

It is my earnest hope that this idea may be the means of spreading devotion to Mary in this manner, which ties in with your work of Gardens for Mary, and, as you say, it is an apostolate that can reach people of all beliefs and maybe just the little thought may need to love Mary and her Divine Son more.

Grenada, British West Indies  
4/7 C

A copy of the March Catholic Digest has reached me. The article "Vest Pocket Gardens" for Mary" gave me a thrill. . . . It will hardly be possible for me to get from the midst of the mountains here to the Island's capitol until sometime next week, in order to get the local government authority to grant me a permit to purchase from the "dollar area." But please rest assured the money will reach you in due time.

Reason for my anxiety not to lose time is partly seasonal, partly personal. Partly seasonal, because the "dry season" (our winter) ends in May or June, and we want the seed in good time for planting. Partly personal because after 21 years in Grenada, I am likely to be leaving after mid-year (Ultimately, I hope, for work in the southern states, U.S.A.) Before going I would like to start a crusade for Mary Gardens throughout the parish --- perhaps throughout Grenada, which has nearly 60,000 Catholics among nearly 90,000 people.

The people's little homes climb the mountains around the church on every side. Nearly every family has a small garden plot, mainly for food crops, though many grow flowers (roses bloom all the year around here).

Birch Grove's 3,000 people aren't 90% Catholic by baptism; many are well instructed Catholics, many are not; but the recent handing over of the government grade schools to the Catholic church, leaves us with a school now of 50 children, and we hope the parish will be solidly Catholic within 20 or 30 years. If the Mary Gardens catch on (and God and Mary will see they do) devotion to Our Blessed Lady will spread and intensify and help in the Catholicizing of the parish. Bamboos grow on all sides --- and the people can use them for plainly tagging Mary names by each flower. If the pastor holds a "Mary's Gardens competition" once or twice a year, personally visiting the Gardens and giving small but valued prizes for the best, there should be thousands of Mary Gardens in Grenada within 5 years. --- And the people, reading tags and teaching the names of the flowers to their children from infancy upwards, should help Mary to permeate Grenada and her people. (Incidentally, Grenada was named "Conception Island" by Columbus --- the first land in the new world to be dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, to whom (I believe) the United States is dedicated. The Catholic Digest article is being forwarded to his grace, the Archbishop of Port-of-Spain, whose devotion to Our Blessed Lady is intense --- an apostolic devotion, as in numerous ways he has worked to get Our Lady known and loved throughout the Archdiocese. . . He is Irish from Cork. The Islands are British - ruled, predominantly negro. This transplantation of Our Lady's dowry, under U.S.A. - Irish - British auspices, some thousands of miles across



1953 - 10

the Atlantic after four centuries of forgetfulness will prove finally apostolic --- will enable us to take our small place in the new age of Mary.

If I may send you the old Irish greeting in your labors, "God and Mary be with you". Sincerely in J.M.J.

New York, N.Y. 4/5 C

I just read your fine article in "The Catholic World" and I wish to avail myself of your offer of planting instructions and informative leaflets. I have in mind at present a shrine to Our Lady of Fatima at our summer camp which has a plot of ground in front of it about 8 by 10 feet. Such a shrine should have flowers that speak of Our Lady. For blooming this summer, the flowers would have to be annuals. Next fall some biennials and perennials could be planted. Sincerely yours in Our Lady.

P.S. The enclosed little verses were suggested by your article:

Flowers

A flower is an act of love  
Intended for its God above;  
Its purpose is to make us rise  
And keep our thoughts on paradise.

When we bend down to pick a rose  
Or any other flower that grows  
Our thoughts should rise to God above,  
For they remind us of his love.

Esopus, N.Y. 4/23 C

The may issue of the British publication "Novena" is carrying our article on Mary's Gardens. And the English Redemptorist at St. Mary's Clapham (London) are hoping to interest England in the project. And so may it soon be that:

"from sky to sod  
The world's unfolded  
Blossom smells of God. . ."  
And Mary

(from Thompson's "Night of Forebeing"--- J.S.)

Nassau, Bahamas 4/7 C

On February 28, I finally found time to plant my garden. On March 4th the morning glories showed their first leaves above ground. Now all but Our Lady's Delight and the Virgin Flower are up. I must begin to transplant.

You requested the name of the sister who is taking care of the Mary Garden. You probably realize by now that I am the sister. There is another sister here, Sister . . . who has a Mary Garden near her mission school --- Sacred Heart. Mine is in our Convent Garden.



1953 - 11

I read the article in the Catholic Digest. I trust that you will find someone to help carry on the work you began. It is indeed an apostolate in itself. May God and Our dear Blessed Mother love you more for it. Sincerely in His Love and Her's.

Gloucestershire, England  
Good Friday C

Your letter today, has brought me such happiness --- real delight. I have loved flowers for over eighty years, my long life, and have tried to leave better gardens wherever I have lived. In the gospel quoted today, have you ever noticed that Our Lord's passion began and ended, in a garden? So St. John tells us. And one of the delights promised us in paradise growing by the river of life, the trees have leaves for the "healing of the nations"; and the trees fruit each month. And if they fruit, there must be flowers first,-- and won't they be lovely ones? Your papers re Our Lady's Garden are most interesting and have told me far more than I can tell you. But I have enclosed on a separate sheet anything that I think you may like to hear.

Maryknoll, N.Y. 4/15 C

We, too, have what we call Our Lady's Garden --- enclosed by a six foot picket fence with a bed just inside this fence where evergreens and shrubs abound. Time does not permit us to care for many flowers but we shall make an exception this year by making an offer of a prize of some lovely Mary plants to the sister who has best cared for her particular garden section. . . . Gratefully in Mary.

Jumez Springs, N.Mex. 4/29 C

Your replies to queries concerning your apostolate bring to my mind in principle a three-fold inter-depending relation, that is, I feel sure --- most important for the mature Christians, critical reflective interpretation of all that God has for us, and is to, in us. It is simple and yet it can give eminently an important key. Here is the relation: the Christian holocaust analogically, as it works in us: (in the sacraments,) (in prayer), (in our work). Beginning far out and returning back towards the center, it is evident that the spirit in which I have worked, and even the very matter of my task, has had an informing effect on my being, so that I am (more or less) truly integrated in self-possession, I have more of that which is truly God- and Christ-like in the measure that I have carved, hewn, uttered, ordered, given into a birth - enunciation through (in my work), which is or makes me to be or what I have, am, eminently in my prayer. What I have is proportioned to what I am. And in prayer what I am is more mystically proportioned to what I am to receive, to see and hear. The way I hear and see God in prayer (even my act of praying, enunciating: "Christ, I love you!" is a response, an echo, as it were (with a reality of its own) of the Father's eternally enunciating His Word of Love, in an un-created: "Christ I love You!" Yet all this has deepening and effect, disparitively, cooperatively, "continuatingly" with regard to my sacramental reception of this God we are to serve, know and love. All cooperation adequate, supernaturally, is under the aegis



1953 - 12

special magistrium of the Holy Spirit.

Seen aright there can be no fundamental opposition between my work and my prayer, my special prayerful, prayed work and the sacraments. All inter-depend and serve gradually and thoroughly, cooperatively, to give the whole of my action and being over in total holocaust to God. And in the measure I livingly co-relate these realities: the sacrament, prayer, work, I begin to enter into the highest Christian mystical reality; wherein, imitating God in Christ ("Glorying even amidst the inevitable problems, pain) I begin to "give him birth in spiritual birth, in full, finally, effectively. . . .

The flowers are coming beautifully. I shall try to get photos, later.

Portland, Me. 4/25 C

I thought you would be interested in the enclosed clippings tomorrow 's Portland Sunday Telegram - farm - garden section, and wish you lots of success. Our rector at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin (episcopal) hopes to interest the Church Garden Club in planting Mary's flowers as a project.

Havana, Cuba 4/23 C

I just read in the Columbia March issue - Jeremy Clouthm's article "Gardens for Mary." I am writing you as I am much interested in it. We have, at the hotel "Ambos Mundos ", Havana, Cuba, the only roof garden in Cuba. . . . It happens that for a long time I have been nursing the idea of making a shrine for the Virgin at some suitable spot and I even have in mind some very beautiful Spanish tile that has a picture of the Blessed Virgin, so your idea of the Gardens for Mary is perfect for our roofgarden.

Gloucestershire, England  
5/1 C

Thank you for your interesting letter and enclosure. So many people write to us for help, or in some sort of trouble, that it was a real pleasure to get your letter with real happiness in it.

Esopus, N.Y. 5/4 C

I saw the reprint in the Catholic Mind. I can see the project snowballing for Our Lady . . . and as you say, leading to the sacramental Christ. . . . God bless you both, and during this month of May when "from sky to sod, the world's unfolded blossom smells of God," may His Mother's fragrance too prevades your hearts.

Miridor, Phillipines  
5/8 C

The envelope of seeds you sent I have given to the government Bureau of Forestry here in Vaguio to raise in their nursery for me. One packet will go to a little penitent of mine who is having her clothing May 21 in a cloistered sisters of the Fathers of Divine Word, with her garden. I shall also give some seeds to the Maryknoll sisters. Gradually we really ought to be able to spread



1953 - 13

Mary's gardens in this, the only Catholic country, in the Orient and also dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. Sincerely yours  
in Cord Jesu.

Indianapolis, Ind. 4/21

How we hope that the calendars will do much to increase the love of Our Lady's flowers --- so many of which we all know and delight in --- by other names far less charming than her's. Sincerely, your humble servant in Christ.

Exeter, N.H. 5/22 C

I wish there was something I could do for you --- in return for all your thoughtfulness. I certainly can pray for the prospering of the Mary Garden's. Another thing which has given me much pleasure is sharing the seeds with various friends who have little gardens. They love the whole idea and I know it will spread and blossom! Mr. Foley and I have frequent conferences on one thing and another, and he is your firm friend. He is getting some reprints of his article for distribution and wants to join your crusade!

Des Moines, Iowa 5/26 C

I notice many articles telling of your project. Father Brinker of Covington, Ky. mentioned Mary's Gardens on four successive weeks. Sincerely in Christ

Havana, Cuba, 5/11 C

As soon as the garden and shrine are ready, I will send you pictures. I have great hopes for it. Again thank you, and may the Virgin bless you for such a beautiful idea. (If my garden turns out all right, I will pass along the idea, and I have a hunch you are going to have a lot of customers from Havana).

Indianapolis, Ind. 5/28 C

With appreciation --- and assuring you of the prayers of Carmel, in these days of Pentecost, dear Mr. Stokes, I am, sincerely your humble servant in Christ.

Des Moines, Iowa 6/4 C

It strikes me, from my casual observations from many Catholic magazines, a number of feature writers have told your story to the reading public this spring. Sincerely yours in Christ.

New York, NY 6/8 C

With best wishes to you in your beautiful work, sincerely in Our Lord,

Cotabato, Phillipines 5/10 C

His Excellency, Bishop Mongeau, Bishop-Prelate of Cotabato and Sulu, Phillipines has read several articles on your "Gardens for



Mary" and would like to have a competition between the various girls and boys departments of our chain of Notre Dame schools in Mindamo. We have Catholic high schools in fifteen places today where in 1939 there wasn't a single Catholic school. Each school has a boys' department and a girls' department with a total enrollment of over 8,500 students.

Now the Bishop would like to give a substantial prize to the department that can produce the best "Mary's Garden", so he has asked me to order from you thirty sets of ten seed packets and he will distribute them to each department and see what can be done by the Phillipino boys and girls on the project. He would ask you to select flowers that are more likely to grow in the tropics. Also he asked that you send enough literature so that each school would have a copy of the brochure and the prayers to be said by the children. Hoping that you can cooperate with his Excellency in this matter and promising you a full report upon the success of the project, I am,  
sincerely yours . . . By order of his Excellency, most rev. Gerard Mongeau, O.M.I., D.D., Titular Bishop of Diana and Prelate of Cotabato and Sulu, Phillipines

Samar, Phillipines, 6/4 C

Praise be Jesus Christ! . . . I am one of two American Franciscans who were sent here to the island of Samar, to help the local clergy in their work among the people. This is only "like a drop in the bucket" when one realizes how much priests are needed here. . . . Just the other day we received a copy of the Catholic Mind and there I came upon your project, Mary's Gardens. Good work, and may our Heavenly Mother repay you for making her influence felt in this way. Here in Samar, as in every tropical climate, there is much vegetation --- many flowers in the jungles --- but not many of the type that were common to us at home. Is it possible for you then to send us some of these seeds which you have for distribution so that we may try our luck here? Besides beautifying the surroundings, we can also use them to beautify our altar of our chapel. . . . Please see what you can do for us, so we can start putting up Mary's Gardens up here in the Phillipines. Commending you and your confreres' work to the most Sacred Heart of Our Lord and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I remain, in Christ.

Boystown, Nebr. 6/19 C

Several days ago I received your letter and also the seeds for the Garden of Our Lady. I wish to thank you, most sincerely for your kindness and assure that the boys and I will be very happy to put these seeds into the earth in honor of Our Blessed Mother and I trust that the flowers coming from them will be a source of joy and pleasure to all of us. You will have a special remembrance in our prayers begging God's blessing upon you.



Philadelphia, Pa. - 6/28 C

Today I finished reading Eddie Dougherty's "My Hay Aint in" -- a collection of apostolic essays centered about "Madonna House" a branch of the Baroness d'Hucke's "Friendship Houses" throughout the country. You would be interested in his account of his friend and the morning glory, Our Lady's Mantle to us, on p. 108f. He writes: "How especially this man is, to see God in so humble and so common a thing as a flower; and to see the glory of the Mother of God in its blue depth!" I wrote him that I was sending a package of Mary-seeds to plant about Madonna House, so will you take care of that item for me, please. He seems not to know about your project, and it is one, I am sure, that would interest him and his wife, the Baroness very much. This particular center in Canada has the special objective of restoring all things in Christ in the rural areas of Ontario. They publish their monthly newspaper, "Restoration," and I hope the Mary Garden finds space therein.

Weeding seems to have been my major subject for the past months, both at home and at school. We let everything just grow and grow at St. Hubert's, after last summer's catastrophe of burying the garden under a ton or so of new soil, to see what would come through. We couldn't tell whether a shoot was fish, or flesh or good red herring, so taking a cue from the Gospel, let the cockle grow with the wheat. It is beginning to get some semblance of order, and soon I will be able to plant the bald spots. I expect to spend most of the summer here, so will be able to get up to the St. Hubert's Garden from time to time. In the convent yard we have lots of Mary's seeds planted and are watching to see what will happen.

Studying the first article of the Creed in the Freshman religion classes this spring, we were discussing the share God gives man in his creativity. In the fall we had salvaged lots and lots of seeds from Our Lady's Earrings plants at school, and I thought of them at that moment. As a practical example of sharing in God's creativity I offered them seeds to take home to plant. Unprepared of the rush of over a hundred who surrounded me for their thimble-ful, I resorted to the many old envelopes from absent notes. Even these gave out and I was at a loss until one rushed up holding up the pocket of her wallet. We managed that way to get them to their homes, though I wouldn't have been surprised to see flowers sprouting out of some of those junk-full purses they carry on. Reports that "my seeds started coming up, Sister" became more frequent as school drew to a close. If some one aeons from now wonders at the abundance of Our Lady's Earrings in this growing northeast, you know the answer. Sincerely yours in Christ, The Gardener

Phila., Pa. 7/20 C

Yesterday I ran across a delightful passage in Frances deSales Treatise on the Love of God, that one might mediate on viewing



a Madonna lily, for Mary is "Mother of Fair Love" and "Spouse of the Holy Spirit", "Seat of Wisdom." P

"Charity . . . comprehends the seven gifts and is like to a fair lily which has six flowers whiter than snow, and in the midst the beautiful little gold hammers of wisdom, which beat into our heart the taste and loving relish of the goodness of Our Father, the Creator, of the Mercy of the Son, Our Redeemer, and of the sweetness of the Holy Ghost, our sanctifier." Treatise , Book XI, Chapter XV

. . . Sincerely in Christ, the Gardener.

Boston, Mass. 7/23 C

I think the Mary Gardens are a wonderful idea. In my story, though, since it is for a secular paper, I had to tone down the religious angle quite a bit. . . . I plan to buy some of your seeds and distribute them to gardener friends, when I have a moment to think it out. Sincerely,

Minneapolis, Minn. 7/29 C

I am surely enjoying Our Lady's Garden. Yesterday two little flowers of "Our Lady's Delight" opened. As I planted the seeds in flats indoors on May 6 (carrying them outside part of the time) and did not have time to transplant them to their outdoor bed until June 16, Our Lady surely blessed them. I am keeping a little Mary's Garden journal to help me in planting next year, as this is really the first time I ever have done any gardening. I pray that Our Lady and her good mother will bless you and Mr. McTague.

Conbermere, Canada

Our Lady's Garden appeals to me very much and I would like to get the following perennials . . . very sincerely yours in Mary's Immaculate Heart.

Villa Avisiosa, P.I. 7/22 C

The writer of these lines is a Catholic missionary who works in these islands since 1928. He is of German extraction and did not see his home country during the past 25 years of his missionary work. At present I am taking a few weeks vacation. The other day I took a walk, having a Catholic Digest with me, for March 1953. From that magazine I learned of the very pleasant idea that suggests planting flowers named after Mary, Our heavenly Mother. Gentlemen, inspired by that article, I read in the Catholic Digest I feel I would like to order seeds of all those Mary flowers which probably can be raised here in the tropical climate --- either shaded or unshaded. . . . Please, also let me know whether you would accept an order of the same kind for me for my mother who lives in Germany. Yours sincerely,



CONVENT SCHOOL MARY GARDEN  
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

