

Nuns in Japan Prayed For Fliers as Bombs Fell

By GORDON ROOT

(Tribune Far East Correspondent)

YOKOHAMA, Sept. 24—American pilots flying big bombers over Tokyo earlier this year didn't know it but below them prayers were being offered for their safe return to bases. As B29s swept in high over the Japanese capital, six Canadian nuns in a Catholic convent at Urawa, 25 miles to the north, knelt to ask God that the fliers' lives be spared.

Two of six Canadian women, Sister Marie de St. Francis Xavier and Sister Marie de La Providence, both from Quebec province, are on the U.S. army ship Marigold here awaiting transportation to Canada. They told their version of the war Sunday.

"We were not interned," said Sister Marie, "but we were compelled to remain in the convent.

"We could not carry on our work but we did try to help the poor people of this district."

"The Japanese did not bother us but we did not have much food. However, we could not complain because the Japanese people around us had no more."

"There was no wood so we had to cut down trees for the fires."

The sisters had received no news from Canada since the start of the war and they were keenly interested in the nation's war effort. They wanted to know how many Canadian troops went overseas, were Canadian industries busy during the war, and how many men were killed.

The work of the order in Japan will be carried on, said Sister Marie, but by younger members. "I am going back to Canada. I am too old for this work but the mission will continue."