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Serenade *in Cuba*

SR. LEON JOSEPH¹, M.I.C.

After the traditional Hour of Adoration through which we close the old year and ring in the new, we silently returned to our dormitory and settled down for the rest of the night. Our dreams, needless to say, were haunted by the jingling of sleigh bells, . . . the mellow chimes spilling from the spires of the Canadian churches far away . . . the merry gatherings under the old roof trees . . .

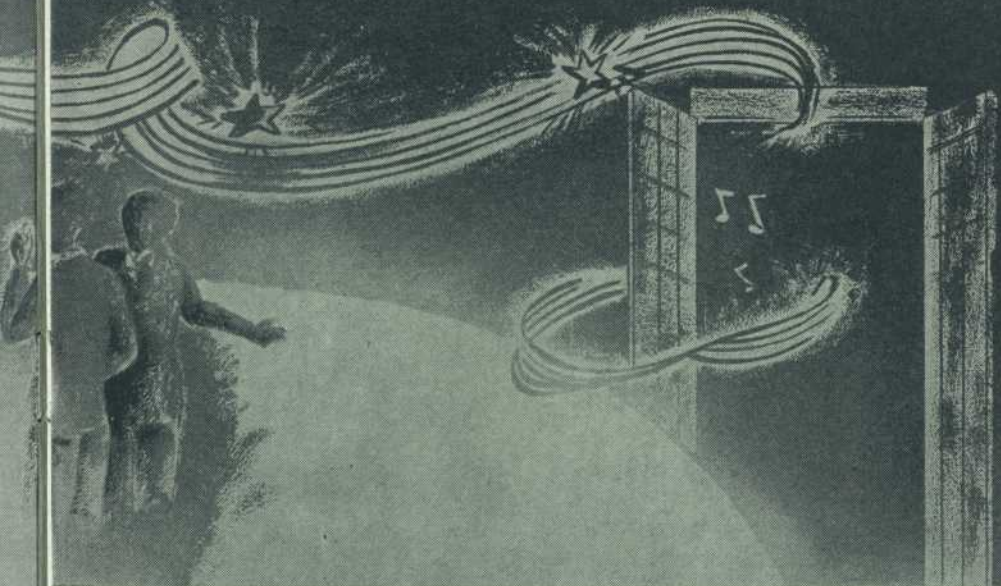
About two in the morning our slumbers were suddenly disrupted by the strumming of guitars and the melancholy strains of Cuban troubadours singing improvised ballads in throaty Castilian. A few verses like the following floated up to us on the night air:

May the New Year bring you joy,
.....
Forgive my disturbing your peaceful slumbers.
.....
No boor am I but a right gallant gentleman . . .

As this was the first time in my life I had ever been awakened to the strains of a serenade under my windows, I determined to catch a glimpse of a real flesh-and-blood troubadour. Cautiously peering out through the shadows I caught sight of one of the serenaders standing under the *portal* of a neighbouring house. While his two companions thanked the master of the house for the customary offering, he continued crooning to the stars, improvising stanzas praising the generosity of their benefactor and expressing the hope that he will be successful in wooing sleep for the second time this night. It seemed to me for a moment that I had been carried away to medieval ages

1. Simonne Sabourin, Saint Isidore, Prescott, Ont.





when the joyous Francis Bernadone chanted serenades under the balconies of Assisi, in beautiful Umbria!

Being of an inquisitive turn of mind, I asked a few explanations of our neighbour about these serenades, on the following morning. She told me that the troubadour I had sighted was an artist of some renown who had fallen on bad days and who now lived in a dilapidated shack outside of Merced. His guitar was a relic of former happy days he liked to remember. On New Year's Eve, it is a tradition for people of his profession to execute under the windows of friends and acquaintances a *punto cubano*, sort of improvised song of good wishes, with the hope that an alms will be forthcoming. Naturally, at this late hour, many are the hearts that remain indifferent to serenades and needy serenaders no matter how touching the melody and words of the former and the expertness of the latter.

Feeling that I owed my unknown troubadour at least the offering of a prayer, I told the Holy Child about him when I knelt before the Crib in our chapel. May the divine Artist delicately touch this soul and draw from it exquisite tones of loving submission to His Will. With his heart adapted to chords of hope and love, he will then be able to improvise serenades to his heavenly Father and to Mary, Queen of Heaven and earth.



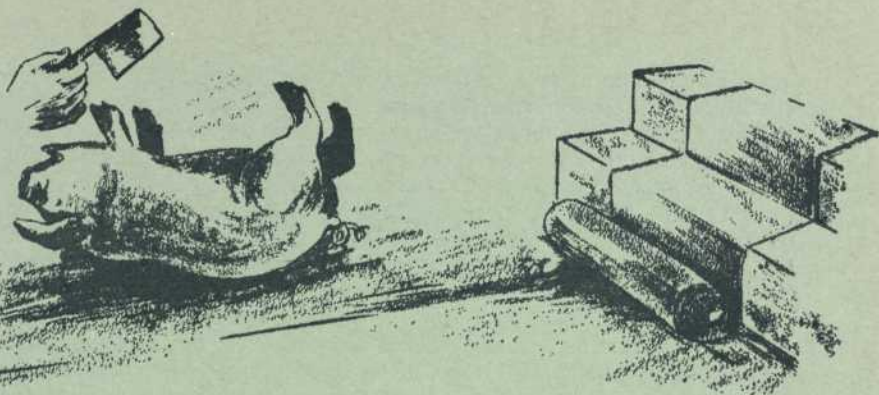
RHODESIA

First Christmas at Fort

Sapphire skies overhead and lush vegetation below . . . We four Canadian Sisters but lately arrived in this beautiful corner of God's world, found it hard to believe that the Christmas season had arrived. But manifold tasks that beckoned left us no time

for daydreaming. Before the sun was riding high, each one of us was busily at work doing her share to prepare the celebration of our first Christmas at Fort Jameson.

Out in the kitchen Sr. Joseph de l'Esperance², at odds with a cooking



stove of ancient make which daily insists on almost smoking her out of the premises, bravely carried on with her pots and pans. Sr. Imelda of Jesus² meantime tried to squeeze a Crib into our tiny chapel while I rummaged in the cases for all available decorations.

In the midst of these occupations, our ears picked up the welcome sound of a car stopping in front of the former Rangely Hotel now metamorphosed into a convent. Our kind friend, Mrs. Cohen, cheerily called out to us from the driveway. A resident in Africa for over thirty years, this English lady who lives at some distance from Fort Jameson never misses an occasion to do us a good turn. Today she brought

to burn, I built a fire outside, scout fashion, and we soon had the meat merrily boiling in a large aluminum pot.

Early in the afternoon, leaving Sr. Imelda of Jesus in charge of the house, we went over to the mission to lend a hand at decorating the inside of the church, setting up the Christmas Crib, rehearsing plain chant and carols for the High Mass and the two low Masses. Sister Superior⁴ took charge of the choir practice and patiently lent herself to listen to endless palavers about this and about that. Sr. Joseph de l'Esperance solemnly presided over the laying down of a magnificent carpet recently donated by overseas benefactors to the zealous Vicar Apostolic. My own work consisted in building a Crib with practically no material. After poking my head into every corner of the sacristy in vain, I went outside and picked some long stiff grass and an armful of brushwood. With these and pieces of stout twine I finally managed to shape a semblance of grotto or cavern. The

Jameson

SR. ST. RODRIGUE¹, M.I.C.

us precious gifts in the shape of flowers, vegetables, butter, and a fat little pig. The coming of the latter forced us to forego all other work to lend a hand at cutting it up. As the kitchen stove still stubbornly refused

1. Francoise Pageau, Quebec.

2. Yvette Hervieux, Lanoraie, P.Q.

3. Adrienne Larouche, Nashua, N.H.

4. Sr. St. Alexandrine (Evelyn O'Neil, Quebec.)

grass came in handy to camouflage the rough branches knotted together as best I could. The result was anything but elegant. When the *Bambino* which we had brought in our cases from Canada was laid in the most rustic of mangers, the statue of the Blessed Mother was found to be too small to match so I hoisted her up on a pincushion as pedestal. St. Joseph and the shepherds, finally found standing place about the Holy Child while the angels hung here and there at more or less precarious angles. Surveying my finished handwork with an anxious eye, I breathed a fervent prayer that none of these angelic figures would take a fancy to plunge downwards during Midnight Mass. On the altar and around the Crib, massed bouquets of brilliant African blooms added a note of gaiety.

Back at our convent after supper, I hung up wreaths and decorations to give the house a festive air then went to bed to snatch some sleep before the celebration began in earnest. As the youngest member of the community, I enjoyed the privilege of being awakened to the familiar strains of *Ca Bergers*. Sister Superior and Sr. Joseph de l'Esperance who respectively hold the high and honourable functions of organist and of sacristan, left for the church around eleven so as to make sure that everything would go off perfectly while Sr. Imelda of Jesus and I left just in time for Mass. As we made our way to church, a broadcaster filled the air with the mellow sound of Roman bells and with merry Christmas music. Above our heads the stars shone innumerable like so many jewels studding the somber draperies of night. The moon seemed impaled on the highest branch

of a tall eucalyptus. The church was already filled to capacity when we entered and joined our companions on the other side of the altar rail where we had reserved seats.

On the stroke of midnight, His Excellency The Most Reverend Msgr. Courtemanche, Vicar Apostolic of Fort Jameson, was escorted to the altar by a deacon, a sub-deacon plus six acolytes representing the African population; two blacks, two whites, and two coloured. On the missions the great feasts of the Church are celebrated with all possible solemnity. After High Mass the whites and the coloured were the first to leave. The whites here comprise about a hundred families, functionaries of the government, planters, merchants. The half castes or coloured, form a class apart from the blacks and the whites. They usually adopt the latter's way of living and consider themselves superior to the former. To us the most interesting are perhaps the purely African races. I was looking forward to quietly enjoying the beautiful liturgy of the Mass at Dawn when the blacks began to sing at a rousing rhythm *Wabadwa Mulungu Mwana*.

In spite of myself, I had to close my missal and listen as they chanted their happiness. Some fastidious people might have called this shouting instead of singing but I rather enjoyed hearing them thus vehemently singing the praises of the Holy Child. Listening to them, it seemed to me that I understood better their character, their aspirations, and felt drawn in closer union with the soul of Africa. I am sure they are all among those men of goodwill to whom the angels promised peace on that wonderful night, one thousand nineteen hundred years ago.

They may not observe the niceties of sacred music, but their hearts are loving and true. Must they not remind the little Son of Mary of the shepherds who were the first to kneel and adore Him as the Word made flesh? One Mass may be enough for the whites and the coloured but the blacks not satisfied with assisting at the three Masses celebrated during the night will be present at High Mass to morrow. With these thoughts milling in my head, I went home to partake with my companions of a *reveillon* after the Canadian fashion on Christmas night. On the refectory table Sr. Imelda of Jesus had placed a bouquet of cedar wood branches to simulate a Christmas tree she remarked complacently. In a cone of banana leaves we each found some delicacies sent from the dear homeland by thoughtful friends and benefactors. God bless them for their kindness and generosity.

After a few hours of peaceful slumbers, we heard two low Masses in our little chapel. Already black women and children were jostling one an-

other outside on our veranda, eagerly awaiting their Christmas presents. It is a Fort Jameson tradition that each white must provide a Christmas gift to each black who asks for one. Again, thanks to the generosity of our dear parents, friends, and benefactors overseas we had the joy of being able to distribute sweets, gaudy, jewelry, and some articles of clothing to all who crowded into our convent on this blessed day.

In the afternoon, Sister Superior and I went to visit the women's prison. Instead of the usual weekly catechism lesson, the prisoners were gratified with a repetition of Christmas carols. Even the stocky guardians joined in singing *Wabadwa Mulungu Mwana*. To each inmate we then offered a ring with Our Lady's monogram and a little bag of candies. Our visit wound up by a short but fervent prayer addressed to the little King of peace newly born.

Such was our first Christmas at Fort Jameson. It was a Christmas with a missionary flavour we would not exchange for any other.



The external troubles of the world are only a reflection of the interior disorders of our souls. Instead of seeking first the kingdom of Heaven within us, we try to build a kingdom of heaven outside of us. Before we have found the peace that only Christ can give, we try to give peace to the world. As if one would give something which one does not possess!

Dr. John C. H. Wu

The Song of the

The Feasters:

The cricket sings in the hall,
The year is late in the fall.
Let's dance and sing today;
The sun and the moon wouldn't stay.

The Moderator:

Do not go to extremes,
Forget not your noble dreams.
See how the prudent boys
Restrain themselves in joys.

The Feasters:

The cricket sings in the hall,
The year'll take leave of all.
Let's dance and sing tonight
To catch time in its flight.



ong the Cricket

The Moderator

Enjoy you surely may
But heed what the elders say.
If you have no control,
You may soon lose your soul.

The Feasters:

The cricket sings in the hall,
The year is beyond recall.
Let's make the best of life
Time's like a butcher's knife.

The Moderator:

I know that life is brief;
But too much joy brings grief.
Beware of the charms of beauty:
True peace is found in duty.

Confucius

(translated by John Wu)

Christmas

at Kuanhsi

SR. MARIE XAVIER¹, M.I.C.

Christmas 1954 was highlighted by a remarkable event in Kuanhsi — the establishment of the Church through the Baptism of the five first catechumens. Somehow, it seems well nigh incredible that after two thousand years of Christianity, the glad tidings had never yet been brought to this little town of ten thousand inhabitants . . . It took the war and the Communist persecution which expelled so many missionaries from China to cause the Gospel message to be known all over the Beautiful Isle.

Early on Christmas Eve, Mrs. Chang and her two little daughters arrived at the convent. So eager were they to be baptized that they kept on insisting "Put on our white dresses right away, please . . . We want to become God's children as soon as we ever can . . ."

When the solemn moment did arrive, they were almost beside themselves with joy. Even the youngest who is only five years old answered the ritual questions firmly and unhesitatingly. The Christian names of Agnes and Cecilia had been chosen for these Taiwanese girls living in times as perilous as the did Roman martyrs of old. The two youthful neophytes to whom the story of their patron saints had been previously recounted, proudly exclaimed after the Baptism ceremony, "If the Communists come along we also will die rather than give up our Faith." Peter Sung and Teresa Low equally became children of God that same night.

After the three low Masses during which were sung carols familiar beyond East and West, a gay *reveillon* was served to the neophytes and the entire gathering. Catechumens and even non-Christians appeared deeply touched by the ceremony they had witnessed. It was three o'clock when we were at last free to snatch forty winks before setting out in the morning for Che Koan Tse where High Mass and two other low Masses were to be offered.



Here laborers pray for good luck at New Year's,
Sr. Marie Xavier and a catechist.

Christmas at Kinshan

SR. IMELDA OF THE EUCHARIST¹, M.I.C.

While our three companions celebrated Christmas at Kuanhsi Sr. St. Alice² and I set out for Kinshan, a lonely mountain outpost under the direction of Rev. Aurelien Demers, s.j. The population is made up of Taiwanese and a majority of mountain people.

Splendid missionary work has already been accomplished by the zealous pastor in this little village. When we arrived, early on December 24, Father was busy rehearsing for midnight Mass with his mixed choir made up of catechumens. These young people afterwards recited night prayers together before they went home for supper.

Having lived in mission countries for a long while, I had taken part in more than one Christmas celebration strongly reminiscent of the poverty of Bethlehem. But this one I found exceptional. Never before had the "*Gloria in excelsis*" sounded in this corner of the Lord's vineyard. Like the shepherds of old, a good number of the mountain people gathered in the modest mission chapel where a simple Crib had been set up. It all seemed strange and mysterious to them; but they were as delighted as children when they heard their sons and daughters lustily singing the Christmas carols in their own dialect.

Kneeling beside the poor little representation of the Nativity, my thoughts wandered back to my dear homeland where so many young Canadians are wondering what to do with their youth. Oh, if they could only see all the work there is to be done among these souls of goodwill! And my prayer rose fervent to the Holy Child that He may call a good number among them to the sublime vocation of the apostolate.

1. Simonne Boisclair, Almatville.

2. Jeanne Bastien, Montréal.



Manchurian Christmas

SR. SAINT EDMUND¹, M.I.C.

It was a bitterly cold Christmas Eve in a remote hamlet of Manchuria. Martha, the Christian widow, shivered as she squatted on the *kang* (brick bed) beside her beloved baby boy. Tucking the bedclothes cosily about the restless little frame she scanned his features for perhaps the hundredth time that day. How she wished she could see shining there once again the radiant sparkle of health! But tonight the almond eyes held a feverish, glassy stare that boded no good.

The house in which the widow lived was the typical hut of the Chinese poor, with its mud plastered walls and dirt floor, its roof of thatch, and its small windows through whose panes of translucent paper the wind whistled in a fierce or a playful mood. Nowhere were the usual grinning faces of the family deities to be seen. There was no domestic altar with the tablets of ancestors enthroned among ritual offerings of flowers, food, or incense. Instead, a crucifix hanging on the wall between pictures of the Sacred Heart and of the Blessed Mother proclaimed to the world that this humble abode was a truly Christian home.

Two years previously, Peter, the young husband, "had hailed the century" (had passed away), leaving his wife Martha and four-year-old Johnnie in none too comfortable circumstances. Undaunted by hard work, gifted with robust health, Martha courageously measured up to the task of rearing her sturdy little son.

1. Irma de Ladurantaye, Cap Saint Ignace.

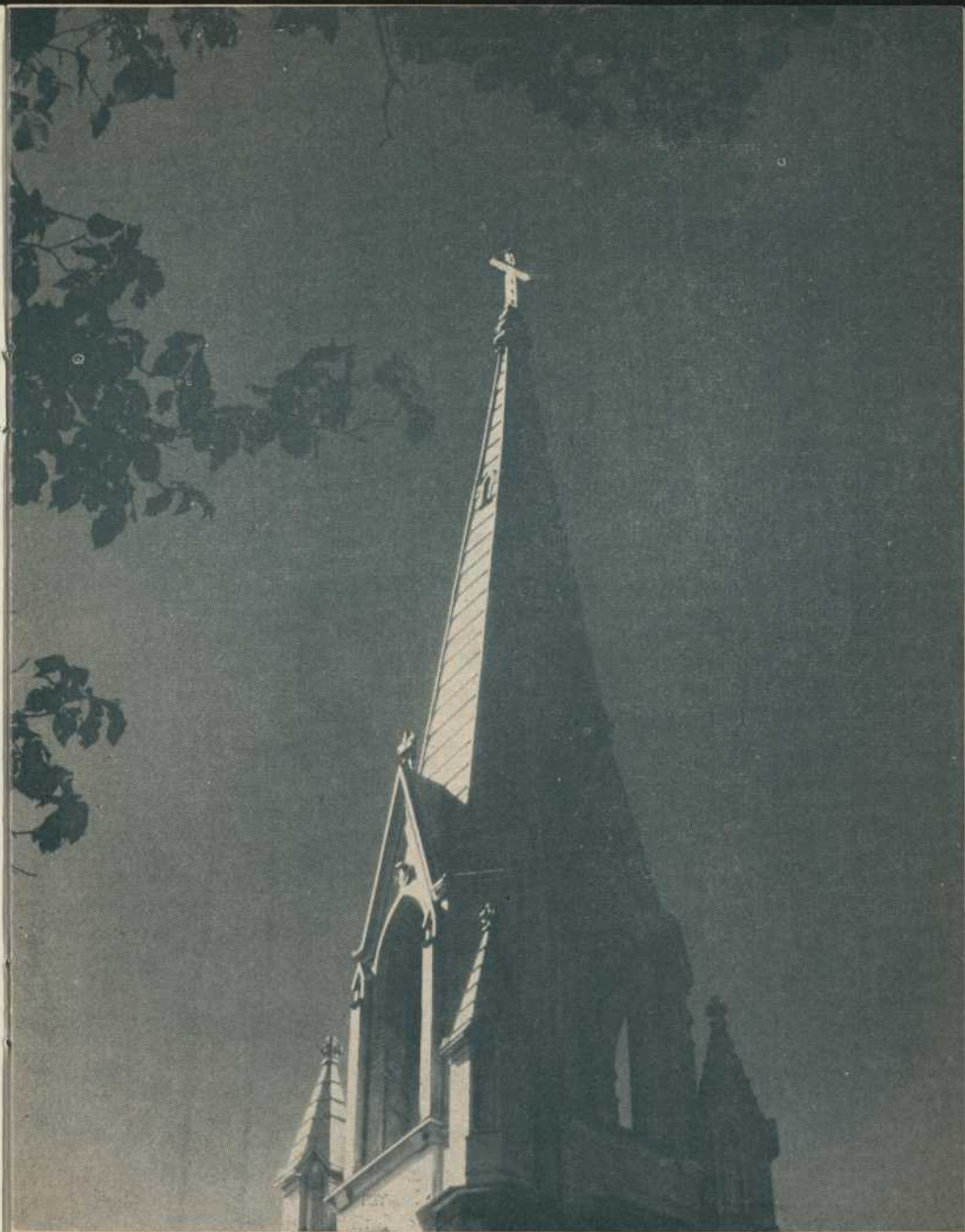
But now another misfortune had fallen on the young mother to test her endurance. Johnnie, the light of her eyes, the pulse of her heart, had fallen seriously sick. That very morning a Sister-Nurse from the Catholic Mission had called and the poor mother had guessed there was not much hope left to save her treasure. "Sister, please, Johnnie must not die. Can't you do anything for him? Is there no hope left at all?" Sister had tried to bolster up her courage. "As long as there is life, there is hope," she said; "Pray hard, dear Martha, and do not forget that where we poor human beings are powerless, God remains all powerful. Be of good cheer! The Sisters at the Mission will pray for you and your sick boy. Let's keep hoping for the best. I'll call again tomorrow with medicine and food."

It was midnight and over the countryside the bells of the mission church were pealing out their message of peace and hope and love. Martha hearkened as she kept her lonely vigil by the bedside of her ailing son and in her heart dawned a sudden inspiration. "God alone can cure my Johnnie. I'm sure He will not take him away from me on this, His divine Son's birthday". Immediately acting upon her resolution, she dressed the child, wrapped him up in a padded robe and hurried outside along the narrow streets that led to the Catholic temple.

Entering the crowded church she walked straight to the front and laid her precious burden beside the manger. With what fervour she prayed, gazing in devout admiration at the figure of the holy Babe clad in garments of bright red, lying there so sweetly appealing between Jesus and Mary. No modernistic angels with peroxide permanents cluttered the manger but crude cardboard figures in pink, yellow, and green sporting sturdy wings that had nothing lightsome about them. Christmas and its genuine spirit was in the loving hearts of the faithful as they sang with a will the *Gloria in excelsis* or chanted in a formidable chorus the prayers of the Mass. Martha felt herself uplifted and strengthened as she shared in the common prayers. Repeatedly, she bent with anxious solicitude over the form of her child and each time she noted that his restlessness had gone, his breathing seemed easier, his eyelids dropped to curtain his too bright eyes . . . A thrill of hope raced through the mother's veins and a paean of gratitude rose from her heart, for the Lord of Heaven had bent an attentive ear to the cry of her distress. Johnnie would live to carry on her honoured husband's name.

Mass was over but still she knelt absorbed in rapturous thanksgiving until the sound of firecrackers set off by her fellow Christians in a festive mood brought her back to earth and its prosaic realities. Cautiously she took the boy in her arms, lifting him up before the Holy Family as a precious offering. Then, she drew the coverlet closely about him and hastened back home through the darkened town.

On the following day the Sister-Nurse came around half expecting death to have called during the night. How amazed she was to find Johnnie sitting



The steeple points skyward.

up in bed, a cheerful grin on his face. His fond mamma hovered over him, fairly devouring him with her eyes. "Sister, you told me to pray," she exclaimed. "Well, I prayed and I dared the Lord of Heaven to show Himself a father to my orphaned boy. I brought him to Midnight Mass and he fell asleep as soon as he was inside the church . . . Isn't it just too wonderful?" She cried and laughed at the same time as she fed Johnnie some steaming rice gruel.

Two weeks later, Martha's son had completely recovered and in the merriest of moods joined in all the games of his companions. Before a year had elapsed he was admitted as a pupil at the Mission School; bright, alert, studious, he soon outstripped his classmates. Much to his mother's consolation he also became an accomplished altar boy.

Johnnie was a sturdy self-reliant little man of twelve when he first told his mother of his one ambition to become a priest of God. At first her heart rebelled against the thought. Like all loyal Chinese mothers, she had been looking forward to the time when her son would carry on his father's name, while providing security for her declining years. But soon her strong Faith enabled her to weigh the matter in the scales of eternity. She remembered how on that Christmas night, long ago, she had lifted him up in her arms as an offering. God had accepted her oblation and restored her dying son to life. Could she now be ungrateful enough to oppose the will of the Master? Once her sacrifice was made she banished anxiety regarding the future and laid aside all she could from her meager earnings to prepare the outfit Johnnie would need at the Seminary.

* * *

It was Christmas Eve once again and bitterly cold winds blew from the Gobi desert over the remote Manchurian hamlet. But inside the brilliantly illuminated church all was warmth and jubilation. In front of the Crib knelt a gray-haired, venerable woman, her wrinkled face alight with supernatural happiness. With loving gaze she watched her son at the altar holding in trembling hands the chalice of salvation. How good God had been to the widow and to the orphan! "O Lord of Heaven," she prayed, "you restored him to my affection twenty years ago. Today I am restoring him to You. Take him and make use of his youth, of his manhood, for the coming of your reign in Manchuria. He is Your servant but he is also my son. Praised be to You for your ten thousand graces!"

In the sanctuary ablaze with light a youthful voice, vibrant with emotion, intoned the *Gloria in Excelsis*.

To talk is a good thing. But to act is very much better. Our Lord "began to do and to teach," but, notice, He began by doing — and His whole life could be summed up in the words; "He did all things well."

Raoul Plus, S.J.



Rambling through Tokyo

SR. SAINT JEROME¹, M.I.C.

We did not need a second invitation to put our Japanese books aside on Sister Superior's² feastday and to go exploring in Tokyo for a change. Sr. Marie Xaviero³ had long promised to take us for a visit to the famous Shinto and Buddhist shrines of her native city. So after packing our lunch boxes with rice and salted vegetables, we set out gaily.

Our first stop was at the Meiji temple. Originally, Shinto or the "way of the gods" was nothing more than animism which later found its outward expression in nature worship. It had no canon of sacred books, no organized body of doctrine. Moreover, there was not the slightest ethical complexion to the features of this primitive quasi religion. The "way of the gods" therefore, was not and never became a religion in the strict theological sense of the word. One can assert that it is little more than a reverential attitude adopted by the Japanese towards their departed forbears. The Meiji shrine was built in honour of the emperor so named. Like all other Shinto shrines of some importance it is preceded by three *torii*, elegant gateways of light skeletonlike post-and-lintel construction designed with delicately curved lines. According to certain accounts, the *torii* was originally a perch for the sacred fowl kept on the temple grounds to give warning of daybreak. In

1. Therese Renaud, l'Orme, Loretteville, P.Q.

2. Sr. St. Gabriel Lalemant (Francoise Lacourisere, Three Rivers.)

3. Catherina Sachiko Hongo, Tokyo.



Torii leading to famous Yasukuni Jinja

later times it came to be regarded as a merely symbolic ornament. These gateways enable one to differentiate a Shinto from a Buddhist temple. The pillars which support the *torii* lintels at this particular shrine bear an inscription to the effect that the trees used in their construction were at least one thousand years old. As far as the eye can see stretch gardens planted with hundreds of stately trees most of them pines regarded here as symbols of longevity. People from all over the country planted them in memory of one of their greatest emperors. Some of these pines have been artistically trained in the shape of huge parasols. Upon remarking on their beautiful appearance Sister Marie Xaviero further informed us that they were called *karakasa matsu* or parasol pines. Beyond the third and last gateway we came to large basins hewed out of stone which are used for the ritual rinsing of the mouth and washing of the hands. According to Shinto commentators the Japanese "being of a divine race in whom is found no trace of original sin", walk always in the way of the gods, the true meaning of the word Shinto. Therefore, they reach perfection by the mere fact that they follow their natural leanings without the need of any commandments of a practical nature. As long as they (the Japanese) conform to their ritual purifications, they are assured of being purified of their daily peccadilloes.

The stark simplicity of architecture and the small dimensions of the Shinto temples are calculated to recall the Japanese hut of early times. There is really no need for them to be very large since the faithful never enter into the shrines proper where the only objects to be seen are the legendary mirror

and the sword. No religious office is celebrated within their walls. Devotees may come at any time to pray and revere the shades of national heroes according to their devotion. Standing at a respectful distance, they clap their hands three times to call the attention of the spirits, make three profound bows, and state their petition.

Before leaving the precincts we visited Homotsuden, the palace museum where are exposed objects that belonged to the illustrious emperor Meiji and to the empress, his wife. Among other things we admired the statue of Ninomiya Kinjiro, the classical model of Japanese students. Too poor to attend regular classes, Kinjiro used to carry a book with him whenever he went picking brushwood for his parents. He studied patiently as he trudged over the hills and finally he became a renowned scholar.

It was nearing the noon hour when we passed under the sacred straw rope hanging from the last portico. We found a secluded spot in the large park nearby and ate our *bento* (lunch) with appetites whetted by our morning jaunt. The early afternoon hours we spent visiting another famous Shinto temple, Yasukuni Jinja, dedicated to the memory of soldiers killed in battle. According to the Shinto creed, those who give up their lives for their country are considered as martyrs as this supreme sacrifice is supposed to wipe away all guilt. Yasukuni is built in the same plain architecture as the Meiji. The only difference we noticed were beves of pigeons whirling about its roof.

From Yasukuni we went for a stroll in the neighbourhood of the imperial palace which is surrounded by three moats. Ordinary folk are allowed to cross the third moat only on New Year's day and on April 29, the Emperors'

Meiji temple, Tokyo





One of the moats circling the Imperial palace, Tokyo, Japan

birthday. This, only since the last war. The first time this permission was granted, there was such a rush of people over the bridge that a few persons fell overboard and were drowned. Today all was very quiet as we walked about admiring the landscape, more especially the beautiful swans gracefully swimming on the still waters of the interior moat.

In the late afternoon hours we entered the courtyard of a Buddhist temple. Japan received Buddhism from Korea whither it had spread through China. For many centuries, all education was in Buddhist hands as was also the care of the poor and sick. Buddhism moulded Japanese art, introduced medicine, created dramatic poetry, and deeply influenced every sphere of social and intellectual activity. We entered the temple compound just in time to be present at a funeral service. Gongs accompanied dismal chants which seemed to issue from the nether world. Then the shaven headed bonze rose from a pile of cushions, made three profound salutations towards the coffin, and sailed majestically out of the temple followed by the faithful.

Sr. Marie Xaviero had a suggestion to close our holiday in a fitting manner. "How about making a visit to the true God, Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament?" she inquired. Of course we were more than willing but we could not see any catholic Church nearby. To our surprise, Sister led us straight to a department store where on the last floor there is a chapel far richer than all Buddhist and Shinto temples since it holds the Treasure of heaven and earth.

On the way home, we reflected on the influence wielded by the two religions we had been studying in their external manifestations. Whence comes the exquisite Japanese politeness? From Shinto which urges respect in words and actions towards one's betters and also from Buddhism stressing as it does the virtue of kind benevolence towards all. The family spirit, the respect which must be shown to the aged are taught by the "way of the gods" tempered by Buddhist tenderness for the old and feeble. Japanese cleanliness stems from the hoary Shinto cult which demands perfect neatness of the body and entire purity of the heart before presenting oneself before the *kami* (deities). Simplicity of material life in Japan cannot be explained only in the light of economic factors. In a moral order it has been deeply influenced by the following Shinto precept, "In a spirit of thanksgiving for all created nature, let everyone avoid squandering the goods left by ancestors or enjoying them in a purely selfish manner."

Finally, the double influence of Shinto and Buddhism may be traced in the deep love of nature which characterizes the Japanese. They are passionate lovers of their beautiful country which they are fond of comparing to a magnificent garden planted by the gods. In no other land perhaps does art form part and parcel of the people's life as it does in Japan. All Japanese are artists in the sense that they love and can appreciate the beautiful. May these beauty famished souls soon come to acknowledge the wellspring of all art — Beauty eternal.



The Thief of Time...

I'm going to start something — Tomorrow.

I've made up my mind to turn over a new leaf and get busy — Tomorrow.

I'm going to learn all about my job, and then I'll make things hum — Tomorrow.

I admit I've gotten into a rut; but you just watch me begin to get ready, to start, to commence, to prepare, to undertake to study, to learn, and to get a real move on — Tomorrow.

But not today.

Great Scott, no, not today.

MADONA



S.S. Elisabeth



S.S. Victor



S. Marie Thérèse



S.S. Jeanne de Chantal



S.S. Clotilde



S.S. Denise



S.S. Pierre Apôtre



S.S. Athanase



S. Bernadette de l'Immaculée



S. Philippe du Sauveur



S.S. Camille de Lellis



S.S. Marcel

1955

Mission Assignments



S. Marie Edmunde



S.S. Valérie



S. Monique d'Ostie



S.S. Jean du Calvaire



S.S. Ida



S. Estelle de Jésus



S.S. François de Paule



S.S. Jean du Cénacle



S.S. Robert Bellarmine



S. Marie Thérèse



S. Marie de Bethanie



S. Raymond de France

ments



S. Epiphane



S. Alphonse Marie



S. L. Gilles



S. Bernardin de Sienne



S. B. Barthelmy



S. Marie Albert



S. Joseph Arthur



S. L. Eugene



S. Joseph Emile



S. L. Lucille



S. Marie du Sacre



S. L. Helene



S. L. Emile



S. Mectilde du S. C.

Mission Assignments 1955

HONG KONG: Sr. St. Jane of Chantal (Jeanne Caron, Montreal); Sr. St. Peter Apostle (Leocadie Landry, St. Jean l'Evangeliste); Sr. St. Denise (Odile Malboeuf, Sudbury, Ont.); Sr. Joseph Arthur (Laura Therien, St. Leonard d'Aston).

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS: Sr. St. Barthelemi (Marie Lambert, St. Barthelemy); Sr. St. John of Calvary (Doris Hague, Montreal); St. St. Bernardine of Siena (Antoinette Foisey, Waterloo); Sr. Camille of Lellis (Yvonne Jolicoeur, Joliette); Sr. St. Eugene (Diana Chaine, Arthabaska); Sr. St. Giles (Therese Gloutnez, St. Nazaire d'Aston); St. St. Marcel (Antoinette Castonguay, Montreal); Sr. Marie Albert (Madeleine Alarie, Trecesson, Abitibi); Sr. Joseph Emile (Beatrice Pelletier, St. Germain of Kamouraska).

FORMOSA: Sr. St. Elizabeth (Blanche Menard, St. Elizabeth of Joliette); Sr. St. Victor (Germaine Tanguay, Nashua, N. H.); Sr. Marie Therese (Marie Therese Roux, Montreal).

NYASSALAND: Africa, Sr. Marie Edwidge (Marie Paule Gaudreau, Rimouski); Sr. Alphonse Marie (Jeanne Fortin, St. Octave of Matane); Sr. St. Valerie (Marie Jeanne Dumas, St. Eloi).

FORT JAMESON, Northern Rhodesia: Sr. St. Epiphane (Gemma Ouellette, St. Epiphane).

HAITI, Antilles: Sr. St. Lucille (Adrienne De Grandpre, Pawtucket, R.I.); Sr. Marie Theodore (Lucienne Gadoury, St. Elizabeth of Joliette); Sr. St. Ida (Alice Gagne, East Broughton); Sr. St. Yolande (Elizabeth Vamchestein, St. Matthew of Laprairie); Sr. St. Eusebe (Marie Fugere, Montreal); Sr. St. Francis of Paule (Marie Therese Laperriere, Quebec); Sr. Mechtilde of the Sacred Heart (Jeannette Papillon, Quebec); Sr. Estelle of Jesus (Madeleine Bolduc, St. Damien of Berthier); Sr. Raymond of Jesus (Laurette Edger, Montreal); Sr. Marie of Sion (Lucille Metivier, Buckland); Sr. Robert Bellarmine (Pauline Pouliot, St. Philemon).

CUBA: Sr. Philip of the Saviour (Therese Bernier, East Angus); Sr. Bernadette de l'Immaculée (Bernadette Gagnon, Jonquiere); Sr. St. Athanase (Therese Bergeron, St. Sophie of Megantic).

ROME: Sr. St. Clovis (Alma Couture, St. Sabine).

VANCOUVER: Sr. Marie of Bethany (Berthe Piche, Quebec).



Hemming Stray Lambs Into the Fold

At the end of the doctrine lesson I announced to my future First Communicants that I would leave immediately to visit the families of those who had not yet brought in their Baptism certificate. Delighted exclamations greeted this announcement. Vainly did I try to dismiss those children whose papers were in order; the whole group insisted on accompanying me on my way. Indeed it seemed quite a picnic for them. Some ran on ahead, others clung to my mantle, skipped, chattered, giggled, and danced around me like so many gleeful pixies heedless of the torrid weather.

Our first call was at Purita's home. Her mother who was working in the garden, respectfully welcomed the *Madre* and invited me to climb up the ladder that led to the one and only room of her tiny nipa hut. When I broached the subject of the Baptism certificate my host scratched her head in perplexity. Where in the world had she put it away? A few moments of embarrassed silence followed during which she rummaged among the yellowed papers in an old tin box. Then she joyfully exclaimed, "Here it is,

Madre." While this was going on, I noticed in a corner of the room, a young girl, apparently a servant, eying me wistfully. Upon questioning her, I found that she had come to Manila from a remote province, six years ago. Since then she had not received the Sacraments even once as she could find no priest who understood her dialect. My promise to arrange things so she could once again go to confession and receive Holy Communion caused her to cry for joy.

From Purita's house we went on to Purificacion's. Her mother being absent, the father replied that he had no idea where his wife put away such papers. Would we call again some other day? Well, no, we hardly could as there was very little time left before the day fixed for the First Communion ceremony. Pointing out a tin box like the one I had seen at Purita's "Why don't you look in that?" I suggested. My surmised proved correct. Purificacion had been made a child of God through Baptism at Iloilo, ten years ago, read the precious record.

Next on my list of missing certificates was that of Lourdes. In front of her house, we found a group of housewives gossiping while they did the family wash. As I gingerly followed Lourdes' mother up the ladder to her hut, her cronies picked up their tubs and hastened inside, the better to observe from the latticed walls of their own huts the happenings at their neighbour's.

The Baptism certificate exhibited showed that Lourdes had, alas, been baptized in the sect of Aglipay. "How is it," I asked, "that of all your children Lourdes alone has not been baptized a Catholic?"

"Well, it happened this way," the mother explained. "When Lourdes was born we were living in one of the provinces. On the day decided upon for the ceremony, we took the baby to the Catholic Church but the Padre was absent. He would not be back before two or three days, we were told. What could we do? The party was all fixed and our guests had arrived, so we just took the child to a neighbouring aglipay church and had her baptized there." The poor woman seemed totally unaware that there was anything amiss with these proceedings. I gently remonstrated with her, declaring that of course there could be no question of having her little daughter admitted to make her First Communion unless she was baptized as a Catholic. Mamma was much taken aback but willing enough to do as we asked since we apparently thought it necessary: "Anything the *Madre* says..." she added, "I'm a good Catholic you know..."

The afternoon hours passed all too swiftly as we made our turns. At last there was only one house left, Violetta's. When asked to show us the way, however, the latter demurred as if reluctant to have us call on her parents. Her companions pushed on ahead to encourage her and beckoned me to a small hut which I took to be Violetta's home. Climbing up the ladder, I found framed in the doorway a smiling lady who did not understand one word of what I said. A pleasant faced Filipino came to the rescue offer-

ing to interpret as the lady did not know English. I soon discovered that I had been misinformed. These good people had never even met Violetta. Still, I reasoned, God had surely not allowed me to call on these persons without some providential design of His own; so before turning back I ventured a few polite inquiries. It was thus I learnt that the man was a *calesa* driver who had come to Manila from the provinces nine years ago. At first, he had had difficulty in getting settled as he knew neither English nor Tagalog. Worse still, being unable to find a priest who understood his dialect, he had gradually drifted away from all religious practices. "Now I know both languages but it is such a long time since I have been to church that I am rather shy . . . I hardly know how to go about receiving the Sacraments," he added lamely. He accepted with alacrity my invitation to call at the convent where the *Madres* would see to it that he was helped to arrange matters. Going down the ladder I thanked God who had led me straight to this erring sheep of His.

Violetta who had by now completely forgotten about her previous reluctance led us straight to her home. Her mother was absent but her sister, a student at St. Therese's College, welcomed us cordially. She told us how happy she and her mother were to have Violetta so well prepared for her First Communion and promised to help her little sister in being always faithful to her religious duties.

It was quite late when I finally returned home to our Convent on Narra street. I was very tired but, oh, how grateful to God who had allowed me while "feeding my lambs" to hem safely into the Fold two straying sheep!

What a deep-felt consolation was mine when a few days later I saw the *calesa* driver and the young servant kneeling at the altar rail besides my First Communicants.

SR. THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS¹, M.I.C.



CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN KOREA

Reverend Father Chin who entered the Society of Jesus in Japan and was ordained in Europe after completing his studies, has now gone back to Korea to co-operate in the establishment of a Catholic University in Seoul. This university will be conducted by Jesuits of the Wisconsin province (U.S.A.). Two other Korean Jesuits already ordained but who are at present pursuing higher studies will also be sent to Korea later on.

Reverend Father Geppert former rector at Sophia University, Tokyo, has spent the past year in Korea preparing this new foundation.

FIDES

1. Yvonne Gerin, Coaticook, P.Q.

HOSPITAL IN THE AIR

SR. JEANNE D'ORLEANS¹, M.I.C.

A few months after the inauguration of our clinic in Limbe, a ramshackle structure next door was made to serve as a makeshift hospital. The one and only ward boasted of ten beds plus ten cots. The remaining free space was used as a storeroom and general utility room.

This arrangement which was supposed to be temporary last year, continues being so this year. Will it still be so in 1956? We Sisters have since taken to building not "castles" but "hospitals" in the air. Thanks to their American benefactors, the Protestants in our vicinity have constructed a splendid combined clinic and hospital. May we not hope that our Catholic friends, Canadian and American, will also be instrumental in making our dreams come true? Meantime we are trying to help ourselves as much as we can. Our courageous little pupils have already gathered impressive piles of stones with a view to the future construction. Perhaps you will say that it might be more practical to begin by the purchase of a suitable piece of ground whereon to erect it . . . The fact is that we have found such an ideal plot but the devil has it bristling with barricades of his own making. So my initial petition will be to beg the privileged pilgrims to St. Joseph's Oratory to talk things over with the great Purveyor in our favour. He has carried through so many difficult transactions that it will be mere child's play for him to secure at reasonable terms the ground we desire.

This first problem dealt with, we missionaries, Sisters of Limbe are planning beforehand and at leisure, like the man in the gospel who wished to erect a tower, what the cost will be. We want a modest but modernly equipped hospital. By what miracle shall we be able to materialize the necessary capital of \$15,000.00 when our cash-box is empty except for a few cents and "dreams"? Fifteen hundred dollars is a relatively small sum towards the building of a hospital but to us it is all but fabulous. Must our Catholic Hospital in Limbe then remain a "hospital in the air"? We are and will remain incurable optimists as far as it is concerned. Moreover, news recently received from the homeland has set our hopes soaring. The mother of our Sister-Nurse who, having visited us some time ago, knows the urgency of our need, wrote that Quebec had voted millions for the erection of hospitals. Surely our Canadians who so generously contribute to the relief of ailing humanity, will heed our urgent appeal in favour of the sick poor in a country so sorely tried as Haiti has lately been.

Good St. Joseph, when you have swept away the barricades from the piece of ground we covet, please send us at least a fraction of the \$15,000.00 necessary for the foundation of a hospital in Limbe.



Waiting for the opening of the gate at Limbe Clinic.
Sr. Jeanne of Orleans dreams of the future modernly
equipped hospital where many Haitian patients will find relief.

THE LITTLE WORLD

of Sr. St. John of the Redeemer

SR. MARGUERITE OF THE ANGELS¹, M.I.C.

Odile, Marie, Esna, Lurina, Aquica, these are five little maids of Haiti who have recovered health and their zest for living at our Limbe Clinic.

Odile, a sickly baby of eighteen months, was brought to us during the novena preparatory to the feast of the Immaculate Conception. In her swollen face, her eyes and mouth were mere slits, and she whimpered almost continually, *m'grand gout*. (I'm hungry.) Five months of constant care restored to her eyes the sparkle of health and set her dimpled feet twinkling in and out of the house. As she is motherless, she has found a new home at "Bel Air Orphanage", conducted by the Sisters of Our Lady of Haiti, an indigenous community recently established at Cap Haitien.

When she first came to the clinic, two-year-old Marie was a pitiful morsel of humanity. Running sores emitting an almost unbearable stench, covered her from head to foot. Her flesh was literally falling to pieces, the bone and tendon of her left leg being left bare. Poor, little abandoned Marie! It took quite a while to re-awaken some show of vivacity in her wasted frame. But good tonics, wholesome food, and expert care finally transformed her into an imp of mischief. In spite of a slight limp in her left foot, she even became so nimble at racing that she left her playmates far behind. Since then, the healthy, roguish lassie has become the pride and joy of an adoptive mother.

Lucrina and Esna were carried in on a cold drizzly morning in January. They were placed in the same cot, the only one available at that time. It took only three weeks to cure Esna who suffered from avitaminosis. Strangely enough, when her parents visited her at the hospital, she sulked and even declared in no gentle tones, *Pas vini. M'le rette ici as Mere yo*. (Go away, I want to stay with the Mothers.) This surprising reaction in a five-year-old was doubtless a proof of what austere privations she had had to endure although through no fault of her parents, too poor to give her even the bare necessities of life. This we tried to make her grasp urging her to show her father and mother the affectionate regards they deserved. She understood us quite well, and when her family next called she thanked them gratefully for the bananas they had brought.

Esna returned home after a prolonged stay at the clinic to build up her strength. She still comes in once in a while to see her beloved nurse Sr. St. John of the Redeemer² who always keeps on hand some vitamins for her to take back home.

1. Marguerite Maltais, Chicoutimi.

2. Marcelle Saint Arnaud, Ahustsic, Montreal.

Lucrina, six, was no lamb, let me assure you. From morning till night she cried, « *M'vle banane, m'vle riz.* (I want bananas. I want rice.) When time came for the Sister-Nurse to change her bandages, she fought her off like a wild cat, screaming at the top of her lungs *Pas touche 'm. Ce maman v'le.* (Mamma doesn't want you to touch me). However, as soon as her sores began to heal she showed us only the sunny side of her character. It took her several months to recover completely. What she will probably never know is that the thread of her young life would have been snapped had it not been for the generosity of our kind friends and benefactors overseas who provided needed medication on time to save her.

Aquica who is a motherless little girl, the darling of her father's heart, also suffers from malnutrition. The same old story over and over again. These little ones do not get even half the vitamins they need to grow up sturdy and strong. As she was brought to the clinic before being too far gone, she recovered promptly. To prevent any further setbacks, whenever Papa cannot provide her with a wholesome dinner, Aquica comes to have her meal at the convent. How we enjoy to see at noon, tall Sr. St. John of the Redeemer returning home from the clinic, holding the tiny little black girl by the hand!

It has been a pleasure to introduce to you, dear readers, the little world of Sr. St. John of the Redeemer such as I was privileged to know it during my stay in Haiti. These children as well as the hundreds of patients cared for at Limbe Clinic thank you most gratefully for your help. *Merci en pile.* (Piles of thanks).



End of the World in Katete

SR. MARIE DE LOURDES¹, M.I.C.

In the late evening hours of June 29, an extraordinary event plunged the population of Katete into something akin to the terrors of the millennium. Alarming signs such as the apparition of small globes of fire piercing the darkness of the night and flooding our hospital with yellow radiance, all but frightened the people out of their wits.

Huddled together outside their quarters, the Black postulants gesticulated wildly, and laughed and cried in turns as the lights appeared and disappeared in the most disconcerting manner possible. A few clasped their hands and made a fervent act of contrition thinking their last moment had come. Others who tried to take the matter in a light mood, were rebuked by their companions. "This is no time to giggle . . . The best thing is to keep at distance," the prudent ones advised. "The balls might fall on our heads and burn us to cinders . . ."

"By all means, let's be careful", retorted one of the bolder little Sisters. "I don't intend to take risks at least not before receiving the habit."

Big husky boys from the college near-by, crouched behind clumps of bushes, blubbering unashamedly. "I'm scared," whimpered a smaller boy as he rubbed his fists into his eyes to shut out the terrifying vision. Cloths thrown over their heads, the old women wailed, "Take away this bad fire . . . We don't want to be burned alive". At the hospital, the patients ran out of the wards to escape into the garden, anywhere out of range

¹ Irene Champagne, Montreal.





of the frightful flashes of light. Only the littlest children stood their ground with the fearlessness of childhood, looking up with laughing faces at the pretty shining things hanging from the ceilings.

In front of the native novitiate, the novices loudly commented on the strange happenings. One of the youngest remarked, "Those Europeans are real wizards!" Finally, the boarders rushing into the yard began to dance about excitedly, singing a song of their own composition *Kanada in Africa!*

For us missionaries, this was a joyous event and one we had long been looking forward to. The sight of the hospital blazing with lights inside and outside, somehow brought us memories of the midnight Masses of our homeland. By now you will have doubtless guessed that the end of the world in Katete simply meant the installation of electricity in the building doing duty as hospital. When the first wave of excitement had subsided, old and young crowded into the brilliantly illuminated rooms.

Scarcely less spectacular than the advent of the electric light had been that of running water which occurred a few weeks earlier. Just think! Water that runs out of a magic pipe apparently from nowhere! The good folk of Katete asked as a privilege to touch the faucets, then watched in open-mouthed surprise as the water trickled out. They examined the cement sinks, the walls, the piping, trying to guess where the supply of magic water came from.

One evening while we Sisters were at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the mission church, they decided to investigate this matter more thoroughly. Climbing up to the tank they opened up the large tap. All the villagers hearing of their discovery, arrived with pails to get their share of the wonderful water. You can easily imagine our dismay upon finding the reservoir dry when we came home. Our neighbours were amazed when we patiently explained that the water piped in this manner was very expensive and that it must not be spent as recklessly as they had done. That rubbed off some of the magic for them.

To highlight this festival of modern commodities, Sr. St. Leo the Great had some records played on the phonograph, turned on the radio, connected a heater, and taught our visitors how to play a game of ping pong on the brand new set just installed. She even allowed them a peek in the laboratory microscope but on one condition — each must produce a "lousie" for inspection. It was really comical to hear the childlike exclamations when the specimens found on short notice showed up a lovely almond colour under the lens.

Thanks be to God and to our Reverend Mother General for this precious gift to our hospital. Later on, the wires will extend not only to the school but also to the novitiate and to the Sisters' convent. Katete will at that time be on the verge of being promoted to the respectable rank of a city. By then we shall probably all be pushing up daisies unless some generous friends or benefactors get interested in our electrification problem and adds a few feet to our wiring.

Why I am a Novice of Mary Immaculate

At the origin of my vocation stands, clearly outlined, the tall bronzed figure of a missionary on leave. I can still see him in my mind's eye, standing on the rostrum of a packed reception hall eloquently pleading the cause of the most pitiful outcasts of humanity — the lepers.

His account of the leprosarium set me dreaming dreams at once magnificent and repellent. Everywhere around me my imagination conjured up victims of the gruesome disease whose suffering I was privileged to allay. This was the first time that vistas opened up before me on the kingdom of pain and human distress. I felt that only one thing now mattered: to bring relief and a certain measure of happiness to the unfortunates whose existence was blighted by leprosy.

After his conference, the missionary Father made the rounds of the pupils to beg for his proteges. The expression on my face no doubt betrayed the upheaval in my heart, for when he stood before me he gave me such a searching penetrating look that it haunted me for days afterwards. In that one short moment I felt the imperious call to be a missionary.

But the going was far from being easy. The missionary vocation was precious and beautiful beyond words, I knew, but its exigencies began to frighten me. During the weeks that followed my mind was entangled in a web of specious objections. The battle was on — the eternal conflict of the flesh against the spirit. After all, I reasoned, why hold myself responsible for the welfare of people I did not even know? Personally, they were nothing to me. Nevertheless, try as I might, I could not shut them out of my memory. I seemed to envision them holding out their hands to me, pleading with me to come and help them bear their almost intolerable burden of misery.

Many were the nights I spent tossing on my bed, courting sleep in vain because I could not make up my mind to relinquish all and follow in the Master's footsteps. My youth was far too precious a capital to squander thus in a quixotic career, I reflected. Too many pleasant plans and enticing pleasures beckoned. And then, how could I leave my beloved family where life was so comfortable and reassuring to run after a will-o'-the-wisp? To rid myself of what threatened to become an obsession, I called at the municipal library for some interesting book. A volume titled *White Fire* caught



STUDYING THE RULES AND CUSTOMS OF THE INSTITUTE



LAUDATE DOMINUM OMNES GENTES

my attention. Just the kind of adventure story to afford me the distraction I sought! Alas! No sooner had I read the first few pages, than I realized I had fallen from Scylla into Charybdis. The book was an inspiring account of a missionary Sister's work among the lepers of a lonely island lazaretto. My first reaction was to return the book immediately, but it somehow seemed to possess a strange powerful fascination. So I spent the rest of the day poring over it and dreaming of the lepers.

When I woke up the next morning I was amazed to find that all my selfish objections against obeying the call to a higher life had vanished, burned to ashes in the flames of the genuine white fire, the Holy Spirit. Then and there I gratefully acknowledged that it was He who had guided my choice.

I was now sure of the goal and a delicious peace flooded my soul although I was still ignorant of the particular way God wanted me to follow. A few weeks went by and the uncertainty remained. It then occurred to me that the best thing to do to ascertain the Lord's Will in this matter would be to spend a few days in prayer and recollection. Someone directed me to a retreat house conducted by the "little white Sisters". This title appealed

to me, so after making inquiries I secured a room. The first day and the next went by uneventfully enough. Although I found the conferences much to my liking they did not help to solve my problem.

On the last evening of my retreat, the light came unexpectedly. When I entered my room after supper, I found a few missionary pamphlets on my bedside table. One of them bore the caption "Sister X cares for the poor leper women of Sheklung." How eagerly I examined the serene figure of the white-clad Sister tenderly dressing the sores of a leprosy patient! This was what I had been looking for. My vocation, I had found it at last, I would become a Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception.

I will admit that the sacrifice involved in parting from all those near and dear was tremendous. The Master Missioner, however, strengthened my heart and Our Lady herself led me to the gate of the novitiate and the fulfillment of my heart's desire.

Reading over this paper, it seems that I have perhaps minimized the influence of Mary over my decision to become a missionary Sister. But in reality She it was who guided me every step of the way. She was and remains the lodestar leading me on to the goal. My only wish now is to make her known and loved from pole to pole, to enkindle in all hearts the white fire of her love.

SISTER FRANCES

SENDAI, JAPAN

RETURN TO CHRISTIANITY AFTER THREE CENTURIES

One hundred and eighty-four persons, residents of the village of Yonekawa near Sendai, were recently baptized together. This remarkable event is not without an historical significance. Three hundred and forty-one years ago when the great persecution struck central Japan, a good number of Christians were exiled to the northern part of the island of Honshu, in the neighbourhood of Sendai. After awhile entire Christian villages spread out on a large part of island until the persecutors pursued and disbanded their Christian victims once again. Although they were left without any priests and their principal leaders were put to death, several hundreds of years later, traces of Christianity had not yet entirely disappeared from this region.

In the days that followed the last war when new religions began to mushroom everywhere in Japan, ancient Christian books and manuscripts were brought out of hiding. The people of Yonekawa turned once again to the "Faith of their fathers". They sent messengers to the Catholic missionaries of Sendai asking to be instructed and prepared for Baptism. Six hundred catechumens followed the first doctrine courses given. The one hundred and eighty-four recently baptized at Yonekawa were part of this first group.

FIDES

The Japan Catholic Scene 1945-1955 Ten Years of Progress

(continued)

Social Institutions

Perhaps the greatest problem facing the Church in 1945 was the social one. Tens of thousands of people were homeless, jobless and hungry. Thousands of war-orphaned children roamed the streets begging food and shelter. Characteristically, the Church exerted all Her efforts to relieve this situation. Within ten months at least seven Orphanages were swung into full operation. Thousands of other homeless people were housed and fed temporarily. In Tokyo's still famous beggars' retreat, Ueno Station Sisters and Doctors ministered nightly in the streets to the thousands of homeless poor who gathered there. Hospitals were soon going in Tokyo, Yokosuka, Nagoya, and Nagasaki. The Saint Vincent de Paul Society spread conferences all over the country. Supplies apart from private Charities came through the Rehabilitation Committee and LARA whose Maryknoll director distributed thousands of pounds of food, clothing and drugs to Catholic Institutions. Distinguished visitors to Japan included Father Flanagan of Boys' Town fame who lent his expert advice to plans for three Catholic Boys' Towns in Sendai, Yokohama, and Osaka. The great Father Flaujac while rebuilding and expanding his former social facilities began a huge re-settlement project on a large tract of land donated by the Emperor. The post war era with its poverty, despair and new found freedoms brought with it many social evils not widely experienced in Japan before. Immorality in print, pictures and action became widespread. The overpopulation problem was met in secular circles with published solutions ranging from legalized abortion and birthcontrol to outright sterilization. The Church from the very beginning, by press, radio and public and private lectures fought an all out battle with the so called experts. By the end of 1947, the progress of the Church's social work could be measured in part at least by her 12 hospitals, 46 orphanages, 65 nurseries and children's homes plus over 50 other charitable institutions of all kinds.

The Press

The Press and literary movement of the first two post-war years was characterized by a frantic activity that for lack of expert leadership, news-print and printing facilities failed to supply the demands of the hour. The Catholic Newspaper (K. Shimibun) which began publication in February of 1946, struggled along on a staff of two where it needed ten. Supplies of Catechisms and religious books were infinitesimal compared to the demands.

Four small Catholic publishers found great difficulty in issuing supplies of the ten or so, new books printed by the end of 1947. A combined circulation of some 30,000 was reckoned for the three Catholic periodicals which apart from the Catholic Newspaper formed the Catholic press. The Franciscans in Sapporo and the Salesians in Tokyo issued smaller periodical publications. On February 2, 1947 the introductory number of the Clergy Magazine, *The Missionary Bulletin*, printed in English and edited by Fathers Roggendorf, s.j. and Tibessar, m.m., made its appearance. Within four months it had grown from a 4-page stencilled effort to a large, informative, printed magazine carrying world and local news to the Missionaries in the field. In its pages are reflected the unbounded zeal and enthusiasm of the Missionaries in the face of equally large opportunities and obstacles, to the work of conversion.

1945 — 1947 Conclusion

The general conclusion arrived at by a study of the official Reports and publications of the 1945-47 period, is that the Church in Japan immediately after the war, did indeed face a new era in Missionary possibilities. Opportunities to make converts were innumerable. The harvest was ripe — the labourers few. The few however, taking advantage of every available tool to fashion the house of God in Japan did a magnificent job. Perhaps the best characterization of the time was given by the Apostolic Delegate to Japan, Archbishop Paul Marella, in his May 1947 address to the Japanese Hierarchy, in which he said, "It is yet impossible to assess statistically the progress made in the Missionary field all over the Country. One thing we know; that enormous efforts are being made and amazing results obtained and all this in spite of the gigantic destruction wrought by the war and the depressing material difficulties of the present."

"Our task is nothing less than the conversion of the whole of Japan, without distinction of classes or persons and we are certainly not afraid to face this immense goal. But we are also on our guard against the facile optimism of those who keep repeating that the work of conversion is already well under way and that the Baptisms can be counted by the millions. The day of mass conversions will arrive if it is the will of God. For the present and for a long time to come, we shall welcome with open arms, the souls that come to us one by one..."

Report of the Rehabilitation Committee (Tokyo 1948) and of the
Catholic Directory of Japan (1948)

News Briefs

According to a report carried by the Tokyo Shinbun (Jan. 14), the Nippon Shukyo Gakkai, an Educators Committee for the study of Religious trends in Japan — decided at a recent meeting to submit to the Education Ministry the following recommendations.

1. That a more intensive course in Religion be given in the Social Science departments of Japanese Middle Schools.
2. That courses on Religion (Shukyo Gakku) and History of Religion

(Shukyo shi) be introduced in Public University curricula, where to date these have not existed.

3. That studies of Religion and History of Religion be made obligatory for those aspiring to a Degree in Social Science.

4. That the aforementioned subjects be added to the number of those in which all teachers can qualify for a degree.

The newspaper comments that the Minister of Education Mr. Ando who is in basic agreement with these recommendations and hopes for a wider understanding of Religion among students and teachers, has promised to submit these proposals to an Education Ministry Committee for further study. A decision is expected in the near future.

1948 Hardly Satisfactory

The story of the progress of the Church in Japan from 1948 to the present is largely that of the structure built upon the foundation laid within the first two post-war years. The plea for Missionaries for Japan, addressed by the Holy Father to the Catholic World's Mission Societies and Congregations was answered by a steady stream of zealous Priests, Brothers and Sisters who disembarked from almost every ship which touched these shores after 1947. However, the high hopes entertained by many, that the entire nation might be Christianized as were the Latin and Germanic peoples of old, were being rapidly cooled. With the gradual increase of material prosperity came an almost proportionate decrease of serious interest in religion. Although for example, in Tokyo in early 1948, each missionary averaged one hundred catechumens — a figure topped in other districts — and numbers of educators, students and workers were asking for information if not for instruction, the actual results when measured in baptisms, could hardly be called satisfactory. Owing to the want of personnel and especially of means, (the greater part of the Missionaries hailed from France, Italy and Germany), truly more could not have been achieved. The plain facts are that the Church in Japan was not equipt in the immediate post war years, to cope with the "sizeable wave" of popular interest in Catholicism. To quote the Sect. General of the N.C.C.J. "If Priests, Sisters and Brothers in sufficient numbers and language prowess had been available, the picture might be very different today."

To arrive at a picture of the Church as it exists in modern Japan, by any detailed description of specific mission accomplishments is obviously impossible outside of a multi-pages treatise. In this brief sketch, perhaps a highlighting of events followed by the latest statistical reports may best portray in broad outlines the growth of the Church during the 1948-1955 period.

Coordinating the Mission Effort

The Ordinaries and Superiors meeting in the spring of 1948, laid particular stress on the need of close cooperation among mission personnel, particularly through the medium of the National Catholic Committee which they had established for that very purpose. To coordinate and unify the endeavors of the workers in the field and give them a rallying point for aid and advice, several new departments were planned as additions to Remmei. The multiple

charitable and social institutions of the Church were drawn together into the National Catholic Charities Organization (Caritas) under the direction of Rev. L. Tibessar, m.m. A "Bureau of Emigration" to inquire into the possibilities of relieving Japan's population pressure and an "Information Bureau" both headed by Father Wm. Kashmitter, m.m., were established. The official publication of the latter, took the form of a news letter called the *Tosei News* which appeared once every two weeks. To combat the still problematic shortage of Catholic books and general literature and promote closer cooperation among the various publishers a "Catholic Publishers Association" was formed. It immediately began to fill a long felt need — the preparation of a general catalogue of all the Catholic Japanese books available at the time.

A most concrete proof of recovery and progress might be seen in the physical expansion of the National Committee's offices and Staff. Before the end of 1948, N.C.C.J. thanked the Jesuit Fathers for their hospitality, the University for its shelter and moved its files and personnel to a new Headquarters Building near Yotsuya Station.

The Mission Effort

Keeping in pace with, and possibly a few steps ahead of the activities of the Church's Administrative branch were the Missionaries in the field. The *Tosei News* of '49 and '50 carried news on almost every page of new arrivals and new buildings being erected. The Superiors of Societies new to Japan travelled like prospectors around the country seeking advice of the veterans and interviewing Bishops, before deciding the sphere of their future activities. Publishers of books on the Japanese language rejoiced in the sale of texts, as the new arrivals struggled with the hardest language in the world. Many new Missionaries were sent out to work in parishes and mission stations with only the barest knowledge of Japanese to aid them in spreading the Gospel. Catechists became a crying need and all too few were found among educated Catholics. Audio-Visual catechetical aids were found upon experimentation, to be most effective in attracting people to the parish church. The numbers of Missionaries asking Remmei for Catholic slides, film strips, movies, posters, pamphlets, kami shibai and the like, gave impetus to the formation by the Hierarchy of a Fukyo Bu (Propaganda Dep't) at Committee Headquarters. Hundreds of sets of religious slides, pamphlets and other such aids were produced locally and distributed. Further guidance in conversion technique was given in a joint Bishops' Pastoral letter issued in 1950. Missionaries were called upon to study more intensively, means and methods of propaganda and to train and organize voluntary Catechists. The Laity in turn was urged to give its aid more actively in the fields of Catholic and Social Action. The Hierarchy's opinion of the effectiveness of the mission effort, particularly in the propaganda line is adequately summarized in the following quotation from the Pastoral letter. "We are well aware of the excellent work that has been done in this connection . . . We must admit however that the Church is reaching only an INFINITESIMAL PART of the eighty million non-Christians surrounding us at present."

KATETE, NYASALAND

Two Guides Write

to the Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

MOST REVEREND MOTHER,

A grateful little guide is much honoured to bring you her best wishes upon your Feast Day. Our mothers often say you love us! So today, I tell you the same. Who I am? Marguerita Maria, baptized only last year. In 1951 I was a pagan, I did not want to stay with the mothers, but now I am so use with them that nearly always I like to be with them. I am in grade VII in mother St. Albert's class. In my family we are all Christians. In the month of the Sacred Heart I have prayed especially for you, for it is your name, is it not? I love the Sacred Heart of Jesus very much that's why I chose Marguerita Maria. I am a Girl Guide too, and I wish to pass my Second Class. About our open-air activities we prepared a camp, and it is so nice, that we are ready to receive you now. I am thankful for the mothers who are coming. Indeed we need many many mothers to teach our people about the Good God. We have not enough, and the souls are so lost in the darkness. The mothers are very kind for us, they often go to the villages to teach Catechism. We understand their work, they want to win our souls only. We wish that many girls shall join with the Immaculate Conception Mothers in August. Will Reverend Mother Assistant accompany you when coming here?

Your loving and sincere child

MARGUERITA MARIA NYIRENDA

* * *

MOST REVEREND MOTHER,

You shall remember my name when coming here I hope because I just received it. It is Denisa a very happy little guide. When Mother Assistant came she told us how deeply you love the Africans. Myself also I do love you. May our love for each other rejoice you.

Every day our Lady of Lourdes hears a "Timuwoneni Maria" for you.
Best wishes and good health.

Your loving guide

DENISA NG'ANDU

An Appreciation

IN OUR MAIL BOX

DEAR SISTER,

I have just received your review *The Precursor*. Its name is to my opinion very appropriate, indicating as it does the missionary vocation of our Canadian people. By its articles on the various mission fields your publication reflects the universal character of the Church and the apostolic work of your dear community. Convinced that such a great work can be continued only with the spiritual and material help of the faithful I am sending you a modest offering hoping to be soon in a position to help you in a more efficacious manner.

Kindly remember in your prayers and good works the needs of my family and the success of my undertakings. I consider it a privilege to be allowed to do my little share for the apostolate and offer daily prayers for the missions where your Sisters are at work.

Your humble servant,

ROBERT C.



Our dear Sister St. Paul (Blanche Clement, **Montreal**) who died at the Motherhouse; our dear Sister St. Leandre (Jeannine Moreau, **Quebec**) who died at **Havana, Cuba**; Mr. Ralph Hague, **Montreal**, brother of Sr. St. John of Calvary, m.i.c.; Mrs. Joseph Arthur Constantin, **Montreal**, Mother of Sr. St. Colette, m.i.c.; Mrs. Wilfrid Talbot, **Montreal**, mother of Sr. Lucille Mary, m.i.c.; Rev. Brother Adolphe, E.E.C.; Mr. and Mrs. Felix Roussil, **Maisonneuve**; Mrs. A. E. Casault, **Verdun**; Mr. Th. Eugène Lemieux, Jonquiere; Mr. Philiza Bouchard, Mr. Elzear Cyr, Miss Marie Celia Nolette, St. Blaise; Mrs. Moise Bazinet, **St. Rémi**; Mr. Emile Perron, **Laprairie**; Miss Marie Prud'homme, **St. Philomene, Co. Chateauguay**; Miss Julia Cote, **Drummondville**; Mr. Albert D'Amours, **Edmunston, N.B.**; Mr. Ernest Lamy, **Montreal**; Mrs. C. Bouchard, **St. Eloi**, father of Sr. St. Charles de Milan, m.i.c.; Mrs. A. Ready, mother of our Sisters Jeanne Mance and Rita du Sacre Coeur, **Montreal**.

The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

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Montreal 1, P.Q.

Nominingue, Labelle County, P.Q.

Rimouski, P.Q.

Joliette, 750 St. Louis Street.

Quebec, 1073 St. Cyrille Street West.

Vancouver, Oriental Hospital,
236 Campbell Street.

Vancouver, Mount St. Joseph's Hospital,
3080 Prince Edward Street.

Three Rivers, 1325 de la Terriere Street.

Granby, 35 Dufferin Street.

Granby, 279 Main Street.

Chicoutimi, Cenacle Street.

St. Marie, Beauce County, P.Q.

St. Johns, P.Q., 430 Champlain Street.
Perth, N.B.

UNITED STATES

Marlboro, Mass., 187 Pleasant Street.

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Kowloon, 103 Austin Road, Hong Kong.

Kowloon, Our Lady of Protection,
125 Waterloo Road.

FORMOSA

Kuanhsi, Hsinchu, Hsien, Taiwan,
Formosa.

JAPAN

Koriyama, 96 Toramaru, Koriyama Shi.
Fukushima Ken.

Wakamatsu, 480n Sakae machi,
Aizu Wakamatsu.

Tokyo, 108-4 cho me, Fukazawa cho,
Setagaya ku.

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Manila, 1111 Narra Street.

Manila, Gagalangin,
Corner S. del Rosario & Antipolo.

Las Pinas, Rizal.

Mati, Davao Province.

Davao City.

Padada, Davao Province.

Baguio, Mountain Province.

WEST INDIES

Les Cayes, Haiti.

Les Coteaux, Haiti.

Roche a Bateau, Haiti.

Port Salut, Haiti.

Camp Perrin, Haiti.

Mirebalais, Haiti.

Limbe, Haiti.

Cap Haitien, Haiti.

Chantal, Haiti.

Mercedes, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.

Marti, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.

Manguito, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.

Los Arabos, Prov. of Matanzas, Cuba.

Maximo Gomez, Prov. of Matanzas, Cuba.

Colon, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.

AFRICA

Katete Mission, Katete River P.O.,
Nyassaland, B.C. Africa.

Mzambazi Missions, Kafukule, P.O.
Nyassaland, B.C. Africa.

Rumphi Mission, Njakwa P.O.,
Nyassaland, B.C. Africa.

Karonga Mission, Karonga P.O.,
Nyassaland, B.C. Africa.

Kaseye Mission, Fort Hill P.O.,
Nyassaland, B.C. Africa.

Vua Mission, Deep Bay P.O.
Nyassaland, B.C. Africa.

Nkata Bay Mission, Nkata Bay P.O.
Nyassaland, B.C. Africa.

Fort Jameson, P.O. Box 106,
Northern Rhodesia, B.C. Africa.

MADAGASCAR

Morondava, Madagascar.

ITALY

Rome, via Giacinto Carini, 8.



*The little bell of Roche a Bateau
rings out merry greetings to all
our friends and benefactors*