

**ONE VISION  
MANY VOICES**

**Lectures Delivered at the  
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**ADAPTING THE VISION:  
CAROLINE IN 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICA**

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**ANNE M. BUTLER**  
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New habits and strange customs! Pigs on the street, chickens in front of people's houses, women smoking tobacco, ..wearing hats and veils driving vehicles,...Negroes shouting lustily to announce their sales of ice cream, matches, brandy!... houses and streets illuminated by gas, heating by hot air pipes, very frequent fire alarms..filled with gratitude and yet amused we reflected upon all these things...<sup>1</sup>

So wrote Mother Caroline Friess in 1850, describing her arrival in New York City, three years earlier, on July 31, 1847. From that day, with its astonishing sights and sounds, until her death almost exactly forty-five years later on July 22, 1892, Mother Caroline carved out a personal history directed by religious conviction and spiritual values. However, in addition, her life, seemingly

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set apart from mainstream America by virtue of its convent dimension, paralleled that of thousands of other nineteenth century immigrants.

Indeed, the immigrant experience, spawned by the great waves of European migration into the United States during this era, proves to be one bellwether by which we assess the last half of nineteenth century American history. In a thirty-five year period, nearly fourteen million immigrants stepped onto American soil for the first time. As for Mother Caroline and her little traveling band, guided by Mother Mary Theresa of Jesus – they joined the masses of Germans who turned their hearts and minds toward the social, economic, and political opportunity promised by a new life in America. Between 1851 and 1853 more than 360,000 Germans arrived at these shores and took up the challenges of the stranger in a foreign land.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of where these newcomers put down roots, all confronted major national forces played out against the remaining years of the nineteenth century.

In 1847, as Mother Caroline and her companions began their first investigative tours through Baltimore and Philadelphia, Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave from Maryland, launched publication of his abolitionist newspaper, the *North Star*. Douglass' paper, champion of many important social causes, called for an immediate end to black bondage and symbolized the growing national division over the issue of slavery.<sup>3</sup> As it happened, Douglass and other abolitionists went unheeded as the North and the South increasingly rattled their sabers at one another for the next fifteen years.

In large measure, the stresses created by the unexpectedly rapid acquisition of major western lands prodded the sections to these bellicose positions. Within the decade of the 1840s, the land that encompasses present day Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Washington, and Oregon came under the American flag. The westward migration spurred by available land in these territories heightened the need for congregations, like the School Sisters, willing to take on the academic and religious training of growing frontier populations.<sup>4</sup> While these vast land holdings fueled nationalistic fervor, they also served to escalate the growing contention over the existence of slavery within the borders of a democratic republic. Although national politics had turned on the issue of slavery for almost one hundred years, the question of whether or not to permit its extension into the new western territories brought the country to its Constitutional crisis.<sup>5</sup>

In 1861, the nation, after years of bitter debate, collapsed into the long anticipated civil conflict. For the next four years, its disastrous effects threatened even the convent-enclosed School Sisters, as restrictions on travel and

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disruption of mail effectively isolated various houses in both the North and the South.<sup>6</sup> The hardship this evoked for a young community of women struggling to secure its national foothold represented only one element in a clash that ripped apart the national fabric.<sup>7</sup> In the wake of death and destruction, the national economic and social losses barely exceeded the political chaos of the remaining years of the 1800s. The aftermath of that bloody and vicious war shaped the remainder of the nineteenth century and touched the lives of a continuing influx of American immigrants.

Woven among these tumultuous and painful national events was yet another major theme of the nineteenth century – one that came to bear directly on the work of Mother Caroline. Less than a year after Mother Caroline stepped from the steamship *Washington* onto the teeming docks of New York, a group of secular women gathered in the first formal women's right convention in this nation. On July 19, 1848, at Seneca Fall, New York, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, through her "Declaration of Sentiments" patterned on the Declaration of Independence, gave passionate voice to the intellectual yearning of women for equality.<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Protestant, married, the mother of seven children, and Mother Caroline Friess, Catholic, celibate, the temporal and spiritual leader of a religious congregation – these two remarkable women shared neither nationality, religion, nor life experience. Yet, the most vigorous manifestations of that female quest articulated by Elizabeth Cady Stanton would take form within the parameters of Mother Caroline's lifelong dedication to education and the advancement of women through learning.

This is not to suggest that as a Catholic German immigrant, Mother Caroline met with encouragement or even tolerance from the surrounding largely Protestant American society. Quite the opposite. When the School Sisters of Notre Dame came to the United States in 1847, they landed squarely in the midst of an intense anti-Catholic tradition. The 1834 mob arson that burned the Ursuline convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts, had been followed by a chain of anti-Catholic episodes.<sup>9</sup> By 1840, the attack broadened to include heated debates over public education. In New York and Philadelphia, Catholics protested the ridiculing tone to religious instruction in the public schools, as well as the imposition of the King James version of the Bible on Catholic children. The American Protective Association, under the guidance of at least one hundred ministers, led an intense counter attack.<sup>10</sup> In May 1844, Philadelphia erupted in religious violence, which left thirteen dead, countless wounded, and several Catholic churches in smoldering ruins. These were years in which Catholic immigrants often felt the heat applied by the Order of United Americans or the Know-Nothing Party, which peaked in the 1850s. This group, which won its

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popular label because it surrounded all activities with secrecy, vigorously sponsored anti-immigrant legislation designed to restrict the political and social rights of the foreign born.

As for Catholic sisters, women who lived in community and wore distinguishing dress, many put aside the religious habit when traveling abroad for fear of the resulting insults and assaults.<sup>11</sup> Mother Caroline and her companions quickly learned about these unpleasant realities when, during her very first days in Baltimore, black children threw mud at the sisters as they walked on the street.<sup>12</sup> Given the largely negative social and political status of blacks, whether free or slave, in 1847 Baltimore, the raucous behavior of these youngsters pointedly underscored the widespread public hostility against Catholic women religious.

Clearly, the American social order felt endangered by the increasing presence of Catholics, regarded as clannish foreigners determined to destroy the concept of the separation of church and state. With highly charged feelings on both sides, Catholics increasingly looked to the security of a parochial school system, wherein their children could receive religious instruction free from physical and intellectual attack.<sup>13</sup> Even this strategy, designed to provide an educational enclave for Catholics, did not alleviate the prevailing anti-Catholic sentiment. The educational stakes seemed high to the nativists, who often regarded the parochial academy, not as a retreat out of the American mainstream for Catholics, but as yet one more challenge to Protestant values.

Not all of the resulting confrontations involved young children or impassioned, uneducated gangs who stormed churches and convents; middle-class political and religious leaders also contributed to the ill-will. Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph, led an early attack, and Protestant leaders such as Lyman Beecher, Horace Bushnell, and Albert Barnes followed, fretting about a supposed international Catholic conspiracy to deliver the United States into the hands of the Pope.<sup>14</sup> In 1846, the year before Mother Caroline's arrival, another famous Beecher, Edward, son of Lyman and brother of preacher Henry Ward Beecher, writer Harriet Beecher Stowe, and educator Catherine Beecher – had proclaimed in an address to the Ladies society for the Promotion of Education at the West:

Look now and see what the Catholics have been doing in...Indiana, where there is not one good Protestant female high school. Though the Catholic population of the States is but 25,000, they have five female seminaries, established at the most important points..and this is but a specimen of what they are doing all over the West. Indeed,

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out of sixty-eight Catholic female seminaries, forty-five are [in] the West. What does this look like but a deliberate purpose to proselyte the West by the power of the female mind.<sup>15</sup>

Beecher's comments hang on a complex set of ironies. Not only do they resonate with anti-Catholic and anti-woman tones – after all, he seems to suggest, isn't it bad enough that Catholics are trying to convert the West, but, even worse, they plan to do it with women – but such sentiments from the brother of two of the nineteenth century's most influential and powerful women certainly raises interesting speculation as to the Beecher family dynamics.

In addition to confronting a widespread and virulent anti-Catholic spirit, Mother Caroline also faced turmoil within her own church. The dramatic increase in the number of Catholics moving to America in the nineteenth century both inflated the potential for church power and added stresses to the small collection of clerics. As immigrant Catholic numbers soared well beyond a million, the existing American church faced seemingly impossible circumstances. Staggered by the needs of thousands of poor immigrants, many of whom did not speak English and who found their only institutional bonding within the church of their nativity, an overwhelmed American clergy sought to meet the multi-faceted demands of the burgeoning flock. Almost overnight, dioceses had to be formed, parishes created, schools constructed, and a system of governance established. Both financial and personnel considerations dominated the efforts, which, throughout the nineteenth century, were often marked by policy disagreements and rivalries among Catholics.<sup>16</sup>

One aspect of the clergy's response included the effort to organize the American church around national groups. This notion appeared to offer a solution to the pressures created by language differences and national conflicts, exacerbated by the tendency of the diverse foreign-born Catholic populations to congregate in the same geographic areas of America.

German Catholics especially supported the national church concept. Intensely devoted to their language and culture, Germans felt that parochial schools staffed by sisters of their own nationality guaranteed the best chances for preservation of their heritage. Immigrant experiences in German Catholic Milwaukee, Wisconsin, reflected these attitudes.

In Milwaukee, by 1850 immigrants accounted for almost two-thirds of the population. In this city of immigrants, Germans, always dominated among the foreign-born, jumping from almost 60% of the immigrant number in 1848 to 70% by 1869.<sup>17</sup> Guidebooks, published letters, state publicity campaigns, and the

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personal recruitment efforts in Europe of Bishop John Martin Henni help to explain the attraction Milwaukee held for German Catholics.

Milwaukee Germans gravitated toward their own ethnic communities, from whence they formed a range of social groups that drew on a curious blend of new world activities and old world nostalgia. From lodges to singing groups to neighborhood improvement societies to annual festivals to newspapers, these immigrants found multiple ways to support a vibrant German culture in Milwaukee.<sup>18</sup>

Within the immigrant circle, women played an essential and visible role. German immigrant women maintained close association with one another, not only in their ethnic neighborhoods and at the market place, but also through parish groups, altar societies, amateur dramatics, rosary guilds, the Sodality, and a spectrum of other pursuits.<sup>19</sup> Despite the well-defined profile of these immigrant women, few left as detailed a written record of their lives as did Mother Mary Caroline who arrived in Milwaukee on December 15, 1850.

Like all immigrants, Mother Caroline entered into a dual experience as a newcomer to America. First, she functioned as an observer of the often strange American society into which she had moved. Second, she lived as a participant in that society. Both of these identities – observer and participant – further illuminate the nineteenth century world of Mother Caroline.

As an observer of American culture, Mother Caroline rates as both admirer and critic. In her letters, she captured the social, economic, and political tones of American life at mid-century. For example, her account of the first expedition to Harrisburg, in which she recalled the roughness of the roads, the style of the vehicle, and the discomfort for the passengers mapped out the nature of all frontier travel.<sup>20</sup> And her chilling portrait of air pollution and its resulting health impact for Pittsburgh children was years ahead of its time.<sup>21</sup> It is from writings such as these, which permeate her letters, that today's historians are able to reconstruct the ecology of a nineteenth century world. Given this rich environmental record in her papers, perhaps we should forgive Mother Caroline her slight lapse into one of the most common foibles of immigrants – that of danger exaggeration, noticeable in her comments about the fearsome but unseen Pennsylvania rattlesnakes, "four to five feet long and as thick as a man's leg."<sup>22</sup>

In addition to being an environmental observer, Mother Caroline was also a cultural observer. Sometimes her social comments reflected her personal

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concerns, as when she constantly worried about the unruly conduct of so many American children.<sup>23</sup> On other occasions, her observations assumed a lighter tone, exemplified by her chance sighting of Tom Thumb, as he rolled through the streets of Detroit in his elegant carriage, or her tourist-like stop at Niagara Falls.<sup>24</sup> Her many visitations to far flung points allowed her uncommon exposure to many facets of America. While most newcomers journeyed to one location and settled into an ethnic community, Mother Caroline constantly moved about her new nation. This brought her into contact with native Americans, free blacks and slaves, husbands and wives, children, public leaders, other religious congregations, the church hierarchy.<sup>25</sup>

She visited large cities and small mission houses. She understood the disasters caused by economic depression and encountered the horror of poverty everywhere. She witnessed profound social forces shape both the North and the South. She stayed in the most cosmopolitan areas and traveled to the tiniest hamlets. She moved among the leaders of church and state, but returned to the poorest of the poor. She watched the transformation of immigrant communities from dislocated newcomers into political powerbrokers. Accordingly, as an immigrant observer, from her unique position as head of a growing community of women, Mother Caroline saw and recorded the diversities and complexities of American society as it tumbled toward the twentieth century.

In these events, however, Mother Caroline played more of a role than merely objective by-stander. Like all immigrants, she participated in the forces surrounding her and consequently both helped to shape and was shaped by her adopted nation.

Only twenty-three when she came to America, Mother Caroline exuded the vigor and optimism that characterized the immigrant style. That spirit helps to explain the zest with which she undertook, only a year later, the oversight responsibilities for the tiny band of German sisters left in the United States by Mother Theresa. Little perhaps did she, as a professed sister of the church, recognize how much her own experiences paralleled those of the immigrants around her.

First, by virtue of youth and single status, Mother Caroline replicated other women immigrants. Between 1840 and 1860, in Milwaukee, young, single immigrant women outnumbered any other demographic category.<sup>26</sup> Like most of these women, Mother Caroline came to an urban area in search of work, although in her case, the work extended far beyond her own employment and encompassed all those under her care. Further, her employment never wielded a temporary influence in her life, to be replaced by a sharply defined domesticity.

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Rather, the boundaries of her work constantly shifted and expanded, always bringing enlarged responsibility and status, even as she moved beyond youth and into her older years.

Second, like that of almost all immigrants, Mother Caroline's life was circumscribed by poverty. Obviously, in part this concerned her religious vow, but her immersion into poverty exceeded the spiritual goal of frugality. The call from pastors to serve small German parishes seemed always linked to the great poverty of the people in the area.<sup>27</sup> The effort to maintain educational establishments in such communities usually guaranteed a continual financial drain on motherhouse resources. As the missions increased, so did the monetary burdens of Mother Caroline. After the visitations of 1889, the list of new economic worries countered the better reports of some houses: the Chatawa, Mississippi, mission was located in the midst of a community in total economic disarray; Culman, Alabama, duplicated the Mississippi situation, and the St. James convent in Baltimore needed major renovations that would cost thousands of dollars.<sup>28</sup> Mission houses strapped by local economic deprivation barely sustained themselves and could do little to help with the larger expenses of the community.

The fact that sisters took a vow of poverty often served as a convenient loophole for church members and leaders, who accepted the excruciatingly bad conditions in some convents as normal. With stunning regularity, the annals of women's congregations contain accounts of the arrival at a frontier mission where the promised convent turned out to be a roofless, three-sided hut, or tales of the refusal of the local grocer to extend further credit to sisters who could not secure promised wages from their pastor.<sup>29</sup> The church at large too often adopted an expectation that sisters could endure, indeed should embrace, any level of poverty – poor housing, meager food, no wages, lack of medical care – while everyone else should enjoy at least a reasonable standard of living. Somehow a benign tolerance deemed it acceptable that sisters should work harder and be paid less than anyone else – secular or cleric – in the church.

Mother Caroline, however, was never freed from the realities of convent poverty – notes the 1875 house chronicle for the St. Vincent Mission at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, "Rev. Mother visited this mission for the first time...she pitied the poverty of the sisters and immediately sought to help them..."<sup>30</sup> That scenario repeated itself from mission to mission, year after year, as Mother Caroline struggled to secure the rudiments of decent living for her community.

Most especially the grinding impact of poverty took its toll in terms of the health of the School Sisters. Throughout her lifetime Mother Caroline watched

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once healthy young women again and again succumb to the strains of poor diet and overwork. In 1876, sisters in New York City, in an effort to improve their health, received special permission to take walks outside the convent grounds with their boarders.<sup>31</sup> Such measures simply could not alter the overwhelming drain that poverty took on the physical well-being of the community. The roll call of the deceased runs through Mother Caroline's letters as a steady, mournful drum: Sister Mary Christina, in 1856, age 26, consumption; Sister Cornelia Evers, in 1872, age 26, consumption; Sister Germana Leibrand, in 1872, age 29, typhoid; Sister M. Andrea Corsina Halahan, in 1876, age 23, pneumonia; Sister M. Benedicta McCudden, in 1878, age 22, consumption.<sup>32</sup> In 1886, a weary Mother Caroline noted, "...overworked Sisters die very young because of the hard work, great labor, and night watching..."<sup>33</sup>

Despite these unending stresses, the ultimate success of Mother Caroline can be tied to her strategies for accommodation, for without these immigrants did not survive well in America. Not all accommodations came easily to immigrants and for Mother Caroline the struggle often centered on the issue of the German language. Although the sisters' contracts stated that instruction would be in both German and English, the former component lost favor with each passing year.<sup>34</sup> Always an advocate of the preservation of German skills, Mother Caroline expressed frustration that the combination of many regional dialects, coupled with an infusion of English, produced a hybrid language.<sup>35</sup> By 1884, she noted with resignation that throughout the schools, German proficiency had slipped. In part this was a product of general acculturation of large numbers of second generation immigrants, but it also stemmed from an on-going language debate between the Irish and German factions within the church.<sup>36</sup> In keeping with the community's reputation for academic standards, Mother Caroline's complaint hinged on the matter of competency and a bit on her struggles with the Irish bishops, for she wrote, "It's embarrassing! It would be better to abandon the German altogether than to make such a mess of it; we are running into the danger that the children learn neither German nor English."<sup>37</sup> However, her own 1889 directive in which she reminded all the houses that sisters speaking English among themselves was forbidden, foreshadowed the ultimate termination of German as a sustaining language of the community.<sup>38</sup> While it caused Mother Caroline pain, the transition from mother tongue to English underscored the nineteenth century immigrant evolution of the School Sisters.

Clearly, the matter of German remained an issue of hardship for Mother Caroline. Yet, in other areas she demonstrated that critical sense of

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accommodation needed for the School Sisters to emerge as one of the most influential religious communities in the United States. She carefully juggled the exceptional demands placed on women religious in America with the expectations of the European motherhouse, that could not know the circumstances of U. S. mission life.<sup>39</sup> She guided the School Sisters through their passage from old world cloister to new world convent. She accomplished this largely without destructive confrontation with the clergy or censure from Munich, and in the process she retained the congregational integrity of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Thus, she could report that the rule of enclosure had been carefully guarded, except when the call of duty required that it be broken.<sup>40</sup> That the American definition of a call of duty might differ from that in Europe, as did the rising hour each morning or the agreement to teach boys, is indicative of an overall pattern of adjustment, as a European religious community took on the tone and texture of a new society.

Indeed, in her process of accommodation, Mother Caroline had early on taken that step which tied her irrevocably to her adopted country. As early as 1850, Mother Caroline launched the procedures to be named a naturalized citizen of the United States, an event that occurred on January 9, 1856. Perhaps no other action by immigrant people so clearly manifested their hopeful expectations of and personal commitments to the United States.<sup>41</sup>

In making this important decision, Mother Caroline expressed above all the immigrant's understanding of America as a land of opportunity. She seized opportunity and explored it, not only for herself but for the hundreds of young women who entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Contrary to boulevard opinion of either the nineteenth or the twentieth century, convent life in American pushed back societal parameters for women and presented vistas of opportunity. Inside religious cloisters, women, guided by a rule of obedience, accepted seemingly impossible challenges for to refuse a task violated sacred promise. In the execution of a religious vow, women, despite their own personal trepidations and insecurities, rapidly developed managerial and executive talents they had never anticipated. Their successes and the resulting sense of confidence they gained, both as individual sisters and as communities, spurred them forward to even more challenging endeavors. Out of this courage rose the Catholic schools, hospitals, missions, and orphanages of this nation. In a society that has typically overlooked or misunderstood both the temporal and spiritual nature of sisterhoods, American religious women steadily acquired a collective multi-layered resourcefulness, easily a match for any to be found in the mainstream of society.

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The massive accomplishment of Mother Caroline's life would alone attest to the correctness of these assertions. At a young age, she accepted the order of her superior and assumed responsibilities that far transcended any comparable role for secular women of the day. As the complexities of that assignment mushroomed throughout the remainder of her life, she fashioned herself into an astute business woman, knowledgeable in matters of finance and governance, conversant with male leaders of every field. On the occasion of her eulogy, she was credited with establishing an educational network that encompassed 200 convents, 2,000 sisters, and 70,000 students.<sup>42</sup>

These achievements point to her personal success as an immigrant woman, but they are only one factor in Mother Caroline's management of opportunity. Perhaps the greatest element can be found in the way in which she made opportunity a continuing dynamic for those 2,000 School Sisters of Notre Dame and all the professed who followed them. The expansion of personal horizons, the immersion in advanced learning, the assignments to distant missions, the development of a congregational political structure, the challenges of civic and church diplomacy, the exposure to complex social and economic problems – all these forces, from which secular women were routinely excluded, Mother Caroline provided for thousands of young women who together forged the School Sisters of Notre Dame into a network of American religious.

Even this list of ways in which Mother Caroline led women to advancement does not do her justice. For above all, Mother Caroline, through all of these practical concerns, guided her community to spiritual and intellectual attainment. She defined the standards by which the School Sisters could undertake these massive responsibilities and still pursue and preserve their fundamental goal – that of living the spiritual rule of the congregation. Clearly, she did so with personal integrity, dignity, and a kindly good humor.

Mother Caroline's immigrant world changed between 1847 and 1892. So did Mother Caroline, the immigrant. She watched the society around her, she plunged into its demands, and she used it as a vehicle through which to promote the School Sisters of Notre Dame. As she accommodated and adjusted, she advanced and strengthened the interests of her sisters. Although she symbolizes successful immigrant acculturation in a material context, Mother Caroline also stands as a beacon for those who cherish devotion to the mind and the spirit.

Across the panorama of a turbulent nineteenth century America, Mother Caroline shaped an American heritage that gave intellectual purpose and spiritual direction to all School Sisters of Notre Dame. In so doing, Mother Caroline enriched American education and enhanced the meaning of Catholic womanhood. Your presence here this morning gives witness to that statement, to the legacy of this remarkable immigrant woman, Mother Mary Caroline, and to

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the enduring power of a gentle voice that once had said, "Take this child and make Him grow."

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

for

"Adapting the Vision: Caroline in Nineteenth-Century America"

by

Anne M. Butler

1. The concept of America as a "melting pot" for European immigrants has been replaced by a more complex vision of the nineteenth-century, one that suggests newcomers confronted a sharply divided society that pulsed with both discrimination and opportunity. What three factors in American society created the greatest barriers for Mother Caroline as an immigrant? What three factors and the way she manipulated them contributed to her successes as an immigrant?
2. Historically, women have largely been defined by the nature of their labor, both paid and unpaid. In what ways did Mother Caroline, as a School Sister of Notre Dame, use that concept as a benefit for her congregation, as the sisterhood, newly arrived in America, sought stability in a challenging political and cultural environment?
3. The history of America is marked by narratives of community building, largely within the context of traditional family structures. How did Mother Caroline use secular and spiritual components to build community and family for the School Sisters of Notre Dame, single women who often lived in small convents, far from the congregation's motherhouse?
4. Much of American history ignores the impact of religious conviction and personal spirituality as forces that sustained immigrants, as they explored ways to adapt to the standards and expectations of a democratic society. Where, in the words of Mother Caroline, are found examples of how her faith directly influenced her transition from European nun to American sister?

## NOTES

1. Mother Mary Caroline Friess to Reverend Joseph Ferdinand Mueller, 18 June 1850, Barbara Brumleve, SSND and Marjorie Myers, SSND, eds., *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1 (n.p.: Resource Publication #34, SSND Heritage Research, 1985), p. 30.
2. Early nineteenth century statistics for immigrants are often estimates at best. However, most authors give figures that are generally the same. The overall impact of these numbers is a convincing statement that the nineteenth century marked years of enormous migration from Europe to America. For example see, John J. Appel, ed., *The New Immigration* (New York, Pitman Publishing, 1971), pp. 1-4; Charles M. Dollar, ed., *American Changing Times* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1982, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), pp. 279-81; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Athenum, 1977), pp. 14-19. For a discussion of how immigration pressures specifically concerned religious women, especially nursing sisters, see Judith G. Cetina, "In Times of Immigration," in *Pioneer Healers: The History of Religious Women in American Health Care*, ed. by Ursula Stepsis, CSA and Dolores Liptak, RSM (New York: Crossroad, 1989), pp.86-117.
3. The premier abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, had been launched in 1831 by William Lloyd Garrison. By 1847, the genre had proliferated. The very week that Mother Caroline arrived in New York the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* on 29 July 1847 had proclaimed, "Keep it before the People! That on Tuesday, the 18<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1847, two women were sold at public auction in the city of Washington, and the proceeds of the sale deposited in the treasury of the U.S." In the same month, the *Southern Literary Messenger and Review* had announced, "These [anti-slavery] associations are too generally nurseries of all manner of fanatical extravagance to have much of the favor of men of sound minds and moderate views. Their very nature seems to plunge them at once into the excesses of fanaticism..." *Southern Literary Messenger and Review* 18 July 1847, p. 434.
4. John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., rev.) pp. 125-26. For an overview of the spread of Catholic institutions and charitable services during the nineteenth century, see John O'Grady, *Catholic Charities in the United States: History and*

*Problems* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Charities, 1930).

5. Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), pp. 155-63.
6. Mary Caroline Friess, Report to the Central Council of the Louis Mission Society in Munich, April 1862; St. Mary and St. Joseph Orphanage, New Orleans, LA, April 1861, pp. 8-9, 26 June - 13 July 1861, p. 9, *House Chronicle*; Most Holy Redeemer and St. Joseph Orphanage, New York City, New York, 20-27 June 1862, *Most Holy Redeemer Chronicle*, p. 29; *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v.1, p. 118; v. 2, pp. 555-557.
7. The effect of the Civil War on the Catholic community in the United States is treated in John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism*, pp. 97-102. Judith Metz, SC., "In Times of War," in *Pioneer Healers*, pp. 39-68, is useful for a sense of how the Civil War had a direct impact on the communities of religious women.
8. For a biography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, see Bruce Miroff, "Elizabeth Cady Stanton," in G.J. Barker-Benfield and Catherine Clinton, eds., *Portraits of American Women: From Settlement to Present*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), pp. 221-39. For an analysis of the political thought and writings of Stanton, see Ellen Carol Dubois, ed., *Elizabeth Cady Stanton-Susan B. Anthony: Correspondence, Writing, Speeches* (New York: Schocken Books, 1981), pp. 13-15, 44-52.
9. For a discussion of anti-Catholicism see, for example, Charles M. Dollar, ed., *American Changing Times*, pp. 281-83; John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism*, pp. 84-87; Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants: 1790-1880* (New York: Athenum, 1969), pp. 185-90; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, pp. 5-7.
10. Charles M. Dollar, *American Changing Times*, p. 282; John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism*, pp. 109-10; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, pp. 61-63; Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973, 2nd. Ed.), pp. 243-44.

11. For a study that considers varied aspects to the difficulties surrounding the establishment of religious communities in the United States, see Eileen Mary Brewer, *Nuns and the Education of American Catholic Women, 1860-1920* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1987), pp. 1-43.
12. Mother Caroline Friess to Joseph Ferdinand Mueller, 18 June 1850, in *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1, p. 30
13. Charles M. Dollar, *American Changing Times*, p. 282; John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism*, pp. 54-56; Winthrop Hudson, *Religion in America*, pp. 243-44.
14. Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America*, p. 240
15. Quoted in Thomas Woody, *A History of Women's Education in the United States*, 2 vols. (New York: Octagon Press, 1966, reprint ed.) ii, p. 456-7.
16. Mother Mary Caroline to Mother Superior Theophila, 6 November, 1890, Mother Mary Caroline to Mother General Margaret of Cortona, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 2, pp. 467, 469; John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism*, pp. 59-60, 80-81; Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants*, pp. 164-67; Winthrop Hudson, *Religion in America*, pp. 247-49.
17. Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Immigrant Milwaukee: 2836-2860; Accommodation and Community in a Frontier City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 14-15. Conzen's study is a detailed, highly quantified analysis of the ethnicity that Germans brought to Milwaukee.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-56, 172-76.
19. For a full discussion of the broad range of activities of early German immigrants in Milwaukee, see Kathleen Neils Conzens, *Immigrant Milwaukee*; pp. 189-91.
20. Mother Caroline to Joseph Ferdinand Mueller, 18 June 1850, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1, p. 31
21. *Ibid.*, p. 42
22. *Ibid.*, p. 33

23. *Ibid.*, p. 37-38, 47; Mother Caroline Friess to \_\_\_\_\_, 12 November 1853, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1, p. 55.
24. Mother Mary Caroline, an account of her journey, circa June 1849; Mother Mary Caroline to Reverend Joseph Ferdinand Mueller, 18 June 1850, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1, pp. 16-17, 45-46.
25. These references are throughout the letters of Mother Caroline. However, for examples see the documents on pp. 23-24, 30, 46, 47, 65, 71, 76, 78, 100, 310, 367, 548, 552, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other documents*, v. 1 & 2.
26. Kathleen Neils Conzens, *Immigrant Milwaukee*, p. 48.
27. This theme runs throughout Mother Caroline's correspondence. For examples, see the documents on pp. 25, 35, 38, 45, 56, 84, 116, 560, 583, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, vs. 1 & 2.
28. Mother Mary Caroline to Superior General Margaret of Cortona, 26 February 1889, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v.2, pp. 443-47.
29. For examples, see pioneer annals for Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Archives, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Archives, Aberdeen, South Dakota; Sisters of St. Mary of Oregon, Archives, Beaverton, Oregon; Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Archives, Leavenworth, Kansas; and the Franciscan Sisters of Glen Riddle, Archives, Aston, Pennsylvania.
30. St. Vincent Mission, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, 9 May 1875, House Chronicle, p. 1 printed in *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 2, p. 572.
31. Most Holy Redeemer Convent, New York City, New York, House Chronicle, January 1876, p. 60, printed in *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 2, p. 573.
32. Notices of death are found throughout the letters. For these examples, see pp. 65, 143, 145, 188, 213 of *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*.

33. Mother Mary Caroline to Mother Superior Sister Theophila, 11 October 1886, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 2, p. 395.
34. Contract between Fr. Mathias Alig and Mother Mary Caroline, 1 January 1867, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v.1,p.134
35. Mother Mary Caroline to Reverend Joseph Ferdinand Mueller, 18 June 1850, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1, pp. 37-38.
36. A powerful voice calling for an end to the European tone of the American church was heard in Archbishop John Ireland. For a full discussion of his position and his clashes with various religious communities, see Marvin R. O'Connell, *John Ireland and the American Catholic Church* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988).
37. Mother Mary Caroline to Reverend P.M. Abbelen, 23 January 1884, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1 p. 333.
38. Mother Mary Caroline to Superior General Margaret of Cortona, 26 February 1889, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v.2, p. 447.
39. Mother Mary Caroline to Reverend Joseph Ferdinand Mueller, 18 June 1850; Mother Mary Caroline to Esteemed Director of the Mission Society, April 1858; Mother Mary Caroline to Mother Superior Theophila, 11 May 1885; Mother Mary Caroline Funeral Sermon delivered by Reverend Benedict Neithart, C.Ss.R., 27 July 1892; Institute of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Maryland, House Chronicle, Summer – Fall, 1850, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, vs. 1 & 2, Fn. #7, p. 36, pp. 88-89, p. 377, p. 507, p. 547; P.M. Abbelen, *Venerable Mother Caroline Friess: A Sketch of Her Life and Character* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1893), pp. 108-10.
40. Mother Mary Caroline to Reverend P.M. Abbelen, 3 November 1879, 7 September 1885, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, vs. 1 & 2, pp. 236-37, 383.
41. Mary Caroline Friess, Certificate of Naturalization, 9 January 1856, printed in *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1, p. 59

42. Eulogy of Mother Mary Caroline Friess, delivered by Rev. Benedict Neithart, C.Ss.R., 27 July 1892, *Mother Mary Caroline Friess: Correspondence and Other Documents*, v. 1, p. 507.

