

NESTLED AT THE FOOT of the rugged snow-capped Chugach Mountains in Alaska lies the little town of Valdez. Within its boundaries one can easily find a large home bustling with endless chatter and excitement. Never a dull moment. "Boys, time to rise and shine!" "Be sure to straighten your rooms!" "Dinner's ready! Did you wash your hands?" This is the Valdez Assemblies of God Children's Home, and these and many other "homey" expressions are heard quite often throughout the day.

Everyone has his duties; somebody must even do the dishes! But these tasks are all necessary in order to prepare the children for the practical aspects of life.

The physical needs of the children are all very well taken care of also. Energy? It's boundless! We often wonder if the children ever become tired, for at the close of the day they are as energetic as they were at the beginning. Snowball battles are frequent, and Valdez affords plenty of snow for these occasions. Tricks are innumerable. One never really knows what to expect when he steps into the boys' dorm to awaken them in the morning. A basketball might hit his head and bounce off to the floor. Excitement? Oh, yes, on every hand!

Each morning finds thirteen children trudging through the snow to their respective schools. Three are in high school and ten in grade school. There the children are taught and prepared for life in the community. We workers do our best to help and encourage them in their studies.

As each new Lord's Day dawns, we thank God that not only the practical, physical and mental needs of the children are met, but the spiritual needs as well. We praise God for the opportunity of worshipping Him in spirit and in truth and count it a great privilege to be able to help meet the



Ruth Tomko

Editor's note: Miss Tomko recently went from her home in Pennsylvania to assist the James Houghtons in the Valdez Assemblies of God Children's Home. We asked her to write the following article giving her impressions of the work, and to give our readers a glimpse of what it is really like inside the Children's Home.

SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN

by Ruth Tomko

spiritual need of each boy and girl. Christ says, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water . . . he shall in no wise lose his reward." Matthew 10:42.

Our children, like yours, have their ups and downs, joys and sorrows. But in the case of these children, there may be more of a reason for inconsistent feelings and problems of adjustment. The experience of many has been, "I am only a child; but already I have known hunger, cold, pain, heartache, and bitter disappointment." To them, it may have seemed that no one cared. But it is part of our job to point them to One who does, for Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God . . . And he took them up in His arms . . . and blessed them." Mark 10:14, 16.

We as workers have tried to manifest the spirit of Christ by opening wide our arms and welcoming these children into the Home. Their young lives may have been crushed and broken by some earthly sorrow; but Christ has come to heal the broken-hearted and it is our privilege to point them to Him.

In our Home are small lives that God can use if we, as workers, are faithful in our tasks. We realize more and more each day that work in this Home is not merely the daily rounds of scrubbing and cooking and washing and ironing, for to us has been entrusted a great spiritual task as well. Children are precious jewels in the sight of God.

Christ said to Peter, "Feed my lambs," and He is also saying to us today, "Feed my lambs." Winning a child means winning a life for Christ, therefore we constantly seek to make certain that the young ones in our care will never want for the ever-present resource of power and strength that comes with the sense of divine companionship that only walking with the Master can give.



The family at the Valdez Assemblies of God Children's Home.



Three older girls in the Valdez Assemblies of God Children's Home