

Your National Parks?

There are many besides the more famous ones like Yellowstone and Yosemite, and each has its own unique beauty.

by Frances and Dorothy Wood

WITH THE APPROACH of Summer's vacation season, the names of the national parks take on a magic aura. Yellowstone, Grand Teton, Glacier, Grand Canyon, Yosemite: these are familiar names in thousands of homes. Yet many of our national parks are virtually unknown to millions of Americans, even though every park was created to preserve some special, unique feature of historic or scenic interest.

Big Bend combines mountains, desert, and spectacular canyons on the Rio Grande in Texas; Carlsbad Caverns, in New Mexico, preserves the largest and one of the most beautiful caves in the world; Utah's Bryce Canyon is a fairyland of fantastic, colorful rock formations; and Zion, a deep, multi-colored canyon, is filled with a number of monolithic carvings.

Oregon's Crater Lake features a blue, blue lake in the crater of an extinct volcano. Olympic, in Washington, rises from wide Pacific beaches to rugged, snowcapped mountains and, midway, contains the country's only rain forests—junglelike growths of tremendous spruce and Douglas fir, in lush settings of mosses, ferns, and vines.

Each park is different—and the differences offer almost every kind of vacation to be had in America's outdoors.

Have you ever thought of a national park as a place where you can coast down a glacier on the seat of your pants? Try it in Washington's Mount Rainier, where the mountain slopes are covered by 26 glaciers. For a guided hike across one of these—Paradise—to beautiful caves of blue ice, each hiker is furnished with sturdy boots, an alpenstock, and heavy pants with a paraffin-coated seat. On the return trip, the hikers sit down on the ice, hook together with their stocks into human toboggans, and coast down the glacier on the seats of their "tin pants."

During the short Summer season at Mount Rainier (about June 20 to Sept. 1), you can

ski, hike, or ride horseback along skyline trails, where warm sunshine glitters on vast snowfields; where carpets of wild flowers, pushing close to the glaciers' edge, combine the bloom of Spring, Summer, and Autumn.

Short, easy trails encourage close acquaintance with "The Mountain"; in Paradise Valley, particularly, short walks from Paradise Inn lead to viewing points for Nisqually and Paradise glaciers, and to such lovely spots as Fairy Pool. For the more rugged, there are many miles of hiking and saddle trails. The most ambitious is the 90-mile Wonderland Trail that encircles the mountain, with shelter cabins at easy intervals along the way.

All this has taken on much greater interest since recent completion of Stevens Canyon road, for you now can enter from the east and drive around the mountain and through the park. However, in the glow of this new, highly scenic and convenient route, don't miss the trip north to Sunrise for a magnificent view of Mount Rainier and some of the big glaciers, such as Emmons and Winthrop.

The completion of Stevens Canyon road is an accomplishment of Mission 66, that gigantic development program intended to bring national park facilities up to demand level by 1966. New visitor centers are also under development, and plans are under way to enlarge and extend overnight facilities, including campgrounds. The considerable Winter ski season—from December to May—is receiving attention in improved facilities in Paradise Valley and at Cayuse Pass.

Mt. McKinley National Park, in the new state of Alaska, also honors a lofty mountain—highest on the North American continent, more than 20,000 feet above sea level. Here are some of the largest wild animals on the continent—giant Alaska moose, Toklat grizzly bears, caribou, Dall sheep.

Lassen Volcanic National Park, north of Yosemite in California, preserves the area around a volcano active in our time—Mount Lassen, which last erupted from May, 1914, to February, 1921. A well-paved highway crosses the western section, and many of the most striking volcanic formations and scenic lakes are within sight of this highway or only a short walk from it—Sulphur Works, Bumpas Hell, the Devastated Area, Chaos Crags, and Helen and Emerald lakes.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, south of Yosemite, protect the giant sequoias, many of which were old, as we think of age, before Christ was born. In Sequoia's Giant Forest, so named because of the size and splendor of its trees, is the General Sherman Tree. Probably the largest tree in the world—272 feet high and 101.6 feet around—it is believed to be over 3,500 years old.

Kings Canyon has the second-largest sequoia—the General Grant Tree in Grant Grove, familiarly known as the nation's Christmas tree. Giant Forest and Grant Grove are connected by the famous Generals Highway, which is open all Winter.

(Continued)

"I Was Warned About The CATHOLIC CHURCH!"

My relatives and friends were shocked when they heard I was studying to become a Catholic.

With complete sincerity... and a genuine concern for my welfare... they set out to show me what a terrible mistake this would be. And as I look back now, I realize that if all the things they believed about the Catholic Church were true in fact, I would indeed have been making a great mistake.

But the important fact is, the things they thought to be true were not.

Having been a non-Catholic myself until early manhood, I can understand the viewpoint of these people. And most of them, I realize, are prompted in their beliefs not by malice, but by grievous misunderstanding. And I am reminded of Christ's words to the Apostles: "...yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

They sent me all sorts of pamphlets and tracts condemning the Catholic teaching on the Sacraments, on Baptism, salvation and other topics. There was, in these pamphlets, a remarkable lack of agreement as to the "correct" doctrine. They were in accord only in one thing—their opposition to the Catholic doctrine.

I have come a long way since I first looked at the Catholic Church through non-Catholic eyes. I am a convert to Catholicism, and I can, with knowledge, reason and fairness, discuss both sides of "The Catholic Question."

I have not, as my non-Catholic friends predicted, lost the slightest degree of religious freedom. I am not held to my faith by bonds of

fear or superstition. The Catholic Church does not corrupt the Scriptures... does not deprive me of direct access to God... does not try to substitute a man-made system for the true religion of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, it has consistently taught what I am convinced are the true teachings of Jesus.

Not all of those who heard Christ's words from His own lips could believe what He said. Many of His disciples "...went back, and walked no more with Him" (John 6:67). It would, therefore, be presumptuous of me to think that all who read this will share my conviction that the Catholic Church is "the church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

For the benefit of sincere and fair-minded people who want to know the Catholic Church as it is, I have written a pamphlet discussing many things about the Catholic Faith which most disturb and confuse those on the outside. A copy is yours for the asking. It will come to you in a plain wrapper, and nobody will call on you. Write today for Pamphlet FM-43.

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