

July 14 1959

TO: Messrs. Hayward
Rodgers
Hammerstein
Lindsay
Crouse
Donohue

Part of a letter to Mary and me from Sister Gregory, who will be here in August, says:

"I am so happy you visited the convent at Elizabeth. I'm sure they enjoyed it more than you. However, it gave you something of the 'feel' of convent life. I assure you it is not either terrifying nor boring. However, one of your problems will be to project the atmosphere of convent life without losing dramatic and theatrical values. Therefore, you will, I think, have to take a few liberties here and there.

If you have any questions, Mary, about anything you may be free or not free to do, just write them down and we'll run through the list either on the phone or in person. In portraying nuns, most actresses become 'habit bound' and the result is a stiff and unnatural performance. A few little hints from one who has been living in one for years usually helps. I remember seeing an actress portray a nun on TV last year and my neck ached by the time the half hour was over because she held her neck and head so stiff throughout the program. The habit itself removes the person at least one degree from the audience, and if it is not handled naturally, it becomes a sort of wall getting between the character and the audience and empathy is lost.

"I am very interested in discovering how Mr. Rodgers handles the music in the convent scenes - that would seem to be one of the trickiest spots. If it is too chantish it would probably be untheatrical and if it's too rhythmic it would seem out of place in a convent. I know Mr. Rodgers will solve it beautifully and I'm dying to know how he'll manage it.

As you know, the project is very much in my prayers, as you and your work always are. The good Lord must sometimes wonder if I think He is absent minded because I keep reminding Him so frequently about the needs of my friends.

Have fun and be happy. If you can spare the time, without inconvenience, I'll see you soon - if not, I'll be with you in spirit. God love and keep you.

Your devoted,

/s/ Sister Gregory"

Richard Halliday