believe me this is not so. It is very well done, and my authority for saying that are the Government educational and medical authorities. Just think of it; these 78 sisters under the leadership of the Superioress the Reverend Mother Lucy Chan and her principal Assistant, the Reverend Mother Theresa Tam, who incidentally were amongst the founders of the present independent institution, are providing education for 4,000 children, looking after 150 orphans and maintaining a hospital of nearly 100 beds with an outpatient department. All this is a most creditable achievement and I am indeed proud to be associated to-day with the work of the sisterhood.

"This fine building is a credit to its architect Mr Basto and to the Contractors, Messrs Tin Lee and sets an example for other institutions.

"And so, my hearty congratulations to all of you who have worked so well and faithfully to lift up and care for such a large number of needy ones. You truly express the spirit of Christianity and emulate the example of the great Master Christian in His love of mankind."

Mr Liew's Speech

Mr Liew Pak-sang, on behalf of the Chinese Sisters of the Precious Blood, thanked Her Ladyship for opening the Orphanage and for her gift of a picture.

Mr Liew said in part:

"Your Ladyship's noble gesture and the eminent presence of so many distinguished guests here, today, have enhanced the significance of the event and have made it a landmark in the history of the Chinese Sisters of the Precious Blood.

"On behalf of the orphans I thank you all; no doubt you have seen some of them. Some may be too young to understand the meaning of a home, perhaps, or what it is to be loved and cared for, but I assure you, in the Orphanage here they are being looked after and nurtured with tenderness and devotion.

"We all know the importance of social service in Hongkong and of helping those in need. We are aware that throughout the Colony very

much work has been done in this field and we know how many diverse activities are united by the common motive of service to the community. The Congregation of Chinese Sisters of the Precious Blood, in line with the Catholic institutions and other benevolent organisations of the Colony who have done so much to help the needy, is very glad to be able to expand their contribution to the common effort now that their dream of building a new Orphanage has become a reality. Our thanks are due to the Government and the Departments concerned for all their help, and also to the public whose sympathy and financial support have done so much to make this new project possible."

A number of the orphans sang for the guests and later posed with the official party for a group photograph.

Preparation for the formal opening were undertaken by helpers from the Wanchai Parochial Centre, who were directed by their Chairman, Mr Chung King-pui, MBE, assisted by Mr Chow Yau-cheung and Mr Li Chi-leung. The joint Hon. Secretaries for the function were Mr Wong Lung-kwong and Mr Liew Pak-sang.