

No. 9, Vol. XVII, 28th Year
Montreal, May-June 1950

The Precursor



Three Sunny Smiles From Japanese Playground

The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

CANADA

MOTHERHOUSE,
2900 St. Catherine Road,
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26, P. Q.
(Founded in 1902)
National and Diocesan Offices of the Holy Childhood. Publication of the Holy Childhood Messenger and a mission magazine, The Precursor. Mission workroom and procure. Tabernacle guild. Kindergarten.

NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Montreal 9

OUTREMONT, 314 St. Catherine Road,
Montreal 8, P. Q.
Closed retreats for women and girls. Recollection days. Mission workroom. Kindergarten. Catholic Action Movement meetings.

CHINESE HOSPITAL and DISPENSARY,
112 Lagauchetiere St. West,
Montreal 1
(Founded in 1918)
Visits to Chinese patients in Catholic or Protestant hospitals.

NOMININGUE, P. Q. (Bethany)
(Founded in 1914)
Closed retreats for women and girls. Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood.

RIMOUSKI, St. Germain St.
(Founded in 1918)
Apostolic school for prospective missionaries. Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood. Kindergarten.

JOLIETTE, 750 St. Louis St.
(Founded in 1919)
Closed retreats for women and girls. Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood. Mission workroom. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

QUEBEC, 651 St. Cyrille St.
(Founded in 1919)
Closed retreats for women and girls. Recollection days. Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood. Mission workroom. Catholic Action Movement meetings. Chinese mission.

VANCOUVER, 236 Campbell St.
(Founded in 1921)
Hospital and Clinic for Orientals. Religious instruction of Chinese.

THREE RIVERS, 466 Bonaventure St.
(Founded in 1926)
Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood. Mission workroom. Kindergarten.

GRANBY, 35 Dufferin St.
(Founded in 1930)
Closed retreats for women and girls. Recollection days. Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood. Mission workroom. Kindergarten. Parochial school.

CHICOUTIMI, 61 Jacques Cartier St.
(Founded in 1930)
Closed retreats for women and girls. Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood.

GRANBY, 279 Main St.
(Founded in 1931)
The Immaculate Conception Hostel for girls. Kindergarten.

ST. MARIE, Beauce Co.
(Founded in 1932)
Closed retreats for women and girls.

ST. JOHNS, P. Q., 430 Champlain St.
(Founded in 1935)
Closed retreats for women and girls. Diocesan Office of the Holy Childhood. Workroom for needy churches of the diocese.

VANCOUVER, 3080 Prince Edward St.
(Founded in 1946)
Mt. St. Joseph's General Hospital for Orientals. Clinic. Refuge for old people.

The Precursor

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Vol. XVII

MONTREAL, May-June 1950

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The Rich Young Man

*He longed to follow the Prophet,
Morning for him was bright
With a vision afar — the Perfect,
And a Presence near — the Light!*

*His soul was born for the noble
(Lilies, though sprung from the sod)
And immaculate came for the counsel
To the kindly Christ of God.*

*A youth who had honored his father,
Who had altered naught of law,
Who had always walked in whiteness,
On whose shield nor stain nor a flaw.*

*"Good Master, what is wanting?"
Adoring he bent the knee.
"Since a child I followed faithful
Commandments so dear to Thee."*

*Youth, the road is steep and narrow,
No roses where you tread.
Not e'en a stone hath the Master
Whereupon to lay His head.*



*Go, sell thy great possessions,
Unworthy all of thee.
A greater glory waits thy going
To Heaven, to Life — saith He.*

*Christ looked on him in loving
And dared to try the truth —
A challenge to turn from shekels
He hurled at the heart of youth.*

*Not Christ then glowed, but the shekels,
Youth shackled him to them,
And spurning the proffered splendor,
He dulled a diadem.*

* * *

*On Central or Main where Christ walks
A rich young man He'll meet.
Oh, fling to the wind all your shekels
And come and kiss His Feet!*

THE PRECURSOR

A Word to Graduates

You have been so saturated with the principles of Christ that they are part of you. You are young and you are gay of heart. You are optimistic and enthusiastic. You have common sense and a sense of humor. Few others are in such a position as you to contribute to the peace, not only of a small locality, but of the world itself. Your potential power cannot be exaggerated. It is now you and your world.

You must carry God's truth into the mainstream, into the market place. If you do not share Christ's magnificent principles which make you good and true and peaceful, you cannot ask others to do it. To a heartsick humanity that needs Him so much, He asks each of you to bring His light, to be a Christ-bearer — a Christopher — because He knows men will be drawn to Him through you.

"Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven" (Matthew 5: 16), Christ pleaded. Even if Communism and other current dangers disappeared overnight, there would still be as great a need for you to bring the Light of Christ to the bulk of mankind who huddle in darkness. Darkness, you know, is nothing more than the absence of light, just as hate is nothing more than the absence of love, disease the absence of health. — *Rev. James Keller, M.M.*



His Excellency
Most Rev. Paul Emile Leger
Archbishop of Montreal

Consecrated in Rome on April 26

Blessed Is He Who Cometh in the Name of the Lord!

The Door of Forgiveness

The sacred rite is accomplished. The Holy Door, the Door of Forgiveness and of Peace, has been opened by the Vicar of Christ.

The Man nearest to God, in the gorgeous frame of the greatest temple of Christianity erected on the holy tomb of the Prince of Apostles, after having invoked from the Divine Shepherd grace and love for his flock, has knelt down in humility, as for the first time happened six hundred and fifty years ago.

The ceremony was very short, lasting only twenty minutes. Pius XII arrived in his gestatorial chair, followed by the dignitaries of his court.

At 10.38 the Pope struck the first hammer knock, and at 10.40 the Holy Door was opened. Immediately afterwards the Pope knelt on the threshold praying: "O God, who through Moses didst grant to the Hebrews the Jubilee Year and remission of sins, grant us also, we sons of Thine, this Jubilee Year and that, passing through this door, we will obtain forgiveness and full indulgence of all transgressions, so that the day when Thou wilt call us, we may through Thy mercy enjoy Celestial Glory."

Afterwards Pius XII crossed alone the divine passage.

The Redemption Year began from that moment.

F. G. in *Anno Santo*



HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XII OPENS THE HOLY DOOR, DECEMBER 24, 1949



HIS HOLINESS ENTERS ST. PETER'S BASILICA IMMEDIATELY AFTER OPENING THE HOLY DOOR

Authority and Loneliness of the Pope

Canon 218 of the Canonical Laws Codex prescribes that the Pope has supreme and full power on everything that concerns Faith, habits, and Church discipline, and that such power is independent from every human authority. The extent of papal authority is therefore without control and without limits. It is tremendous to think that such a heap of power is concentrated in the hands of a single individual, who has also the burden and the responsibility of the vast flock of Christ's followers.

Although these hands are learned and strong and saintly, they remain nonetheless human hands, frail and weak, hands that can and do feel the cold and the heat of seasons. Although blessed by the Holy Ghost and consecrated by the illuminating and strengthening Chrism, he is but a man who before the *Ecclesia Dei* and the mass of Christians takes upon himself for everyone and in the name of all the task of teaching, ruling, and canonizing.

For the Pope, then, who is its qualified interpreter, there is no other than the divine law. From that high place and in that solitude a giddy feeling of loneliness must overwhelm one and one must be afraid of losing everything that is more keenly alive, humbly lovable: a baby's soft cry and a mother's smile.

Up there, where the air seems motionless and the heat of the city does not arrive, dangers must be hard as rocks, silent as glaciers. What would happen if also the rock should go drifting? The solitary rock that stands between the Vatican Hill and the Tiber's strand survives from two thousand years in the vicissitudes of human generations which never rest in unending fight between Light and Darkness, to testify that Unity and Happiness are possible. The defence of that supreme authority has been the defence of life and love.

A single man with his sole strength could neither fulfill human wishes nor soothe earthly delusions. To Peter's reasonable doubt, to his incapacity as a fisherman and a boatman, there provide prayer and Christ's promise: "I have prayed for you, so that your Faith will not falter; I shall be with you to the end of centuries."

Through that prayer, through that promise the fulfilment of Peter's mission as teacher and guide of the Christian community is assured.

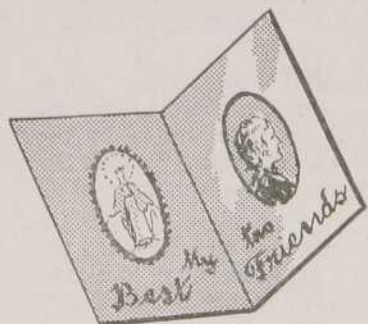
MSGR. ENNIO FRANCA IN *Anno Santo*

HOLY YEAR CALENDAR

MAY AND JUNE

- May 1 to 14 : International Congress of the Students of the Holy Winding Sheet (the garment in which Our Lord was laid in the tomb after His Crucifixion).
- May 7 : Canonization of the Blessed Maria Goretti, Italian martyr of chastity.
- May 18 : Canonization of the Blessed Vincenza Gerosa, Co-Founder of the Sisters of Charity.
- May 25 to 30 : International Congress of Sacred Music.
- May 25 to 30 : International Congress of Christian Sacred Drama.
- May 28 : Canonization of the Blessed Jean Valois, onetime Queen of France.
- Late in May or early in June — the International Congress of Social Science of the Institute of Social and Political Sciences of Fribourg.
- June 2 : Pope Pius XII is expected to consecrate on this day the new Church of St. Eugene, in Rome, which is the gift of Catholics all over the world to mark the Holy Father's sacerdotal jubilee.
- June 18 : Canonization in St. Peter's Basilica.

A Hero in the Strife



Not so very long ago there lived in a small Massachusetts town a young American boy who wanted very much to be a missionary; but he had heard so many tales, some true, some false, about the sufferings that missionaries are sometimes called upon to go through, that he quaked in his boots at the thought that he might get his head chopped off.

The only boy at home, he had everything a boy's heart could desire. As he grew up, a still, small voice kept whispering in his ears that there was work for him in China.

When he found he could not resist any longer to that beckoning voice, in a gush of genuine generosity he said yes to the One who was calling him to be His apostle and His representative among the heathen.

He finished his public school, smiled his way through the seminary years, was ordained to the priesthood by his bishop, and a few months later boarded a liner for distant China, the land that had always been calling to him. Still his inner fear was with him, but his love for Jesus was stronger and he was ready, if need be, to show that love for his Master by laying down his life for Him. After two years of painstaking language study he was missioned to a section of China where many small villages were unfortunately without a pastor to lead them in the way of religious truth. With selfless devotion he gave himself to his flock, and before long had won the hearts of many confided to his care.

At night when he was alone in his poor little rectory, he used to take the picture of his mother and look at it with an aching heart. His love for her was a love beyond the power of expression, and he missed her as he had never thought he would; yet even if he was lonesome it did not make him sad, for he knew that his beloved mother was fingering her rosary beads for her son, and how proud she was that he was giving his all for the loving Savior of souls.

Then the young missionary of twenty-five would fondle another precious keepsake, the picture of his daddy; inwardly he would say, "Thank God for having given me so fine a daddy!"

Sometimes also he would take a peek at the picture of his sister spending her life in the service of God's black babies in Africa, and with a smile he would speak to the seasoned missionary Sister thus, "Well, Sis, who will win the more souls for Christ, you or I?"

Early in his mission career he had understood that in China, as in every other land, some dark alleys and dark days can be brightened only by a smile; for this reason he always tried to keep in cheerful spirits and see life through rose-colored glasses instead of dark-blue goggles. Very seldom he thought of himself; all his worries and all his cares were for the spiritual and material welfare of his adopted countrymen.

One September night the young missionary, alone as usual with his book and pipe, felt more lonesome than ever. For weeks upon weeks he had not seen a white face; the weather must have helped to dampen his enthusiasm, because it was raining and very muggy. As he was finishing his night prayers and thinking of retiring for a few hours of well-earned rest, he heard a knock at the door. His boy answered and came back with the information that an old lady was dying about five miles away and wanted very much to see the Catholic missionary and settle her accounts with her Maker. The middle-aged man who had brought the message was outside in the rain waiting for the priest to accompany him.

The missionary hesitated. It was so dark and the roads he knew were infested with thieves who might be on the lookout for a chance to waylay him. After all, he could very well wait till the next morning and visit the old lady immediately after Mass; surely God would spare her till then. He had all but given a negative answer to his boy when he happened to turn his eyes to the pictures of his own mother and his heavenly one hanging above his office desk. What was it they were saying? A missionary, a real apostle worthy of the name and worthy of his Master, should never hesitate when someone was needing him; he did not belong to himself any longer but to the souls of men, however good, however evil. In a hurry, so as to make up for the time he had lost in dallying, he slipped on a sweater, took his sick-call bag, gave a last look at the pictures of his two mothers, and accompanied by his faithful houseboy walked into the night, following the man who had come for him. On the way he recited the rosary. Did he know that it would be his last?

When they came to a turn in the road the man jumped briskly to the side of the missionary and pointing a revolver to his heart, roared, "You're not going any farther tonight!"

Saying so, he pulled the trigger. The missionary Father fell, a smile on his lips. Death did not call him immediately; he had time to tell his houseboy how glad he was to lay down his life for Christ, and as if in a dream he slowly and incoherently related the struggle that he had gone through when the ruffian knocked at the door. Suddenly his ashen face became sad, and with a dying voice he said, "Who will take my place? There are so few missionaries in the world!" The effort had been too much, and he collapsed; but regaining consciousness for a few seconds, he tried to kiss the cross of his rosary. It was his last act of love; a smile still playing about his lips, he gave up his soul to God. In the pocket over his heart were found the pictures of the Blessed Virgin and of his own beloved mother, with four telling words underneath, "My two best friends."

* * *

Who will take the place of this missionary who fell on the battlefield for souls just a year ago? Will it be you, John, Harry, Joe, Paul, William, Bill? If you want adventures of all kinds, if you want to give something big to God, if you want to be a hero in the strife, ask Our Blessed Mother to enlist you in the army of her Son's apostles and your desire will be fulfilled.

SISTER VERONIQUE DU SAUVEUR, M.I.C.(1)

Statistics of Closed Retreats

In the Convents of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

for the Year 1949

	Retreats	Retreatants	Day Retreats	Day Retreatants
Our Lady of the Holy Ghost Retreat House 314 St. Catherine Road Outremont, Montreal 8.....	131	3,485	23	1,559
Bethany Retreat House, Nominingue Labelle County.....	11	259		
Immaculate Conception Retreat House 750 St. Louis St., Joliette.....	73	1,753	5	137
Our Lady of the Cenacle Retreat House 651 St. Cyrille St., Quebec.....	124	3,779	13	648
Our Lady of Missions Retreat House 61 Jacques Cartier St., Chicoutimi.....	68	1,542		
Mary Mediatrix Retreat House 35 Dufferin St., Granby.....	72	1,566	10	476
St. Bernadette Retreat House 430 Champlain St., St. Johns, P.Q.....	62	1,556		
Our Lady of the Rosary Retreat House St. Marie, Beauce County.....	39	1,013		
Our Lady Queen of Missions Retreat House 187 Pleasant St., Marlboro, Mass.....	25	534		
Immaculate Conception Retreat House Les Cayes, Haiti, West Indies.....	1	52		
Totals.....	606	15,539	51	2,820

1. Veronique DELCOURT, Westbrook, Me.

The Pope's Mission Intention

FOR MAY 1950

SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN INDIA

India is using every effort to obtain prosperity for all its inhabitants. This is a mighty undertaking since that vast nation numbers no less than 300 million people within its boundaries. The greater part of these have scarcely the necessities of life. The population is denser than in Europe, but industrial methods and the sense of social justice have not been sufficiently developed so that all can live with a degree of ease and security.

Among these 300 million inhabitants there are almost 60 million Untouchables. These are considered from religious motives to be men outside of every caste and have practically no rights but many duties. More or less on the same plane as the Untouchables are the 10 million aborigines who occupied parts of India before the coming of the Aryans.

Generally these two classes of Indian society live in great misery. This misery is easily intensified when the harvests are poor because of weather or other circumstances. This often happens in one or another region of the large subcontinent. Moreover, farmers and others suffer a great need not only of grain but also of money. This is a very serious calamity when one considers that almost three-fourths of the whole population have to live from the fruits of agricultural labor. Not rarely the owners of the lands and their stewards, blinded with pagan selfishness, without any consideration demand the moneys due them.

It is therefore not without reason that the very leaders of the new India recognize that the chief of the serious problems that must be solved is the wide and extended poverty among so many millions of men. The new central government is trying to do away with this misery with good and opportune legislation, but there is a greater need of a sense of social justice than of just laws. This sense of social justice must be in all those who have to execute in a practical way the legislation that has been agreed upon.

Hinduism, however, because of its caste systems and religious tenets upon which it is based, must make tremendous adaptations before it can put into practice among the mass of the people the reforms commonly demanded in the world today. The influence however of Christian ideas in modern India is much greater than the numerical proportion would allow one to expect. Only one to one and one half percent of the whole population is Catholic. Among other things, this influence appears in this, that the Hindus are beginning to understand well the injury of social discrimination toward the Untouchables. The central government has tried to suppress this discrimination at least by law.

It is easy to see that the Communists gladly abuse this injustice and misery to promote their own ideas and to extend their world influence.

It is therefore of great importance for all India as also for the future of the Church in India that the social questions of that country be solved as soon as possible completely and everywhere according to those universally accepted concepts of social justice which the Sovereign Pontiffs in their Encyclical Letters and other documents both clearly and profoundly have proposed.

BISHOP THOMAS J. McDONNELL, D.D.

National Director

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, U.S.A.

Joan

Very early in life Joan had known sorrow in the loss of her beloved mother. Her father she scarcely knew. Engrossed in his thriving business concern, Mr. Belloc on his flying visits home barely seemed to notice his lonely little daughter who would have liked so much to climb on his knees and tell him her love. Soon he married again, a giddy, frivolous creature who refused outright to be burdened with the care of another woman's child and demanded that the little one be packed off to her maternal grandmother's.

Tenderly the grand old lady with staunch faith and boundless charity took the unwanted orphan to her heart.

"Poor child, how much you have suffered already! We called you Joan when you were baptized. A warlike name reminiscent of purity and valor. Something tells me you also will have to fight to keep the treasure of your faith."

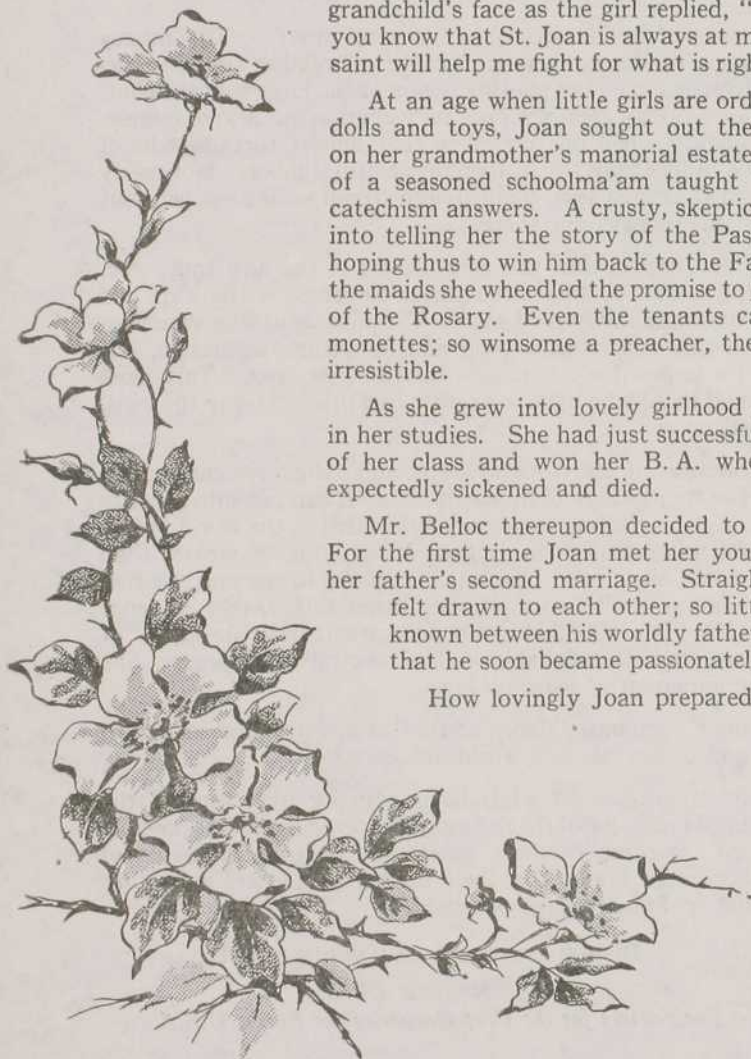
Grandmother's heart thrilled at the earnest look on her grandchild's face as the girl replied, "Gram, never fear. Don't you know that St. Joan is always at my side? My brave patron saint will help me fight for what is right."

At an age when little girls are ordinarily absorbed by their dolls and toys, Joan sought out the children of the tenants on her grandmother's manorial estate and with all the dignity of a seasoned schoolma'am taught them their prayers and catechism answers. A crusty, skeptic uncle of hers she cajoled into telling her the story of the Passion and death of Jesus, hoping thus to win him back to the Faith of his fathers. From the maids she wheedled the promise to join in the daily recitation of the Rosary. Even the tenants came in for practical sermonettes; so winsome a preacher, they all agreed, was simply irresistible.

As she grew into lovely girlhood Joan steadily progressed in her studies. She had just successfully carried off the honors of her class and won her B. A. when her grandmother unexpectedly sickened and died.

Mr. Belloc thereupon decided to call his daughter home. For the first time Joan met her young brother Paul born of her father's second marriage. Straightway brother and sister felt drawn to each other; so little affection had the boy known between his worldly father and his frivolous mother that he soon became passionately fond of his sister.

How lovingly Joan prepared her brother for his first Holy Communion! So sadly had his religious education been neglected that he had to be taught from the very beginning even the most elementary truths about God and the soul. Never had the youthful apostle known a more docile or eager pupil. A three-



day retreat was managed before the great day, and Paul received Jesus' first visit with the piety and fervor of an angel.

Mrs. Belloc had looked askance at this religious indoctrination of her son. But then, of course, it was still considered *bon ton* in her society for children to make their First Communion; so she brought forth no objections to that.

But the real blow fell when Paul insisted on being allowed to accompany his big sister to Mass twice a week. Sharp, stinging rebukes lashed Joan's sensitive soul.

"Can't you be satisfied with living like a nun in the world without trying to make Paul share in your mummeries? Let me tell you that I will not allow my son to grow up a bigot!"

Weak and irresolute, Joan's father, instead of vindicating his daughter's conduct, forbade her to have anything further to do with the boy's upbringing and even curtailed the pleasant walks brother and sister loved to take together. The mother saw to it that her son should entirely escape the influence of his older sister and have his own way in everything but that.

Silently and courageously Joan accepted to live like an outcast in her own home. She continued to study, preparing for a teacher's career as her delicate health debarred her from entering the religious life.

Already she was dreaming of a useful, active life wholly dedicated to apostolic action among the young, when her health broke down completely. A neglected cold, a persistent, racking cough, and the lungs were found to be so seriously infected that Joan had to leave Paris for the country estate where she had been happy to live as a child. Grandmother was no longer there to welcome her grandchild, but a widowed aunt surrounded her with the best of care. Alas, it was too late and it soon became evident that the young life was drawing to a close.

The aunt found her niece in tears one day.

"Auntie, I cannot bear to die before having done anything worthwhile for God. I who had dreamt of winning many souls to His love, I haven't even saved one. Why must I die so soon, Auntie? Is there really no hope?"

That very evening Mr. Belloc was apprised that his daughter's life hung in the balance and that he would have to hurry if he wished to see her alive. But the father himself was sick and unable to travel; he sent Paul to the bedside of his dying sister.

The sick girl smiled a sad, wistful smile as Paul placed his hands gently on the white coverlet of her bed.

"Paul, I am not afraid of death. It is rather a privilege to die in the full bloom of youth. No, I am not afraid to die, just sorry to go before realizing my dream of winning many souls to God. Not even one soul may I claim to have led to His feet."

"Darling sister, many, many souls will owe you their eternal salvation."

"What do you mean, Paul? How can that be?" Two blue eyes set in a pretty face stared rather quizzically at the young man. How sweet she looked, how innocent, thought Paul.

"Do not talk in riddles. Tell me what you mean by saying that I have given a priest to God."

"Can't you guess, dear big sister, that I myself am to be that priest?"

A radiant smile lit up the pale features, while an incredulous look shadowed Joan's eyes.

"Dear little brother, can your words really be true? You're not saying those things just to humor me?"

"Joan dear, don't you remember how you were cruelly forbidden to talk to me about God's love?"

"Surely I remember. How then could I have influenced you, brother mine?"

"Of course you could not guess. It was such a little thing. And yet nothing is little which is done for God. After my First Communion, do you remember how you used to come into my room on your way back from six o'clock Mass? Gently you woke me up with this beautiful greeting, 'I bring you Jesus' kiss.' After you had been forbidden to interfere with my education, you kept on coming to wake me every morning. You no longer gave me the usual greeting, but you gravely and silently kissed my forehead. Of course I knew you had been to Holy Communion and that through you Jesus Himself lovingly bent over me every morning. Joan dear, you cannot imagine what it meant to a child whose worldly mother showed him scant affection to be awakened every morning, not by the cold impersonal voice of a hireling, but by Jesus Himself. For years, thanks to my darling sister, I was thus awakened by celestial music. Your prayers have been answered. Nothing will keep me from being true to my sublime vocation of winning souls to God."

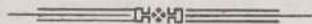
Tears of unutterable joy welled in Joan's lustrous blue eyes and her head drooped on her breast; her folded hands relaxed.

"I can die happy, now that I know. With my whole heart I offer up my life for the realization of your apostolic vocation."

Two days later, Joan drifted quietly out of life a few moments after her dear Paul had brought Jesus' kiss as he hurried to her bedside from the neighboring parish church.

* * *

May Joan's example ever be an incentive to you all, dear young girls desirous of cultivating in the garden of souls priestly vocations for the greater glory of God and the salvation of His creatures.



True Greatness

That the older one grows the dearer one's mother becomes is generally admitted. The reason is that, as we grow older, we realize the many sacrifices that a mother makes out of love for her children. The following beautiful incident, told in the life of the illustrious Pope, Blessed Benedict XI (1303 - 1304), has lived in history.

The Papal court at Rome was thrilled with interest. Word had come that the mother of the Supreme Pontiff had arrived in Rome and was being conducted to the Lateran Palace for a visit with her saintly son. The whole city had gone out to meet her, and the Holy Father, surrounded by a group of Cardinals, awaited her arrival.

A trumpet sounded. At the door stood an old woman, sweet of face, and dressed in the homely peasant clothing of Treviso. She was dazed for a moment by the greatness of the reception room and the sight of her son on the Papal Throne in the midst of his attending Cardinals.

She was dazed only for a moment, for Blessed Benedict XI arose quickly and rushed to the door. He threw his arms around her toil-bent shoulders and, with tears of joy, introduced her to the waiting Cardinals. His mother was of peasant stock and he had been a shepherd lad, and no false vanity could have persuaded him to permit her to come in brilliant, worldly attire. His greeting still lives:

"There is no one in the world who could love his mother as I do mine."

My Mother

*Rapturous, radiant, fairest of May,
Mother's Feast.*

*Filling our hearts with the lilt of a lay,
Mother's Feast.*

*Faces all beaming and laughing eyes gleaming,
Bird out a-warbling, if blossom still dreaming,
Morning when Mary's fond favors are streaming,
Mother's Feast.*

*Wildered and wondering, Angels are there,
Fleet of wing,
Fingering silvery locks of her hair ;
Whispering*

*Thoughts of the measure of Heaven's fair treasure
Waiting eternal beyond stars and azure,
Meted to Mother at Godly good pleasure,
Mays will bring.*

THE PRECURSOR



The Guardian Angel of Tender Years



Through Them
Many Will Know and Love Thee,
O Immaculate Mother!

To Teach All Nations

The 1950 series of mission departures opened in February last. From Cote des Neiges more Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception have gone to embrace the ups and downs of God's work in fields afar.

On February 21, four Sisters bade farewell to the Motherhouse with Cuba as destination. They were Sister Marie Vianney (Marie Therese Savaria, Montreal), Sister Joseph Edmond (Marguerite Simard, Montreal), Sister St. Maxime (Jeanne Pelletier, L'Islet), and Sister Bernard Marie (Juliette Desnoyers, St. Henri de Mascouche).

Two other Sisters, Sister St. Edouard (Rose Allaire, St. Edouard de Frampton) and Sister St. Bibiane (Bibiane Filteau, St. Emelie de Lotbiniere), left on the morning of February 22 for our missions in Haiti. The two departing missionaries were accompanied by Rev. Mother du St. Coeur de Marie, Councillor, appointed to make the official visitation of our Haitian establishments, our Reverend Mother General having been prevented at the last moment from going in person to visit our Sisters there.

In the last days of March five others left for the foreign fields of Africa, via Holland and Italy. The Sisters were Sister Bernadette de France (Bernadette Dumas, St. Anselme de Dorchester), Sister Marie Gemma (Germaine Morin, Roberval), Sister St. Leon le Grand (Pauline Longtin, Montreal), Sister Leon Marie (Lucille Fontaine, St. Ephrem d'Upton), and Sister St. Brigitte (Jeannette Caron, St. Jean de la Lande). The new mission group is destined to Northern Nyasaland, where a Catholic mission will be opened at Rumphu, in the Apostolic Prefecture of Msgr. J. M. St. Denis, W.F.



Departing Missioners

Above, centre: Rev. Mother du St. Coeur de Marie, on official visitation of our Haitian missions.

Left, then counterclockwise: Sister Bernadette de France, Sister St. Edouard, Sister St. Leon le Grand, Sister Bernard Marie, Sister St. Brigitte, Sister Marie Vianney, Sister St. Maxime, Sister Leon Marie, Sister Marie Gemma, Sister Joseph Edmond, Sister St. Bibiane.

Bound Feet

Mother was making me a little pair of pointed red shoes to be hung before the incense container of the Goddess of Mercy. I did not understand what she was trying to do.

"Precious," she said, "today I am going to bind your feet. Come and worship the Goddess of Mercy, and she will grant you a pair of very small feet like hers."

Mother took an incense stick in her hand, lighted it, burned paper money, and waited for me to kneel down. I watched her from across the room and dared not approach. Two big tears suddenly ran down my face, and my heart began to feel pain and fear. I said, "Mother, I don't want to have my feet bound."

"Come quick, come quick! Buddha will protect you," she said, and coming over she seized me and made me kneel down.

"Mother, binding feet is too painful. I won't be able to walk. Don't do this to me," I begged with tears coursing down my cheeks.

"If I bind your feet it is out of love for you; not binding them would be really doing you harm. You must think that a big-foot maiden cannot be married off."

(Gossip said I was big and had not yet bound my feet; in the future, surely no mother-in-law would want me.)

Mother had taken a mouthful of holy water and sprayed it on my feet, and was already putting red ashes between my toes. I roared with pain. "Mother, I can't stand it! I'd rather not marry than have bound feet!"

"Such a little thing," she said. "I haven't begun yet, and you are already crying about pain. So I shall bind them all the tighter."

° ° °

After that I could only sit beside the fireplace and spin, or walk about slowly in the house. I was like one wearing fetters and could not go freely. No longer could I see the lovely flowers and the green grass and the lively fish and crabs. No longer could I go with my basketful of flowers over the stone bridge, and throw them down into the water letting the stream carry them to Tungting Lake, with the bidding:

"O flower, flow on
To the palace of the Dragon King.
His beautiful Princess
Is preparing for her wedding . . ."



On the birthday of the Flower Spirit, while I was asleep, Mother drilled a hole in each of my ears. I woke in pain, but she had already put two red silk threads through them.

"Good! Now I have done two of your three big affairs," she said happily.

Her ideas of the three big affairs for a girl were these:

1° — Binding her feet

2° — Drilling the ears

3° — Marrying off.

Yes, the remaining affair of killing me had not been done yet! With bound feet and pierced ears, I sat and waited for the fifteenth return of the plum and peach trees.

Mother is radiant today. The red chair is at the door. Good-bye, my native village, my lovely village, with green mountains, gurgling brooks, and drooping willows like silken threads. My village that once thrilled my soul, but now leaves in my heart only a bloody stain. Good-bye forever, my ancient village. I leave you to go to the home of an unknown husband and a new mother, whose kindness to me will depend on the number of grandsons that will carry on the family name.

° ° °

Thirty years have passed. The Goddess of Mercy has given me eight children. Five children are living, while three have passed the river (have died). My three boys tell me they care for me, but they disappoint me, while the girls have been wonderful in the terrible trials we have gone through, and that on account of my boys. Strange to say, my husband, who had studied English at a Mission School when he was young, has been wanting to have the girls study at a school conducted by foreigners of the religion of the Lord of Heaven. At first I did not like to confide my girls to strangers, but I soon found out how the Sisters teach the girls to be pure, honest, and obedient.

Two years ago, the youngest, Kun Wan (Powerful Cloud) asked permission to become a Catholic. My husband hesitated and so did I, but then my eldest son got into trouble after the Japanese occupation and we were obliged to spend much money. At that time we had few friends; only the Sisters helped us, and for that reason my husband changed his mind about foreigners coming to China to teach about God. Kun Wan received the Holy Washing (Baptism) and is very happy. She is a very energetic girl. Her elder sister followed and they are now both of that religion. I am often afraid that our gods are angry with us. The girls never offer incense and very often tell me to keep them a piece of meat before offering it on the altar of the ancestors. They have filled the house with pictures of their holy protectors, as they call them, and I have a hard time finding a little corner for my gods.

When one of the Sisters died a few months ago, my girls cried so much that I told them I didn't expect they would be so sad if I were to die. This

Sister had been very good to us all. We had a ceremony for her at the Stone House (High Mass at the Cathedral) and there I felt that really their religion must be great, since they do so much for their dead. I was thinking that I would like a similar ceremony when I died. I was horrified at my own thoughts, and I felt my faith in Kum Yam (a goddess) diminishing. Some time after, a Sister visited at our home and I heard my husband saying, "Some day we might be of the same religion as you." I was shocked. What would the spirits do to us if we were to become Catholics? I know of so many instances where people have been punished for forgetting the gods.

These thoughts were constantly in my mind when my younger daughter came to me saying, "Mummy, you know how you told us you cried when they bound your feet. You knew it was wrong to take away the natural development of your body. Now, if you know by the gift of Faith that your soul is also bound to many foolish superstitions, will you not say again, 'I don't want to be bound. I can't stand it! Please don't bind me!'" I said nothing. My mind was troubled by something I did not know.

° ° °

Yes, this woman, as so many others, is craving for what she does not know. She is longing for the gift of Faith that brings peace of mind to everyone who possesses it. Let's all say a prayer that thousands of pagans may be unbound from superstition and lovingly gathered into the bonds of Faith.

A MISSIONARY SISTER, *Canton, China*



SISTER ST. BARTHELEMY (MARIA LAMBERT) SERVES THE ORPHANS' MEAL AT CANTON

Mzambazi

Bright and early on November 19 we bade farewell to the Sisters of Katete, our first African mission, with Mzambazi, one hundred miles distant, as our destination. In a land of modern, efficient transportation, one hundred miles is a mere trifle; here it means spending almost the whole day travelling over steep mountain trails and bumpy forest paths.

Our devoted Prefect Apostolic accompanied us the whole way. Two of our Sisters from Katete, Sister Madeleine Marie⁽¹⁾, Superior, and Sister Marie des Anges⁽²⁾, also were of the party. Early in the afternoon we left behind the magnificent panorama of the mountains and resolutely engaged on the last stage of our trip, a trek through seventeen miles of jungle roads. Shadows were beginning to lengthen when we glimpsed the hamlet of Mzambazi through the trees, its rustic huts as so many beehives clustering around a pretty little church.

Glad shouts of *Moni Amayi!* greeted our arrival. Black friends, young and old, milled around us, speaking words of welcome, dancing for joy, even kneeling in our path.

When at last we succeeded in breaking free from the friendly crowd, Msgr. St. Denis led the way to the comfortable quarters he has kindly seen should be ours when we arrived. Imagine a brick-walled house in this out-of-the-way corner of Africa! The natives find the Sisters' new home nothing short of a Palace Wonderful — and it really is, compared to their miserable huts. Though lack of workmen and of material has halted the completion of our convent, four large rooms are ready for occupancy, and that is quite enough for our needs.

Christians here number five hundred, and two thousand names figure on the catechumenate list. How eager we are to do our small share in making God better known and loved by His dusky African children!

On the Sunday following our arrival, people flocked to the mission in unusual numbers, curiosity of course having drawn many who had never yet laid their eyes on Sisters. After the Gospel Msgr. St. Denis told the congregation how grateful they should be to God, who has sent them Sisters from so far away to take care of their children and their sick. When we came out of church we were surrounded by black faces and submitted to a regular crossfire of questions. Then we were invited to sit on the veranda of the parish priest's residence for the entertainment prepared in our honor. Native dances were executed, addresses read, welcome songs rendered with gusto; then as gifts we were offered fresh eggs and fat hens. We could not help being deeply touched by these grateful demonstrations of our African friends.

In the afternoon, after the people had gone home to their villages, we

1. Madeleine LORANGER, Westmount.

2. Alice PEPIN, Warwick.



TWO SISTERS WHO LIKE BLACK FACES. SISTER MARIE DES ANGES (ALICE PEPIN, WARWICK)
AND SISTER MARIE DELIA (MARIE MARTHE TERRIEN, OTTAWA)
SENT THIS TELLING SNAPSHOT OF THEMSELVES FROM FARAWAY AFRICA

were free to enjoy the intimacy of our own little home nest. Msgr. St. Denis came after supper and invited us to walk around the compound, which measures five hundred feet in length. Most of the ground has not yet been tilled, but fine vegetable gardens are a pleasant prospect.

While walking along our zealous pastor enthusiastically unfolded his plans for the future.

On Monday morning, he and our two Sisters from Katete went back home to the central mission, leaving us alone to launch our apostolic venture in the Mzambazi we already love.

Eagles...

A solitary bird, the eagle. In that, he differs from other winged creatures. They live in flocks. And they fight in flocks. But alone the eagle battles. Perhaps that is why, inevitably, he brings the missionary to our mind. Because "in the world of men," it is in the missionary, and almost uniquely in the missionary, that the eagle's isolated strength finds its analogy. For he, more than any man, fights for what he believes, not side by side with those of his own race and ideals. But apart, in the midst of an alien culture, he struggles to bring the Truth to those who have no inkling of it. And the singleness of mind, the courage of the eagle — these he must have in his efforts. But, as he is human, he trusts two things: his God and his people at home, who are "backing" him. Because of these, he does not fly alone.

Catholic Missions

Mission Doings in Katete

Extraordinarily large appears our bush convent since the departure of some Sisters for Mzambazi. What with the daily classes, the care of the boarders, work at the clinic, and occasional home visits in neighboring villages, we have more to do than the seven of us at Katete can manage. A hearty welcome awaits each and every Sister who comes from Canada.

Little by little I am getting used to the intricacies of the Citumbuka language; already for a whole month I have been obliged to teach its rudiments to a class of eighty dusky boys and girls from the jungle. Of the number, twenty only are Christians and ten are catechumens; but even the non-Christian youngsters are very fond of the Sisters. You should see how eager they are to learn and how docile they prove in the classroom; their eyes never leave my face as I laboriously instruct them in the Citumbuka A B C. How I wish I knew more, so as to be able to tell them all about their heavenly heritage. Through them we hope to win the older generation, for black daddies and moms are incapable of resistance where their children are concerned. This means that if we convert these young hopefuls the fathers and mothers will soon follow them in the Fold.

Once in a while we tour the bush hamlets in search of other little ones to be taught. The Protestants are at work around here also, "snatching brands from the fire of Popish superstition," as they are pleased to say.

The poor bush children make big sacrifices to attend school regularly. Some must trot along, often on empty stomachs, as much as four or five miles through forest paths before reaching the Catholic mission. Their zeal would put many a Canadian boy or girl to shame, at least those boys and girls who prefer playing truant to getting instructed in the three R's. We were hardly through the first assignment the

other day when a poor little girl about whose illness I knew nothing fell off her bench, writhing in a fit of epilepsy. As the natives greatly fear the dead, whom they associate with spirits, all the pupils wanted to run away, and while I tried to care for the sick girl, pandemonium broke loose.



Wakafwa! (She is dead!) shouted the children as they ran into Sister Superior's⁽¹⁾ classroom.

Order was soon restored, however, and the sick girl was led to the clinic, where the nursing Sister gave her medicine. Vainly the mission catechist strove to persuade her to return home at once with an older sister also one of our pupils; the child stubbornly refused to go back to her village.

Nikuhumba kuambira ku sukulu! (I want to learn in school!) she pleaded over and over again.



VISITING NATIVES WHO SELDOM SEE ANY WHITE FACES ARE SISTER THERESE MARGUERITE (THERESE GOUIN, MONTREAL) AND SISTER ST. JUSTINIEN (PAULE IDA COULOMBE, MONUMENT), BOTH STATIONED AT KATETE, AFRICA

I had not the courage to refuse to keep her, at least for the rest of the day. Apart from the others I made her sit on the school's most comfortable seat, a board propped against the wall so that she could lean back and rest. She seemed better and spent the forenoon thus listening attentively as the other pupils recited their lessons. At noon, while we were reciting the beads in church, the poor girl had another attack; when she had sufficiently recovered I told her as gently as I could that she was decidedly too ill to come to school. You should have seen the despairing look that crept into her eyes! She followed me to the convent and crouching on the steps joined her hands in silent supplication; emotion choked her so that she could not utter a single word. Poor little one, we will not abandon you, for you are doubly dear to us precisely because of your misfortune.

1. SISTER MADELEINE MARIE (Madeleine Loranger, Westmount).

We will make it a duty to call at your village as often as we can to tell you about your heavenly Father and the best of mothers whose name is Mary.

How would you like a visit to my classroom? You will find it quite a streamlined affair, bush style, with adobe walls, roof of bamboo slits, dirt floor; as benches, boards laid across two piles of bricks. No desks, I hear you ask? Why complicate the furniture question so, when our boys and girls find it so natural to slip off their benches and squat on the ground, using the vacated seats as desks when writing out their lessons? Provided they have a sheet of paper and a pencil stub they may call their own, our young ones are happy and contented.

One thing to which I cannot yet get accustomed is seeing the children gobble live grasshoppers measuring sometimes two inches in length, smacking their lips as if they were delicious chocolates. They keep the insects in their mouth to savor the taste as long as they can. Sometimes when they talk the imprisoned grasshoppers or beetles will try to wriggle out, but the youngsters take great care not to lose these choice tidbits. Before eating them they carefully knock the senses out of their victims; but they never go so far as to kill them, for these children of the wild prefer fresh meat in the strictest sense of the word! No greater treat can we give our boarders than to allow them to go insect hunting; in a trice they swarm out in the fields digging the ground for fat, juicy worms or catching dainty flying morsels. Whenever they espy plump, fleshy insects they cluck their tongues appreciatively, exclaiming, *Oh! nyama comene!* (Lots of meat!) I sometimes wonder whether I should let them eat such "meat" on Fridays.

As my pupils are generous and big-hearted, they never fail to offer me a share of their bush delicacies. Generosity, concern for the other fellow, desire to share the good things that come their way — such are the characteristics of our dear black people. They also have an innate sense of justice. The negro child who has done wrong expects punishment; should you fail to upbraid him for his wrongdoing you will lose his respect and consideration.

I once questioned the boys in my class whether anyone among them would like to become a priest to help the missionaries. Ten pairs of black hands shot up and some of them belonged to non-Christians. Catechumens here are given a very complete course in religious instruction extending over a period of four years, so that when they are finally allowed to be baptized they are thoroughly grounded in the practices of our holy Faith.

"Sister, I would like to fade out (idiomatic expression meaning to leave) of Africa," a young girl at the boarding school confided the other day.

"Why would you want to leave your own country?" I queried.

"Because I want to go to Canada where I may become a Sister like you."

Another Catholic boarder has already chosen her religious name; she intends to be called Sister Teresa of the Angels.

"Why do you wish to enter the convent?" I asked.

"Because as a religious I will learn wisdom."

Vayi, a catechumen, I found one evening sweeping the floor with one hand and holding her rosary in the other.

"Sister," she explained, "I pray *Amama Maryia* because I am afraid to die tonight before being baptized."

The fields are indeed white unto harvesting, but how few, alas, are the apostolic harvesters!

AFRICAN MISCELLANY

Situated at an altitude of 4,750 feet above sea level, Katete is surrounded on all sides by lofty, green-garmented mountains. During the winter season woollen clothing and warm blankets are most welcome, as strong winds often lash our towering heights. In Mzambazi the climate is warmer than in Katete, according to our Sisters.

December ushers in the rainy season, which may last for six months at a stretch, with flashes of sunshine in between the showers. Sunrise and sunset stage pageants of breathtaking beauty in these parts.

Africa is indeed a beautiful continent, one of the most wonderful on God's earth for us missionaries. I love everything about it except the nasty, creeping creatures that abound in such a great variety, especially the legions of multicolored lizards lazily lounging in the African sunshine or inquisitively peeking at us from the most unexpected places. What do you think Sister Marie des Anges⁽¹⁾ found coiled around the bell the other day? A big serpent, if you please, with a doubtlessly religious bent of mind! When Sister came to ring the bell for prayer, the ugly reptile lifted up its head for a good look at her; but the look was brief, for the aides hurried at Sister's call and killed the intruder. Another was caught at the door of my class-



KATETE MISSION SOMETIMES HAS UNWELCOME SPOTTED CALLERS.
THIS ONE HAS BEEN DEVOURING THE SISTERS' HENS AND CHICKENS.

1. Alice PEPIN, Warwick.

room the other morning. One peculiar kind of serpent in Northern Nyasaland with bold and uncanny aim spits its venom right into the eyes, at least so people tell us. A scorpion also paid us a visit but decided to leave without pricking anybody, much to our relief; a scorpion's dart is almost as dangerous as a serpent's fangs. All these crawling visitors take their outings especially during the rainy season. One cannot be too careful of one's steps.

Some insects I have seen measuring six inches in length; like miniature buses they seemed to me complete with rubber tires, tiny, glowing headlights, and baggage accessories; others are an inch and a half long with glistening black bodies and amber yellow heads. One night I was even interviewed by a romantic screech-owl that perched on my window ledge.

BLACK CHRISTMAS

"How have you enjoyed your first black Christmas?" So many of you have inquired in your kind letters that I want to assure you that it will count among the most memory-stirring feasts of my life. Sister Françoise de Lisieux⁽¹⁾ and I were privileged to prepare the altar for Midnight Mass. As neared the holy hour, the stillness of the night was suddenly filled with melody; our young people of the boarding school were making their way to church singing carols in Citumbuka. During Mass, "Holy Night" was also beautifully rendered in the native dialect.

Mass over, back to our convent we hied to enjoy a *revue* which strove hard to remind us of the Canadian homeland far away. Four candles, two white and two red, gave the tiny refectory a cheery glow.

Three o'clock found us in bed dreaming of our first Christmas in Africa. Pontifical High Mass was celebrated at nine thirty with a large number of the faithful in attendance, some of our dear Christians having walked two whole days to be in time for Mass and to receive the Sacraments. We cannot help but admire deeply the generous sacrifices the natives so cheerfully make to be true to the God whose children they have become at the baptismal font.

During Midnight Mass I implored the Holy Child to grant me the grace of becoming a hundred per cent African, that I might draw my beloved blacks to Him by the thousands. Do join your prayers to mine to make sure that my request will be granted. When shall we expect more Sisters in Nyasaland, the most wonderful mission country under the sun? The heartiest of welcomes awaits you in this corner where work is plentiful and laborers are few.

SISTER ST. BERNADETTE, M.I.C.⁽²⁾

The more or less striking success of any special mission must not blind us to the fact that vast areas are still untouched. A great work has still to be accomplished. It is not merely a question of converting this or that nation, but of spreading the Faith of Christ through all the world, and so preparing for His coming again.

Rev. Pierre Charles, S.J.

1. Marie Claire LACOMBE, Montreal.

2. Marie FYFE, Laprairie.

Where God Walks

One morning in late October I ventured into a slum section of Manila. The houses there are wonders of simplicity — a few squares of sheet iron adjusted without respect for wind or heat, or simpler still, a half-dozen empty bags nailed to three or four pickets to serve as a waterproof roofing.

But God walks there with His grace. On that particular morning I called upon a certain Mrs. D —, one of my familiars at the clinic and a likeable, friendly woman, who had just moved in but had already gotten acquainted with her neighbors and knew their sundry and divers needs. From her I heard about the invalid next door, a young man who lived with his stepmother, and who upon the doctor's order had had to give up his studies when in his third year high.

Half an hour later I called upon the young fellow. After having touched the usual general topics of conversation I asked what he did with his time.

Grinning broadly he answered, "I'm the kitchen boy."

"But you should be resting," I protested mildly.

Soon I understood the why of the situation. Two healthy, husky boys — stepmother's sons — were lazily looking on while he, poor sick lad, had to hustle about for the next meal.

He was very glad when I invited him to come to the clinic for regular treatments. One day he brought along his nine-year-old sister, and another time one of the boys, who had a sore eye. The two boys and their little sister are frequent callers now. They need medical care, and badly; but most of all they need the ministrations of the Divine Physician Himself, the Sacramental Savior they have never received in Holy Communion. The regrettable fact might be more readily excusable for the little girl, but boys of eighteen and nineteen should have been led to the altar rail a good ten years ago.

In another neighboring house, in a dark, dreary corner, a year-old child lay stretched on the bamboo floor. The door being opened I walked in without further ado. A man appeared from nowhere, gathered the whimpering babe in his arms and brought him to me. The two pain-filled eyes, unused to the glaring sunlight, blinked and blinked so that I had to draw closer and shut off all the light I could. The poor ailing baby, so young and already acquainted with suffering, was also deprived of motherly care and tenderness, for I was told that his mother was employed in a factory at the other end of Manila. Willingly the child would have accepted anyone as a substitute; his first reaction on seeing me was to lift his little arms in a "hold me" gesture. I gave him a few candies which he gulped down in a fraction of a minute.

Thoughts of that forsaken mite of humanity followed me on the way home, and it struck me that not Heaven but martyrdom lay about him in



ON THE CONVENT GROUNDS, GAGALANGIN, MANILA

his infancy. How many year-old infants in Canada have so early found that life is to be spent in a valley of tears and sorrow?

A few days later, I again visited in the vicinity and called upon my little pal, gave him some nasty medicine, stuffed his wee hands with candies, and dropped some more on the floor in front of him. True to the instinct of self-preservation, he began with the dainties on the floor, all the while clasping to his heart the sweet contents of his closed hand, so that his banquet might longer last.

On my next call neighbors said the mother had found a lodging nearer the factory where she worked, and had brought her little son along. Yes, the poor baby is elsewhere, though not away from pain and hunger. Whispering a prayer to his Guardian Angel, I smiled a little frustrated smile as I looked at the candies I had brought.

SISTER JOSEPH ARTHUR, M. I. C.(1)

If we want very much to do great things for God, we can do little things while waiting; as a man who is very hungry takes a biscuit while waiting for his dinner.

Mother Henrietta Kerr

1. Laura THERIEN, St. Leonard d'Aston.

In Honor of the Holy Cross

In the Philippine Islands the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross (May 3) is celebrated with unusual pomp and outward show. Very few indeed are the Filipinos who do not like exterior demonstrations, especially so when they can have a procession.

On this particular May day (or more exactly May evening, since processions are sometimes held as late as nine p.m.), the cortege is formed by young girls of fifteen to eighteen years wearing the national costume reaching down to the ankles; several even display a train which, naturally, connotes smiling little pages to lend their assistance as train-bearers. Torches and large-size lamps are also carried to light the way and give the gold and silver gems on the costumes a chance to sparkle. To one of the young ladies is reserved the privilege of being more royally garbed than the others, for she is to represent the Empress Helena, to whom in a vision was revealed the precise spot where the Holy Cross lay buried. At her side

walks Constantine, her son. All along the way a scintillating dome is held above the head of the royal pair.

Merrily the church bells peal out before and after the two-hour procession, telling the joy of the faithful, to whom similar feasts mean as much as Christmas and New Year's mean to us. It is indeed regrettable that prayer and piety should no longer be as in the past the dominant note of these celebrations, which have gradually lost their primitive sense and taken on a more profane character.

FRIENDS OF ST. FRANCIS

The feast of the gentle Saint of Assisi brings an investiture ceremony for his good old Filipino friends of the third order, grandmothers for the most part, as in this corner of the Philippines tertiaries are generally recruited among the silver-haired. Like all other ceremonies, this one



Two Fast Friends of Good St. Francis. No, This Isn't the Special Garb They Wear on Initiation Day

is inevitably ushered in by a procession with more than plenty of music and bells.

Carrying lighted torches and escorted by the directors of the association and a few other members, the dear old souls slowly hobble into the sanctuary and kneel before the altar steps. The priest blesses the habit each carries in her arms and retires.

Still in the sanctuary, the newly elected tertiaries with friendly help begin to don their quaint garments. A complex problem this, needing many minutes and much patience, since the apparel to be put on is nothing less than a complete religious habit with its ample, heavy black dress, wimple, white cotton headband, and long black veil. When at last the costumes have been more or less elegantly adjusted,

with all seriousness and piety is begun as strange a procession as one can imagine. With the president in the lead, the group advances on tottering steps in the aisle, a lighted candle flickering in each trembling hand, poor old limbs wearily dragging wooden shoes and getting all confused in the over-long dress. Their vision being in some cases impaired by the maladjusted coif, the old ladies zigzag all around the church before returning to the altar rail. There they bow and smile for a fraternal accolade. This last touching rite of the investiture ceremony bids tears flow on many an old furrowed cheek.

Before leaving the church, each pious disciple of the Umbrian Saint removes her holy habit and folds it with as much care as if it were her bridal gown. Thereafter she will wear it only twice a year, for the processions on her patronal day and on Good Friday. In its folds she will be enveloped when for her comes the hour to sleep with the dead.



Sister Gabriel de l'Annonciation (Ida Carriere, Hammond, Ont.), Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception, Las Pinas, Philippine Islands, Poses With One of Her Pupils.

WE'RE HAVING NEW PEWS

The material administration of the parish of Las Pinas is not confided to aldermen, as is generally the case, but instead to a group of parishioners chosen among the most influential and the most zealous for religious matters. The members of this committee, the *Centro Catolico*, are twelve in honor of the twelve Apostles.

Adventures of a Cat



When Whiskers saw Marion near the big box he felt very sad. He knew she was going to send him far away to the missions.



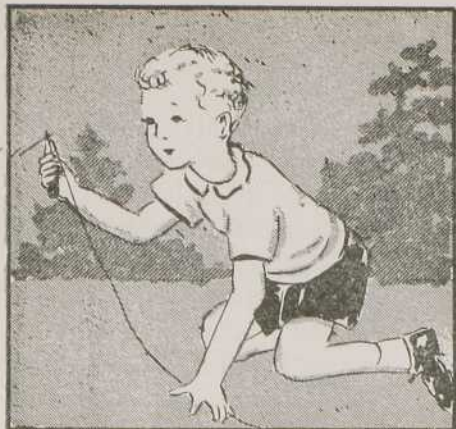
"Mother," said Marion, "I think I should give Whiskers a last ride. He feels so sorry about having to leave us."



And away she scampered on the street, pulling a little wagon in which sat her own beloved Whiskers, happy as a prince.



Ron, a poor boy who lived on the same street, had often watched Marion and her brother playing with their toy kitten.



The temptation to steal Whiskers was just too strong. With his penknife Ron cut the string tied around Whiskers' neck.



Quickly he ran off with the horrified Whiskers. The poor little kitten felt it was terrible to be kidnapped like that.



"Whiskers! Whiskers! Where are you?" cried Marion when she found to her dismay that her favorite pet had disappeared.



Meanwhile Ron didn't feel very happy. A strange little voice kept telling him he had done wrong in stealing the kitten.



Up in Heaven the boy's Guardian Angel was wiping his tears with the tips of his wings and fingers. Ron had been so bad.



"I shouldn't have stolen Whiskers," said Ron in his prayers that night. "Please forgive me, Jesus. I'll take him back to Marion."



MOTHER MINE, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

At one of its recent meets, the *Centro Catolico* came to the conclusion that the church was old enough to have new pews. The present ones, it seems, had been on active service for two hundred years, and after so long an era of devotedness had become instruments of penance instead of comfort. A good number of new pews have already replaced the veterans; now the antiques that have seen so many folded hands and bended knees during two centuries of faith will humbly walk off the scene, unwept, unhonored, unsung, as the poet would say. We hope that the more modern seats will bring back to the house of God those parishioners who stayed away under the facile pretext that the pews two centuries old were a handicap to piety.

ANOTHER PROCESSION — REX REGIS

With the purpose of rectifying a general error and placing devotion to Our Lord at its own proper first place, our reverend pastor decided to hold a procession of the Blessed Sacrament on the feast of Christ the King. This was something new, for a like manifestation was not listed among the many processions dear to the Filipino heart.

At the morning function our pupils had a pretty good success with Dumont's Royal Mass, with accompaniment from the far-famed bamboo organ, which is played only on great solemnities. Influential Catholic parishioners made it a point to receive Holy Communion at that Mass.

Many good souls got the surprise of their lives when, contrary to the prevailing custom, the procession was set for three thirty that afternoon, so sure had they been from their cradle days that a procession was not genuine unless it took place at eight of an evening. But at the appointed hour all willingly cut the strings of the old time-honored tradition and made ready to leave. The band opened the line of march, and the whole affair was done both religiously and with dignity.

Following the cross and the Sacred Heart banner marched the public school pupils with their teachers; the first communicants — thirty-five boys and girls who had received the King of Kings for the first time that

day; the girls of St. Joseph's School — juniors in uniforms and seniors with white veils; the Children of Mary with Our Lady's banner; the various confraternities of women; the boys of our school — scouts in uniforms and sixteen altar boys in red cassocks preceding the Blessed Sacrament. The mayor of the city followed the procession with his assistant and six municipal councillors carried the canopy; men and boys ended the line of march. The procession advanced in two straight files on either side of the road, the middle being reserved to fifteen bearers of banners representing the mysteries of the Rosary and to the little girls in white, throwing flowers under God's footsteps.



SISTER MARIE ARISTIDE (ALICE CARRIER, WORCESTER, MASS.),
MISSIONARY SISTER OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, LAS PINAS,
SEEMS JUST AS HAPPY AS HER FILIPINA FRIEND

Of the three altars of repose which had been erected on the way, one especially artistic consisting of layers of banana tree trunks presented a very pleasing effect. A number of parishioners after a hard day of work had consecrated their night hours to preparing this repository for the coming of the King. All along the processional pathway the faithful in their houses displayed pictures of the Sacred Heart with streamers, lights, and flowers.

The police officers kindly saw to it that the heavy circulation which generally reigns on this route should be marshalled elsewhere during the two hours the procession lasted, so that nothing might disturb the



GOING HOME AFTER A GOOD FISHING DAY, LAS PINAS

Royal Pilgrim and His devoted escort. To His faithful crowded in the church or kneeling near the doors, He gave a last blessing before returning to the tabernacle where He dwells for love of men.

Surely Christ the King blessed His Filipino flock on that day of days. May He grant to them all the precious graces He lavished on the multitudes that followed in His footsteps when He walked the highways and byways of Galilee.

HOBBIES

High on my list of hobbies I place "soul-collecting." It was the hobby of Christ the Redeemer as He plodded along the highways and hedges of Galilee. It was the hobby of Peter the Rock, of Paul the Indomitable, of Thomas the Doubter who stopped doubting, and of all Christ's apostles from 33 A.D. to 1950 A.D. It was for that hobby that Xavier exchanged his sword for a crucifix; that Damian lived and died on a filthy, fever-infested strand; that Ignatius prayed and preached A.M.D.G.; that frail young women, spurning the vista of potential thrills the world has to offer, have crossed and will cross again the seven seas to dip the hand into the dish with the savage. Stamp-collecting is the hobby of kings, they say; but soul-collecting is the hobby of The King.

OUR LADY OF VACATION

Sweet Lady of Vacation Days
O hearken to my plea . . .
Where'er I roam in leisure's ways
Protect and shelter me!

May virtue's robe which now is mine
Unspotted e'er remain;
Make of my heart a cloistered shrine,
And keep it free from stain.

May all my hours be filled with joy
As yours in ancient days,
When visiting Elizabeth
Your heart hummed songs of praise.

May each vacation be for me
As your own Visitation . . .
And each new one more holy be,
Dear Lady of Vacation.

O Lady, good and true and kind,
When pleasure's haunts I tread,
May I be deaf and dumb and blind
To sin and tempters dread . . .

That when at length life's days are done
I, too, may hope to spend
My days with you and Christ your Son . . .
A vacation without end.

REV. J. A. WILLIAMS

The Christopher Page

CALLING ALL MOTHERS

Mary's month draws the spotlight on you, mothers. No matter how humble your station in life, you can play an important part in changing our materialistic, mad world for the better. No matter how many boisterous, red-cheeked handicaps you have on your hands, you can influence the world, you can share with Christ the extending of His Mystical Body, you can leave the earth better than you found it! In Christopher parlance, it's the *little* people who do the *big* things, and that without disrupting the routine of their everyday, humdrum existence.

Big things must be done today, before the Red Sea of Communism engulfs the second half of the world. In this our twentieth century, mankind needs the dynamism of Faith; it needs to be set straight again, face turned to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We are at the crossroads. Christ or chaos it will be — but in the option, mothers, you have your word. It is not too late; Christ still wants to save the world from disaster. He will not use atomic bombs, for He is the gentle Christ. He will use instead people fired with the Christopher purpose, individuals glad to work singly, each on his own limited scale, to restore all things in Him, to sow love where they find hate, plant faith in place of doubt, exchange joy for sadness, and inspire uplifting hope where they find down-dragging despair.

How can you home-tied mothers answer Christ's plea? The solution is simple. A Christopher always starts on his knees. He appeals to Christ for grace and to His Blessed Mother for guidance, because he knows the value of prayer and the miracles it can work.

A good Christopher-minded mother will always remember to make her Morning Offering. God does not need a stereotyped formula; the offering of one's day is a matter in which the heart must have a greater part than the head. Its value is tremendous, as Father Thomas H. Moore describes so beautifully:

"The first purpose of this prayer is to put every action of the day on a supernatural basis. If I am a mother, I can get the children ready for school simply because it is a part of my job as a mother. The children have to be dressed and fed. The process of dressing and feeding babies is an activity common to the whole neighborhood each morning. But if I have made the MORNING OFFERING, the individual duties of motherhood become for me a part of something greater; they fit into the work of Redemption. And it is not only I but Christ working in and through me, who ties the shoe laces and combs the hair of these little ones. A shoe is tied, a little pain is suffered, and something has been added to the great work of saving souls. The Mystical Body is growing and breathing in the activity of every member."

By this simple, one-minute method every task, every thought, every word is converted into an act of love, into an act of prayer — and why not also into an act of supplication that each day, one top-quality person with a Christopher ideal may get into education, government, writing, or labor-management, which are the four great fields, the four vital spheres that make or mar?

As the Christopher founder repeatedly points out, it is more important and more urgent to *chase in* people with sound ideas than *chase out* those who hold the blueprints for a universal catastrophe. In this, too, your prayers, mothers, can wield undreamt-of influence; they can change the destiny of mankind. Your prayers can save the world.

A MISSIONARY SISTER



Clinic Calls

At a stone's throw from church and convent is located Roche-a-Bateau's vest-pocket clinic, where big deeds of charity are done in the name of the Divine Physician. It is a small, unpretentious two-room shelter with a large spreading roof to enable the poor suffering callers to rest awhile away from the sun's burning rays until Sister is ready to minister to them. As many as 150 patients come each day; on Thursdays the number is even greater.

In the waiting room, a cramped affair of eleven feet by twenty, Sister Superior spends most of her time teaching the adults the great truths that matter for time and eternity. Already she has been instrumental in leading many stray souls to God and happiness. In the other room Sister St. Alphonse de Liguori⁽¹⁾ gives medical care, comfort, and cheer.

The patients are all very edifying in their resignation to the will of God; physical and moral suffering they accept as a blessed forerunner of heavenly favors and unending joys.

In front of the clinic, far as the eye can see, the majestic Caribbean sparkles in the tropical sunlight; sparkling but not unpolluted, for in its waters the people wash their sores and ulcers before hobbling over to the

1. Simone LEBŒUF, Fortierville.



THE CARIBBEAN SEA AS GOD MADE IT

Sisters' clinic. For four years it has been thus; all who are ill of body come to see the Sisters. To them we give what we can — bodily cures when these are in our power; but in all cases and at all times the soothing balm of consolation and Christian charity.

Grateful thanks well up from the bottom of every heart to the devoted friends of the missions whose generous support helps us carry on our work of corporal and spiritual mercy. May they all hear on the last day the consoling invitation of the Savior of souls: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

SISTER ST. RITA, M. I. C.(1)

* * *

MY MOST UNFORGETTABLE CHARACTERS

I write about some half-dozen black boys who come to St. Joseph's School. Unforgettable characters they are every one of the six. Had I come to Haiti only to see their sunny smiles and laugh at their clever repartees, I would still count the day happy when I heard about my forthcoming migration to the south.

Don't look too much at the names; do concentrate on the bearers thereof. Moliere and Philistin come from a well-to-do family. Every Saturday that bows to the sun, Moliere raids the gardens for grass and choice morsels to feed his favorite pets. With skillful fingers he twists the long ears of his little grey donkey when the said donkey has acted too much according to his name. Still more comical is it to watch the boy threatening himself with his own clenched fist, knuckles all but puncturing the dark skin, when his teacher returns an exam or a test with a should-be-better reproach in her eyes.

Physically and morally Moliere is the image of his father; Philistin, however, in much the same way as Jacob has inherited the innate gentleness of his mother, whom he is always ready to help with duster and broom and mop. That he will grow up to sterling manhood we augur from the fact that, a mere stripling of twelve, he bravely bore without a word of excuse an unjust accusation that dealt a terrible blow to his pride. There is much nobility in him. Indeed, we hope that in a few years he and his brother will be model young fathers worthy of imitation, the sincerest form of flattery.

Two orphan lads, Bonnel and Guiel, deserve all our sympathy.



1. Rita LEGRAND, St. Philippe de Laprairie

BONNEL AND GUIEL, INSEPARABLE COMPANY

Having known neither father nor mother, these boys concentrate all their affection one on the other, and day in and day out prove it, though in a very original way. Guél forever pretends to be vexed by Bonnel's latest mischievous prank; while Bonnel under much apparent seriousness hides a big temptation to burst out laughing. When things go wrong some boys run off to be alone with their great sorrow; but not so these two, who willingly accept consolation. Drying the scalding tears coursing down their cheeks, we have the impression that we are taking Mother's place and doing Mother's job. Both boys are very courteous and grateful for every little kind deed done to them.

Another motherless twosome, John and Fritz, have been forsaken by their father and now live with an aunt. Poor as Job, she somehow manages to bring up her nephews as if they were her very own sons, with the avowed intention of making real gentlemen out of them. Together the boys come to school and together they run home when lessons are done. Does Fritz have to stay in after class, John offers to help him with the difficult problems, and Teacher never seems to have any objections. Poor boys, they must both be so hungry!

Serious and hard-working, John is on the whole a very good scholar. But not so Fritz, who, for all he is bright as any, is unfortunately too giddy and thoughtless to have any spectacular success at his books. Sometimes he studies, but oftener he studies not. A heart of gold is his, though, and when he has done a misdeed, he kneels down to ask forgiveness and with tears in his eyes promises to be a good boy; then he goes back to his seat, sure that he has been forgiven and that Teacher and pupils alike still hold

him in high esteem. Maybe John and Fritz have a vocation to the priesthood; but if so, God will have to whisper their names to charitable benefactors, or else their noble ideal will never pass beyond the wishful stage.

Brothers, too, are Delille and Kelly. Delille, a fervent member of the Eucharistic Crusade, takes it upon himself to play police on the playground and paves the way to an armistice when fists come into action. Prayer and example are his



DELILLE AND KELLY, BROTHERS UNLIMITED

twin methods of apostolate. By dint of sacrifices and supplications the dear boy has finally succeeded in persuading his father and mother to have their marriage blessed by the Church. Clean of heart, an angel in disguise, he treads a guileless path and feels heartily sorry when a classmate is not on his best behavior. For him, too, the priesthood seems a likely vocation; that is, if generous benefactors are willing to help us place a chalice in his hands.



SISTER MARIE LUCILLE (LEA LECUYER, MONTREAL)
EXPLAINS TO A YOUNG GENTLEMAN OF THE ROCHE-A-BATEAU CLASS

Much younger and much more roguish is Kelly, who sometimes has to atone in some dark corner for his latest escapade. Too young to know that *vanity* is a word found in the dictionary, should he happen to lose his cap he very unashamedly covers his brown head with Mom's many season broad-brimmed hat. Without any self-consciousness he pulls the ugly thing over his tangled mop of hair, and when his errands are done he returns home, blissfully unaware that some people he courteously greeted walked away smiling.

A good student, Kelly keeps his books in perfect order. With time he will grow up to man's estate, and will be, like his brother in the Crusade, a most honorable and respectable citizen of Roche-a-Bateau. Blessings on him!

SISTER MARIE LUCILLE, M. I. C.(1)

1. Lea LECUYER, Montreal.

Bishop Wright Installed Diocesan Leader

To His Excellency

Most Rev. J. J. Wright,

recently appointed by the Holy See
first Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester, Mass.,
the *Precursor* offers respectful greetings
and prayerful wishes
for a long and fruitful episcopal career.

Message From Mirebalais

Our school has been in full activity since November 21. Two hundred pupils are coming regularly to deepen their knowledge of the Catholic way of life and learn something about everything, as the saying goes, the better to be able to assume their responsibilities in the world of tomorrow.

Christmas of 1949, first on foreign soil for the Mirebalais mission band, brought its unforgettable hours and minutes. As the Nativity Feast was also a first for our pupils, inasmuch as never before had they spent it with Sisters, we did our best with our native genius to make the day one they will long keep in glad and grateful remembrance and tell their little children about twenty years hence.

For Sisters and pupils alike Midnight Mass was a thrilling experience. The seniors had the privilege of singing the Common of the High Mass and time-honored Christmas carols at the two Masses that followed. Oddly enough, when a singer in Haiti courts applause and appreciation, he will sing at the top of his voice and as long as his vocal cords will allow. Rehearsals for Midnight Mass were no easy matter; having no musical anything at the school, whenever we had a mind to go over the Christmas hymns we had to walk fifteen minutes to the church and try them on the old organ there. Little we worried about the handicaps, though, for we just knew that our youthful choristers would carry through all right — which they did, to the satisfaction of their proud parents.

Spacious and with very few pews to take up room, the church has standing accommodation for a good number of the faithful. At Midnight Mass it was crowded from the door to the altar; yes, to the altar, for in this region men are allowed to occupy seats in the sanctuary.

Seventy-five percent of the Catholics show their face in church only twice a year, on Christmas and eight months later on the feast of St. Louis, their parish patron. Several men, women, and children did not count it too much to walk twenty or thirty kilometres to be able to hear Mass in the night of the Savior's birth; many others travelled all night coming and going, some on foot, some on mules; still others passed by our convent at dawn on the 24th, gaily humming to themselves to forget the long distance and the next-to-impassable roads. After having confessed their sins to the priest, they spent the day in eager anticipation of the blessed night.

All those day and night pilgrims put me in mind of the Jewish caravans of long ago painfully trudging along the dusty highways and byways of Palestine to inscribe their names for Caesar's good pleasure. Many in Haiti were coming from afar, not only as distance is computed, but also as is civilization. In the bluffs that surround Mirebalais are little huts the dwellers whereof have never lifted their eyes above and beyond the trees around them; there they live through the Shakespearian seven ages and walk off this earthly scene sans health, sans wealth, sans the million comforts so necessary to moderns. Of clothes they wear next to nothing, so that their clothing bill is almost negligible. Only when the tattered

things are ready to fall apart will they think of getting something new that can hold together.

Thanks to the kindness of a benefactress from St. Marie, Beauce County, where I was stationed before my assignment to the missions, I had the joy of putting up a Christmas Crib in my class, with the Bethlehem personages all in attendance and appropriate decorations to make it more colorful. You should have seen the ecstasy beaming on little black and brown faces!



MIREBALAIS SCHOOL, HAITI. TO THE RIGHT IS THE SISTERS' HOUSE;
IN THE CENTRE, THE CHAPEL

Eyes were too small to take in all the beauty and had to look long before calling themselves satisfied. Had I not sentinelled the little Crib of the Christ Child, I am sure it would have been mischievously invaded by tots below and above seven who wanted very much to do a bit of contemplation at close range. On all sides I heard exclamations of wonder and admiration; some even said they lacked French words to express all they felt inside at the sight of the Christmas representation. And it is all so understandable; are not an Infant Jesus Crib and a Christmas tree laden with gifts and decorated in bright, showy colors enough to thrill children into whose drab lives not much beauty has ever crept? In Mirebalais, as in most of Haiti, children do not get many gifts nor much attention at Christmas time; this explains why the tiniest little plaything can send them into raptures and make the giver feel sorry she has not more to give.

Around that time too we had the pleasure of distributing to each girl four very modest-sized candies; yes, exactly four, along with a holy picture, the whole wrapped in red paper and tied with a bit of ribbon in which was passed a miraculous medal. Knowing ahead of time that we would have many youthful visitors when so tempting a bait was offered, we had taken the precaution of preparing about two hundred and fifty identical gifts. But the girls who came were not empty-handed; they brought a profusion of natural flowers to lay close to the Crib. On certain days the Child Jesus

could no longer be seen; not even His little outstretched hands showed above the roses and fragrant blossoms so lovingly brought to Him. It is a custom here to half-bury the statues under sheaves of flowers; Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Louis are sometimes standing waist-high in a maze of floral beauty.

Like wildfire spread the good news that the Mothers from Canada had gifts for all who went to wish them a happy new year. All wanted to take advantage of an opportunity the likes of which happened so seldom, and visitors were very numerous. On the day after New Year's, three grown-up children in their twenties knocked at the door; evidently they too were coming for medals, pictures, and candies. Sister Superior soon had their wishes satisfied, and they went away as delighted as children of five or six.

The generous help of our dear Canadian benefactors certainly came in handy this Christmas. How we should have liked to share with them the great pleasure of making others happy, so true it is that it is a still more blessed thing to give than to receive.

On Christmas Night God's candles had all died out in the skies, and our steps had to be cautious all along the way to church, for stones in our path might have caused regrettable mishaps. But on New Year's when we went to another Midnight Mass all the lights of the heavens were on and finding our way was easy. If you want to see stars right down to the horizon, do come to Haiti, where you will be served to your eyes' content! Never have I seen so many stars in Canada. But you must not gather that this suggests any inferiority on the part of my homeland, for it doesn't and I will always believe that Canada is of all countries the prettiest and the best.

SISTER ST. MARTHE, M. I. C.(1)



Freckles and His Friends

A pug-nosed, freckled-faced lad of twelve barefooted his way up the aisle of the only Catholic church for forty miles around. He had never been in one before. His eyes were large as they roamed over the stations of the cross, the statues, to rest finally on the altar. He had listened carefully to the explanation of the Home Missioner whom he had dubbed "The Reverend." Suddenly he leaned over the altar railing and pointed to the sanctuary lamp and the tabernacle.

"What's that box for and why is the red light burning?"

Father explained that the red lamp was a sign to Catholics that our Lord, Jesus Christ, was really present in the little box under the form of bread. "Freckles" thought this over for a moment and then said:

"You mean that Jesus is really and truly in that box?"

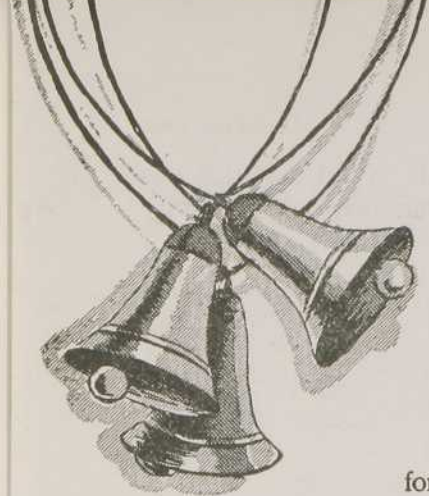
Again Father answered in the affirmative, telling him of the words of Jesus at the Last Supper. The boy stood silent for some time and then blurted out:

"Gee! We ought to kneel down and pray to Him, oughtn't we?"

"Freckles" had the answer. Would that all could kneel before Him!

Rev. Edward W. Smith

1. Antoinette RAYNAULT, l'Assomption.



First Communion *at Marti*

Merrily the church bells pealed out this morning for the First Communion ceremony of twenty-two Cuban girls.

During four months these children, our pupils, had been very regular attendants at the catechism lessons given by the Sisters every Sunday after Mass. When these courses of religious instruction were launched, the children knew practically nothing of their religion beyond the fact that there was a God; now they are sufficiently initiated to receive the heavenly Guest within their hearts.

To help them prepare more worthily, we had given each child a holy card representing either the Christ Child or Our Blessed Mother and enough gold stars to weave a crown, which crown was to be wrought by so many little sacrifices. Sacrifices! Such a hard word to understand for these children of nature accustomed to a life of caprice! And yet, understand it they did after a few lessons, and put it at once into joyful and loving practice.

Another word whose meaning they understood for the first time was — confession. What strange, confused ideas they had about the Sacrament of Penance! They had hardly been trained to distinguish between right or wrong. One tiny black damsel was sure she had committed a serious sin by killing a lizard basking in the Cuban sunlight; real faults left her quite unconcerned. Once when we were insisting on the importance of truthfulness in confession, a seven-year-old negro lass ventured, "Madre, I'm going to tell Father the truth, the whole truth about myself when I go to confession."

"That's fine," encouraged Sister. "Jesus will be pleased."

"Yes, Madre, I'm going to tell Father that I spanked Junior."

Tedious months of preparation over, how happy the twenty-two chosen little girls were on that blessed morning of their First Communion! As most of them came of poor families, we lent them spotless white dresses and veils, much to the pride of the fond parents.

Pious hymns were rendered by the pupils during Mass; then the thanksgiving prayers were read by the oldest of the group and repeated by all in unison. Xiomara, whose birthday it was, had been chosen to read the act of consecration to Our Lady in the name of her twenty-one companions.

After Mass the little ones stopped at the *Colegio*, where their classroom had been decorated in Marian colors. Before they went home for the day, a picture was given each of the first communicants in memory of these happiest moments of their lives.

In a few of these homes the children will be made to feel that this was indeed a red-letter day; but for many it meant just another drab, ordinary day without any specials. Some of these families are so poor — poor in a



SISTER ST. VERONIQUE (FABIENNE BERNATCHEZ, PONT ROUGE),
MISSIONARY SISTER OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, MARTI, CUBA,
WITH A HANDFUL OF CUBAN DELIGHTS.

material sense, poorer still in a spiritual one. May Our Blessed Savior keep these young hearts hallowed by His sacramental presence, pure and loving and true as on this day of days.

SISTER ST. VERONIQUE, M. I. C.(1)



Why Do We Have Them, Anyway?

I know of some mighty good reasons why there must be missionaries. To begin with, someone must preach the Gospel to every creature; someone must show Christ as the lovable and loving Brother He is; someone must carry on His redeeming plan and make the universe His empire. We need that valiant army, again, to deaden the grip of Lucifer and strengthen the grip of Christ; to fill the Mansions above with rescued souls; to provide white-robed choristers for the eternal Sanctus. But we need them also — a sickened world needs them — to care for babies, to teach youth, to nurse lepers, to solace the old, to soothe the dying. We have need of them to change despair into hope, hatred into love, ignorance into adoring faith. Of their sterling calibre we need thousands — millions!

1. Fabienne BERNATCHEZ, Pont Rouge.

What About Manguito?

Manguito is a little town of contrasts, and about as cosmopolitan^{as} Heaven. Right across our convent live a Chinese dad and mother with their almond-eyed youngsters. Our next-door neighbor hails from Spain and no Cuban flavor has his faultless Castilian. A Jew runs the store on the corner, and not an ordinary Jew this storekeeper, but one wedded, poetically, to a Grecian maiden. Scores of business people are half-breeds, or, as is the case with our postman, authentic, full-blooded negroes. Should you meet Alfredo, however, biggest and cleverest of our altar boys, you might wonder whether the golden-headed, cassocked young one hasn't been born in Canada. For Sunday Mass, too, lovable old grandmothers turn out, looking for all the world like those we have known and cherished. And then the contrast — half a dozen black pickaninnies, arms bare, legs bare, smiles everywhere, scamper up the aisle as probably do others of their kind over in Africa — if only our Sisters would divulge the fact!

Manguito has a population of some three thousand souls. The streets, five or six in one direction and eight or nine in the other, are spacious, straight as an arrow shot, and well paved. Houses reach out close to the street as if to catch the attention of passers-by. Not one home however poor or however rich is without its veranda to keep the sun's rays at respectable distance.

Buses and taxis are not unknown conveyances in Manguito, even if the milkman and the corn merchant prefer old Dobbins, on either side of which to let their merchandise dangle. Good old pedestrians as well are the hens and chickens, frequent sights in the streets of Cuba. Henhouses being out of question and out of sight here, when the stars peep out the little red hens perch on the branches of a tree and go to sleep; and well they may, for the weather is always benign. Why, didn't we have supper outdoors on Christmas night! November and December we find the best months of the year, but not so the Cubans; to them these months are winter and as cold as the Arctic. One November day our pupils ran into class with woollen sweaters and three-quarter length coats, begging to have doors and windows closed. "It's winter!" they wailed, while we inwardly called it a pleasant June morning of the Canadian type.

Came another week, however, when we in our turn shivered and went after sweaters and woollen blankets. The thermometer had plunged downward and the nights were as cool as late September ones in Canada, while the morning hours afforded us the pleasure of feeling really cold; by noon, though, the mercury indicated 100° Fahrenheit in the sun.

Of a strange variety are Cuban winters, that unashamedly bring the season of fruits and vegetables and haymaking to boot! In late November, Mr. and Mrs. Cueto, our landlords, having invited us over to their farm



REHEARSING FOR CHRISTMAS CAROLS WITH SISTER MADELEINE DU SAUVEUR
(ALICE LABELLE, MONTREAL) AT MANGUITO, CUBA

for the orange harvest, Sister Superior⁽¹⁾ and Sister St. Odilon⁽²⁾ rode over in senor Cueto's jeep. Oranges were plentiful and our Cuban friends most liberal, so much so that the Sisters returned with three large bags of oranges, several grapefruits, and five or six coconuts over the bargain.

Manguito's people are kind-hearted, as will appear by the following instance. As the *Colegio* owned no piano, the solfeggio teacher decided to ask permission of senor Alfonso, our neighbor, to go to his house to look over the accompaniment of the national anthem and a few little Spanish songs she wanted to teach to the children. Imagine our surprise when, a short while later, in lumbered senor Alfonso with five or six men shuffling along with the piano! Our kindly neighbor explained that his family being in mourning had no use for the instrument; the *Colegio* could therefore keep it until it had its own.

Here, as in many other sections of Cuba, Catholics don't seem too convinced about what to believe and what to do. Superlatively enthusiastic when exterior demonstrations or processions are to be held, the Cuban Catholic seldom darkens any church door on ordinary Sunday occasions. By the fact that he wears more or less ostensibly a medal of Our Blessed Mother, he believes himself an uncrowned saint. The Sacraments, that of Matrimony included, are left out altogether, as is the case with Sunday Mass and Sunday rest. Very few fulfill the essential duties of Catholics; they are satisfied with a "nodding acquaintance" with their Maker.

1. SISTER MADELEINE DU SAUVEUR (Alice Labelle, Montreal).

2. Constance Dubois, St. Ferdinand de Megantic.

Once when we needed a bit of information about a certain family, Isidora, the little classroom cleaner, believed she would be expressing herself very clearly if she answered, "The people you refer to live next door to the man who goes to Mass." It was all unmistakably clear then, so exceptional in Cuba is a gentleman who pays heed to the First Commandment of the Church. "Eat, sleep, and be merry" seems to be the modern pagan's unholy trinity in Cuba as everywhere else on God's earth. The sugar-cane industry being positively the only one here and keeping all hands busy only from February to May, the great majority of the people are idle for twice four months of the year. Add to this the debilitating climate of perpetual summer and more especially the lack of religious teaching in the schools, and you will understand why so noble-minded and generous-hearted a people can turn the cold shoulder to religious matters.

THE PADRE'S FEASTDAY

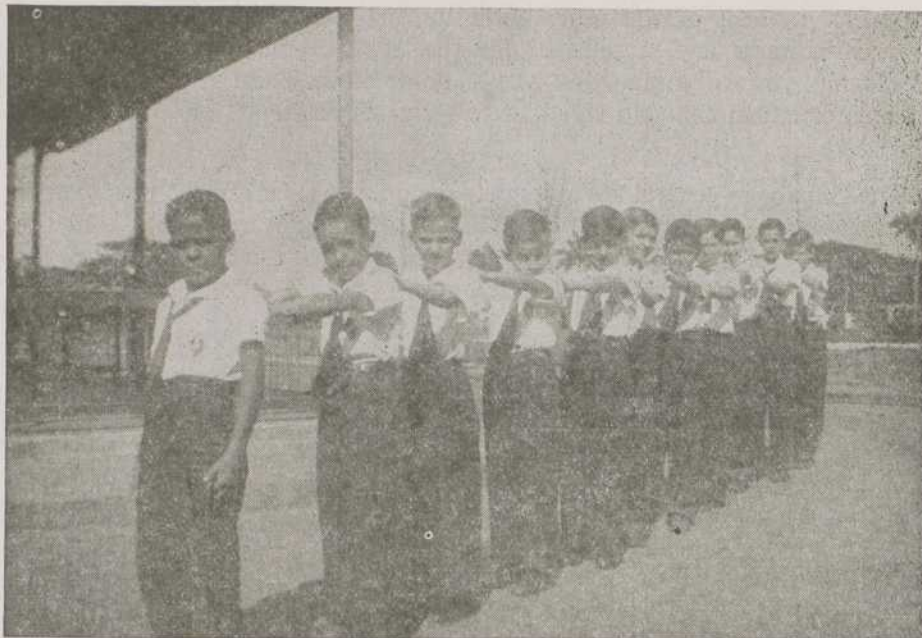
The Cubans in general are extremely devoted to their *santo*. On October 11, feast of St. Germanus, the parishioners of Manguito saw to it that the patronal day of their beloved pastor, Rev. Father G. Lemire, P. M. E., should be noted in a very special manner.



SISTER ST. ODILON (CONSTANCE DUBOIS, ST. FERDINAND DE MEGANTIC)
AND SISTER LEON JOSEPH (SIMONE SABOURIN, ST. ISIDORE DE PRESCOTT, ONT.)
HAVE BEEN VISITING COUNTRY HOMES NEAR MANGUITO, CUBA

The pupils of the *Colegio*, who had pooled their own spending money to pay the stipends for the High Mass, sang the *Kyrie*, the *Sanctus*, and the *Agnus Dei* of the Mass of the Angels. Although the budding choristers had only had ten days to become familiar with the Latin polysyllables and the Gregorian melodies, they sang almost to perfection, and made us feel very proud of them.

After Holy Mass the pastor thanked the children as well as the grown-ups present. "You could hardly give me a more welcome gift than that of



THESE ARE THE BOYS WHO KEEP TEACHERS BUSY AT THE *Colegio San Jose, Manguito*

a Mass for my intentions. You may be sure I have confided them all to Our Lord and I have not forgotten to offer yours also."

A reception was subsequently held in the largest classroom of the *Colegio*. Were present, besides the hero of the day, his confreres, Rev. Fathers J. Geoffroy, A. Leblanc, W. Rioux, J. Vezina, and Doctor Garcia, director of the school. A vibrant acclamation in French, *Vive le Pere Cure!* greeted the appearance of Father Lemire. A fifth-grader with all due solemnity presented a sheaf of flowers with the Spanish salutation, "Reverend Father, please accept with this humble sheaf the expression of our thankfulness and our best wishes on the occasion of your patronal feast." — "And all the love of our hearts!" chorused four little smiling gentlemen. Then the pupils of the fourth and fifth grades offered their *regalo*, a handsome feastday cake. Several boys and girls had also brought along little tokens of affection and gratitude, which noble feelings were likewise expressed in the spiritual bouquet of Masses, Communions, Rosaries, invocations, and sacrifices concealed among the blooming sheaf of beauty.

Padre, his voice a little unsteady, addressed the babes of his flock. "Dear children, after all you have done for me today I really don't know what to say —"

"Say thanks, Padre!" interrupted Jesus, a roguish half-breed who serves morning Mass and who, by the way, has not many worries about the art of public speaking.

Everybody laughed and everybody broke at once into lively chatter which was interrupted only for dinner.

While our guests repaired to the glorieta for the frugal meal served them, our pupils scampered off to their *casas*; but punctually at two o'clock they were back for the program of games and songs. The well-known Canadian airs, *Frere Jacques* and *Yukaidi*, were merrily reproduced to fit into Castilian songs. Rev. Father Vezina, choir master and game leader all in one, had the knack of keeping his jolly band in a hilarious mood. At three thirty he called a halt saying it was time to share the *regalo*; nobody protested, for stomachs were getting empty.

The Cuban anthem and a hymn to Our Blessed Mother brought to a glorious ending the feast of Manguito's beloved pastor.

At eight thirty that night the Madres heard a gentle knock at their door. Too young to know anything about monastic silence after the last bell, Jesus the altar boy and Alfredo his cousin were coming for their schoolbags they had been too excited to remember! The Sister who answered said that it was too late and that they must wait till the next morning. Thereupon the two politely excused themselves and Alfredo voiced a thoughtful wish, "Sleep well . . . angel dreams!"

"And Blessed Mother and your Guardian Angel be with you," finished Jesus with his big mischievous grin.



"If I Had Been Judas"

When we spurn Christ's love for us and commit a mortal sin, there is upon our lips the kiss of Judas. But mortal sin should never lead, as in the case of Judas, to despair. Rene Bazin, the French novelist, relates this story:

"I was present at a Catechism class, where there were a hundred little boys belonging to a parish in Paris. This quarter was poor, and so was the church. When I entered, the curate was telling the story of Judas, who sold his Master. He ended his narrative with the words:

"'Judas was seized with despair, and hanged himself.'

"Immediately one of the smallest boys stood up and made a sign that he had something to say.

"'I did not ask any questions,' remarked the curate, 'but what is on your mind?'

"'I wish to say,' answered the boy, 'what I would have done if I had been Judas.'

"'Well what is it?' he was asked, as all the boys turned towards their companion.

"But he, quite unabashed, and quite determined, because he heard the voice of his heart, replied:

"'I would have hanged myself to the neck of Jesus.'

"Some of the little boys laughed at the strange idea, but most of them were silent, as the lesson went home to their hearts."

The Martyr of Futuna

Blessed Peter Chanel

Prepared from the French by Florence Gilmore

(By kind permission of the Maryknoll Fathers, Maryknoll P.O., New York)

(Continued)

While Father Chanel was superior of Belley, Father Tromprier died. He wept long and bitterly over the news and prayed much for the repose of his soul. And Father Tromprier's death was but a beginning of sorrows. Soon another blow fell, one that was wholly unexpected. As his father was going home one evening he had a stroke of apoplexy and fell into a ditch full of water where he was found dead. How Father Chanel's heart ached! What tears he shed! And for the moment it was impossible for him to go home. He went, however, to the convent of Bon-Repos and broke the news to his sister, and they cried together, little children again in their sorrow. The next morning he said Mass for his father's soul, and the altar was wet with his tears.

Later, he went to see his mother. "The trip I have just made was the saddest of my life," he wrote to Father Bret. "You know my father died very suddenly, on his way home from the mill. Oh, what sorrow! Nothing can ever console us! My poor mother is resigning herself, little by little, to God's will, and taking courage to go on alone. I feared at first the blow would be too heavy for her to bear."

Father Chanel's work at the college filled his days so completely that he had time for few visits except to his sister. He and she, always so close to each other, loved to talk together of the happiness of the religious life. Sister St. Dominic was never weary congratulating him on having joined the Society of Mary; she even urged him to cling to his desire for the Foreign Missions. Quite simply she would tell him of her faults and ask how she might correct them. "Don't forget that it is to make us humble that God leaves us our weaknesses," he sometimes reminded her. "We must believe that He thinks of us and loves us; we ought to have our eyes fixed on Him rather than on our faults. St. Francis de Sales tells us not to examine whether our hearts please Him, but whether His heart pleases us."

Many outside the preparatory seminary appealed to Father Chanel for encouragement and direction, and he found abundant time for each soul. One of his nieces, a novice in the Visitation convent of Bourg, wrote to him that she wished to return home. "What!" he replied. "You would throw aside the sword of sacrifice before you have won the crown! Take courage, my child; try to strengthen yourself in your vocation; increase the number and the fervor of your prayers; throw yourself at the feet of the Blessed Virgin and beseech her to be your light and your strength in the way which will lead you to heaven. Remember, life is but a rapid passage across the plank which separates time from eternity."

The superior of a large community having sought his advice in her trials and perplexities, he wrote, "I have just read a letter of Fenelon's which will, I am sure, comfort your weariness and renew your courage. I am going to copy some extracts from it in which you will find much food for thought. 'It is in prayer alone that you will get the courage, patience, sweetness, and firmness necessary in the guidance of souls. There you will learn to rule with ease. It is in time of silence that God will take your heart from you and give you His. Let Him be all in all to you. You cannot pray too much.

'If you make decisions, and if you act without prayer you will always be uneasy, you will draw upon yourself many contradictions, you will spend yourself for nothing; but if you are faithful to prayer, your purgatory will become an earthly paradise. You will do more good in one day, with peace in your heart, than you could do in a month when you are troubled. Those who are closely united to God are always close to one another; those who live in the same house, but are not united in the heart of God, are strangers to one another.'"

To an old pupil of Belley who asked his advice as to means of overcoming the many temptations that beset him in the world, Father Chanel said, "I am happy to see that you are in earnest about your salvation. Keep up your courage to tread God's way to the end; only by persevering can you be saved. I am going to give you some rules which I hope will prove helpful: Every morning, on awakening, raise your heart to God and give a few moments to prayer and meditation. Meditation enlightens the soul, reminds it of its duties and disposes it to fulfill them. Go to confession at least once a month. Never go to bed with a mortal sin on your conscience. At your age the soul is often weak, but with your faith and the sterling principles deep-rooted within you, repentance should be prompt and easy. Be on your guard against bad books and dangerous companions. Do not allow yourself too much leisure. Work fortifies us against the attacks of the devil, who should always find us busy. Young and strong though you are, accustom yourself to the thought of death. It drives away sin and leads to virtue; it frightens only guilt. Above all, dear child, have a filial love for the Blessed Virgin. It has been said and cannot be too often repeated, 'No servant of Mary will ever perish.'"

Early in the month of May, that month he loved above all others, Father Chanel and his fellow Marists received news that gave them great joy. The Society of Mary had been solemnly approved by Gregory XVI, and the brief was on its way to France. When Father Colin received it, he gathered his sons about him, and one by one they knelt and kissed it to signify their whole-hearted acceptance of all it contained. It was then opened and read with profound emotion:

"The salvation of all nations, a charge laid upon us as prince of pastors and shepherd of souls, forbids us to let pass any means of giving praise to the name of the Lord, from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof, and of spreading the holy Catholic Faith, without which it is impossible to please God.

"Hence we surround with the tenderest love of our paternal heart those ecclesiastics who, banded together, cease not to exhort the people, by preaching the word of God and administering the Sacraments, endeavoring, by every means in their power, to produce abundant fruit in the vineyard of the Lord.

"So it gave us great happiness to learn that our beloved son, Claude Colin, and other priests of the diocese of Belley, laid some years ago, the foundations of a new society called the Society of Mary. This society has for its aim the glory of God and the honor of His holy Mother, and the spreading of the faith of Christ's Church, by educating children and establishing missions even to the ends of the earth." (1)

The brief went on that the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda had assigned western Oceania to the new society and accorded it all necessary faculties for the election of a superior general and the taking of simple religious vows. It was decided that the superior general should be chosen and the vows made on September twenty-fourth, feast of Our Lady of Mercy, after some days spent in retreat.

Another brief named Monseigneur Pompallier Bishop of Marone and Vicar Apostolic of western Oceania. All was settled except that Father Colin had yet to announce who were to be the privileged missionaries.

At last Father Chanel saw the apostolic life opened before him. He had already offered himself for the first band of missionaries sent out by the Society, and when he was chosen, his joy was almost greater than his heart could hold. He had reached the height of earthly happiness. "Oh, what good news I have to tell you," he wrote to one of his friends. "Our little Society has been approved by the Vicar of Jesus Christ, who has deigned to confide to it the missions of Oceania. How can we ever thank God as we should! I have been named one of the first band. My heart has not stopped throbbing for joy since I was told. There will be eight of us, five priests and three brothers. Father Bret, whom you know, is of the number. He is as happy as I. Already he seems more serious, more recollected than of old. For several days I have not seen him without either his beads or the Life of St. Francis Xavier in his hands.

"We shall be ready to start whenever the Holy Father gives the signal. Time will lag until we are off for Polynesia. In such a long voyage there will be many dangers, but I am not the least afraid. I have made to God the sacrifice of my life. Only one thought frightens me: I am so unworthy of my high vocation. I need so much help from God and the Blessed Virgin that I am begging prayers on all sides. I count on yours. Bishop Devie has promised me his."

(To be continued)

1. Blessed John Mary Vianney, Cure d'Ars, more than once besought his bishop to allow him to enter the Society of Mary, of which he said: "It is a work after God's heart, because it has humility, simplicity, and contradictions." To some Marist priests he once exclaimed, "What happiness is yours! You are sons of Father Colin, that holy priest whom I knew so well at the seminary. I, too, wished to be a Marist, but the bishop would not hear of such a thing." Failing to obtain the permission he desired, the humble Cure d'Ars joined the Third Order. Since his beatification he is its special patron.

Wang Chiselled Idols

Old Wang was a carver of idols. For over fifty years of his seventy he had carved idols, ugly, frowning, hideous, two-faced idols ad infinitum. Then one day he stroked his long white beard and said to himself that a man of his age had better get out of business. His chiseling had enabled him to set a good little nest egg aside, and he wasn't a fellow to worry overmuch about the future. Provided he had two meals a day, he could face the world with his perennial toothless grin and go his way with a singing heart.

So Old Wang sold his remaining idols. In remembrance of the happy by-gone times he kept nothing beyond his two best carving knives, on the handle of which he had written his name in Chinese characters. He liked to show his favorite tools to the boisterous company of youngsters that followed on his heels everywhere; for Wang was very popular with the rising generation, probably because he had kept something boyish about him and always relished a good joke.

Wang was not a Christian and it seemed as if he would never be. He always pretended he had carved idols fifty years too many to abandon their worship in his declining days. But if he in no wise intended to accept the foreign devils' religion, as he termed the Catholic Faith, his indifference did not stop him from liking the *Shenfu*, and he was on friendly terms with him.

One afternoon the missionary Father had a favor to ask. He wanted very much to have a wooden crucifix above his desk. A six-inch one would do. Would his Chinese caller chisel one for him with his knife sporting the Chinese characters?

Wang did not dislike the idea. This would be a new venture for a fellow who had so long carved ugly idols. Not that he called them ugly, mind you. Anyway, he was glad to do anything for the *Shenfu* who was so kind.

But a person who wants to make a crucifix must know what he is about. So to the *Shenfu* went the old Chinese for details about — well, about those thorns . . . and those nails . . . and that bleeding Side . . .

Father pulled a chair and began to explain to this old man who had to know all about the Crucified One if he would carve His image. They chatted far into the night, *Shenfu* and the idol carver about to try his hand at something more divine than he could imagine. God's grace and the missionary's words worked wonders in the soul of the chiseller. The next morning he pushed his bench aside and got down on his knees. It took him several days to finish the crucifix, but not once again would he sit down to do the work. On his knees he finished carving the crucifix for Father's desk.

Old Wang's carving knives are now the treasured possession of his little grandson, who, by the way, is the *Shenfu's* best altar boy. Old Wang himself is dead. The priest baptized him on his deathbed, and this onetime carver of idols was confided to a grave in consecrated ground. Old Wang had chiselled his way to Heaven.

A Missionary Sister

Leaves

From the Novitiate Book



Wednesday, February 1

The door of the novitiate swung wide open today to admit a group of postulants. To these chosen souls honored with the call to religious and missionary life we extend the heartiest of welcomes wishing them to know only happy days in Our Lady's dwelling.

Saturday, February 11

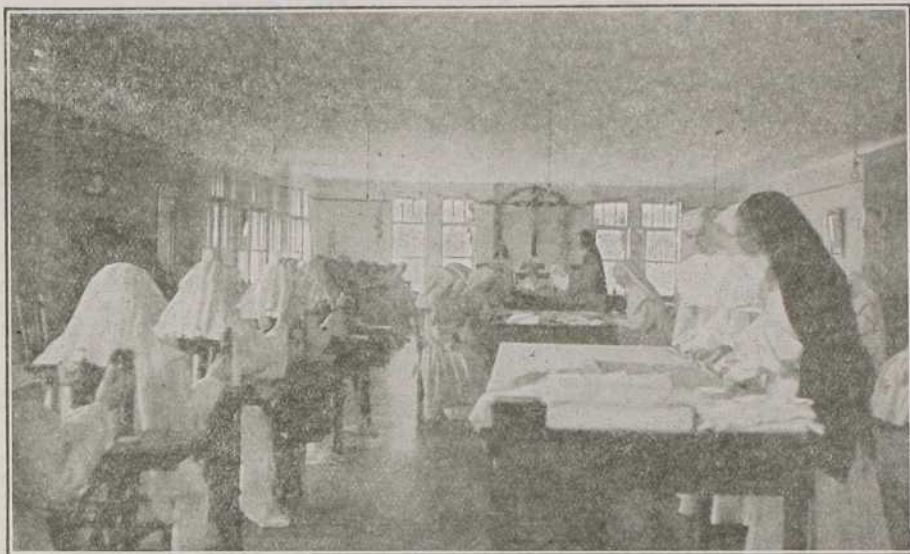
The atmosphere of prayerful quietude hovering over our premises during these eight blessed days of recollection changed this morning to one of exultant joy in the oblation of so many youthful lives to the Queen of Missions.

Fifteen novices knelt in the early morning eager to pronounce the three vows about to bind them to the heavenly Bridegroom. This private ceremony was presided over by Rev. Father Alphonse Giroux.

In the afternoon parents and friends thronged the chapel for the ceremonies of investiture and final vows. Rev. Father Henri St. Denis, O.M.I., uncle of one of the happy elect, officiated. In a stirring allocution he spoke of the zeal which should animate those who are about to dedicate themselves to the service of God in the religious life; fathers and mothers come to sanction their beloved children's oblation the preacher commended for the generosity of their own sacrifice.

In white garments and filmy veils eighteen postulants advanced to the foot of the altar, there to receive from the hands of God's minister the blue and white livery of Mary Immaculate. After the chanting of a hymn extolling the attraction of the divine Lover and His tenderness for the religious soul, the novices re-entered the chapel and knelt to receive the names they will henceforth call their own.

The new novices are: Miss Rita Levesque, St. Octave de Metis (Sister St. Blanche); Miss Jeannine Boily, Clermont, Charlevoix County (Sister St. Pamphile); Miss Lorraine Dube, Mont Joli (Sister St. Nicole); Miss Suzanne Deriger, Montreal (Sister Paul de Jesus); Miss Rachel Fauvel, Ville St. Pierre (Sister Alain de la Roche); Miss Marie Jeanne Dumas, St. Eloi, Riviere du Loup County (Sister St. Valerie); Miss Antoinette Castonguay, Montreal (Sister St. Marcel); Miss Pauline Pouliot, St. Philemon (Sister St. Robert Bellarmin); Miss Alma Couture, St. Sabine (Sister St. Clovis); Miss Fernande Charbonneau, St. Hyacinthe (Sister St. Michel des Saints); Miss Jeannine Lavallee, Laval sur le Lac (Sister Francois de Fatima); Miss Monique Lemays, St. Justine (Sister St. Maurice); Miss



IN THE NOVITIATE SEWING ROOM

Marie Paule Roy, St. Gervais, Bellechasse County (Sister St. Laurence); Miss Colombe Bolduc, St. Damien de Brandon (Sister Marie Colombe); Miss Fernande Leblanc, St. Adalbert (Sister St. Bertrand); Miss Therese Gauvin, St. Epiphane (Sister Therese du Carmel); Miss Marguerite Noel, L'Ascension, Lac St. Jean (Sister St. Wilbrod); and Miss Jacqueline Heroux, Montreal (Sister Marie Immaculee).

Nine professed Sisters desirous of binding themselves by perpetual vows to the Lover of souls then advanced to the altar to receive the golden ring of fidelity. They were: Sister Jules Marie (Therese Moisan, St. Georges de Beauce); Sister Renee du Sacre Coeur (Renee Martel, L'Epiphanie); Sister Monique du St. Sacrement (Monique Cloutier, Ottawa); Sister St. Simon (Pauline Roy, St. Odilon, Dorchester County); Sister Celine de Jesus (Celine Trudeau, Delson Village); Sister St. Brigitte (Jeannette Caron, St. Jean de la Lande, Beauce County); Sister Bernard Marie (Juliette Desnoyers, St. Henri de Mascouche); Sister Helene du Sacre Coeur (Helene Hetu, Montreal); and Sister Marie Elise (Marie Poirier, St. Aime).

Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament brought the touching ceremonies to a close. May the number of souls glorifying Christ through a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience be ever on the increase!



Call to the Colors

In the larger sense, all Christians including lay men, partake of the royal priesthood. The first Pope, St. Peter, so stated and the late Pope Pius XI reiterated it. Confirmation makes a soldier of every Christian. And a soldier is not for parades but for combat. The apostolate is a combat.

Joseph M. Lynch



Glories of Mary

Please find enclosed offering in thanksgiving for favors received. Mrs. C.D., **Fort Kent, Me.** — Thanksgiving for a favor received. Mrs. R., **Thamesville, Ont.** — I sincerely thank Our Blessed Mother for all the favors she has obtained for me. Mrs. A. B., **Dracut, Mass.** — Enclosed please find offering for a favor received. Mrs. N. LaF., **West Springfield, Mass.** — This is to acknowledge with thanks a favor received through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother. R. P., **Ville Emard.** — I have obtained a favor from Mary through wearing the Miraculous Medal. I am requesting another favor and my cure. A subscriber. — Sincere thanks to Mary for the cure of one of my little boys. Will you please pray for my daughter who is ill. Mrs. I. F., **Sutton.** — I have been answered by Our Lady, Queen of Our Hearts. A subscriber, **Lachine.** — Grateful thanks to Mary Immaculate for favors received. Mrs. A. H., **L'Ange Gardien.** — Gratitude to Mary, Queen of Our Hearts, for a favor received. Mrs. W. L. — Grateful thanks for the return of my daughter. Mrs. X., **St. Johns.** — I wish to thank Our Blessed Mother for two favors obtained upon application of the Miraculous Medal. Please pray for my health and two other intentions. A subscriber. — Thanks to Mary, Queen of Our Hearts, for a favor received. X. — I have obtained a favor from our heavenly Mother after promising to publish in the **Precursor**. May I also ask prayers for two other very important intentions. Mrs. J. — Grateful thanks for a favor obtained. — Thanks to Mary, Queen of Our Hearts, for a favor received. Mrs. I. V., **Verdun.** — I heartily thank Our Blessed Mother for a successful operation. May she grant my mother a complete cure. Mrs. B.B., **Montreal.** — Thanks for a favor received. Miss M. S. — Our Blessed Mother has answered my prayers and made things better for my husband; may she keep on helping us. Mrs. A. V., **Ville Emard.** — Grateful thanks for a successful lawsuit. Once again I am asking Our Blessed Mother's help. Mrs. F., **Montreal.** — Please publish my thanks to Mary for the favors she has granted me. Mrs. E. B. — I have received several favors from Our Blessed Mother. M. L.P., **Montreal.** — Heartfelt thanks for the cure of my daughter. Mrs. A.P. — Grateful thanks to Our Blessed Lady for a favor received. Mrs. E. L., **St. Rose.** — Sincere thanks for a favor received. I am asking prayers for my husband who is ill. Mrs. R. B. — All my gratitude to Mary, Queen of Our Hearts, for a favor received. Mrs. J. H.B. — I am coming to fulfill a promise in gratitude for the cure of a person dear to me. Please have prayers offered for the spiritual welfare of the same. Anonymous. — Thanksgiving to Mary Immaculate for a favor received. Mrs. F. V., **Woonsocket, R.I.** — Thanks for my son's successful operation. Mrs. H. L., **Montreal.** — Thanks to the great Mother of God for a special favor received through her intercession; please pray that she will always protect us. Mrs. R., **Montreal.** — Sincere thanks for a favor received through the intercession of Our Blessed Lady. C.N., **Montreal.** — Please publish my thanks for improved eyesight and employment for my son. R. A. C., **Winooski, Vt.** — Grateful thanks to Mary who has answered my prayers. I am asking another favor. A subscriber. — Homage of gratitude for a favor received. A subscriber, **St. Charles de Mandeville.** — Sincere thanks for cure without an operation. Mrs. J. D., **Maniwaki.** — I have received a favor. M. L. B. — Thanks for a favor obtained. Mrs. S.

GENERAL THANKSGIVINGS

Thanksgiving to St. Expedit for a great favor received through his intercession. M. A., **Montreal.** — Enclosed is a money order that I wish to go to the Little Flower Bursar for a favor asked and obtained. J. O'D., **Westmount.** — I have received many favors through the intercession of St. Therese. Mrs. L., **Ludlow, Mass.** — Sincere thanks to St. Therese of the Child Jesus for a favor obtained after promising to publish in the **Precursor**. Miss G. C., **Montreal.**

MASS is celebrated once a week in the chapel of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception for the intentions of Subscribers to THE PRECURSOR and all living Benefactors.



Petitions to Mary

Please pray that my husband will keep his job and stay away from drink. Mrs. J. O'C. — Please pray for my intentions spiritual and temporal. G. W., **Montreal**. — Will you please pray that I will be married and have my home this year. Miss B. P. — Kindly say a special prayer for my husband's health and other intentions. Mrs. M. DeL. — Pray for one of my boys to go back to work and another to stop drinking. A Mother. — Say a prayer for me. Mrs. D., **Montreal**. — Please storm Heaven with prayers until my son gives up drinking and leads a happy normal life. Mrs. C. — Will you please keep a votive light burning for a very special intention. Mrs. C. MacL., **Westmount**. — Please have a mass said in honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help that my mother will be cured of her sickness. R. B., **Ville Emard**. — Please pray for my late son Walter. Mrs. D., **Verdun**. — Please pray for my family and me, that God will bless us with good health. K. H., **Verdun**. — Kindly pray for my young son who has left home and does not want to return. Mrs. G., **Jonquiere**. — Would you be kind enough to pray for my daughter and all our family. Mrs. P., **Mackayville**. — Will you please pray for my mother. Mrs. C. B., **Otter Burn Park**. — Kindly make a novena for the cure of my little daughter of ten who has rheumatic fever; prayers also for my aged mother and myself. Mrs. B., **Maniwaki, P.Q.** — Will you please pray that my husband and myself will be granted good health and good success in our undertakings. Mrs. D. R. McK., **Cornwall, Ont.** — Will you please ask Our Blessed Mother to grant me courage and strength to go through a very serious operation as soon as I am strong enough. Mrs. S., **Porcupine, Ont.** — Please pray to Our Lady of Fatima that my son and his wife will go back to church again regularly. Mrs. S., **Coatsworth, Ont.** — Kindly have prayers said for my daughter married to a non-Catholic, and for several other intentions. Mrs. L., **Belle River, Ont.** — May I ask a remembrance in your prayers. Mrs. D., **London, Ont.** — Please say a little prayer for my son. Mrs. D., **Windsor, Ont.** — Please remember my little boy in your prayers as he is very nervous. Mrs. E. P., **Amherstburg, Ont.** — Will you please pray for several important intentions. A. and E. G., **Amherstburg, Ont.** — Kindly have a novena made in honor of the Blessed Virgin for a great favor I am asking. Mrs. B., **Skowhegan, Me.** — Will you please pray to Our Blessed Mother for my intentions. Mrs. L. — Please pray for a special intention. Mrs. B. — Will you please pray for all my intentions, that I will have peace of mind and that the worry and trouble of the past year will cease. Mrs. C. — Will you please have a vigil light burn in honor of Our Blessed Mother for the following intentions: peace of mind and a happy and successful marriage. Miss R. B., **Maine**. — Will you please make a novena to Mary, Queen of Our Hearts, for a great favor I need soon. Mrs. C., **Skowhegan, Me.** — Please pray for my feet. Mrs. H., **Holyoke, Mass.** — Will you kindly burn a light in honor of Our Blessed Mother for my mother who has a very bad leg that it will get well soon. Will you please pray for me also as my nerves have been very bad lately. Please pray for my intentions. Mrs. L., **Springfield, Mass.** — Please say a prayer for our family. Mrs. A. C., **West Hartford, Conn.** — In your prayers please remember me and my intentions. Mr. L. B., **Los Angeles, Calif.**

GENERAL PETITIONS

Will you please pray to Our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph that my daughter will see a fine Catholic young man. A subscriber. — I am asking your prayers to Our Lady and the Little Flower of Jesus for a conversion. K. — Please find enclosed two dollars for low masses for the Holy Souls in Purgatory for special intentions. Mrs. W., **Kenogami**. — Please make a novena to Our Blessed Mother and the Sacred Heart of Jesus so everything will turn out all right for my daughter. Mrs. B., **Granby**. — Kindly have prayers said for an urgent request to Our Lady and the Sacred Heart. Mrs. A. M. — Please make a novena to St. Anthony who helped me so much and is so good to me. Mrs. R., **Baltic, Conn.**

VOTIVE LIGHTS IN THE CHAPELS

of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

Sanctuary lamp.	\$25.00
Vigil Light or candle.	10 cents each. 75 cents for a novena. \$2.00 for a month. \$20.00 for a year.

Our Beloved Dead



Rev. Father D. Guay, Bois Franc, Gatineau Co.; Mrs. Wilfrid Rompre, St. Thecle, mother of our Sister St. Expedit; Mrs. Alphonse Ancil, Montreal, mother of our Sister St. Alphonse Rodriguez; Mrs. Charles Chenard, Bic, mother of our Sister St. Elise; Mr. Arthur Pigeon, Quebec, father of our Sister Marie du Carmel; Mrs. F. X. Lanctot, Montreal, mother of our late Sister Therese du Carmel; Mr. L. E. Gauthier, La Tuque, father of our Sister St. Lydie; Mr. Philippe Surprenant, Detroit, Michigan, brother of our Sister Marie de la Presentation; Mr. A. Labrie, Cowansville, brother of our Sister Marie Simone; Mr. Philippe Hince, Tingwick; Mrs. Marcelle Fong, Canton, China; Mrs. J. L. St. Jacques, Cote des Neiges; Mr. Charles Chen, Montreal; Mr. Goyette, Outremont; Mrs. Catherine Perrault Casgrain, Montreal; Mr. J. O. Mousseau, Ville Mont Royal; Mrs. A. Deseves, Mr. J. Beauregard, Mrs. Bernard Lacasse, Mrs. Rene Demers, Mrs. Albert Naud, Mrs. Paul Chagnon, Mrs. Conrad Morin, Mrs. Omer Corbin, Mr. Conrad Girard, Mrs. Joseph Dupuis, Mr. J. C. Labreche, Mr. Louis Lymburner, Mr. F. Stephen, Mr. F. Desaulniers, Mrs. Horm. Pauze, Mrs. Adelard Lavigne, Mrs. Leo Boudreau, Mrs. Edouard Coutu, Mr. J. Raoul Jasmin, Mr. U. Ampleman, Mrs. David Dauphinais, Mrs. Emilie Daneau, Mr. Wilfrid Lapierre, Montreal; Mr. H. Brousseau, Mr. John Breslyn, Mr. Joseph Decoeur, Mr. Eugene Larocque, Verdun; Miss Florida Richard, Lachine; Mr. Philibert Pigeon, Vercheres; Mrs. Leopold Hamel, St. Alexandre d'Iberville; Mrs. Omer Fortin, Contrecoeur; Mrs. Alphonse L'Heureux, L'Acadie; Mrs. Camille St. Pierre, St. Johns; Mrs. J. B. Dion, Cowansville; Mrs. Leandre Leblanc, St. Agathe; Mr. Philias Ferron, Shawinigan Falls; Mrs. Ovide Bellemare, Louiseville; Mr. Honore Gauthier, Three Rivers; Mr. Wellie Vandal, St. Marc de Figuerie; Mrs. G. A. K. Laflamme, Mrs. Veilleux, Quebec; Mrs. Eudore Fournier, Plessisville; Mrs. Amedee Belanger, Cap St. Ignace; Mr. Albert Poirier, St. Timothee; Mr. Alberic Desrochers, St. Flavien; Mrs. Wilfrid LeBeau, Padoue; Mr. Philippe Gingras, St. Rene Goupil; Mrs. Neree Guerette, Causapscal; Mrs. Jeremie Jean, St. Mathieu; Mrs. Rosalie Caron, St. Ferreol; Mrs. Cyprien Couture, Miss Gracia Beaudin, Mr. Bernard Tremblay, Mr. Adelard Tremblay, Mr. Rene Gilbert, Mrs. Leonce Lavoie, Mr. Edmond Louis Maltais, Mr. Johnny Tremblay, Mr. L. P. Guay, Mr. Louis Tremblay, Mrs. C. E. Desbiens, Mrs. Johnny Gagnon, Chicoutimi; Mrs. Jacobe Bedard, St. Methode; Mr. Bertrand Martel, Mrs. L. H. Tremblay, Mrs. Leopold Lavoie, Jonquiere; Mr. Simon Lapierre, Kenogami; Mr. Arthur Deschesnes, Chicopee, Mass.; Mrs. Julie Rossignol, Waterville, Me.; Mrs. Leslie Conway, Montreal; Mrs. James McDonald, Union City, N.J.



MASS is celebrated once a week in the chapel of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception for deceased subscribers to THE PRECURSOR and all deceased benefactors.

Girls —

What Does "Substitute" Mean?

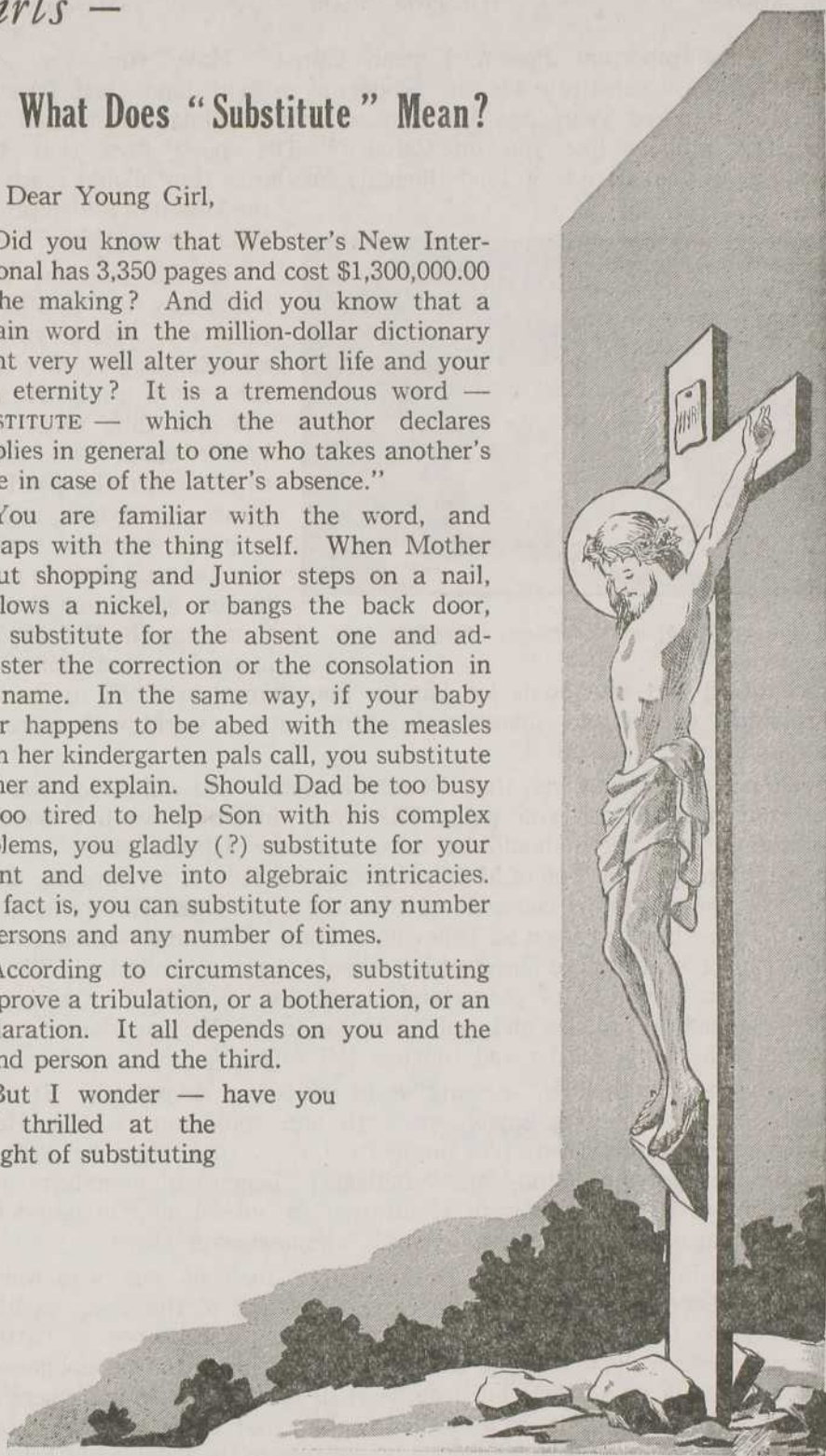
My Dear Young Girl,

Did you know that Webster's New International has 3,350 pages and cost \$1,300,000.00 in the making? And did you know that a certain word in the million-dollar dictionary might very well alter your short life and your long eternity? It is a tremendous word — SUBSTITUTE — which the author declares "applies in general to one who takes another's place in case of the latter's absence."

You are familiar with the word, and perhaps with the thing itself. When Mother is out shopping and Junior steps on a nail, swallows a nickel, or bangs the back door, you substitute for the absent one and administer the correction or the consolation in her name. In the same way, if your baby sister happens to be abed with the measles when her kindergarten pals call, you substitute for her and explain. Should Dad be too busy or too tired to help Son with his complex problems, you gladly (?) substitute for your parent and delve into algebraic intricacies. The fact is, you can substitute for any number of persons and any number of times.

According to circumstances, substituting can prove a tribulation, or a botheration, or an exhilaration. It all depends on you and the second person and the third.

But I wonder — have you ever thrilled at the thought of substituting



for a Very Important Person, I mean Christ? Have you ever considered being a substitute for the Savior in mission lands just because nineteen hundred years ago He, bruised and bleeding, substituted for you and millions like you on Calvary? The poet says that the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts; methinks they should reach to the Mount of Redemption. What do *you* think?



Having the happiness of baptizing a poor dying baby.

In the religious and missionary life is offered to every young girl a splendid opportunity for this substituting. If she will but fling aside the baubles of earth and clasp to her heart the pearl of great price which is the religious vocation, a girl, any girl with love to urge her on, gets a fine chance to take up the Redeemer's lifework; a fine chance to

glorify God and save souls for Him; a fine chance, in short, to change this world of sin and shame and sorrow into a world with more of happiness and grace in it.

Do not expect, however, that the mad modern world will direct you to the convent and wish you well. The world in which we live doesn't understand why there should be substitutes for Christ, since, to its way of thinking, the Son of Man was a complete failure, an impostor who had not the power to come down from the Cross when His tormentors laid that as their condition for believing in Him. Why any normal young girl with a roseate future ahead of her should want to embrace a life of poverty and privation, of purity and submission, is still a mystery to unenlightened worldlings and will long be one. If you dare to be different, they will wonder and tongues will wag.

And yet, that scoffing, sneering world needs you desperately. It is a world that has put its Savior to death and would want to keep Him dead. Do you see, then, how imperative it is that there be "other Christs" to oppose the "no-Christ" millions? Legions of volunteers are an urgent necessity if we want civilization to subsist and mankind to be folded again in forgiveness to God's compassionate Heart.

Substituting for the Master isn't easy; but then no one who walks in His footsteps expects life to be easy. Speaking of the religious life, Father Barrett, O. P., says: "It is no avoidance of care nor of battle. It is far more truly the taking over of cares which one has no obligation to receive; it is an advance into the heart of battle, it is an act whereby an individual makes effort to bear the penalties that come upon all those who would dare fill up whatever must be wanting to the Passion of Christ."

But with God's dear grace to uphold her, the little nun, if she does admit that it *is* hard, will add an adverb; she will say, "Gloriously hard." Glorious, indeed, for it is girlhood's highest ideal. Now that the Master's earthly task is done, His consecrated Bride humbly takes over as a go-between for God and men to prepare the way for divine grace and infinite mercy. She has, so to say, a presence that is not her own; she is never merely herself, since to those she helps and comforts she is the patient Christ. She is Christ caring for His wounded, Christ teaching His little ones, Christ comforting the sick, Christ easing the burden of the weary, Christ helping the dying over the threshold to endless life. Time is forgotten and centuries do not count. It really is always the same loving Son of Mary, yesterday in Galilee, today in China or Japan or Africa, the same forever who ministers to the needy and maimed and ill.

Glorious, moreover, in that it satisfies. An ex-movie star, Jose Mojica, now a Franciscan monk who signs O. F. M. after his name, has this to say: "I, who have experienced all the world offers, and who have had in abundance all that modern youth may hope for, can say that all the world's gold, fame, power, applause, and pleasure do not have the value of just one hour spent in God's service." A good modern paraphrase, don't you think, of David's words in the Psalms: "Better is one



TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD TO HIS LITTLE ONES.

day in thy courts above thousands. I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners."

Thinking of Noah Webster's million-dollar volume, the undersigned makes haste to add: "If you have a million-dollar love for God and a million-dollar smile to carry you over the bumps, you're one of the girls we need to substitute for the Eternal Lover of souls."

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