



M A R I A N B R O W N

*each day brings  
new opportunities*

**I**N a little village church on a Sunday afternoon an old rector preached a sermon, the Call of Samuel. After the service the superintendent of the church school asked me if I would become the assistant superintendent. My answer was "No," not because I lacked the interest, but because I was frightened at the very thought. (I was quite young in those days.) The superintendent's rebuttal was significant: "I did not ask you!" she said. I knew her meaning at once and my next answer was "Yes."

This was the beginning of ten years of volunteer church work. In my spare time I taught in the church school and sang in the choir. When I asked our new rector if something could be organized for the young people of our parish, a Girls' Friendly Society was started and the rector appointed me the first leader.

My activities through the GFS brought me in contact with diocesan work. It was at this time that I met our diocesan worker who suggested that I take a course of study to improve my church school teaching. Later I represented our county on the board of religious education; in this capacity I met the bishop and other church leaders. My interest in the work grew and before long I wished with all my heart to become a professional church worker. I used every advantage

which came my way to become as good a volunteer as possible.

My position in the business world was becoming duller and duller and the Church's work more challenging — the time came when I almost was compelled to make the choice. I wanted to train but it seemed next to impossible. I took into my confidence my friend, the diocesan worker, and my bishop; before I knew it, plans were made that I should train.

With the bishop's blessing in his little chapel, I left for the Church Training and Diaconess House in Philadelphia. There I spent two years learning about the work of the Church, worshiping and living as a family with the other students, and training for a definite future. In the mornings before academic classes, we had small household chores; then recreation and work.

We studied more than the Bible and the Prayer Book; we studied psychology, sociology, public speaking, and history; we had courses in Pauline and Catholic Epistles, Christian mysticism and doctrine, among others. We were given ten weeks of practical work; during one work period, I was on a staff of a settlement house and during another, I worked at a summer camp.

After two years of training and seven years of experience in a fine south Philadelphia

parish, I felt somewhat prepared to go into the mission field. In June, 1939, I was "set apart" as a deaconess, and two months later I went to the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. For almost seven years I worked among the Arapahoe people there. Feeling that the Navajo peoples in Arizona had a still greater need, however, I asked to be sent to them in 1946. I have been with them ever since.

I have found that the work of the Church is thrilling and all-absorbing; I am sure that it is the most interesting of anything which we may do with our lives. I know of no other service rendered which has greater compensations. It is our Lord's work so He is able to use all we are willing to give.

I remember an incident on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming which demonstrates an interesting result of teaching. A little boy in preschool went into the mountains with his father for wood. Kenneth Hungry's imagination began to work.

"Father," he said, "suppose a bear would come; what would we do?"

"What do you think would happen, Kenneth?" his father said.

The boy was quiet for a moment and then replied, "God would take care of us, Father." This child had learned to trust in God's loving care.

Then there was the time when the aunt of a Navajo baby asked me to take the sick child to a government hospital. The baby had to go back three times for treatment. At the end of this period, the aunt wanted to know if we should ask the mother about bringing the child to baptism. We did, and not only was the baby baptized, but also the baby's father, a great aunt, and a young cousin. Taking a baby to a hospital could be called social service. In the Church it is Christian social relations.

At the Good Shepherd Mission my day is full. In the morning I make visits, each day encountering new needs and new problems among the people in the Navajo country. We try to work out the problems together, and I teach religion from home to home. One afternoon a week, I meet with the teachers of religious education who come to my office for material, council, and advice. Then I teach a class at Window Rock, one of our day schools. There are 45 baptized boys and girls here, and in the evening a group gathers together at Saw Mill for recreation and fun.

I could go on, for each day brings new opportunities, and the common tasks for me become joyful service. Our Lord's work, the Church's work, becomes something bigger than life itself.

**T**HIS story tells some of the deep satisfactions found in church work. It shows, too, some of the particular personal requirements needed for successful church work: consecration, adaptability and flexibility, native intelligence, humor, and understanding.

There are needs for nurses, doctors, occasional needs for laboratory technicians and social workers, housemothers, teachers, as well as opportunities in the general work of evangelism. Missionaries are usually single women without dependents between the ages of twenty and thirty-five when first appointed. Missionaries require the full training that their particular profession requires and at least a year or two of practical experience. If you were to go as a specialist, such as a teacher or a nurse, you should have some additional preparation in a church training school.

*This folder is one of a series written by active workers in the Church today. Trained women are constantly needed for work in parishes, rural areas, overseas, on college campuses.*

*For further information write to*



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