

# Elizabeth Hayes — A Woman of Her Time

## *An Examination of the History of Victorian England and an Attempt by an Englishwoman to Trace Its Influence on Mother Mary Ignatius Hayes, 1823-1894*

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How was Elizabeth Hayes influenced by the world she lived in? This is a very interesting question because our very early experiences affect us all. Whether they were happy or unhappy, they leave their mark on us, and often affect us in later life.

Though her roots were English and her family were very involved in the Anglican High Church in England, she herself was brought up and educated in Guernsey, and I believe this fact alone had an influence on her in later life.

The Channel Islands, a legacy from William the Conqueror, have always been and still are self-governing, having their own States Parliament, making their own laws, and having their own currency. Until after the Second World War, the Islands were more French than English, so Elizabeth was bilingual. Since France was the "eldest daughter of the Church," she no doubt had some experience of French Catholicism.

By the time she came to live in England, after her father's death, around 1843, she was already grown-up, bilingual, well educated, and was able to obtain a teaching post in Blackheath. These early years, I think, left her with a natural rapport with French people, whether in France or in French Canada. She must also have been accustomed to living in a more Catholic or, shall I say, a less Protestant atmosphere than she found in England. It is interesting to remember that the Convent in Glasgow was of French foundation, though she did not find what she wanted there.

To know what England was like when she left Guernsey, it is necessary to look back to the earlier part of the century, when the Napoleonic Wars, which ended with Wellington's victory at Waterloo in 1815, were still being fought. I will dwell on all significant aspects of life within the scope and limitations that an essay such as this demands.

The French Revolution had the effect of rousing a fear of mob rule, as had happened in France in 1789. The lower classes of society must be kept down, they must be read the Riot Act. They must be prohibited from coming together lest they plan rebellion. The memory of the mob overthrowing the monarchy, sending the aristocrats to the guillotine, setting up a reign of terror, overthrowing the government, and bringing in a new constitutional regime was a source of great fear—it must never be allowed to happen in England's green and pleasant land. But another kind of revolution was making England's land anything but green and pleasant, the Industrial Revolution.

The Industrial Revolution resulted from the invention of machinery and new methods of mass production, which in turn led to the building of factories near the sources of coal and iron. As early as 1812, the Luddites went around breaking up the machines which were throwing them out of work.

The population began to move to the new urban centres to find work in the new industries, and those who were employed were housed in the mean, unhealthy, back-to-back houses which often became slums. Conditions in the factories were also deplorable. The hours were long and the pay poor. Even women and children worked for long hours for little pay. Children were employed in the mines, some as young as five years old, whose job it was to crawl through the tunnels dragging tubs of coal. Unemployment increased, and conditions worsened as people flocked into the country hoping to find a living.

Some were appalled by the grave injustice and the widespread inhumane conditions. The most notable of these was Lord Shaftesbury, who pressed for legislation to ameliorate the lot of women and children but who failed to have any of the harsh laws repealed. His efforts, however, resulted in legislation forbidding children under nine to be employed in the factories and those under thirteen to work for more than forty-eight hours a week! There were the few who built model mills and housed their workers decently, saying that a profit could still be made.

For our purposes, it is important to mention the evils of slavery, since Mother Mary Ignatius would later come to minister among the newly emancipated black community in Georgia. It was William Wilberforce who laboured to have slavery abolished. He succeeded in doing so in the British Empire in 1807, and efforts were being made on many fronts to have it abolished everywhere by 1833. In the United States and Russia it was in existence until the 1860's.

It is necessary to understand, too, the place religion held in this century of change and turmoil. Not many people realize that the Church of England, established by Henry VIII, with the King or Queen as head, not only governs the High Church Anglicans but is an umbrella covering Low Church Protestants as well. The Church of England includes all groups except Methodists. After the "Glorious Revolution" of 1689, when William of Orange thwarted the Stuart attempts to turn England Catholic again, both Catholics and some groups of Protestants became known as dissenters. These were discriminated against especially by the Test Acts, by which they had to take an oath of allegiance to the Church of England in order to follow certain professions. Parliament and the universities were closed to them as well. The temper of the times still lingers in the Protestant Succession Act, which perdures to this day.

But there came a dramatic change for the Catholic Church when the Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1829 freed Roman Catholics from most of the legal discrimination against them and they could practice their religion openly. There was much animosity among the extreme Protestants as the Catholics came "out of the catacombs" at last. In time, religious life began to revive, as young ladies who wished to be religious no longer had to go abroad to Europe. Who could have foreseen that in a few years time the Oxford Movement, which started in 1833, would lead many Oxford clerics to "go over to Rome." It is true that the "second spring" predicted by John Henry Newman did not materialize, as not all became Catholics. Of the Oxford leaders, Pusey and Keble remained in the Anglican Church. Pusey founded some Anglican Sisterhoods and recommended to Elizabeth Hayes that she go to Wantage. Newman, Father Faber, W. G. Ward, and others followed the example of Elizabeth Lockhart's brother William, who left Newman's "Littlemore" community to become its first member to join the Catholic Church. It was not until 1851 that Manning turned to Rome. The Gorham judgement dispelled any hesitation he may have felt. This judgement indicated that civil law courts could overrule the Church's own court; laymen could interfere in a Church decision.

The Oxford Movement may have been a shock to the Established Church, but a further one was in store when in 1850 Dr. Wiseman came from Rome to set up and restore the Catholic Hierarchy. It was a bold step, and one that was greeted with horror. In spite of the hostility and

attempts to thwart his intentions, he was successful, but anti-Catholic feeling remained strong in many quarters throughout the century and into the next. In his letter from the Flaminian Gate, Wiseman sought to appease his critics by declaring that he had come to care for the Catholics who were emerging from the catacombs after four hundred years of oppression; in particular, he had come to look after the very poor Catholic immigrants and their children coming from other countries, especially Ireland. Many of these were homeless, and men like Dr. Barnado were horrified to find children sleeping on the streets at night. The homes founded by this good man still exist in England. Naturally, the care of poor children was attractive to Sisters, both Anglican and Catholic.

Wiseman was careful to establish sees differing in name and location from those of the Anglican Bishops. Manning's conversion came at an opportune moment. Just as the Catholic Church was finding its feet, as it were, and needing a man of his standing and experience as well as an Oxford education, here is the convert who, by the grace of God, meets that need. He was a great administrator and quickly became aware of the need of priests for parish work, which led to the foundation of the Oblates of St. Charles dedicated to that need. As an interesting aside, the Oblates have always been concerned with and supportive of the English foundation of Elizabeth Lockhart. While the Church was laying foundations for the future after four hundred years of suppression, Foundresses, especially converts, were searching for information on religious life. All found themselves in a man's world! As well as finding out what kind of life they wanted to lead and what kind of work they were attracted to do, they found they needed the approval of bishops and priests and a rule of life approved by Rome. Both Anglican and Catholic Sisters wanted to help the new destitute poor, and especially the orphans and unwanted children.

The challenge was enormous and well beyond the ability and resources of the private sector. When the condition of the poor and homeless reached a point when it could be overlooked no longer, the Government set up WORKHOUSES. These were for the old and sick poor, and excluded the able-bodied even if the latter could not find work. Homes began to be built for orphans and unwanted children, and we know that at Portobello Road the Sisters built St. Elizabeth's Home, which could accommodate 180 children. Many of these were Poor-Law children. The Poor Laws were introduced by Queen Elizabeth I to meet in some way the huge wave of new poor resulting from the loss of the monasteries in Henry VIII's reign. Today we would call them children in care. Parishes were to look after their poor, and the better-off paid a kind of tax to support them. Naturally the contributors wanted to pay as little as possible, and later in the century public opinion led to an enquiry into the bad conditions in the workhouses and the dreadful food the people were being given, and that in small quantities.

Homeless children, as well as children whose parents were unable to care for them, were paid for by the poor law authorities in the homes for children. Catholic authorities found that in these, Catholic children went to the Anglican Church and lost contact with their faith. The Convents sought to remedy this situation by providing homes for their own needy.

Many poor families depended on the money earned by wives and children. Wives often worked as sweated labour in the factories for a mere pittance; others took in work and laboured at doing washing or sewing at home. I remember a poem in a book at primary school. The refrain went like this:

Stitch, stitch, stitch in poverty, hunger and dirt  
And still in a voice of dolorous pitch,  
She sang the song of the shirt.

Numerous single women took to the streets, and we know how Mother Lockhart started a penitentiary at Wantage to give them a home and shelter. William Gladstone, the famous politician, at one time showed his concern for these "fallen women" and tried to help them.

There are some people who always blame the Government for everything, so perhaps at this point we should take a look at the government during the nineteenth century, and consider the changes it went through.

The Oxford History of England still calls its volume on the Nineteenth Century *The Age of Reform*, and there is little doubt that reform was seen to be necessary after the experience of the French Revolution. It was seen to be even more necessary as the results of the Industrial Revolution made themselves apparent. The upheavals caused by this revolution, the growth of the population, and the plight of the lower classes made it clear that strong government was necessary to uphold LAW AND ORDER. There was little respect for the monarchy under George IV and his brother William, and agitation for an extension of the franchise led as early as 1832 to Earl Grey's great reform bill. Fear of mob rule was in the air, and great jubilation followed the passing of the act. It was the first step of the reform of parliament. Its greatest triumph was that the "rotten boroughs" were done away with. These were places where few people now lived but they still sent MP's to Parliament. Old Sarum is quoted as represented in the House, but it had no inhabitants at all. As time went on, every aspect of life became the subject of reform. One has to realize the scope of reform needed. The country was ruled by a two-party government: the Whigs and the Tories. They were unsalaried, and therefore had to be financially independent. Voting was done in public. Most MP's were wealthy landowners.

In 1837, Victoria became queen at the tender age of 18. With Lord Melbourne at her side, she promised to be good and to dedicate herself to the service of her subjects. People felt a New Age was beginning, and there is little doubt that her long reign of 64 years brought a certain amount of stability to England. Due to the strides being made in industry and in trade, a new well-to-do class, *the nouveaux riches* of the new capitalist society, began to seek prominent places in the country and supported extension of the franchise. Agitation for the vote went on among all classes. The CHARTIST MOVEMENT attracted many of these crusaders. A charter of reform was drawn up, demanding universal suffrage, the abolition of a property qualification for voters, a secret ballot, payment of MP's. It seems very reasonable to us in the 20th century, but at that time it must have seemed impossible. It was 1867 before most men got the vote. In 1884 agricultural workers gained the privilege. The secret ballot came in 1872, but not until 1911 did the MP's receive a salary of £400.00 per annum. The snag: UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE DID NOT INCLUDE WOMEN. It was only in 1918 that women of 30 were able to vote; in 1928 the privilege was extended to women of 21 !

As the Industrial Revolution progressed, discontent among the ill-paid workers became widespread. Dickens' book *Hard Times* paints a vivid picture of the era. Agitators for justice became aware of their need for education if they were to better the conditions of the workers. Singly, they could effect little. They were merely counted as trouble-makers!

As the century progressed, however, a new type of working-class men emerged, men who had studied and had become highly skilled. In about 1868, a group of engineers set up the first viable trade union, a union which would champion the cause of the workers and fight for their rights. Miners, farmers, and other groups began to set up unions. Later in the century we hear of strikes for higher wages. We mention the Dockers Strike since Cardinal Manning spoke in favour of the dockers "tanner"-the old sixpenny coin. Liberal MP's began to take up "causes" and champion special issues. Gladstone became known affectionately, at one time, as

the "People's William" ! It was the Trade Union of the Miners who paid for Keir Hardy to enter parliament in the 1890's. The Labour Party, then established, eventually replaced the Liberals, but not until the next century.

The value of education for children was grasped by many thinkers quite early in the century, as we see from the Factory Acts of Shaftesbury and other philanthropists. They demanded that children working in the factories and mines were to have two hours of schooling per day. Inspectors had to be appointed before this was complied with. As time went on, Ragged Schools for ragged scholars sprang up, as well as "Dame" Schools which taught reading for a few "coppers" a week. Homes for Children usually taught the pupils on the premises, as the Sisters did at both Wantage and Bayswater. Convents often ran a "poor school" for the very poor families. Trade Schools and Mechanics Institutes began to proliferate, where workers could study and learn a trade. These day schools also provided evening classes. As the working class gained more freedoms, especially the right to vote, liberal governments began to build state schools. Robert Lowe remarked, "We must educate our masters." It was not until 1870 that Foster's Education Act provided education for children up to the age of 13. This was compulsory and not universally popular. Teachers of "the masses" were to be paid by results, so they did their best to persuade their charges to imbibe the three R's. Schools for girls who could afford to pay for their education were poor compared to the public schools for boys, until pioneers like Miss Buss and Miss Beale introduced more scholarly academies.

THE GREAT EXHIBITION held in Hyde Park in 1851 was an enormous success and demonstrated the continued growth of inventive skills. A new world was opening up, and England was becoming THE WORKSHOP OF THE WORLD. Inventions such as the spinning jenny and the new methods of smelting iron, the development of the railway system enabling goods as well as passengers to be carried at great speed, the postal system with its PENNY BLACK stamp, all played their part in this new world, not forgetting the growth in population as the immigrants from Ireland and other countries helped to swell the number of lowpaid workers! Inventors built light houses and bridges. IRONBRIDGE, the first one made of this metal, still attracts visitors and tourists. Later we had iron-clad ships, horse-drawn tramcars, gas light, and as early as 1831, Faraday was producing electricity. This writer was present in London in 1931 when Buckingham Palace, the Houses of Parliament, and other public buildings were floodlit for the Centenary. As the country became transformed in this melting pot of change, and travel increased with improvement in transport, it opened up the mind and often the conscience!!!

We have considered some of the reforms, but in the second half of the century every sphere of existence seemed to come under the microscope, including the army and navy. Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War of 1854-56 was appalled at the plight of the British soldiers inadequately clothed in the Russian winter, and the neglect of the wounded and lack of supplies for care of them. THE LADY OF THE LAMP stirred the public conscience, though real reforms came about only later in the century. Her call for the training of nurses and well-run hospitals bore immediate fruit, especially in London. The navy was essential to English sea-power if Britannia wished to continue to rule the waves! The Press Gang method of obtaining unwilling recruits for the Merchant Navy, the hard life, poor food and pay for the lower-grade seamen, the constant flogging were all highlighted for reform. A woman activist, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, put prison reform in motion. The keeping of law and order on the streets of London became dependent on a band of men called the Bow Street Runners. These were replaced by Sir Robert Peel, with the foundation of the Metropolitan Police Force. The police were at first called peelers, but in time became known as bobbies on the beat. Each bobby had his own beat or area.

Because of the many novelists the age produced and the growth of the press, we have some vivid pictures of Victorian life. Charles Dickens in his books covers most aspects of Victorian society, including the still-existent anti-Catholic feeling stirred up by the Gordon Riots of 1780.

Whatever happened in Europe after the Peace of 1815? Pitt the Younger had prophesied a long and bitter struggle, when shortly before his death he rolled up the map of Europe, saying it would not be needed for a long time. He was right, as Napoleon sought to be Emperor of Europe as well as of France. From the French Revolution to the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 at Waterloo, a quarter of a century had elapsed. Britain aimed to maintain the peace by preserving her naval supremacy and also by preserving the balance of power in Europe. The settlement made at the Congress of Vienna proved difficult to maintain, due largely to the rise of nationalism but also due to the attempt of some rulers to return to the *status quo* as it was before the French Revolution. The days of the absolute monarch were gone, as the French soon showed by rejecting the attempt of the Bourbons to rule as such. It was said they had learned nothing and forgotten nothing. Changes in kings and governments followed, until France became a Republic in 1870 after the deposition of Napoleon's nephew, Napoleon III, who fled to England. Belgium and Holland became separate nations, as did Norway and Sweden. The powerful statesman of Austria, Metternich, also had to take refuge in England during the 1848 Year of Revolutions in Europe. Greece was unhappy under the Turks, and the Ottoman Empire of Turkey began to break up. By 1870 the numerous small states of Germany had been moulded into one state under the Kaiser by the Hohenzollerns through the statesmanship of Count Bismarck, who manoeuvred the fall of Napoleon III by sparking off the Franco-Prussian War in that year. In that same year Italy also became one nation, fostered by the diplomacy of Count Cavour and the army of Garibaldi. Here a monarchy was established with Victor Emmanuel of the House of Savoy as king. This meant the loss of the Papal States, leaving the Pope a prisoner in the Vatican until Mussolini set up Vatican City in 1926.

In spite of the influence of the French Revolution, or perhaps because of it, most countries of Europe maintained their kings. The number of crowned heads at Queen Victoria's funeral bears this out.

A word about colonization. It was not something new. The English had occupied Africa, and France had settled Canada until the English took it from them. The Dutch and Portuguese owned colonies. The East India Company gained Indian lands for Britain. Australia was a convict settlement. But as explorers opened up "darkest Africa," followed by traders, a new enthusiasm roused Europeans to extend their possessions. The English Empire grew. Cecil Rhodes dreamed of our possessions spreading up the map of Africa, and indeed he gave his own name to Rhodesia. The discovery of diamonds in Africa and of gold in Australia spurred the British on. The Boers lost land to the British, and Leopold of Belgium suggested all must seize a slice of the cake in South Africa. He proceeded to slice out for himself a huge piece of this "gateau," known to us as the Belgian Congo. The scramble for Africa was on. Other European countries followed suit, disregarding the tribal system, so that one half of a tribe might be a British colony and the other a French or German one. This led to wars with the tribes, especially the Zulus, who were skilled fighters and had a well-trained army, but their weapon, the "assegai," was no match for modern armies with guns. The son of Napoleon III of France was killed in one of the Zulu wars. The Europeans thought they were bringing civilization to these natives.

Colonization was not all trade and exploitation. Christians of all denominations sent out missionaries. As early as 1799 there was a Church Missionary Society in England, and missionaries followed the explorers and traders to Africa and other countries. Many of our modern Irish and English Societies of the Catholic Church were founded in this period.

Colonialism, as I said in the beginning, was not peculiar to the era. Ireland suffered under English rule for centuries. I have so far omitted mention of this land, as I am of Irish descent and very much aware of the persecution of the Irish, especially the Irish Catholics. Some British statesmen did take up their cause, but these were in a minority. Early in this century Robert Peel made himself very unpopular by giving a grant of money to Maynooth. Later, Gladstone tried to push through the English Parliament Home Rule Bills for Ireland. Emigration was the answer for many of the young Irish. These Irish exiles took their faith with them to many countries and also to the mission fields. Large numbers emigrated to America and Britain during the Hungry Forties, when the potato crops failed.

All this empire building led to the emergence of large, powerful nations in Europe. These nations built up great armies and navies to defend their possessions. The scene was set for the next century.

Although progress had been made, the world was still very unequally divided between rich and poor. The growth in the amount of employment available did ameliorate the plight of the poor. The Church showed concern for the very poor, and the increase in the number of convents provided help for the needy and destitute. The Salvation Army concerned itself with the spiritual well-being of the masses, their efforts applauded by Cardinal Manning, himself a great social worker. The health of the nation improved, with demands from the medical profession for proper drainage systems and more sanitary conditions. These efforts lessened the outbreak of cholera and smallpox.

Looking back over the Victorian Age, one is amazed at the advancement in technology. We see swift traffic flows along macadamized roads, a start on the underground tube, the motor-car industry on its way, and ladies riding around on bicycles!!!!

We now turn to look at the ladies during this century. The whole era witnessed the struggle of women for the end of male dominance in government, church, and universities. Women campaigned for equal opportunities and for the right to be admitted to the professions. We have seen how Florence Nightingale took a stand against the government and its red tape in her efforts to ameliorate the lot of the soldiers in the Crimea. She served to highlight the fact that it need not be a man's world. Despite the discrimination, her message was heard, and there was an national demand for trained nurses and well-run hospitals. Spurred on by Nightingale's example, women began to agitate for admission to the medical profession. The frequent outbreaks of cholera and the recurrence of other epidemics drew attention to their cause. The need for better education for women began to gain ground. It is true that some middle- and upper-class women were educated at home by governesses, while others went to boarding or day schools, but the quality of education was poor and much inferior to that provided in schools for boys. A girl could go to a finishing school abroad, but it was solely as a preparation for her role in society as an eligible young lady.

Women met with great opposition. In 1856 a woman was refused permission to sit for the London Matriculation, and another was refused permission to take the examinations for the London Medical Diploma. Those who did not marry found few openings under such a system. They could teach in school or be a governess in some upper-class household. However, as the century went on, they could enter a convent!

The struggle for women's rights continued, and by degrees good schools were opened up after the example of Miss Buss and Miss Beale. Gradually, a few women entered professions formerly closed to them, and the first lady doctor came on the scene. Universities kept their doors bolted, but a chink was put in their armour when Girton University College for Women finally became a reality.

We here in Braintree have a special interest in the Suffragette Movement-the struggle for the right of women to vote. Mrs. Pankhurst, from Caxton Hall, and her daughters and helpers held demonstrations for years in London and endured prison sentences for the cause. Mrs. Pankhurst's secretary, Jessie Kenny, spent her last years here in St. Francis' Home. Her sister Annie was a leader in the campaign and was forcibly fed in prison when on hunger strike. Both have a place in the history books. Although during their lifetime they did not succeed in gaining the vote for women, they further advanced the cause. Jessie never tired of telling us about the Pankhursts and the opposition of the leading politicians. While Winston Churchill was opposed on every count, he was dead set against the idea of women MP's. What sweet revenge to have lived to see Lady Astor enter parliament! To his credit, George Bernard Shaw lent support to the movement.

Queen Victoria died in 1901. By that time women were beginning to make their way in a man's world. They were even beginning to get rid of their cumbersome clothes in order to ride around London on their bikes.

Mother Mary Ignatius was most certainly a woman of her time. It may even be said that she was ahead of her time, and she was most certainly influenced by the world around her. Full of missionary fervour, she saw the opportunities being opened up by the explorers and traders as well as the pursuit of empire by Britain and European powers. It is little wonder that her missionary vision was worldwide. In spite of the improvement in travel and the invention of the postal system, communication was slow, and it was difficult for her to govern convents in frontier Minnesota and the rural South of the United States from distant Rome. Ahead of her time?

When she left Guernsey in 1843/45, she saw the great changes already at work in England. Catholic Emancipation had freed Catholics to come out into the open, their position strengthened by the Anglican priests and scholars who had gone "over to Rome" as a result of the Oxford Movement. She became interested in Dr. Pusey's attempts to start Anglican Sisterhoods, and, as we know, upon his advice she became a Sister at Wantage.

She, too, soon became aware that it was a man's world. She was not free to do as she deemed best. The Rev. William Butler did not see eye to eye with her. With her education and background, and accustomed as she was to speaking with her numerous relatives in important positions in the Church of England, she must have found this lack of freedom intolerable. When she joined Elizabeth Lockhart in Greenwich after being received into the Church, circumstances relating to the Rule would lead her and the group, under the guidance of Dr. Manning, to adopt a Franciscan way of life and the opportunity to enjoy the freedom of the children of God.

The establishment of convent life in England after 400 years was not easy, and the struggles of women for equal rights brought some confusion and experimentation. Sisters were by tradition cloistered, giving up the world and leading a strict life with a demanding horarium. Elizabeth did not find what she wanted in Wantage, Greenwich, Bayswater, or Glasgow. Spreading the Gospel on the mission field was what she longed to do, and she felt called to it. It was an age of progress and new ideas were needed.

The condition of the working class in the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, the orphans, the poverty-stricken, the homeless, the destitute pouring into England to find work, affected her deeply so that she was powerfully drawn to reach out to the underprivileged and the downtrodden. Wherever her Sisters went, they looked after orphans, opening homes and schools for them. She had a true missionary spirit and was free of the prejudices of the time. She was among the first

pioneers in working among the black population in the United States. She was, no doubt, conversant with the prevalent ideas of the day. She had the wisdom to act on her belief that in God's eyes all men and women are equal.

The struggle of women for equality certainly affected her. She was probably well aware of the progress being made by women to enter the professions, their struggle to train as nurses, teachers, and doctors of medicine and to gain admittance to the universities, as well as to be allowed to vote in elections and even to enter parliament. During her time in Jamaica (*Unless the Seed Die*, p. 84), she sums up her natural inclinations "to stand up for her rights."

She could hold her own with the authorities in the Church, discuss her plans with them, write scholarly letters, and with courtesy state her views. In an age of progress, she could make use of modern inventions for her purposes. Her initiative in publishing the *Annals* to spread the Word of God and to earn money for her communities, organizing the printing, binding, and eventually distributing the magazine, was a tremendous achievement for a woman of her time.

Her desire to be free to make her own decisions often got her into difficulties. She was happy to work in parish or diocese under the bishop or parish priest, but felt she should be free to conduct her own affairs as she deemed best. She did not quarrel but firmly stood by her own point of view.

She was very selective about vocations, endeavouring to make sure that the aspirant was truly seeking God's will and was ready to follow Jesus in the steps of St. Francis. She was dedicated to her beloved Jesus, and wanted her Sisters to be ready to embrace poverty and suffering for his sake.

Sister Mary Ignatius Hayes certainly can be said to have read the signs of her time and to have interpreted them in the light of the Gospel. The challenge then was every bit as great as it is now. A woman of faith, she led with confidence and grace and was unshaken in her resolve to serve even in the most trying times. May we in our day be blessed with the same vision and courage as we bend our energies to the task before us.