

IFUHO — TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER

“ Besides palm trees you certainly have little else here — except faith! ” It was the Station Doctor speaking as he viewed the little mud-and-stick garage which was the only building on the 30 acres of bush spreading over a hilltop. That was in 1937 when Mother Mary Osmund and Mother Teresa Xavier were laying the foundations for the Holy Child Training College in Ifuho.

On September 30th, 1962, hundreds of former students flooded the big compound to help celebrate Ifuho's Silver Jubilee. There are more than twenty buildings now — including Chapel, convent, novitiate

for the Handmaids, large classrooms, cottages for the students, and a big primary school for practice teaching — all in a picturesque setting of tropical flowers and trees that make it a garden spot. Guests christened the new dining hall with a big Jubilee Dinner. The celebration began early in the day with Solemn High Mass and during the festivities that followed there were games, African dances and a play in the evening, “ Murder in a Nunnery. ” The play was presented for three more evenings to give all a chance to attend.

Here is an interview with the Reverend Mother Vicar (Mother

Just before the final dress rehearsal of the Jubilee Production, *Murder in a Nunnery*. Mother Gabriel Dolores, who produced the play, gives the last-minute touches to a student's costume.





To share our bread and give of our substance . . . Student members of the Legion of Mary, with Mother M. Dermot, bring yam to an old woman in a nearby village who is too ill to farm for her food any more. Welfare work plays a significant part in the training of future teachers at Ifuho and of the students in all the Holy Child Missions.

Teresa Xavier) sent in by our special correspondent:

trained teachers will pass out of the College in 1962.

HOW LONG IS THE COURSE OF TRAINING?

Formerly it was a two-year course following the successful completion of Standard VI, the top class in Primary School. But recently this has been changed to four years and now it includes teacher-training for all classes in the Primary School.

WHAT EXACTLY IS IT?

The Holy Child Training College at Ifuho was begun twenty-five years ago at the request of Government to supply indigenous teachers for the lower classes in the Primary Schools. The work was begun with six students in 1937; today 162 are in residence. Fifty-nine

WHAT ABOUT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVERS - HOW DO THEY BECOME TRAINED TEACHERS?

They also enter the Holy Child College at Ifuho for a two-year course and they may do subjects at Advanced Level. When our Secondary School Leavers (Alumnae) are trained as teachers, they become valuable assets as tutors in the first two Forms of the Secondary Schools (High Schools).

CAN YOU GIVE US A DESCRIPTION OF A TEACHER TRAINED AT IFUHO?

A teacher trained at Ifuho is usually a self-reliant young woman,

able to contribute in no small measure to the life of the community in which she lives. She is found most frequently to be an active Legionary of Mary. This in itself ensures a good Christian life. She is eager to help the Parish Priest in the work of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. When she marries she continues teaching if she lives near a school.

DO YOUR TEACHERS ADVANCE TO ANYTHING HIGHER THAN PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS?

In Enugu, the seat of Government for the Eastern Region of Nigeria, at least ten of our girls trained at Ifuho are now Education Officers and they, in their turn, now inspect the work of their old College. There was a time when

the Teacher-Training course was used as a steppingstone to other professions. Since 1947 when the teaching profession was made more attractive, this has been eliminated.

HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO ADD TO THIS BRIEF ACCOUNT?

Yes, the Holy Child College at Ifuho has more than fulfilled its purpose. It has filled a demand for dedicated women teachers; it has produced a light to lead many others to know, love and serve God; it has made possible to many young African women a way of life hitherto unknown; it has extended the kingdom of God in Africa.

We are specially grateful to God for allowing us to do this work for Him and we count the twenty-five years (1937-1962) as our life's privilege.



Mother Maria Stephane, Principal of the College, greets some former students on the Convent steps. They are coming for the reunion held in conjunction with the Jubilee.