NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER DONATE NOW!
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Nov. 13, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini

Gerelyn Hollingsworth | Nov. 13, 2009 NCR Today

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, 1850-1917

Mother Cabrini, who founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, [1] was the first United States citizen to be canonized.

In 1889, she came to this country from Italy with six of her nuns. "When Mother Cabrini first arrived in the United States, [2] she was promptly informed that nuns were to cover their heads with veils, a custom unfamiliar to her. She immediately sent her Sisters to purchase the cheapest, lightest fabric they could find. Each Sister was given 1 1/2 to 2 yards of fabric. The rest of the habit worn by Mother Cabrini and her Sisters varied little from the traditional attire worn by peasant women in Europe at that time."

"Soon after her arrival in New York City, Mother Cabrini created an orphanage for Italian girls. [3]Shortly thereafter in 1890, she moved the orphanage out of the city to the beautiful country location at a former Jesuit novitiate located on the Hudson River in West Park, New York."

She then "embarked upon a tireless crisscrossing of the world, establishing a network of educational, health care, and social service institutions for needy immigrants, institutions that today provide services for those of all faiths and backgrounds."

Mother Cabrini once spent a night with the Benedictines at Mt. St. Scholastica in Atchison, Kansas. "In the winter of 1902 the new convent and the new chapel had a special visitor. Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, traveling west, stopped over night. Sister Barbara loved to recall: 'She was a very nice ordinary Sister. She liked coffee.'"
--from *The Meaning of the Mountain,* by Sr. M. Faith Schuster, O.S.B.

She was on her way to Denver [4] to care for the Italian immigrants.

"She extended a friendly and helping hand especially to immigrants and offered them necessary shelter and relief, for having left their homeland behind, they were wandering about in a foreign land with no place to turn for help.
--Pope Pius XII, Office of Readings [5] for the Feast of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini.

Source URL (retrieved on *05/05/2015 - 20:44*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/nov-13-st-frances-xavier-cabrini

Links:
[1] http://www.mothercabrini.org/ministries/shrine_ny.asp
[2] http://www.cabrinihome.com/westpark.htm
[3] http://www.cabrinihome.com/about.htm

[4] http://www.archden.org/dcr/archive/20011107/
[5] http://www.universalis.com/USA/20091113/readings.htm