



ELEANOR SNYDER

no other job  
can compare



THERE were many contributing factors which helped me decide to leave the field of commercial art and become a full-time, so-called professional church worker, but in every instance a person stands out. If, for instance, a friend, Mrs. Church, merely had suggested that I go to the youth meeting at Grace Church in Newton, Mass., when we first moved there, I would not have gone. I considered myself too sophisticated, having just returned from four years at school in New York City. Mrs. Church came and took me to my first meeting.

Through the YPF, I became a part of the parish life in Newton. The rector saw to it that I met the people in the parish and diocese who were most enthusiastic about the mission work of the Church. The mission field appealed to me. When I made my final decision to become a church worker, I will confess that I felt like a very noble character indeed!

From the first my family's interest, enthusiasm, and prayers have been with me, but my friends reacted in different ways. Some were utterly amazed that a person they always had considered fairly normal, at least like themselves, should give up a good money-making career for something so unconventional and dull. Others assumed an attitude of patience, feeling that perhaps it might do me some good and that I would probably get

over it. Then there were those to whom the Church meant much, who were delighted. May I here admit that in some measure these attitudes were also mine.

In His wisdom, God allowed me to enter training school cloaked in this glow of spiritual pride, strongly aware of my own sterling qualities, nobly giving myself to the Church! Then, at St. Faith's I had the privilege of studying under the Rev. Frank Gavin, the Rev. Stanley Brown-Serman, the Rev. Charles N. Shepard, and to live in a Christian fellowship the tone of which was set by Deaconess Romola Dahlgren and Deaconess Jane B. Gillespy. Our life was centered around the daily services at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. My perspective soon changed under these influences, and the glow around my head became dimmer and dimmer, and I was amazed that God would have me for a worker in His Church. I never cease to wonder at God's power to use fallible human nature even when we put up such stout resistance.

Being a missionary in Panama was a wonderful adventure. Claire Ogden was patient and understanding with my over-exuberant spirit which at times, I fear, was more of a problem than the thirty-five children for whom we cared in the Children's Home in Bella Vista.

My interest in Christian education continued to grow, so after nearly five years I left Panama and returned to the United States. I had the privilege of working at Trinity Church in Boston. Of course the job was too big for me, so for help I tapped every possible resource. At Boston University and at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, I took as many courses as I could squeeze into my schedule. Adelaide Case was on the faculty of E.T.S. at that time, and her classes and friendship were constant sources of help and inspiration to me.

Five years later I went to Northampton, Mass., to be the assistant for student work at St. John's Church. This was a new realm of experience, and a thrilling one. Seven hundred Episcopal students on the Smith College campus, plus a full parish, kept us busy.

I am sure that I had as great an education during my four years at Smith as did the students. I watched much happen in the lives of the girls and made some real friends. It was a completely satisfying job, but the longer I stayed, the more convinced I became that Christian education should make its imprint on people's lives long before they are of college age. At the end of my fourth year, when St. James' Church in Wilmington, N. C., offered me a job, I accepted it.

It was a wonderful choice. I fell in love



with North Carolina and all the people in it, and I accepted the position of adviser in Christian education for the diocese. This work was exciting because there were so many different areas of activity, and Bishop Penick, the clergy, and lay people of the State were so wholeheartedly behind the Christian education program.

Since my first job as a missionary in Panama, I have loved church work. It is all the same, really, and it is all missionary. There is a joyous, contagious quality about work in the Church. Every place I have been, it has been the same — large churches, small churches, rural missions, college campuses, summer camps, and conferences. There is no other job that can compare with it, I am sure; you are upheld even in the low moments. I thank God daily that he allows me to continue.

Some of my friends claim that I have been mighty lucky, and I guess they are right for I have worked with some of the finest bishops and other clergy and have gained much from knowing each one of them. Perhaps this article should have been entitled the saga of a contented church worker.

**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.*

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