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MONTREAL

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Imprimatur, Montreal, April 7, 1954

† L. P. Whelan, V. G., Aux. Montreal

Nihil Obstat, May 2, 1954

J. Chartiez, cens. dep

HOMAGE

*Immaculate Queen and Mother,
Mary,
From our mission gardens everywhere
We have gathered for your sake
These flowers . . .
Joyful tales or sad,
Recounting your gracious bounties
Magnifying your name.*

*Hardy blooms from China,
Crimson-hued
With the dew of martyrdom,
Delicate, coral-tinted
Cherry blossoms
From the Land of Rising Sun,
Wreaths of fragrant jasmine
From the Filipinas,*

*Simple flowerets from Africa's
Tangled wildwoods,
Gorgeous flamboyant
From lovely, seagirt strands of the
Antilles,
All these we lay in loving homage
At your feet,
Immaculate Lady.*

The Redaction



CORONATION of OUR LADY
in Heaven

*Queen of the Seven Sorrows, thou hast won
In gentleness to triumph with thy son.*

*Let all creation's several beauties make
Glad acts of adoration for her sake.*

*Crown her, all stars, and sing, angelic choirs;
Burn as her votive lamp, earth's deepest fires.*

*Spread for her feet, a shimmering tapestry,
The dawn-lit opal of thy waves, O sea!*

*Breathe out her praises, flowers and forest trees:
Snow-mantled mountains, raise her litanies;*

*And myriad children's voices call her blest,
The maiden-mother of the Holiest:*

*"Love be thy reign, thy crown, thy sceptre's power;
Peace be thy mantle, joy thy fadeless dower,*

*To find eternal in the Heart of Christ
The Heaven for which thy heart was sacrificed."*

from the Tablet

TOKYO, JAPAN

MARY QUEEN

SR. MONICA of the BLESSED SACRAMENT(1), M.I.C.

God made you, o Mary, the most beautiful of all created beings, so divinely beautiful that none can worthily sing your praises. For ages, poets and troubadours have essayed to chant your unsullied purity and to add some shining jewel to the coronet of glorious titles encircling your brow. Your loving children of all conditions have in their own simple way, attempted to extol your merciful graciousness to them in crying needs or daily necessities. Virgin souls have spent their lives in the prayerful seclusion of the cloister, endeavoring to fathom the crystal depths of your Immaculate Heart. And yet it seems, o Full of Grace, that nothing has been said about you. It appears that you will forever remain an unsearchable mystery of holiness except to Him who fashioned you as the perfect copy of a divine Model.

Nevertheless, O Mystic Rose, innumerable are the paths that lead to the enchanted garden where you bloom and shed your fragrance. Ideal of the Godhead, melody of grace, you draw us to the Lord by the irresistible charms of your perfection. Among the endearing appellations bestowed upon you, that of Queen of the Missions holds more than ordinary appeal. It is a title that none can ever share with you for it is too closely linked with the mystery of our Redemption.

Apostles of all times and climes have ever looked up to you as their Model. One need only cast a glance at your life, *O First of all Missionaries*, to gather from every one of your actions practical lessons of self-sacrificing zeal for the conversion of the world. Always and in all circumstances you walk at the head of the great apostolic army,

1. Monique Cloutier, Ottawa, Ont.



OF MISSIONS



afire with the love of God, eager to kindle that fire everywhere. You teach men to be God-conscious even from your tenderest years when, tiny Hebrew maiden, you serenely mount the steps that lead to the Temple of God, and to the total dedication of your budding life to His glory. You instruct us again in the mysterious setting of the Annunciation scene when your lips frame the potent *Fiat*, that same *Fiat* which will be as a wellspring from which will unceasingly flow until the end of time, the human assents transforming frail human hearts into indomitable co-redeemers with the Crucified. You edify and stand as a model when you leave the familiar surroundings of Nazareth for the cold atmosphere of Bethlehem in order to present the Christ Child to shepherd and magi, and then to take Him further still into the hostile land of Egypt for His first human contacts with the gentiles. You teach us, gracious Lady, in your visit to Elizabeth lessons of zeal and self-forgetfulness. Again at Cana you exemplify the mission virtues of tactful charity and delicate comprehension which must characterize the missionary, bound by vocation to become all things to all men.

We admire in you, celestial Housekeeper of Nazareth, the ideal of the interior life. When we see the tremendous results which the Apostles accomplished we must look for some explanation outside of their preaching. There was at work the unseen force of your humility, your patience, your spirit of prayer. May we not safely advance that under your evangelical incognito you undoubtedly did more for the conversion of the pagan world than all the Apostles together?

Your immaculate Heart is moreover the shrine of redemptive suffering. Standing at the foot of the Cross, O sublime and sorrowful Mother, you offered to the eternal Father for the salvation of mankind the blood of your Son and the blood of your own transfixed Heart.

O Immaculate Maiden, in you as in a flawless mirror is reflected that iridescent pearl of purity which the missionary prizes above all earthly treasures. Aware of its fragility, condemned to skirt the mire of sin, he entrusts its keeping to you, most faithful of all virgins.

Not only are you the model of missionaries but you are also their powerful protectress. As you watched the first Apostles carry the glad tidings of the Gospel to the farthest ends of the earth, so today with the same eager solicitude you watch every one of us who sets out to advance the frontiers of your Son's kingdom and to teach a few more souls to know and to love Him. Now as always the one thing closest to your heart is the hemming in of all men within the pale of the one true Fold. Ark of the Covenant, you spend the eternal years seeking out vocations to the missionary life. Whoever has been graced with this glorious calling, thankfully admits owing this privilege to the wiles of your maternal tenderness.

May we not also call you, O Mary, the celestial gleaner of conversions? Thousands of facts related in the missionary annals of the Church vouch to the authenticity of this title. Armed only with the all-powerful weapons of the Rosary and of the Miraculous Medal, Marian knights have waged

victorious battles against the eternal enemy of souls. You are the missionary's recourse in all needs and in all dangers. Like a subtle, mysterious perfume, your virtues embalm the religion of your divine Son drawing all men to the practice of His saving doctrine.

What you were for the first Apostles when the Church was still in swaddling bands, you remain for modern heralds of the Gospel in the darkened strongholds of heathenism. You have not forgotten how the first missionaries tarried in John's house after the Pentecostal events, eager to draw from your gentle teachings the strength and the constancy that would carry them safely through the gauntlet of torture and imprisonment to the calvary of martyrdom. Because you remember so well the needs of those first disciples of the Savior and their diffidence in the face of the tremendous task confronting them, you continue to console and to strengthen today's missionaries who have recourse to you in the whirlwind of diabolical persecution threatening the very existence of the missions.

O Immaculate Virgin, Queen of the Missions, during this glorious Marian centenary when the Church celebrates your victory over Satan, deign to deliver all those who writhe in the clutches of the Red dragon. Bring safely back to the Fold, souls straying in the darkness of error and superstition. Bright Morning Star, guide home to the Father's mansions all those who have not as yet glimpsed the rays of the eternal Sun of Justice.

* ————— *

The Assumption

Behold! the mother bird
 The Fledgeling's voice hath heard!
 He calls anew,
 "It was thy breast
 That warmed the nest
 From whence I flew
 Upon a loftier tree
 Of life. I wait for thee:
 Rise, mother-dove, and come,
 The Fledgeling calls thee home!"

REV. JOHN B. TABB



SAINT PIUS X, THE BELOVED POPE

Pius X, Pope-Founder

of the Society of the Missionary Sisters

of the

Immaculate Conception

On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of our Society, June 2, 1952, His Excellency the Most Reverend Ildebrando Antoniutti thus addressed the Sisters gathered at our Motherhouse: "If you justly regard Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit as your Foundress you may rejoice in having a Pope as Founder." With the graciousness which characterized him, the Delegate added, "I am today wearing a ring once used by Pope Pius X. Only on very rare and solemn occasions do I wear it. I feel sure that all the Sisters present will be happy to have the opportunity of kissing this ring, relic of the Pope to whom they are indebted for their foundation."

The Marian Year will bring in its wake the canonization of Pius X. It will also mark the fiftieth anniversary of our Institute's papal life decree, which latter circumstance makes it a filial duty for us to recall with gratitude the details regarding this momentous event.

In 1904, while Rome and the Catholic world held high festival in honor of the jubilee commemorating the promulgation of the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception, the fate of Delia Tetreault's humble mission society hung in the balance. His Grace Archbishop Paul Bruchesi who, two years previously, had authorized the opening of an apostolic school, now grew uncertain whether this work really bore the imprint of the divine Will. Should he forward the attempt or should he nip its hopes in the bud? The foundation of a Canadian missionary congregation then appeared to be as arduous as it was venturesome. Was not this idea of supplying reinforcements to the mission front as did the older European Churches, somewhat premature in the case of the Church in Montreal? The Archbishop who had prudently followed every move of the Cote des Neiges association, now resolved to lay the whole matter before the Sovereign Pontiff and to abide by his decision. "If the Pope tells me to go on, I shall do so," he declared. "If he tells me to discontinue the work, it shall be done as he desires."

Admitted to a private audience on November 30, 1904, Archbishop Bruchesi had intimate and lengthy discourse with the Holy Father regarding the humble woman apostle, Delia Tetreault and her work. To quote

the words of the Apostolic Delegate at our Golden Jubilee celebrations, "without any of the protocol used in such cases, or some current stereotyped expression, or recourse to the intermediary of the Congregations, Pope Pius X himself pronounced the life-giving sentence that was to speed the undertaking on its way, "By all means let this work be founded," he urged, adding those prophetic words which Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit kept and pondered in her heart of hearts, "All heavenly blessings will pour down upon this new Institute."

On December 7, Montreal's first Pastor found himself kneeling before the Pope for his second audience. It was then that the Holy Father named our society. "You will call it, Society of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception." Upon hearing this, Archbishop Bruchesi joyfully exclaimed, "It will be Our Lady's nose-gay."

In 1908, Rome again held splendid Marian festivities this time to mark the jubilee of Mary's apparitions at Lourdes. Montreal's Archbishop was privileged with other Papal audiences. He spoke to the Father of Christendom about Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit whom he held in high esteem, and of her Institute which had grown and expanded under the aegis of the Immaculate. Over all this the Pope deigned to rejoice. To his paternal blessing he added, through the organ of the Propaganda, a further pledge of his benevolence by assigning the whole wide world as mission field to the new society.

On April 5, 1914, a few short months before being enfolded into eternity, Pope Pius X reiterated in a precious autograph addressed to the Foundress, the blessings which he had hitherto bestowed upon her and her missionary undertaking. When in August, news of his demise reached them, Mother and daughters mourned the departed Pope as children mourn a beloved father. To his benedictions, Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit ever attributed the rapid growth and vigorous expansion of her work.

Not even once did the founding Mother travel to Rome. Unlike St. Frances Cabrini familiarly conversing about her Institute with Leo XIII, she never enjoyed the privilege of communing with the Pope Founder of her society. Archbishop Bruchesi was her loyal and comprehensive intermediary, always on the alert to promote the interests of God's glory by every means at his disposal. What did he tell the Holy Father when he discoursed with him at length about Delia Tetreault? He doubtless recounted what he knew of her profound humility, her diffidence, her filial submission to Holy Mother Church, her passionate attachment to the Will of God, her genuine piety centered upon the Eucharist and the life of union with Mary. But another medium intervened between the Pope and the Foundress, a celestial medium, inspirator of the one and of the other. It is not by haphazard that Delia Tetreault's work evolved in a Marian setting, through a chain of exceptional circumstances all to the glory of Mary Immaculate.

Neither should the similitude of ardent Marian devotion in the heart of the Pope Founder and in the heart of the humble servant of God, be regarded as a mere coincidence. It has been said that the Treatise on True Devotion to Mary by Montfort was the Pope's bedside book and that he constituted himself Mary's slave of love. Early in her life, Delia Tetreault, also a slave of love, nurtured her spirituality on the substantial doctrine contained in the same Treatise of which she became a convinced and devoted propagator. Nothing surprising then that even in the initial stages of her missionary odyssey, the Immaculate Virgin should have been like a heavenly rainbow linking to the Eternal City her little hillside convent.

During this Marian Year the Society offers Mary Immaculate, through its glorious Pope Founder, the homage of its enduring gratitude. The tiny 1904 "nosegay" has recklessly cast its seed to the four winds of heaven. Today it is privileged to lay at the feet of its spotless Queen, multiple sheaves of regal Chinese lilies, gorgeous Japanese chrysanthemums, fragrant Filipino sampaguitas, queenly roses from the Antilles, jungle flowerets from Africa. And forever this flowery harvest remains pearled with the dew of the Pope Founder's fatherly benedictions.

THE REDACTION





Witnesses of Mary in Red China



SR. MARIE JOSEPHINE M.I.C. (Eliane Gravel, St. Prosper, P.Q.)

What an honor to be chosen as Mary's witnesses during this her Marian Year! For are they not indeed her witnesses those Canadian missionaries of Szeping kai accused of carrying on reactionary activities through the Legion of Mary? In hatred of her, their celestial Generalissimo, have they been imprisoned, maltreated, and finally expelled.

Fearless witness the legionary priest who, already in possession of his passport for the homeland, learning of an odious calumny circulated among the Christians to the effect that he had signed a document injurious to Our Lady, eluded the vigilance of his guards to make a vigorous protest. Never had he signed such a monstrous document, he repeatedly declared with complete disregard for the grim reprisals he thus invited. He went on to affirm that this was but another false report forged by Red authorities to mislead the Christians. "Mary is my Mother," he added. "For her sake and for the Legion I will gladly lay down my life if need be."

Courageous witnesses, those Chinese priests of Szeping kai, who even now are enduring torture and imprisonment. Martyred witness, the heroic Administrator of the Diocese from whom no amount of pressure has been able to force a signature against the Legion. Regardless of an eventual sentence of life detention he maintains his veto.

Faithful witness, that intrepid Chinese pastor who publicly declared, "Our foreign missionaries are falsely accused of reactionary activities for having organized the Legion of Mary. I know that my liberty and even my life are at stake but nothing and nobody can hinder me from bearing testimony to the truth. In union with the Chief of our diocese, I forbid the Catholics under any pretext whatever, to sign papers which discredit the Legion of Mary. No, we will never inflict such a dishonor upon our Mother..." Arrested by police officials and forbidden to preach, he retorted, "The law ensures religious liberty; one of my duties as pastor is to preach; I shall continue to preach." A few hours later he was under lock and key.

Witnesses of Our Lady, those four missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Szeping kai who hurled themselves in the gap to thwart the wily schemes of the Party. Documents emanating from the Security Bureau, were making the Christians nervous and hesitant, for these reports reputedly signed by the Canadian priests, testified to the reactionary activities of the Legion of Mary. Under such provocation could the Sisters remain silent? If the missionaries thus falsely accused of having betrayed Our Lady, were expelled without being allowed to set the facts in their true light how the Reds would gloat over their victory! On the other hand doubts would obscure the faith of the weaker Christians leading them to defection. In spite of the perils incurred, one of the Sisters decided to try reaching the

incarcerated priests to apprise them of this new perfidy. By a round of providential circumstances she one day found her way to their dungeon; throwing prudence to the wind, she shouted so as to make sure the priests would hear, "Fathers, you cannot leave things as they are now. You have testified by your signatures that the Legion of Mary is reactionary. You must protest against these signatures before you go." The legionary priests were thus enabled to spoil the Communist's game. For their audacity the four Sisters remaining in Szeping kai were sentenced to expulsion.

Witnesses of Our Lady, those fervent Chinese Sisters of the Holy Rosary, staunch auxiliaries of the priests through prayer, good example, and apostolic activities. The Communists are even now on the watch for an occasion to pounce upon them. Without in the least being cowed, the Sisters keep on going on home visitations, encouraging frightened and discouraged Christians, pointing to the Rosary as a powerful celestial weapon ensuring victory and salvation. In their tiny doctrine school, their dispensary, their workroom, they still continue their Marian Apostolate.

Commandos of Our Lady, those two Chinese Sisters who, when all preaching had been forbidden to the priests, stood at the church door to transmit to the Christians, their pastor's watchword, "Never sign anything against the Legion." For this bold action, the pair was rewarded by being advertised over the city radio as running dogs of the imperialists!

Witnesses of Our Lady, the persecuted Catholics of the diocese, worthy of their heroic pastors; the President of the Legion of Szeping kai who endured twenty-two months of prison, being subjected to grilling interrogations lasting almost day and night; a Catholic High School student who alone of all her classmates obstinately resisted the pressing objurgations of both teachers and pupils to have her enroll in the Communist Youth Association. "My conscience will not allow me to do so," was the only answer she gave.

Martyred witness, the legionary hero who was arrested during the Red purge of January 1952. Called upon to confess his reactionary activities in the Legion of Mary, he flatly refused to do so. To break down his resistance, his captors imprisoned and tortured him. Deprived of sleep and of food, exposed to the biting cold, his arms and hands paralysed by bonds that cut into the raw flesh, forced to submit to endless, subtle questionings, he remained faithful to the end.

Witnesses of Our Lady all, bishops, priests, faithful of China who so courageously follow the example of the first Christians. To those who still suffer in a long drawn-out agony of pain let us bring the solace of our fervent prayers. "Tell all the Catholics you will meet," one of the witnesses mentioned in these lines told me on the eve of my departure, "to pray for the diocese of Szeping kai, for the Church in China, for every one of us, for our trials are very hard to bear." May this plea re-echo within your hearts, dear readers and friends, and urge you to give these confessors of the faith a daily memento in your prayers. If being witnesses of the Immaculate is indeed an honor, such an honor entails sufferings and hardships of all kinds.



Opening of the Marian Year

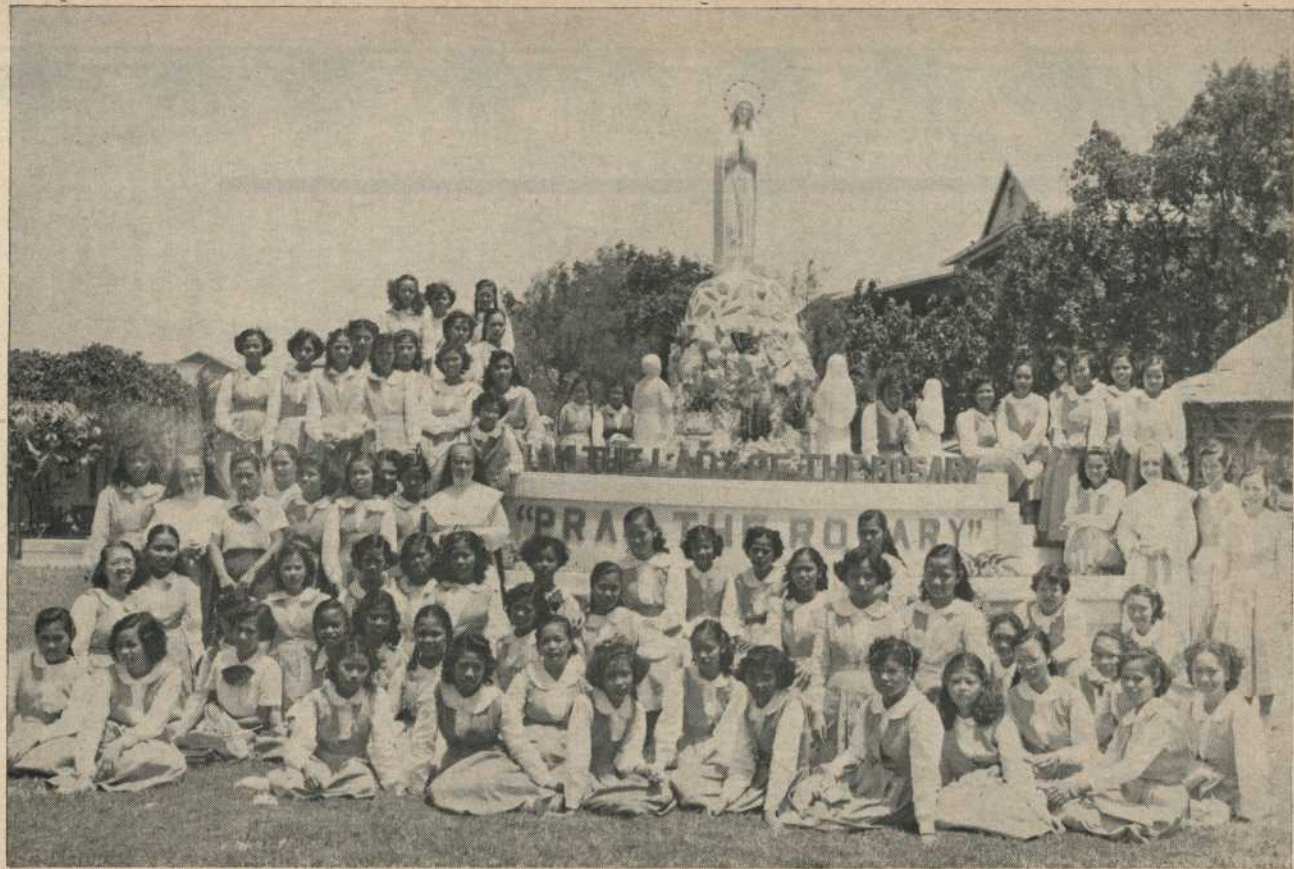
SR. ST. GENEVIEVE OF NANTERRE(1), M.I.C.

After the fashion of France the Archipelago of the Philippines consecrated to the Immaculate Conception loves to proclaim itself the *Realm of Mary*. Our Lady is known and revered by the Filipino people under a wealth of titles with a local flavor: Our Lady of the Rosary or Guadalupe, Our Lady of Peace or of Good Voyage of Antipolo, Our Lady of Piat, Our Lady of the Rose, etc. Was it not therefore fitting that the Pearl of the Orient should elaborately celebrate the opening of the Marian Year in honor of her beloved Senora?

In the Manila Archdiocese the festivities were ushered in on December 8, by a solemn pilgrimage to the national shrine of Antipolo. Advertised by a huge press propaganda, the demonstration all but failed because of the typhoon which struck the Islands on December 5. It was still heavily raining on the 7th, while on the 8th, the day dawned shrouded in grey mists and sullen drizzles. Our pupils of St. Joseph School, Las Pinas, were told that they were free to remain at home if they so preferred; only volunteers need take part in the pilgrimage under such unfavorable conditions. Rainy weather notwithstanding, thirty-five pupils among our Legionaries and Catholic Actionists bravely boarded the pilgrim bus after High Mass at the parish Church.

In Manila the rallying point on the Luneta was already crowded when our group arrived. While broadcasters blared final instructions, Marian banners were unfurled and appropriate inscriptions displayed

1. Genevieve St. Pierre, Montreal.



ON A PILGRIMAGE TO THE SHRINE OF FATIMA, SANTO TOMAS UNIVERSITY CAMPUS,
THE PUPILS OF OUR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ACADEMY, MANILA, P.I.

on conveyances of all description and models; gradually the Luneta assumed a truly Marian aspect. The continual downpours proved powerless to dampen the enthusiasm of throngs eager to do honor to their Queen. At exactly 2 p.m., the cortege started on its way preceded by motorcycles to clear up the circulation in the more congested areas. On the road leading to Antipolo the gigantic motorized parade of autos, jeeps, and buses slowly unfolded. The strains of popular hymns and the hum of the Aves were carried on the air waves. On both sides of the road sympathetic crowds cheered the pilgrims on their triumphant march to Mary's holy city.

When the procession reached the outskirts of Antipolo, orders were given to leave all vehicles behind and to cover the remaining distance to the sanctuary, on foot. Different groups were formed marching forward with their banners at their head and piously reciting the Rosary. A communicative spirit of recollection seemed to pervade the atmosphere.

At a turn in the road unexpectedly appeared, like a celestial vision, a beautiful float decorated with white flowers and bearing the statue of the national Madonna. Our Lady had taken it upon herself to meet halfway her beloved flock about to enter her demesne of predilection. The pageant swept on its way this time with the Queen of the Philippines in the lead escorted by the Bishops and by the Knights of Columbus in full regalia. The rain had dissolved the red clay road winding up the slope and rendered the ascension slippery and arduous. At last, after two hours, the cortege reached the esplanade where Mass was to be celebrated. A billowing sea of opened umbrellas recalled Fatima and the scene of the last apparition. Over the altar, where His Excellency the Most Reverend Vicente Reyes, Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, offered the Holy Sacrifice, a tarpaulin was stretched but assisting Bishops, clergy, and faithful stood outside of this shelter in the downpouring showers. The plain chant was beautifully rendered by the San Carlos Seminary choral, and the pastor of Antipolo directed at the microphone the singing of popular hymns. An eloquent sermon in Tagalog, on Mary's role in the redemptive mission of Christ, was delivered by one of the priests present.

At the consecration, the rain stopped suddenly and the people managed to find dry spots on which to kneel. After Mass, His Excellency the Most Reverend Rufino Santos, Archbishop of Manila, gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and read the prayer composed by the Holy Father for the Marian Year. This prayer was repeated, phrase by phrase, by the kneeling multitude with an ardor which proved that Filipinos form but one heart and soul when it comes to glorifying Nuestra Senora.

Twilight had already set in when the impressive ceremony was brought to a close. Before returning home the pilgrims sang with their hearts in their voices the touching Spanish hymn, *Adios Reina de los Cielos*. But it was really more of an *aurevoir* than an *adieu*, for this pilgrimage is surely only the first of numerous others which will be made to the national shrine of Antipolo during this Marian Year.

THE BISHOP'S ROSARY

SR. ST. PETER(1), M.I.C.

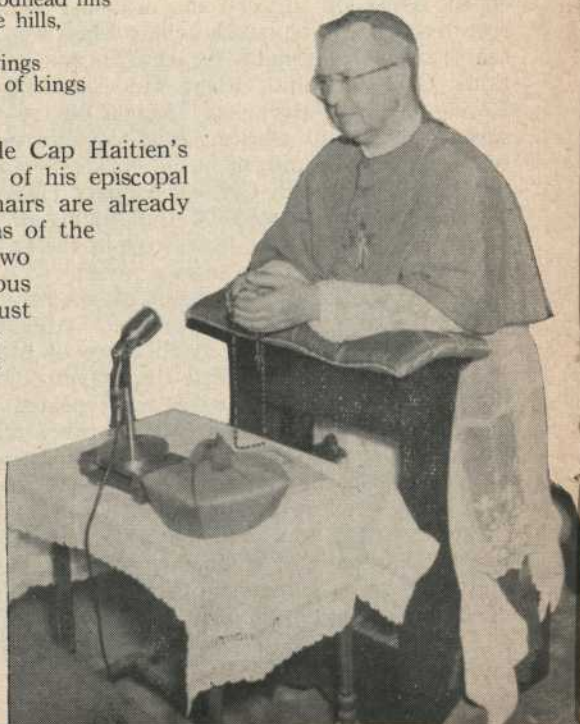
CAP HAITIEN, HAITI

An unprecedented event marked the opening of the Marian Year in Cap Haitien, to wit, the inauguration by Bishop Cousineau of the family Rosary over local air waves. Never had the sleepy, easy-going town been so thoroughly aroused from a religious view point.

In a stirring allocution, His Excellency invited the faithful of his flock to throw wide open the portals of their hearts and of their homes to Mary, Queen of the Rosary, channel of all divine bounties, who would not fail to respond to their filial invitation.

The Maiden whom the Godhead fills
Fleetfooted hastens to the hills,
Love's gentle messenger.
Mary Immaculate who brings
The presence of the King of kings
Hid in the Heart of her.

And now let us kneel beside Cap Haitien's Bishop in the modest chapel of his episcopal dwelling. The few wooden chairs are already occupied by enterprising urchins of the neighborhood. Through the two narrow entrances crowd numerous devotees of the Rosary who must be content with the publican's place. One original lady holds on to what she considers a favored nook, right behind the confessional grating. On the kneelers, the small fry wriggle and jostle one another. Young and old, rich and poor fraternize in this humble sanctuary. Even



1. Jeanne Guinois, Ville St. Michel.

members of the President's family democratically join in with the people to sing the praises of *Maman la Vierge*. Although the heat is often suffocating and the cement flooring hard on the knees, no one seems to mind.

At the appointed hour, the Bishop enters and kneels in the middle of the center aisle. During a few minutes the strains of a familiar hymn to Mary fill the air, then the grave voice of the Pastor begins the recitation of the Aves which like so many courier doves of peace wing their way all over the diocese. A short meditation on the mysteries is woven in between each decade. Soon the blessed rumor reaches even into the hillside *cailles* (houses). Wealthy habitations open their windows wide so that poor neighbors who cannot afford a radio set may benefit by these hallowed moments. In an obscure deserted lane, the old wheelbarrow man who has no other shelter on earth than his primitive vehicle, hears the Bishop's voice extolling the mysterious blessedness of poverty. "Third joyful mystery, the Birth of Jesus in a manger. You who are poor, cherish your poverty which brings you into closer companionship with Jesus and Mary..." The old wheelbarrow man feels uplifted and consoled. Things of earth become luminous with the intangible beauty of the Spirit and he understands that his hands have been emptied of worldly treasures only to be made ready to hold the chalice of eternal bliss.

On some other evening, the enunciation of the sorrowful mysteries instills in lonely hearts the balm of celestial consolations. "Son, behold thy Mother," comments the Pastor's voice and the neglected orphan looks up with a gleam of hope in his tear-dimmed eyes.

When the Rosary is over, the good Bishop wishes a paternal "Bonsoir" to his spiritual children to which the youngsters on the kneelers reply with a naive "Bonsoir, Monseigneur," which must surely make the Angels smile.

Who can tell the far-reaching influence of the Bishop's Rosary in this land where superstition and religious ignorance are still rampant? Once again the infernal serpent's wily tricks are being thwarted through the intercession of her who holds the promise of perpetual victory over the enemy of souls.

O Immaculate Virgin, your peerless purity holds entranced your dusky sons and daughters of Haiti. Deign to accept their homage. Bless their childlike devotion, lean down from heavenly parapets when you hear them calling you with this endearing appellation all their own, "Maman Nous!" Let the beauty of your perfection shine as a star before them and the knowledge of your love lead them safely home across the thorny wilderness of earth into the smiling plains of the eternal Promised Land.

It is necessary to recognize His (God's) most holy Mother as the partaker of the divine mysteries and, in some manner, as the guardian of them, and that upon her as upon a foundation, the noblest after Christ, is built the edifice of faith for all ages.

SAINT PIUS X



CASTLES

IN THE AIR

SR. ST. MARY MAGDALEN, M.I.C.

It happened when I was a child during one of my summer holidays. I had just returned from the city boarding school and had spent the day revisiting all my favorite haunts on the home farm. And now in the quiet of the evening I lazily lounged on the grass by the front porch, thinking the long long thoughts of youth. My Godfearing parents had often told me about those distant mission lands where orphaned children were abandoned and where miserable human beings called lepers found no one to harbor their misery or comfort their distress. My youthful heart rebelled at the thought that so little was done to relieve their hardships. Oh, if only I were a millionaire! In my imagination loomed large, airy, convenient structures where I lodged every single one of these unfortunates, lavishing upon them tender care and delicate attentions, telling them about God, their heavenly Father, and Mary, their celestial Mother. Alas, I always woke up from these daydreams with a pang of disillusion. How foolish and extravagant it was to think that such a noble calling could ever be mine!

On the evening already mentioned, I was busy building castles in the air as usual, when I heard Mother casually remarking to the family circle sitting about her on the porch, "I hear that a new Canadian community has just been founded. It is called Society of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and its members go to the missions where they care for abandoned children and unfortunate lepers." My heart leaped joyfully at her words. This name, Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, held a magic, irresistible appeal. Jolted out of my castles in the air by this wonderful, tangible reality, I rose and fled to my room where I vowed that one day soon, as soon as I would have grown up, I also would become one of those Sisters dedicated to the mission cause.

The road has been long that I have since traveled but time has not erased the blessed memory of that pleasant summer evening. For then it was that through the voice of my own beloved mother, Mary Immaculate herself beckoned, transforming my flimsy castles in the air into blessed realities. Since then, wearing her blue and white liveries, I have seen erected by my dear missionary Society those large azylums I dreamt of as a child. It has been moreover my privilege to see them happily filled with the poor, the maimed, the rejected. Thousands of leprous outcasts have found in my missionary Sisters loving Mothers, devoted Nurses.

I am growing old, but I still occasionally indulge in building castles in the air. As long as there remains even one soul in distress, how can a genuine Catholic rest content? And so during this Marian Year I dream of huge novitiates thronged with armies of courageous, idealistic young girls eager to help in the harvest of souls the world over.

O Immaculate Mother, in your heart I place my trustful aspirations. You will I am sure make these present dreams of mine come true just as long ago you did my childhood dreams.

SR. ST. MARY MAGDALEN (ANNE MARIE MAGNAN, BERTHIER).





*A GROUP OF THOSE WHO, DURING THE
CO-REDEMPRESS OF THE WORLD, REPEATED,*



THE MARIAN YEAR HAVE, WITH MARY
D, "BEHOLD THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD."



Marian Year Encyclical

(Concluded)

There are many things, indeed, which all, in the present circumstances, should petition from the protection, the patronage, and the intercessory power of the Blessed Virgin. In the first place, let them ask that, with the assistance of divine grace, the way of life of each one may be made daily more conformable to the Christian commandments, as we already have said, since faith without works is dead (cfr. James, ii, 20 and 26), and since nobody can do anything befittingly for the common good, unless he himself first shines as an example of virtue before others.

* * *

Let them also ask with supplication that there may grow up a generous and promising youth, pure and unblemished, and that the beautiful flower of youth may not suffer itself to be infected by the corrupt breath of this world and to grow up in vice; that their unbounded zeal and abounding ardor may be governed with even moderation, and that, abhorring all deception, they may not turn toward what is harmful and evil, but raise themselves up to whatever is beautiful, whatever holy, lovable, and elevating.

United in prayer, let all implore that both in manhood and in old age men may shine by their Christian probity and fortitude; that domestic life may be conspicuous for inviolate faithfulness; that it may flourish through proper and saintly education of its children and be strengthened by true concord and mutual help.

Let them finally ask that the aged may so rejoice over the fruits of a well-spent life that, as the end of their mortal course approaches, they may have nothing to fear, no pricks or anxieties of conscience, no cause for shame, but rather may firmly trust that they will soon receive the reward of their long labors.

Let them, besides, supplicate our Blessed Mother, asking bread for the hungry and justice for the oppressed; return to the fatherland for those banished and exiled; a hospitable roof for the homeless; due liberty for those unjustly cast into prison or custody; for those who, after so many years have elapsed since the last war, still silently languish and sigh in captivity the longdesired homecoming; for those blind in body or soul the joy of refulgent light. And for all those separated from one another by hatred, envy, and discord let them implore reconciliation through fraternal charity and through that harmony and peaceful industriousness which are founded on truth, justice, and mutual friendship.

We desire in a special way, Venerable Brethren, that, through the prayers which will be offered to God during the celebration of the coming Marian Year, supplication be made — through the intercession of the Mother of the Divine Redeemer and our Most Sweet Mother — that finally the Catholic Church throughout the world may be allowed to enjoy the freedom that is its right; which freedom, as history clearly teaches, the Church always has used to promote the good of peoples, never their detriment; always to foster concord among citizens, nations and peoples, never strife.

Everybody knows what difficulties the Church is experiencing in many parts of the world; with what lies, detraction, and spoliation she has to contend. All know that in many places pastors of souls are either unhappily banished or thrown into prison without just cause, or else are so harassed that they are unable to carry out their duties properly. Finally, all are well aware that in those same places they are not allowed to have their own schools and training colleges, that they can not publicly teach, defend, or propagate Christian doctrine in periodicals or commentaries, and can not properly train the youth in accordance with the same doctrine.

Therefore, in this Encyclical Letter, We earnestly repeat those exhortations made by Us more than once before as the occasion arose; and We firmly trust that during the celebration of this Marian Year fervent prayers be offered throughout the world to the Most Powerful Mother of God, who is also our tender Mother; and that in those prayers special requests be made of her efficacious and ever-present patronage, that the sacred rights which are proper to the Church, and which the very exercise of human and civil liberty demands, may be openly and sincerely recognized by all; and this without doubt will conduct to greatest common good and to an increase of common concord.

We desire in the first place to direct Our exhortation, inspired by ardent charity, to those who, reduced to silence and trapped by all sorts of cunning snares, look with anguish of soul at the affliction and the distress of their Christian community, left destitute of all human help. Let these, Our dearly beloved brothers, also join with us and all other Christians in invoking before the Father of Mercies and the God of All Consolation (cfr. II Cor. i, 3) the most powerful patronage of the Virgin Mother of God, Our Mother also, and let them ask her for heavenly aid and divine consolation. Persevering in the ancient Faith with undaunted courage, let them take as their motto of Christian fortitude in this time of trial, the words of the Mellifluous Doctor: "We shall stand and fight to death, if needs be, for the Church our Mother, and with lawful weapons: not with sword and shield, but with prayers and signs to God" (St. Bernard, Epistle 221, 3: Migne P L. 182, 36, 387).

Furthermore, We call on those also who are separated from Us by ancient schism, and whom none the less We love with paternal affection, to unite in pouring forth these joint prayers and supplications, knowing full well how greatly they venerate the Mother of Jesus Christ and celebrate her Immaculate Conception. May the same Blessed Virgin Mary look down on all those who are proud to call themselves Christians, and who, being united at least by the bond of charity, humbly raise to her their eyes, their minds, and their prayers, imploring that light which illumines the mind with heavenly rays, and begging for that unity by which at last there may be one Fold and one Shepherd (cfr. John x, 16).

To these unanimous prayers pious works of penance should be added. For the effect of devotion to prayer is this: "The soul is sustained, is prepared for arduous deeds, and ascends to things divine. The effect of penance is that we control ourselves, especially our body, the greatest enemy because of original sin, by reason and by the law of the Gospel. It is clear that these two virtues are intimately connected, help one another, and combine to withdraw man, who was born for heaven, from transitory things, and all but carry him to heavenly intimacy with God" (Leo XIII, xi p. 312).

Since, however, solid, sincere, and tranquil peace has not yet appeared in souls and among peoples, let all strive with pious prayer fully and fruitfully to obtain and to consolidate it, so that, just as the Most Blessed Virgin brought forth the Prince of Peace, so also may she, by her protection and patronage, unite men in friendly agreement. For then only can they enjoy whatever peaceful prosperity may be given to us during the course of this mortal life — when they are not divided by rivalries, not wretchedly torn by dissensions, not forced into opposite camps by threats and intrigues; but when, joining hands in friendly affection, they exchange the kiss of peace, that peace "which is tranquil liberty" (cfr., Phil. xi, 44), and which, guided by justice and nurtured by charity, unites in one harmonious family the various classes of citizens, nations, and people.

May the Divine Redeemer, moved by the favor and the intercession of His Most Benign Mother, grant the widest and most fruitful effects to these Our most ardent desires, to which will correspond, We are sure, the wishes not only of our own children, but also of all those who have at heart the interests of Christian culture and the progress of civil life.

Meanwhile, may the Apostolic Benediction which We impart most lovingly in the Lord to you all, Venerable Brethren, as also to your clergy and people, be a pledge of heavenly gifts and a token of Our paternal benevolence.

Given at St. Peter's, Rome, on the eighth day of September, on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the year 1953, the fifteenth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XII

MOTHERHOOD

Would that it were granted me to recall the vanished past, to hear that soft silvery sound again, and to regain that smile of childhood. Though we be condemned to the quarry of life, though we be cast out, and made to drink the chalice of bitterness to the very dregs, yet when the days of childhood call us home, then the heart and countenance of the eternal, beautiful, good, helpful God beckons us at the beginning of our journey. I do not wish to take my readers into the land of unreality, no, I would like to lead you into the reality of life. In the serious book, of life, a book for everyone, I would, as it were, in a sacred poem, bring before your eyes, the height and depth, the beauty and greatness of the vocation of motherhood. I would like to point this out to the noble women and chaste girls and even the prodigal sons of our country, to have them understand how great this dignity is and what a precious treasure motherhood can be. Perhaps then they will be inwardly moved, perhaps then they will burn and glow and begin to make this miracle of life come true.

CARDINAL MINDSZENTY

Filipino Simeon

SR. MARIE de L'ESPERANCE, M.I.C. (Aurée Vannard, Montréal, P.Q.)

When hoary Simeon of old cradled in his arms the Messiah, the Desired of Nations, and of his own loving heart, he forthwith improvised a gladsome song of thankfulness which the Bible has preserved for our consolation. What a thrilling note of hope is woven through these inspired strains which Holy Mother Church chants in her liturgical offices!

Our seventy-year-old Filipino Simeon had also lived his long life in a mood of expectancy. Not, however, the joyous expectant hope of his Savior's visit, for God meant nothing to his arrogant, pedantic mind. The attainment of earthly fame and riches had been his sole ambition. And now wrestling with a grievous malady he had come face to face with death in the dark tunnel of unbelief. Simeon belonged to a staunchly Catholic family who gloried in the possession of the one true Faith; he alone had wandered far from the Fold. Evil influences had been at work to rob him of his religious heritage so early in life that he had never known the rapture of First Holy Communion. Clever, strong-willed, and ambitious, Simeon was not slow in climbing the ladder of social advancement. Worldly success rendered his outlook increasingly skeptical until he lost every shred of faith he may still have clung to. Deeply enamored of a fervent Catholic girl he pressed his suit and gave his consent to have their marriage blessed by a priest. If the youthful bride had dreamt that it would indeed be easy to bring her lover back to the Church of his Baptism, she was soon to be sadly disillusioned. He might not withhold a mere external show of courtesy towards her religious beliefs, but there his complaisance ended. Nothing would be left to her but to win his conversion through prayer and patient suffering.

The years went by without bringing the couple the blessing of children. In 1951, Simeon suffered his first setback. He entered a Manila hospital to be operated on for a cancerous growth of the liver. As he afterwards remained for days in a critical condition, his family tried by every means to remind him of his immortal soul in much greater jeopardy than its mortal frame but their efforts served only to increase the old sinner's fanatical hatred of things religious.

One year later, he made the trip to New York in order to undergo a second operation. The priest who visited him there was appalled at this man's cynicism. Simeon returned to Manila, embittered and rebellious at what he termed the injustice of fate and firmly resolved to cheat death as long as he possibly could. His long-suffering wife went through agonies of anxiety and multiplied her prayers for his conversion.

It soon became evident that he was not rallying as he had expected to from this second operation. Those about him knew that he was doomed.



SR. MARY ARISTIDE (ALICE CARRIER, WORCESTER, MASS.)
TEACHING HER FILIPINO CHARGES TO PRAY THE ROSARY.

One of his nieces, Mrs. D., a professor at our High School, one day revealed the sad condition of her dying uncle to Sr. Therese of the Holy Face⁽¹⁾. Deeply concerned over the eternal fate of this soul so close to death and apparently so distant from God, Sister requested pupils and teachers to put in an extra effort in order to win powerful graces of conversion. She moreover gave the sorrowing niece a miraculous medal which she enjoined her to offer the patient. A few days later Mrs. D. visited her uncle whose health was rapidly deteriorating. With tactful, tender words she broached the all important subject and offered him Our Lady's medal. For once in a conciliating mood, the sick man listened to her exhortations and accepted her offer. Our Lady had won her first victory. Elated over this initial success, Mrs. D. immediately let Sr. Therese of the Holy Face know about it. The Holy Rosary Guard of honor was made with greater fervor than ever; our dear Catholic Actionists literally laid siege to God's merciful Heart.

Simeon's indirect contact with the Refuge of Sinners had occurred on October 12, 1953. Imperceptibly he fell under her mysterious charm. During the tedious hours of the days and the endless hours of the nights who can tell what went on in the hidden sanctuary of this dying man's conscience? Relentless disease working with terrific speed gnawed at his last remaining physical energies but divine grace worked with even greater celerity at the purification of his soul. On October 23, Simeon at long last surrendered to celestial advances. Such a complete change occurred that it astounded even the patient himself who could not explain how he had been brought to ask for a priest.

A few days before his death Simeon had the happiness of making his First Holy Communion. To his faithful wife he afterwards remarked, "Until now I had always believed the host was only a piece of bread. Now I know better." And with the trust of the prodigal son, he added, "I feel perfectly at peace. I am sure all my sins have been forgiven for I regret them all from the bottom of my heart. How can I have waited so long to come home to Our Lady and her Son?"

This was our Filipino Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis*. He peacefully passed away a few moments later. Mary Immaculate had once again manifested her maternal tenderness, she whose privilege it is to give Jesus to the world until the end of time.

Jesus is King of the eternal ages by nature and by conquest; by Him, with Him and subordinately to Him, Mary is Queen by grace, by divine motherhood, by conquest, by singular election. And her domain is as vast as that of her Son, for nothing has been withdrawn from her dominion. For this reason the Church salutes her as Lady, and as Queen of Angels and Saints, of the Patriarchs and Prophets, of the Apostles and Martyrs, of Confessors and Virgins; for this reason she acclaims her Queen of heaven and earth; glorious, most worthy Queen of the universe . . . And her Queenship is essentially maternal, exclusively beneficent.

HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII

1. Therese Leblanc, Moncton, N. B.

POWERFUL AVES

SR. MARTHA OF THE REDEEMER(1), M.I.C.

During this her own Year will there remain a single corner of the world where the Queen of Heaven has not in some special manner manifested her solicitude for her poor earthly children? In every clime she is known under most appealing titles: Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Our Lady of the Way, Our Lady of the Poor, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, etc...

For over three centuries, the Cubans have revered her as their own sweet Lady of Charity, the *Caridad*. The Precursor has already carried various articles on this national Madona and on the people's ardent devotion to her; today, I again borrow its pages to join my modest tribute of thankfulness to the unceasing homage offered her by her Cuban sons and daughters.

On Christmas Eve with two Sisters from Los Arabos, I set out for a certain *campo* where the First Communion ceremony of four children was to take place. On the way, Father Dugal, p.m.e. spoke about the truly apostolic zeal displayed by Senora X, a fervent devotee of the Rosary, whose husband boasted of being a broad-minded dissenter. This did not in the least interfere with his playing the genial host to the Canadian missionaries whenever they chanced to call.

The Christmas Mass was therefore offered by Father Dugal at the Senor's homestead. His son, back from his school in Havana for the Christmas holidays, served it with edifying piety. Besides the First Communicants, a good number of pupils from the *campo* school accompanied the *Senora* to the altar rail while her husband looked on in the rear, impatient for the ceremony to end.

Mass over, the happy little ones partook of a gala breakfast graciously offered by the Senor while Father Dugal and we Sisters were invited to take place at the family table. Our host chatted pleasantly taking pride in the fact that people dubbed his home, the "Padres' house" because he so often extended a generous welcome there to the missionary Fathers passing through this locality.

After breakfast, a pretty Christmas sketch was presented on the lawn. While the children went through their paces, Mr. X. cast about in his mind for an occasion to flaunt his so-called religious indifference before the Father and Sisters. A beautiful poem about Jesus Crucified furnished him with the desired opening, "Confession, communion," he exclaimed, "Such things mean absolutely nothing to me. My religion is an interior affair. I may have faults but at least I'm no hypocrite; I hold the Fathers in high esteem

1. Marie-Marthe Laurin, Beauharnois, P.Q.



but I can't help looking upon them as mere human beings as fallible as we ourselves are." With apparent conviction he went on to say that for him it was enough to believe in the Supreme Being who sees and governs all things. Encouraged by a friend of the family I tried to argue with him but all to no avail. In a bantering tone he began to recite snatches of popular poems so as to change the subject.

From that time onward, we multiplied our prayers for this straying soul wandering far from the precincts of the Lord's gracious household. Somehow we felt assured that the Marian Year would not go by without our prayers being answered.

At the beginning of April, Father Dugal visited at our *convento* and one of our first inquiries was for news of Mr. X. Imagine our delight when Father replied, "I have been wanting to tell you the good news. When the Pilgrim Virgin recently journeyed through his *campo*, the Senor surrendering to the solicitations of divine grace, went to Confession and received Holy Communion. What a wonderful wife he has! She was a pillar of strength to him throughout, and thanks to her he kept his good resolutions. If only there were more apostles of the Senora's type, numerous conversions could be effected. I do not know what was the real cause of Mr. X's return but I do think his devotion to the Rosary must have played an important role in his conversion. He had been driving one of the Fathers in his jeep, one day, when he inquired pointblank, 'Have you recited your Rosary today?'

'Yes. Why do you ask?'

'Are you obliged to recite it every day?'

'There is no strict obligation for me to do so but every good Catholic feels he must offer Mary this daily homage.' The matter was dropped but a week or so later, driving with the same priest he again queried, 'If you have not yet prayed the Rosary today, would you allow me to pray it with you?' Needless to say, the Father gladly assented. When they had finished, 'Father, you know that I am not a practising Catholic and that I do not want to receive the Sacraments. Nevertheless, I am no atheist. All these years I have clung tenaciously to my belief in God and to the Rosary devotion. If you do not mind, I would like to pray the beads with you every time we happen to travel together.'

Today the Senor publicly recites the Rosary with his family. So often did he plead "pray for us sinners," that Our Lady taking compassion on his irrelevant mood linked his heart with the chain of her Aves to the merciful Heart of her Divine Son.



The whole motive of our confidence lies in the Holy Virgin, seeing that God has bestowed upon her the fulness of every good thing; so that, if there is in us any hope, any grace, any safety, we know that it is all derived from Mary. Such is the will of Him who has willed that we should have all things through Mary.

KORIYAMA JAPAN.



LITTLE MESSENGERS

OUR LADY'S

SR. ST. OCTAVIE(1), M.I.C.

Our Lady's Messengers were grouped four years ago by Sr. St. Gregory of Nazianz (2). Sister's idea was to have the more serious pupils of her English Course gather together once a month to learn more about *Seibo Maria Sama*, (the honorable Mother of God). When the movement started, these boys and girls who were nearly all non-Christians possessed only the bare rudiments of Christian doctrine.

At present they number fifty strong. Among them fifteen after following a thorough course of religious instruction have solicited their parents' permission to receive Baptism. Faced with these consoling results, we decided to take advantage of the Marian Year to reorganize more permanently this apostolic initiative.

At the monthly meeting of their association, all the members are invited to study lovingly and attentively, with a view to imitating them, the traits and virtues that distinguish Mary Immaculate. Their initial objective remains "to make Mary better known and loved," in order to draw all souls to her divine Son. To this spiritual activity, the group now joins practical acts of charity, of that charity which is an essentially Christian virtue revealed to mankind by the Savior. Thoughtfulness for the well-being of others can hardly be proclaimed as the hallmark of paganism. Why needless-

1. Lucille Adam, Auburn Me. U.S.

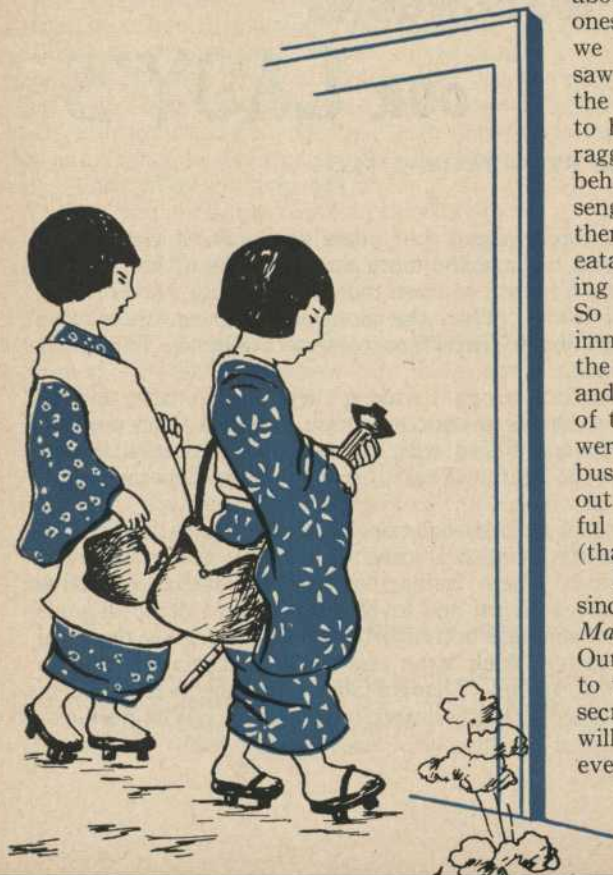
2. Rita Martel, Vankleek Hill, Ont.

ly worry over the fate of unfortunates? A Japanese pupil in my class upon hearing me speak of the joy found in giving, once retorted: "Well, it's the other way with me. I would much rather receive than give!"

Our Lady's Messengers made their first charitable debut on Christmas, that blessed anniversary of the day when God Himself gave His own beloved Son as His supreme lovegift to the world. A large hall had been rented for the day in one of the poorer city districts. Our pupils presented a few Christmas sketches and sang carols for the benefit of the children of destitute families to whom they afterward distributed over two hundred and fifty parcels of candy which they had prepared for this occasion. The distribution over, while the majority returned home, the two oldest members of the group accompanied the Sisters on a visit to a family in distress. They could hardly believe their eyes at the misery witnessed in this dilapidated hovel. To our disappointment we found only the father at home; suffering from a mental disease, he could but give incoherent answers to our inquiries

about his wife and little ones. Fortunately, just as we stepped outside, we saw a woman coming up the lane, a baby strapped to her back and two grimy ragged urchins straggling behind. Our Lady's Messengers presented the mother generous bundles of eatables and warm clothing which they had brought. So pleased was she that immediately darting inside the hut, she lit a candle, and feverishly opened each of the precious parcels. We were about to board the bus when the woman rushed out again pouring out tearful and effusive *arigato* (thank you).

Many other families have since been visited by *Seibo Maria Sama's* Messengers. Our Lady who thus reveals to their youthful hearts the secrets of Christian charity will not fail to lead them every one to her Jesus.



Our Lady and Filipino Soldiers

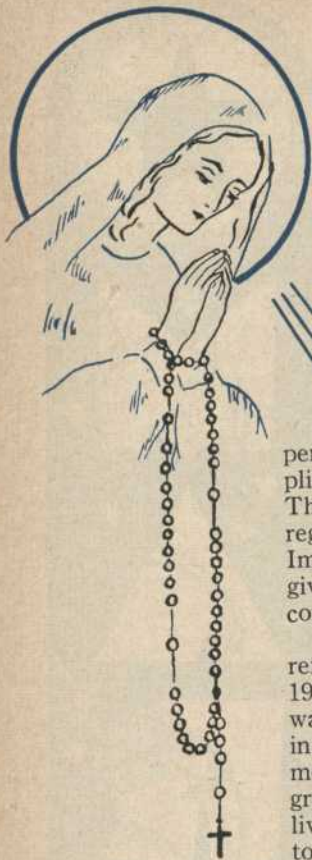
SR. MARY of the CENACLE(1), M.I.C.

Two Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception were one day traveling aboard a small boat which regularly churns its way between the port of Davao and that of Mati on the eastern coast of Mindanao. An officer in charge of a small detachment of soldiers who were not wearing any uniform, drew near to the Sisters and confidentially told them how he and his men were being sent on a perilous military mission. He could not divulge the name of the district towards which they were heading but he explained that the object of their expedition was nothing less than the capture of six Communist chiefs (Huks) who terrorized the region. "I am a Catholic" he added, "and feel so very happy to have met you Sisters! Please pray for me and for my men. We are leaving fourteen on this dangerous mission. Who knows if any of us will come back this way again?" He then introduced the soldiers to the Sisters and the latter invited them to recite part of the Rosary in order to beg Our Lady's protection. To this, the entire group gladly assented. Miraculous medals were then distributed to each of the men who hastened to fix them to their rosaries or to their jackets. "Now, you must feel strong," remarked one of the Sisters, "as strong as Mary who is as powerful by herself alone, as a whole army in battle array." With these encouraging words ringing hopefully in their ears, the men bade farewell and tramped away towards the hills and their grim encounter with fate.

On the following week, the Sisters were traveling on the same boat on their way back to Davao. What was their joyful surprise to notice among the passengers the *fourteen* soldiers met only last week. The latter proudly pointed out six handcuffed captives — the terrible Huks they had been sent to fight. To everyone on the boat, the victors jubilantly told how Mary Immaculate had provided them with a super effective weapon — her Miraculous Medal.

1. Marie Gérin, Coaticook, P.Q.





MARIAN

Devotion

in Nyasaland

SR. MAGDALEN MARIE(1), M.I.C.

In a country where the Church is still at the seedtime period, it would seem rash to speak of either depth or amplitude when telling of Marian devotion among our people. This at least we may affirm: the first missionaries in this region laid broad and solid bases to the cult due to God's Immaculate Mother. Many striking examples could be given of filial trust in her succor exhibited by the newly converted and even by catechumens.

The following episode which we here recount in its refreshing and naive simplicity goes back to the days, in 1947, when the Apostolic Prefecture of Northern Nyasaland was first established. In Katete where the White Fathers in charge of this territory had but lately settled, catechumens and Christians were daily convened for thorough grounding in prayers and catechism. Among others who, living at a considerable distance from the Mission, had to set out in the "wee small hours," were two old women remarkable for their assiduity at the *Visambizgo*. One day

1. Madeleine Loranger, Westmount P.Q.,



they arrived panting for breath, terror stamped all over their wrinkled faces... "Father" shouted Victorya, "We met a lion."

"A lion? Are you sure?"

"Perfectly sure. It was a real, live beast with an enormous head. We were hurrying along, because you always repeat that we must arrive on time, when we unexpectedly knocked into the lion. Both of us clutched at the rosary and crucifix hanging from our necks. Filled with confidence in the protection of *Amama Maria*, I yelled, 'Lion, don't you dare do us any harm. We are going to the Mission to pray. You have your work, we have ours. Be off, and quickly!' Would you believe it, Father, the lion turned off into another path and here we are, safe and sound"

When we Sisters first arrived in this district back in 1948, it was always with deep-felt joy that we noticed converts bringing bunches of wild flowers to offer at the Lady altar. Only too often they had only rags to wear but they never failed in bringing in these simple tokens of their love for Mary. Sometimes there was such a profusion of wild blooms that they spilled all over the carpet. How could it be otherwise? The religious communities who work at the conversion of these primitive tribes all pride themselves on being under Marian patronage. She who prayed the first apostolic missions into existence also prayed within ten short years nine mission stations into this new Prefecture. While on this subject, we must not fail to add that the two native congregations, one of Sisters and the other of Brothers, were founded under the auspicious name of Our Lady of the Rosary.

The majority of novices who have entered the *Wasisters wa Rozario Lituwa* claim to be indebted for their vocation to Our Lady. Sister Maryia Anastazia was cured of a serious sickness through her recourse to Her whom we title, Health of the Sick. She had been a postulant only a few short days when her face and body were suddenly covered with a baffling and extremely painful eruption. Unable to see, to eat, or to sleep, she spent her days and nights reciting the rosary. "*Amama Maria* will certainly cure me because I want to make her known and loved by my pagan brothers and sisters," she would invariably repeat to those who pitied her. Such unwavering trust deserved to be rewarded. Anastazi soon recovered completely. But it was written that the brave African girl would have other obstacles to hurdle ere reaching the goal. Before being admitted to the postulancy the aspirants visit their family. Anastazia accordingly left for her bush village situated at about one hundred miles from Katete. It had been arranged beforehand that the Mzambazi Mission truck would pick her up and bring her back to the convent in time for the feast of the Presentation. On the appointed date, the girl waited in vain for the vehicle to arrive. Nothing daunted, she courageously walked the seventeen miles of bush paths that separated her from the highway where she hoped to meet a conveyance of some sort. But African highways, at least in these parts, are never congested with traffic. Anastazia walked until nightfall and then retired into a

roadside shelter. Tears blinded her eyes as she reflected that her companions would take the holy habit in her absence. At the Mission, we were very much concerned over the missing girl wondering if she had not looked backward at the last moment. Three days later she arrived in a pitiful state of exhaustion but radiantly happy to be among her Sisters once again. In fact so completely sure was she to take the habit in spite of her involuntary delay, that her request was granted. Sister Maryia Anastazia now a fervent novice of the Queen of the Rosary never tires telling about her motherly Patroness.

Mary reigns also in African schoolrooms, even over the majority of non-Christian pupils. Among our boarders it is a curious but authentic fact that never a sacrifice or a task is refused which has been requested in the name of Mary. And yet God only knows that it is anything but easy to



train these primitive children into ways of discipline and orderly work. Knowing as we do the native mentality on this score, we are in a position to gauge the depth of the affection borne to the Blessed Mother by these African lassies.

Frayinisi writing a composition one day on Mary, patroness of her school, had this to say: "The village folk who do not as yet know about *Amama Maria*, laugh at us because we wear her medal. We have been taught to love and revere Mary at our beloved Mission school. We pray to her that she may render us brave enough not to mind having people laughing at us. Kathaza one of my classmates whose father is a fanatic Protestant refused to go back to her village for the Christmas holidays. Her father was furious. One Sunday he strode into the Mission compound and ordered Kathaza to follow him.

'Please, father, I want to hear Mass before I go.'

'You'll do nothing of the sort. We're leaving right away.'

The enraged man brooked no resistance. Raining down blows on the body of Kathaza, he drove her ahead of him like an animal all the while fuming and cursing the Catholic religion and its ministers. Sr. St. Imelda⁽¹⁾ who stood by, powerless to defend this child against her own father, queried of the other school children, 'What will happen to her once she is back in her village?'

'Oh, her father will leave her without any food for several days. Then if she proves docile, he will forget about the incident but he will never allow her to come back to school.' As Kathaza was very studious and eager to become a child of God through Baptism, we decided to pray so hard that the Blessed Mother would be forced to grant our petitions. What joy was ours when at the end of the holidays the father with a sheepish look on his face brought Kathaza back to the Mission school!"

During the Marian Year, Catholics in Nyasaland want to do their modest share in honoring the Immaculate Conception. The material conditions of life will not allow them the consolation of building impressive monuments or of organizing splendid demonstrations in honor of their Queen and Mother. But every mission post in the Prefecture will be gratified with a replica of the Lourdes grotto. A campaign for the recitation of the family Rosary will also be launched throughout the length and breadth of Nyasaland. It is through the potent force of the Rosary that our Christians and catechumens can hope to act as levers to lift to God the pagan masses all around them.



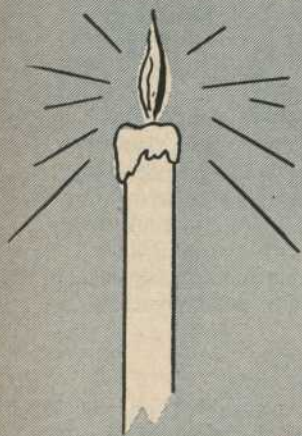
If the devotion one professes towards the most Blessed Virgin does not keep him from sin, it is a lying and deceptive devotion, since it lacks its own natural fruit. If anyone should wish, as we all ought to wish, that his devotion be worthy and in every way perfect, he must make progress and use all his energy to imitate her example. She is the closest copy of Christ that human nature is capable of.

SAINT PIUS X

1. Imelda Saurette, Letellier, Man.

LES COTEAUX, HAITI

How Reposia entered the Marian Year



SR. ST. LUCILLE(1), M.I.C.

For three whole days, tropical downpours had shrouded Les Coteaux in a thick veil of gloominess and unwonted quietude. Even the school bell was silent not daring to fling out its usual summons to little folk, for none appeared venturesome enough to sally forth into the flooded streets.

I was putting the refectory table in order when the insistent ringing of the doorbell startled me. There on the threshold stood Reposia, the candle vendor, looking like a rainy weather wraith, her thin dripping figure crowned with a grotesque straw hat. "Come in, Reposia" I cordially invited, "you look as if you could do with a cup of hot coffee this rainy morning." Her dim old eyes lit up with satisfaction and she bolted inside clutching her meager bundle of wares. While watching her ravenously dispatch her buns and coffee I casually remarked, "Yours is certainly a nice job, Reposia. Just think, your candles burn at the altar during Holy Mass and light up the Blessed Mother's shrine." Her smile faded and a look of sullen defiance flitted across her seamed features.

Reposia was miserable with a double misery of soul and body. For years she had been living at odds with holy Mother Church who sternly reproves the evil of concubinage. In fact, fully half a century had elapsed since she had last received the Sacraments. A few moments of awkward silence followed my remark then she looked up furtively and I saw tears veiling the hardness in her eyes. "Mother," she grew almost humble in her avowal. "You have been so kind to an old woman... Oh, if you only knew how lonely I am!" I hastened to take my cue. "Reposia, I know of Someone who

1. Adrienne de Grandpré, Pawtucket, R. I.

is lonely too, lonely for you to come back to Her... Our Lady's arms are extended, all ready to welcome you." With an impatient gesture she brushed away the tears from her eyes and her old bravado returned. It was not to be as easy as I had first thought to lead this straying sheep home. "Good Mother, you mean well, I know, but my conscience is my own. A body must earn its living after all. When I have enough money put by, I'll think it over." She rose, eager to put an end to a conversation that had become distasteful to her. "But, Reposia," I urged, "You are getting on in years. Don't forget that your soul is much more important than your body." As she shuffled towards the door, she turned and leered crookedly, "Never mind my soul, good Mother, I'm not yet ready to come to Church." With this parting shot, Reposia disappeared, goblinwise, into the sheets of falling rain. But she did not disappear from my prayerful remembrance.

Meanwhile every time I chanced to meet the old candle vendor plying her trade, I showed her more friendly interest than ever. In November I missed her quaint figure from the lanes of Les Coteaux. Upon inquiry I was told that she lay sick in her wretched *caille* with no one to attend to her needs. She was happy to see me when I called with food and medicine and she loudly complained that her material affairs were in a sorry state. As kindly and as gently as I could I suggested that it was high time for her to begin worrying about her spiritual affairs which were in a much sorer state. She continued to feign complete religious indifference but she did accept Our Lady's Rosary.

On November 27, feast of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, I again visited her. Her sickness had by now made such rapid inroads on her enfeebled constitution, that death lurked just around the corner. After administering what relief I could, I attached a miraculous medal to her tattered dress and proposed, "Reposia, you will soon be squaring accounts with your Creator. How about asking the priest to visit you? He will be able to set you at peace with God." This time she agreed doubtless feeling there was no longer any use playing truant with grace. Unfortunately, the pastor of Les Coteaux in charge of a huge territory had been called to a distant hill station on urgent business and would not be back for three days.

This sinner who had so often repulsed the divine advances was now to achieve her purification by three days of anxious waiting. At last, shriven and anointed for the supreme passing, she expressed her deep thankfulness to God who had so mercifully waited for her return. Pressing Mary's miraculous medal to her heart, Reposia slipped quietly into eternity at the dawn of the Marian Year, December 8, 1953.



Mary's children should not fail to imitate any of the virtues of their most holy Mother, above all, her faith, hope . . . and charity toward God and man.

SAINT PIUS X



Mary *Health of the Sick*

SR. ST. BONAVENTURE(1), M.I.C.

Never in her short life span of twenty odd years had Nya gone beyond the outskirts of her primitive village whose daub and wattle huts were mirrored in the blue waters of Lake Nyassa. It took a desperate illness to bring her to our Karonga dispensary and subsequently to introduce her within the Catholic Church. Late one afternoon she appeared in our doorway carried pick-a-back by a professor of the Mission School. He had providentially been on hand when Nya had staggered ashore from the native outrigger and like the good Samaritan that he is, he had taken pity on the sick woman who stood dazed and hesitant with none to befriend her. Inquiring after her illness he kindly offered to carry her to the Catholic Mission, four miles distant.

One glance at her drawn features and pain-glazed eyes and I knew that her case was very serious. Before coming to our clinic she had consulted a quack bush doctor who, as ignorant of dosages as he was of technical asepsis, had prescribed an initial five gram dose of Dagenan, hoping thus to hold a puerperal infection in check.

My Karonga dispensary was not equipped to cope with so serious a complaint but putting my trust in Mary, I determined to do all in my power to snatch this young life from the grave. A small room was found for her within the Mission compound where she was made as comfortable as circumstances warranted. After giving her an injection to relieve the pain and brace the failing heart, I retired with instructions to the Mission person-

1. Edwige Lapierre, Ste. Marie de Beauce, P.Q.

nel to call me if the patient became worse. That evening my meditation was haunted by the memory of a fever racked body tossing on a bed of pain. Try as I would I could not prevent distractions so I ended up by spending the time allotted to prayer in talking to Our Lady Health of the Sick about this difficult case of mine.

During the night a furious storm broke over Karonga. Suddenly, above the howling of the wind and the staccato tattoo of the rain on the roof, I heard knocks on our convent door followed by cries of: "Amayi, Nya is worse. Come quickly." I recognized the voice of the professor who had carried Nya to our clinic. "Go back to her," I shouted above the din, "Instruct her briefly. Baptize her if she is willing and if you think she will die before I can reach her."

A few minutes later I stepped out into the pitch darkness with an aide and ploughed along the mud path that led to the compound. Once in a while lurid streaks of lightning lit our way while the rain continued to pour down in torrents.

At last I reached destination and immediately looked in on my patient. Her breathing was labored and she suffered from choking spells. I spent the rest of the night at her bedside. She was strangely calm and unafraid in the face of death. "I would like to live because of my baby," she confided to me. "If I die, who will take care of it? But I am glad to have been baptized. I am now called Anna just like Our Lady's mother." The professor had thought it more prudent not to postpone her Baptism until my arrival.

In the early morning hours I called the European doctor in charge of the African hospital. He refused to look in on the case giving as pretext that he had an urgent appointment elsewhere. Only one solution remained; administer sedatives and serum and leave the results to divine Providence.

Throughout the Mission compound missionaries and Christians decided to help me save Nya's life by dint of prayers and sacrifices offered for this intention. The four hundred pupils of the Elementary school put in an extra effort of their own. For four days and four nights the woman's condition remained stationary. On Saturday afternoon she suddenly took a turn for the worse; intolerable cramps knifed through her weakened frame, vomitings put in their appearance, and her pulse fluttered alarmingly. But she who until now had serenely been facing approaching death, now manifested a strong desire to live. Her eyes constantly and longingly turned to the cot where slept Merise, her sweet, dark baby girl.

The arrival of members of Nya's family on the scene did not make matters easier for me. Seeing their relative in apparently desperate straits, they grew sullen and restive discussing among themselves on the advisability of having the patient transferred elsewhere. Now they reproached me with the size of the serum bottle which they thought responsible for the pain felt by Nya; now they complained on the quality of the pills, or upbraided me for having baptized her. At last, Father Superior had to make a show

of authority to clear the sick room of all these busybodies.

Towards evening, feeling worn out with fatigue and anxiety, I left my aides in charge while I crossed over to the Mission Church for a brief respite. The Christians were reciting Our Lady's litany. Fervently I joined in their plea, "Mutilombere Ise," (pray for us,) for never had I so keenly felt the need of Mary's motherly help and protection.

When I returned to Nya's side, I was astounded upon finding her making efforts to sit up on her bed. Once she had succeeded in doing so, she grinned cheerfully at me and announced that she would like some fish on her supper menu. Like one hypnotized I followed her every movement as she took up the dish brought in at her request, and ate with evident relish. She then slept soundly through the night. On the next day, she rose early and without the least trace of weariness or pain spent hours squatting with her relatives, telling them all that she had just gone through.

She stayed at the Mission for a few more days where she insisted on helping me with the chores at the dispensary. Then, with Merise snugly ensconced in the cloth at her back she gaily went back to her bush village where she now sings the praises of *Amama Maria*. Ever since it has been my privilege to experience this heavenly assistance, I never cease to extol Mary Health of the Sick, Technique of Sister nurses on the Missions.

Celestial Smiling Lady at Morondava

SR. ST. FERDINAND(1), M.I.C.

Joyful expectation pervades the atmosphere, for the celestial SMILING LADY is expected at the orphanage today. Until now our Christians have more especially honored Our Lady under the title of the Sorrowful Mother, the WEeping LADY of La Salette, under whose patronage the Mission has been placed.

A tiny Malagasy maiden queries anxiously, "Sister, is the SMILING LADY the very same person as the WEeping LADY?"

"Will she smile at us also, I wonder?" muses a pensive Miss, still under the impression of St. Therese of the Child Jesus' story. "She was a lucky one, that Little Therese!" she adds with a wistful sigh.

Towards four a.m., grouped on the verandah decorated with palms and flowers, our one hundred pupils sing with all their hearts to greet their heavenly Queen borne upon the shoulders of six Malagasy lassies. Then the Rosary is recited and our Aves blend in the grand symphony of praise rising from all corners of the Catholic world. The ceremony is climaxed by the enthronement of the SMILING LADY as patroness of our educational center. At her feet the lovable daughters of Madagascar will kneel to learn how one must smile at neighbor through the practice of gracious charity.

Mary, Mother, fill their need,
With the splendor that is love.
Make them in word and deed
Daughters of thine and fit to wear
Grace like a tender gift.

1. Lucienne Ferland, Lac Megantic. P. Q.

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