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The Precursor

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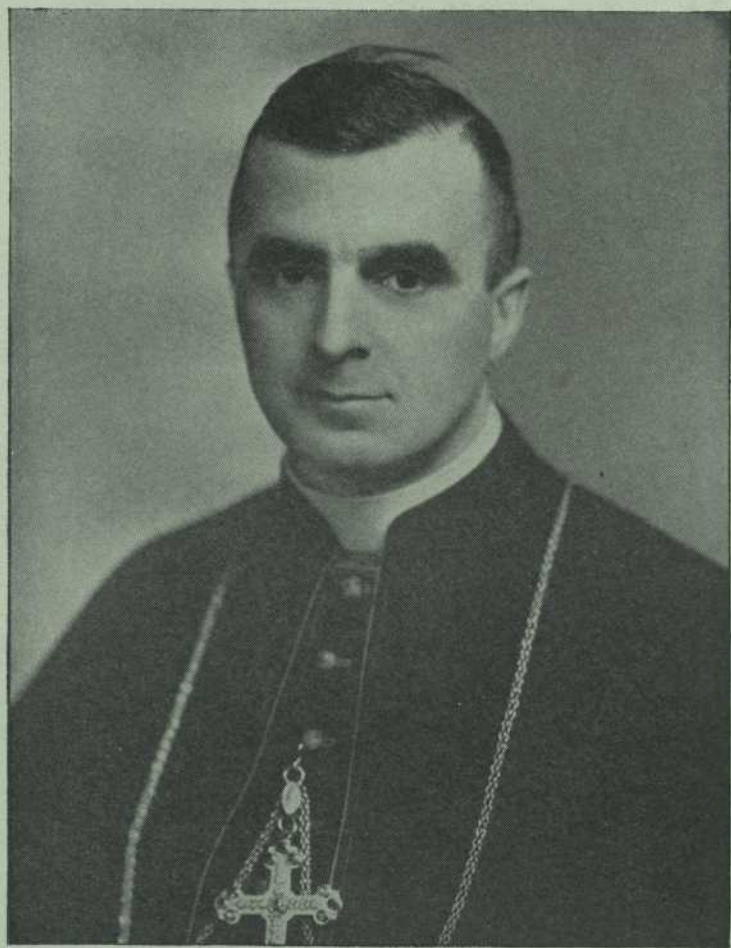
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Cover: Japanese Spring — Mount Fuji, Japan.



To His Excellency
The Most Reverend Maurice Roy
Archbishop of Quebec

*elevated to the rank of Primate of the Canadian Church
the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
through the voice of "The Precursor"
offer their most respectful homage.*



She Who Reflects Celestial Light

SISTER MARY OF THE REDEMPTION¹, m.i.c.

Our Lady's First Nipponese Knight

Daimyo Otomo Yoshishige was mystified. During the years that he had ruled as Lord of Bungo, he had never yet come across such an unaccountable specimen of humanity as Deigo, the Portuguese merchant. The man had come to him a few years hence with a petition to build a godown on his estates. Against his better judgment and the advice of his level-headed retainers he had acquiesced. But the daimyo might be broadminded almost to a fault and curious of Western ways and customs, he was neither gullible nor unwary. Court intrigues and local rebellions had already taught him the wisdom of the old saw, *Yudan daiteki*, (Negligence is the enemy No. 1). Therefore, he had had this lone foreigner in his capital closely watched. Even the interpreters and the very servants in the latter's household were picked personnel, men whose loyalty had been tried. Yet everytime Otomo probed them regarding their master's behaviour, he found their answers noncommittal. "The foreign devil is a harmless dreamer, Excellency," they would reply. "He may be a good enough merchant as merchants go, but he prays far too much to be a plotter. At least three times a day he retires to his private rooms where he spends hours on end a string of precious beads slipping through his fingers, kneeling before the image of a lady."

The daimyo hardly knew what to think. What strange infatuation was this which could induce a man to kneel before the image of a woman? Still, he had to admit that Deigo was no fool. For all that his servants accounted him a dreamer, the merchant showed ability and even shrewdness in the management of his affairs. How then explain the irrevelancy in his conduct? Accustomed to get to the bottom of things, Otomo decided to conduct his own personal investigation. He, therefore, fell into the habit of having his *norimon* (palanquin) stopped before Deigo's dwellings as often as he sallied forth into the city. Much to the servants' surprise and disgust these two held lengthy and apparently amicable discourse.

Incredible as it may seem, a rare and beautiful friendship soon ripened between the noble Lord of Bungo and the humble son of Portugal. One day, the former framed the query he had so long repressed, "Why should you, an honourable man, degrade your manhood by bowing in front of a woman's picture?" Deigo's dark eyes flashed but his voice remained calm as he

¹ Basillise Maillet, Saint-Louis, N. B.

blandly replied, "Excellency, the lady whom I honour on bended knee is no mere woman. She is the fairest of all creatures, the Maiden Mother of my Lord Jesus Christ."

It was in the year 1547 that Our Lady was thus introduced to her Nipponese children. Straightway they took her to their hearts. Was she not the true *Amaterasu*, she who reflects heavenly light, the genuine *Kwannon*, the merciful Mother? Otomo Yoshishige was the first of her Nipponese knights. Charlevoix assures us that although the Lord of Bungo postponed being baptized until the year 1598, he was, nevertheless, faithful to the practice of the Rosary learned from his friend Deigo. In times of great peril, when enemies assailed him without and rebellion threatened him within, he even had his household (non-Christian) recite the Rosary in common.

Deigo of Bungo was not the only Marian lay apostle in Nippon towards the close of the sixteenth century. Other Portuguese merchants also "advertised" their devotion to Mary as may be gathered from the fact that young Nipponese nobles could then be seen wearing rosaries around their necks. Some among these non-Christians were known to have memorized the *Pater* and *Ave* and to have recited them in the street not in mockery but because they thought it a good and gallant thing to do . . . one which might help them achieve prosperity. And so it came to pass that long before the term Catholic Action had been coined, these fervent Christian merchants put it into practice by causing Mary to be known where never before her blessed name had even been heard.

Under the Sign of Mary

No sooner had her name started to be invoked in Nippon, than Our Lady inspired her valiant son Xavier with the thought of winning this island demesne to her divine Son. It was on the feast of her Assumption 1537 that Francis Xavier pronounced his vows of religion, and it was again on this auspicious date that in 1549, he set foot in Kyushu at the port of Kagoshima. A few days later, the neophyte, Paul of Holy Faith who had accompanied him from India, went to do homage to the Lord of Shimazu. At the court of this noble he found himself plied with questions regarding the countries through which he had travelled, the customs of the Portuguese, the aim of Francis in coming to this country. When he exhibited a beautiful image of Our Lady with the Holy Child clasped in her arms, the prince and his retainers admired it greatly, honouring it with respectful salutations. Then the prince had it carried to the women's quarters for the consolation of his mother and of her attendants. Such was the deep impression made upon the aged princess that she pleaded to have the picture given to her.

In one of his letters to members of the Society of Jesus residing in Goa, Xavier thus outlined his plan for the evangelization of this new field of apostolate. "I have all my hopes in Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and in His holy Mother Mary . . ." Accordingly, he laid broad and deep the basis of devotion to the Mother of God in the hearts of his neophytes. The instructions he left in writing testify that never did he give a sermon without extolling her bounties. He had composed short invocations to be recited after

each article of the Credo and each of the commandments. The former was worded as follows, "Holy Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, obtain for us from your most sweet Son that we may believe without hesitation this article of Christian Faith," while the other ran, "Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, obtain for us from your Son the grace to observe perfectly this commandment." All his instructions ended with the *Salve Regina*.

Other Missionaries also Mary-Conscious

In the first part of his history, (1549-1578) Frois refers no less than 21 times to incidents revealing extraordinary devotion to Our Lady in Nippon, proof enough if need be that the missionaries who followed Xavier also cherished loyal devotion to her and sought to promote her cult among those confided to their care.

Most remarkable was the devotion of newly baptized Christians to the Rosary. Many were known to walk incredible distances in order to get a blessed rosary which they wore in an ostensible manner in imitation of their first apostle, Xavier. Among other devotions instilled in the hearts of the faithful were the devout invocation of the holy names of Jesus and Mary

and the recitation of the Angelus. Ample proof of this is found in the correspondence of the first missionaries. For instance, in a letter dated September 20, 1555, Father Edouard de Sylva relates how a young girl was delivered of diabolical possession through this pious practice. "—No sooner had she declared her intention of becoming a Christian than the devil tortured her in a most cruel manner. As it was a feast of Our Lady, Father Balthasar Gago determined to exorcize her after Mass, in the presence of all the faithful. At first she suffered from the devil's vexations in an almost incredible manner but



when the Christians in a body began to call fervently on the holy Names the devil was compelled to flee. Urged to invoke them on her own account the young girl did so in sweet and seemingly angelic accents. Never again was she annoyed by the evil spirit."

Early in December 1602, Jane, Agnes, and Magdalen, three noble ladies of Bungo, were condemned to be crucified along with Louis a boy of seven, the nephew of Magdalen. During the dead of night, on December 9, they were led outside the city limits. In spite of the darkness, a great multitude had assembled. All marveled at the unflinching courage displayed by these delicately nurtured Christian women as the executioners roughly fastened them to their gibbets. But the target of all eyes was Louis, the boy martyr. His cross faced that of his aunt. Brandishing their lances, the soldiers first pierced the heart of Jane, the oldest of the victims. Then they turned to Louis, but the sight of this lovely child whose face shone like a star, caused them to tremble and to miss their aim. Magdalen fearing that he might let himself be frightened cried out to him to invoke the holy names of Jesus and Mary. Without the least sign of weakness or terror, Louis did as he was advised. A moment later, the lance found its way to his pure little heart setting his soul free from the rage of the persecutors.

In this account, "The Great Martyrdom in Edo" relating the burning at the stake of fifty Christians in 1623, we read that until the end, these heroes of the Faith called aloud on the holy names of Jesus and Mary. Indeed, it may be asserted that nearly all those who were privileged to offer the supreme sacrifice, murmured these names with their dying breath as a password to heavenly glory.

Father Louis Almeida writing in 1561 to the Jesuits of Portugal relates how faithfully the Christians recited the Angelus. "Whenever the bell rings for the Angelus, men, women, and even children fall on their knees reciting the praises of Mary . . . Some time ago, a Christian told me about a little girl who had been sent to buy some rice wine at a neighbouring shop. While she was having her bottle filled, the Angelus bell rang. Immediately, she laid the bottle on the table, knelt on the floor and fervently recited her prayers. The non-Christians present in admiration of her piety exclaimed, 'There is no God like the God of Christians who renders little children so well bred!...' About ten Christian families live in the vicinity of our mission church. Every evening as soon as the children hear the Angelus ringing from the belfry, they troop at the foot of the cross and spend an hour kneeling and singing the elements of Christian doctrine . . ."

The missionaries availed themselves of every occasion to place their mission districts, their chapels, their works of charity under Mary's powerful patronage. To cite only a few cases in point, the port of Vocoxiura, in the principality of Omura was named Port of Our Lady of Good Succour while one of the spacious hospitals built in Bungo in 1559, was placed under the aegis of Our Lady's Visitation.

No discussion of Marian devotion in these early days would be complete without a few details concerning the pious practices of three of the most out-

standing Christian leaders of the period. First among these for his chivalrous attachment to Mary is Otomo Yoshishige, already mentioned at the beginning of this article. Even before his reception of Baptism he was in the habit of reciting the Rosary every day in three sections, one in the morning, one at noon, and the other in the evening. Indeed, tender devotion to Our Lady is listed as one of Otomo's outstanding virtues.

Another great devotee of Mary was Takayama Hidanokami (Dario). Frois relates that when the governor of Kyoto ordered the arrest of all Christians found wearing or carrying rosaries, Dario placed a rosary with very large beads around his neck and walked seventeen miles to the capital in the hope that he would be permitted to suffer something for his Faith. Recognizing his dignity and knowing that he was a close friend of the governor, the officials dared not molest him. Forced to flee during the Araki struggle of 1578, Dario became aware that he had forgotten his rosary. He sent soldier back to retrieve it as his most valued possession adding that he could not feel secure without it.

Konishi Yukinaga converted in 1584, was also remarkable for his love of the Blessed Mother. One of the greatest military strategists of the day, Konishi served as admiral in Hideyoshi's fleet. He was later beheaded for opposing Ieyasu in the epoch-making battle of Sekigahara. Mocked and ridiculed as he was carted through the streets of Osaka in an open vehicle, the fearless warrior calmly recited the Rosary and died with the names of Jesus and Mary on his lips.

(to be continued)

Homage

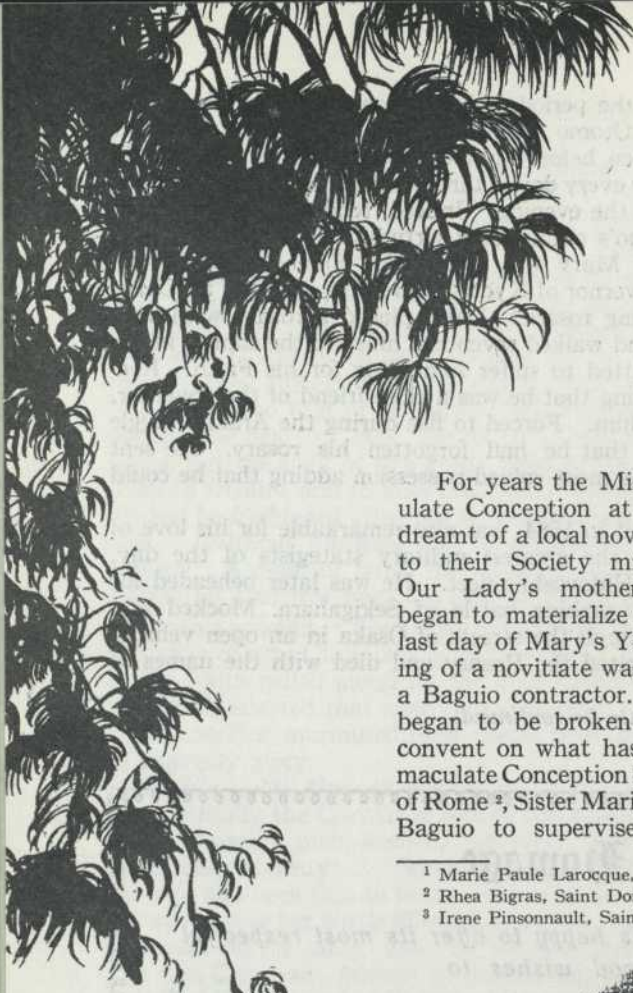
*THE PRECURSOR is happy to offer its most respectful
good wishes to*

His Excellency

The Most Reverend Marius Paré

Auxiliary Bishop of Chicoutimi

*May divine Providence grant him, through Mary
Immaculate, numerous and fruitful years of apostolate
for the greater glory of Christ and of His Church.*



Novitiate Among the Pines

SISTER MARIE PAULE¹
m.i.c.

For years the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception at work in the Philippine Islands dreamt of a local novitiate where Filipino vocations to their Society might be fostered. Thanks to Our Lady's motherly intervention, the dream began to materialize on December 7, 1954. On this last day of Mary's Year, the contract for the building of a novitiate was duly signed by Mr. Espiritu, a Baguio contractor. A few days later the ground began to be broken for the erection of the new convent on what has come to be known as "Immaculate Conception Hill." Meantime Sister St. Paul of Rome², Sister Marie des Lis³ and I settled down in Baguio to supervise the work.

¹ Marie Paule Larocque, Montreal.

² Rhea Bigras, Saint Dorothy, Laval City.

³ Irene Pinsonnault, Saint Michael of Napierville.





THE SUPERIOR OF THE TRAILER-CONVENT, SISTER ST. PAUL OF ROME (RHEA BIGRAS, ST. DOROTHY) AND TWO NEWLY ARRIVED SISTERS: SISTER MARIE ALBERT (MADELEINE ALARIE, AMOS, ABITIBI) AND SISTER ST. MARCEL (ANTOINETTE CASTONGUAY, MONTREAL).

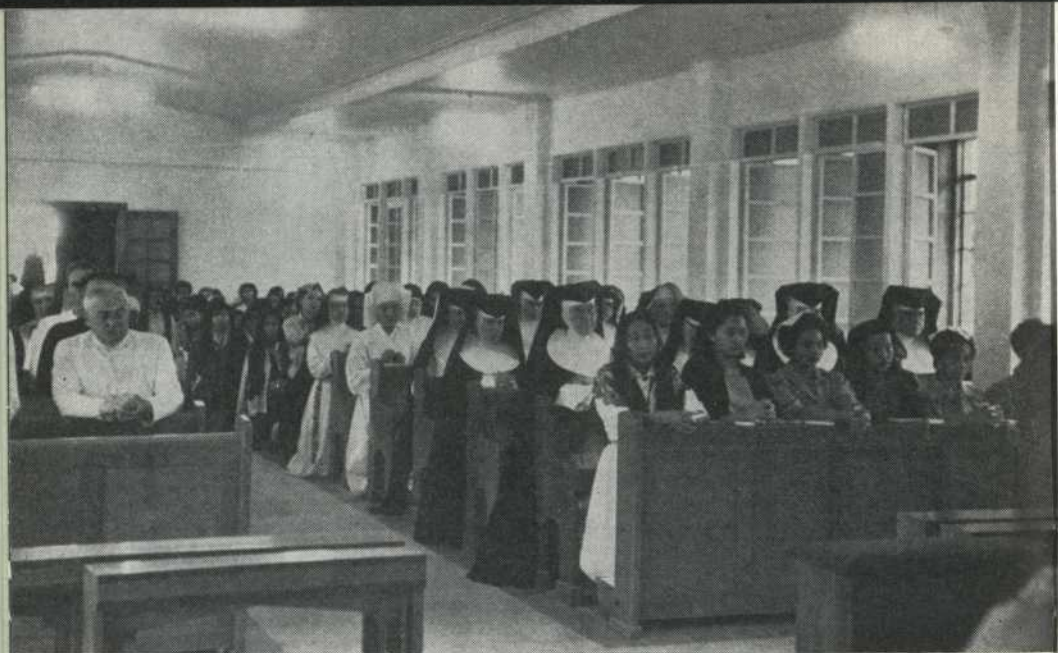
During the first few days we were welcomed at the Little Flower Novitiate; then we stayed for a while at Villa Chabanel while the Fathers were absent. Finally, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd lent us an American trailer which allowed us to move nearer "Immaculate Conception Hill". Many were the comments on this twentieth century innovation of a trailer-convent!

The Immaculate Queen of the novitiate also arrived on the premises in December. A kind friend of the Missions in Canada (who wishes to remain unknown) desirous of honouring Our Blessed Mother in a special manner, donated this statue during the Marian Year. Knowing about the inauguration of our Baguio novitiate, some kind Jesuit Fathers sug-

gested that she offer this particularly appropriate gift to the Sisters.

Thanks to Our Lady's powerful patronage, the construction progressed rapidly. On January 12, 1955, Reverend Rafael Nieuwenhove, pastor at the Cathedral, came to bless the cornerstone. On February 11, a large sign bearing the caption, "Novitiate of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception" was fixed to the tallest pine at the end of the road leading uphill. On July 2, the members of the trailer-convent were able to move into the large as yet unfinished house and have Mass in a temporary chapel. This blessed Visitation was henceforth renewed six times a week until the completion of the building.

The blessing of the novitiate by



**Several nationalities were represented at the blessing
of the Baguio Novitiate.**

His Excellency The Right Reverend William Brasseur took place on Sept. 17. Assisting His Excellency were Reverend Fathers Nieuwenhove, Francisco Billiet, and d'Hondt. RR. Fathers Poirier and Lefebvre, s.j. declared that for their part they represented the dear Canadian homeland. Twenty priests and thirty Sisters of many different nationalities honoured us with their presence. Americans, Belgians, Dutch, French, and Filipino cordially joined with fifteen Canadian missionaries in praising the Lord for His bounties. Were also present delegations from our three schools in Manila, members of the C.W.L., young girls of the YLAC, and numerous friends from Manila and Baguio. The divine Child appointed King of the "Fair Weather

Committee" flooded the day with sparkling sunshine except for a few brief showers. Msgr. Brasseur gave a stirring allocution, evoking memories of our revered foundress, Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit. His Excellency admitted that he had been deeply moved and edified, upon reading the life sketch of our saintly Mother, to find how she had always lovingly submitted to the Will of God as well in the most tragic circumstances as in daily minute events. He expressed the hope that in Baguio novitiate the children of this noble Mother might be characterized by complete abandonment to the divine Will, this in dependence of Mary whose slave of love a true and faithful Missionary of the Immaculate Conception considers herself to be. After

the ceremony, refreshments were served to all the guests by members of the C.W.L. and of the YLAC under the direction of Mrs. Justo Rosales.

It took a whole month before the furnishing of the new house was brought to completion. Then, on October 17, arrived the first of the four aspirants convened for the feast of *Mater Admirabilis*, October 20. Fearful of giving in to the affectionate pleadings of her dear ones who were reluctant to see her go, Gloria had left Manila furtively and entered our Baguio convent ahead of time. Her father was the first to notice her flight. While the train bore his daughter off to her new home, he rang the convent bell at Gagalangin thinking his

daughter might have taken refuge there. About an hour later, he returned home after shaking hands with Sister Bernadette of Lourdes¹. He felt completely reassured about his child's fate, he declared, now that he had had a chance to become acquainted with some of the "wonderful" people she was to live with!

On October 20, Felicidad, Guadelupe, and Restituta entered the novitiate. The *Veni Creator* was sung and the Lord's blessing was called down upon this new family gathered together on the mountain to live in closer union with Him. These pioneer Filipino aspirants to the religious life in our community now feel perfectly at home. In their peaceful

¹ Rachel Demars, Newport, Vt.

His Excellency Msgr. W. Brasseur blesses the novitiate and premises.







solitude among the pines at 10,000 feet of altitude, Gloria, Felicidad, Guadelupe, and Restituta are endeavouring to comprehend the Marian and apostolic catch-word of their revered Foundress and Mother, "May Mary Immaculate be known from pole to pole," so as to be able to convey it the world over.

The
Immaculate Queen
of
Baguio Novitiate
Welcomes
the First
Filipina Postulants

LEGION OF MARY

SISTER THERESE OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT¹, m.i.c.

The Legion in Hong Kong did not at first receive a very enthusiastic response from our Catholic population. It was introduced here by Rev. Aidan McGrath, an envoy sent from Dublin for this purpose. True, a rather impressive group of people was present at his first conference where he explained Legion doings. But nobody seemed interested in taking an active part in this new Marian apostolate. Nevertheless, the tiny mustard seed had been cast into the furrow and it was bound to sprout and grow into a hardy spreading tree in God's good time.

The honour of fully launching the movement was reserved to the zealous Directors and Directresses of our schools who opened wide their establishments to its blessed influence. Soon, four or five praesidia were functioning in each school. For our part at Tak Sun, we are proud of our three praesidia already doing splendid work. After only six years of existence in this city, the Legion can at present boast of having organized over one hundred praesidia and two curiae, English and Chinese, for both Junior and Senior sections.

The spirit of the Legion is characterized by cheerful unassuming devotedness to the welfare of others. To be all things to all men in order to win them all for Christ, such is the goal of every Legionary. In Hong Kong they have selected as a favourite centre of their apostolate, Kwong Wa Hospital exclusively reserved to the destitute. Their regular visits in the wards of this establishment are as rays of beneficent sunshine in the lives of the inmates. Because of the great number of patients who seek admittance, Kwong Wa is bursting at the seams. Every available foot of space is utilized; there are beds everywhere even in the corridors, vestibules, and verandahs. Sometimes two patients share the same bed and consider themselves lucky compared to those who have no choice but to spread their thin mattress or a sleeping mat on the floor between rows of beds with patients in them. In this abode of human pain and destitution, the Legionaries pass like comforting angels. They distribute Catholic literature, gentle words, and pleasant smiles. How happy they are when it is given them to prepare some poor patient or another for baptism! This hidden apostolate they love, for it often affords them the occasion of regenerating moribund adults or babies.



And now, meet our Tak Sun Legionaries. None can be prouder than they are to be enlisted under the banner of Mary Immaculate. They know how to give tangible proofs of their love for the Queen. Every Sunday afternoon, many among these well-to-do boys and girls willingly give up all amusements to teach Sunday school classes to children less fortunate than they and to entertain them with games in the schoolyard once class is over. And remember that many among these youthful apostles are Christians of recent date. Other of our student groups devote themselves to the apostolate of the Catholic press by selling Catholic newspapers from door to door in the city. Some add to this praiseworthy work by gathering up these newspapers after they have been read by their relations and distributing them among the poor and the shut-ins.

Our lads from twelve to fourteen deserve a special mention. Such is their zeal for souls, that I have often seen them give up fascinating ball games to

Meeting of the Senior Praesidium, Tak Sun School, Hong Kong





JUNIOR LEGIONARIES HELP AND BEFRIEND THE REFUGEES.

prepare the younger boys for their First Communion. One group is in charge of a circulating library, while another group among the older pupils assumes the responsibility of training the crusaders. They coach them as altar servers and fire them with their own deep love and reverence for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Their youthful enthusiasm truly runs to the boiling point.

I find it impossible to resist the temptation of relating here the noble example and the high ambitions of our little William (Chang Wei Liang). Enrolled at Tak Sun, he followed the doctrine classes for a whole year before he decided to ask for Baptism. Once his mind was made up, however, nothing and nobody could deflect him from his purpose. As he was only ten and moreover belonged to a non-Christian family, the priest thought it wiser to have him wait a while. But William pleaded his cause with such fervour that he finally won the day. No sooner was he baptized than he became a crusader and enrolled in the Legion of Mary. Even during the holidays, never does William miss his turn at serving Mass. I have even noticed more than once, that after serving Mass at our Convent, he serves two or three others at his parish church. He dreams of becoming a priest and saying Mass on his own account as soon as he grows up. Don't you think Our Lord must gaze on him as fondly as He gazed of yore on the rich young man in the Gospel? Dear Canadian Legionaries of Mary who read these lines, will you please remember in your daily prayers Chang Wei Lang, the angelic Mass server, and all our Chinese Legionaries that Our Lady may bless their apostolate and lead William to the altar as priest of her divine Son.

HAITI

NEWS FROM CHANTAL

I arrived at Chantal on the feast of Our Lady's Nativity and I was at first struck dumb with admiration at what I saw. How contented these good people seemed despite their stark poverty! While waiting for school to open, I studied Creole and it was a good thing I did, for at present I am teaching forty-two Haitian girlies in the second grade. Thanks to generous help received from our Motherhouse, Chantal can now boast of a good school which our children are proud to attend. Furniture is still scarce but we manage somehow with what we have. In my classroom, as there are not enough desks and benches to go around, the doors of our future convent placed on blocks of cement are made to serve as tables. This does not keep my little girls from being very good hands at writing. You should see the neatness of their copybooks! In the Sisters' quarters which are apart from the schoolhouse proper, we lead a very happy family life in between school hours.

The climate here is agreeable; the nights are cool and restful. Known as the *breadbasket of the South*, Chantal is situated in the most salubrious and prosperous part of Haiti. The soil is fertile and the people are hard-working and industrious agriculturists. Come and share our bananas, grapefruits, and pineapples; ripened in the bright tropical sunshine you will find that they are delicious. If you choose to heed my invitation in winter and if you bring me some Canadian snow, I'll give you six of each in return!

SISTER ESTELLE OF JESUS¹, M.I.C.

TRY THE FAMILY ROSARY

It is of the greatest importance that families all over the world take part in the vital struggle against Communism. As the family is the core and foundation of all society, it should have a powerful influence in the restoration of social ideals at present so distorted by atheistic and materialistic theories. This influence of the family on Communism will derive its strength from union with the Queen of the Rosary. Thus, the family which the Communists set as nought, will become the very means of their undoing.

The family once united in the rosary is prepared to resist the evil forces that to this day have broken up families and caused untold misery. The enemies of God strike first at family life, but the rosary will frustrate their efforts and unite the family in stronger bonds of love and concord. For the love of Jesus and His blessed Mother, try the family Rosary.

¹ Madeleine Bolduc, St. Damian of Berthier.



MIREBALAIS, HAITI

**(Addressed to my dear Seniors of Granby High School
and to students everywhere.)**

Have you ever caught yourself wondering about schoolgirls abroad, their way of life, their studies, the schools they attend? Today, I would like to introduce you to a group of charming young ladies enrolled as students at the *Palais Scolaire* of Mirebalais. This state-sponsored educational establishment formally called Lucienne Estimé School is conducted by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. It received its formal appellation, the Lucienne Estimé School, in honour of Lucienne Estimé, wife of an ex-President of the Republic, and its pretentious nickname from Archbishop Le Gouaze on the day of its inauguration. The "Palace" is built of massive walls some two feet in thickness. Ornamented with graceful colonnaded verandahs its facade measures about one hundred and fifty feet in length. The principal building comprises four spacious rooms separated by a large hall which is occasionally used for assemblies. To this main part are attached two wings on either side so that in all we have thirteen rooms seven of which



With Haitian Schoolgirls

SISTER SAINT YOLANDE ¹,
m.i.c.

serve as classrooms. The flooring is of cement polished only in the chapel and in the reception hall. At night, openings doing duty as windows are closed by plain wooden shutters.

About three hundred pupils are enrolled in the various grades: kindergarten 2; preparatory 1, preparatory 2; primary 1, primary 2; secondary 1, secondary 2; certificate 1. This latter course attended at present by ten students corresponds to the tenth grade in Canadian schools. The Haitian educational program is a little different from ours. Here, for instance, sciences are divided over the three years needed to complete the "certificate." Official examinations take place only after the completion of "Certificate 3." Haitian geography and history are studied in their minutest details. Our schoolgirls feel proud of their plucky little republic and rightly so.

The schoolyear in this country opens in October, August and September being the hottest months. Afternoon classes begin only at half past one and finish at half past three although we teachers are sometimes tempted to stretch this schedule especially for the pupils of the certificate. There are many things to learn and our dear pupils have to cope with the handicap of speaking one language, the Creole dialect at home, and another, the French, in the schoolroom...

¹ Elizabeth Vanchestein, St. Matthew of Laprairie.

You would like to know what my pupils wear, I am sure. On week days their school uniform consists of a white blouse and a cobalt blue jumper. A white uniform is worn on Sundays and gala occasions. I must say that I find white extremely becoming for my bronze and chocolate beauties. No need to worry whether stockings are "holey" or not around here. Nobody wears any. All styles of shoes except the high heeled are admissible.

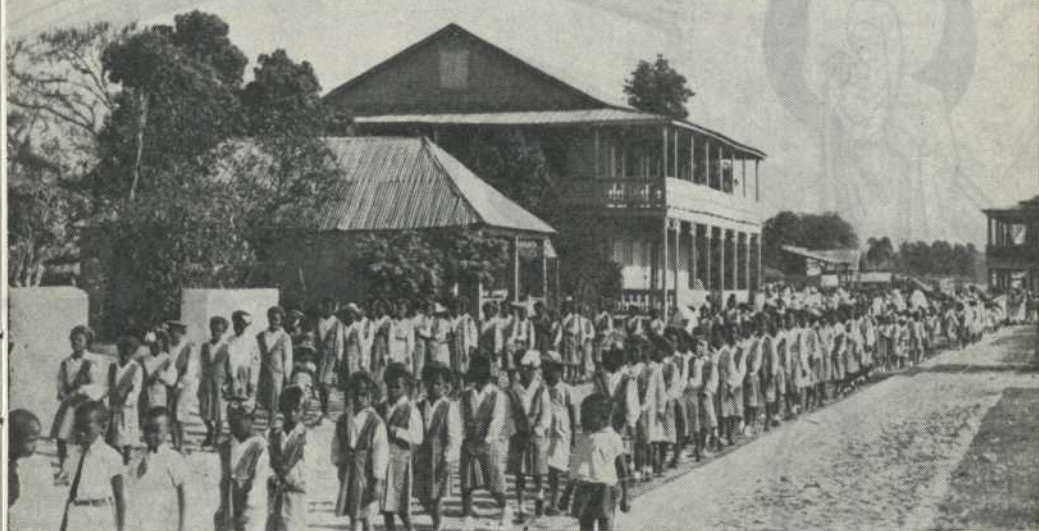
Young girls of Mirebalais are as goodlooking as young girls back home although their skin is darker and their hair jet black. Their hair-do would undoubtedly strike you as highly original. The younger girls braid their hair into a dozen tresses or so which are then left to point in all directions. As a rule Haitian children are fond of study. Gifted with excellent memories they are very attentive in the classroom and often surprise us by the solidity of their learning. They go right to the heart of a problem and patiently strive to solve it accurately. Effort is natural to these youngsters who are so eager to get educated. The girls of the certificate remind me of impoverished aristocrats who have long been deprived of family treasures and who do all in their power to retrieve them.

Studying the character of my pupils the better to procure their welfare, I find a fascinating pursuit. My girls are anything if not docile and deferential. At times I am tempted to think they are perhaps too pliant for their own good. This attitude apparently stems from a desire to be thought well-bred and up to the mark in all things. I find their docility remarkable especially during singing rehearsals for parochial choir to which they all belong. Their voices are warm and rich, and it is the easiest thing in the world to have them observe gradations and variations. They are attracted by everything noble and beautiful, and I am convinced that they are capable of sincere and faithful attachment. You have only to show them affectionate regard to obtain from them anything you wish.

Plantations of cotton are a source of great prosperity in this region. A dam being constructed by an American Company on the Artibonite River will no doubt contribute to an increase in production. Generally speaking, the country people live happy contented lives in their rustic huts from which modern complications are banned. They go barefoot and wear the simplest of garments. Their frugal fare of rice, fruits, and vegetables is cooked outside on open fires; their laundry is done at the edge of the river, this being pleasant and practical in this land of torrid sunshine. In a word although the peasant's lot may be hard at times it is not entirely without charms.

Once again, I assure you that I find my Haitian pupils quite lovable, and that I consider it a privilege to be engaged in this educational venture. How could it be otherwise with young people who are so eager to cooperate? We have been acquainted only for a year and already we are like old and fast friends.

Dear students of Granby and of everywhere, I hope this letter will give you at least a faint idea of the deep and satisfying joys found in the missionary life. What vocation could be more thrilling than to carry Jesus,



Marching to school. Pupils of Mirebalais, HAITI.

in the simple humble way that Mary did over the hills of Judea, to those who are sitting in the shadow of unbelief or superstition or religious ignorance?

To leave Dorval airport surrounded by the affectionate solicitude of three families is a joyful adventure. To "dance the sky on laughter-silvered wings" is pure enjoyment. To feel entirely surrendered to the care of divine Providence is a comfort. But to bear to famished souls the glad tidings of the Gospel is really too great an honour for poor mortal beings such as we are!



The only genuine devotion to the Mother of God is that which flows from the heart; and the acts of the body, when separated from the soul, have absolutely no value or utility in this matter. It is necessary that the acts of the soul should aim solely in making us obedient in all things to Mary's Divine Son. For if the only genuine love is that which is capable of uniting wills, certainly our will and the most holy Mary's must be the same — that of serving the Lord Christ.

Saint Pius X

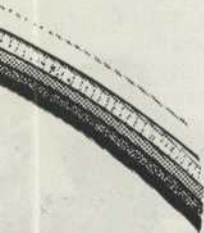


OUR LADY

Our Lady walks the realms of night
Where faithless nations wander far,
Groping in darkness for the light.

And in her hands she holds the Sun
Whose rays dispel eternal gloom.
To them she shows the Radiant One.

Our Lady walks the deserts drear
Where stray her parched and erring ones,
Athirst for waters fresh and clear.



BOY WALKS...

And in her arms she cradles Him
Who is the Living Water pure.
She fills their vessels to the brim.

Our Lady walks the trails of earth
Where quest her harassed missionaries,
In dolours often and in dearth.

And in her arms she clasps her Boy,
The Child born for the wide world's mirth.
To them she gives the Fount of Joy.

M.I.C.



NORTHERN · NYASSALAND

Wedding *in*
Bells **Karonga**

SISTER ST. ELIE, m.i.c. (Therese Godbout, Grand Falls, N. B.)

For the first time in the brief history of our mission, a Catholic wedding ceremony took place in Karonga. In this quiet bush country it proved a sensational event. The two who plighted their troth on this occasion were Victor, professor at the mission school, and Lilian one of our pupils.

Victor had set his heart on having a fashionable wedding. A few days beforehand, he called on Sister Superior¹ to discuss matters. First of all he gravely declared that although he was willing to buy for Lilian a pair of shoes, considered to be the height of fashion in Nyassaland, he relied on the *Wamayi* (Sisters) to provide her with a white muslin dress, ankle length, and a long filmy white veil.

Finally he popped the important question. "What do Canadian bridegrooms wear on their wedding day?" Sister Superior¹ gave him a wise and practical answer or so she thought. "Canadian bridegrooms usually wear a navy blue tuxedo; but a brown suit might be more suitable for you," she suggested.

With this precious piece of information in mind, off went Victor to buy a pair of shoes for his fiancée and a brown suit for himself. However, not wishing to be outdone in elegance by bridegrooms across the seas, he decided to borrow at the same time a secondhand dark blue outfit, shiny with years of wear. This would be just the thing, he decided, to wear at the Nuptial Mass.

On the morning of her great day, we found Lilian crouching on the convent porch, patiently waiting for the Sisters to array her in her wedding finery. As I led her to the room where I had everything prepared, I saw that her hands were none too clean. When I remarked on this, she confided shyly, "Sister, I had to get up early and prepare the *sima* (corn mush) so I had no time to wash." We still had plenty of time so I sent her down to the river for a quick bath.

But scarcely had she reached the river bank when a messenger came running up to the convent to announce that the ceremony would be one half hour earlier and that everybody was expecting the bride. Poor Lilian! Her ablutions cut short, you may imagine the fuss while one Sister slipped on her dress, another arranged her veil, and a third tried to squeeze on her shoes. At last she was ready to walk up to the altar to the strains of a lively wedding march. Upon entering the church, I could not help noticing that instead of wearing his becoming brown suit, Victor had on the second-hand blue jacket and trousers much the worse for wear. It was too late to make him change his mind. As finishing touch he had also put on a large pair of smoked glasses which he considered to be very stylish.

The lilting music which held the assembly enthralled, suddenly sent the bride into an uncontrollable fit of bashfulness. Leaving Victor to march to the altar in solemn state she retrieved her customary place as fast as her tight footgear would allow. It took much coaxing and cajoling to bring the errant bride back to the bridegroom's side. The latter considered it below his dignity to show unusual concern over the escapade. He waited, his glance safely inscrutable from behind the convenient blind of his smoked glasses. No

¹ Sister Madeleine Marié (Madeleine Loranger, Westmount).

further mishap disturbed the course of the ceremony, and the two were wedded according to the rites of Holy Mother Church.

After Mass, while the couple came out, the cameras flashed for the usual photographs. According to traditional custom, instead of appearing radiantly happy the bride in Nyassaland must wear a *woebegone* look, that is as long as people are allowed to see her features, for the women soon surround her, pulling down her veil over her face and holding over her head a huge black parasol.

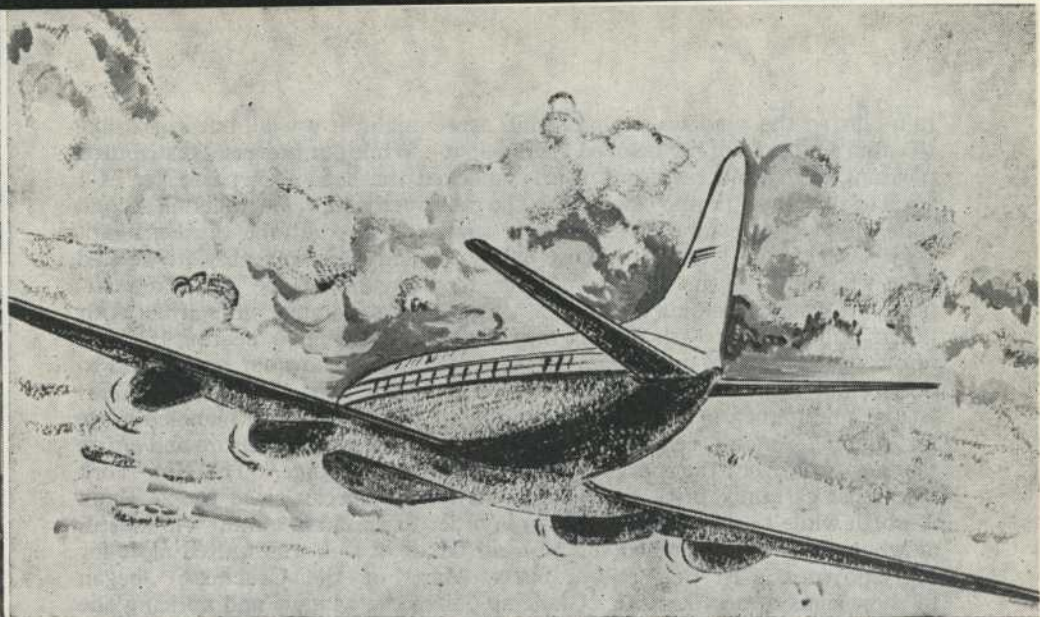
We did not follow the bridal cortege to its destination but the next day we learned that it was nearly midnight before it reached Victor's house. Lilian was so exhausted by all this unusual excitement that she fainted on arriving. The women folk hastily revived her by dashing some cold water in her face. In spite of the late hour and of her exhaustion, the bride had to pay her compliments to the numerous guests present. Afterwards, she sedately sat beside her husband at a small table on which an empty plate had been placed. Silence reigned in the room for a while until the couple had been formally presented to the relatives present. Then the guests came forward to wish husband and wife length of days and depth of wedded bliss, in token of which each person deposited a penny on the empty plate.

As the fashion goes in this remote district, the bride fasted the entire day of her wedding. On the following day she discarded her pretty muslin dress for a plain housedress and busied herself crushing the corn for the family *sima*, her most important duty as an African housewife.

RUSSIA STILL HAS ITS ICONS

It's fall again, in this strange dreamy journey of mine into my past. We are making ready for our annual pilgrimage to one of her innumerable shrines that dot Russia like an immense rosary — the Bogoroditza of Kiev, the fair city on the river Knepr, of Kazan on the Volga, of Tver in the very heart of Russia. In big cities, marvelous are her churches, in little villages infinite is the number of her chapels. On all roads from north to south, from east to west, through that vast land of Russia, she waits in her wayside shrines for the pilgrim, the traveller, the beggar.

There wasn't a palace, a house or a hovel that did not have her holy icon. It may have been a priceless gem of art incrusting in silver, gold and precious stones. It may have been just a cheap chroma. But always the vigil lights burned before her, and always she was the center of the household. Even the Communists have been powerless against her. For people still have her icon. It may be hidden well, but it is there and, as of old, it is brought out in moments of need, joy and sorrow. The present Russian government was compelled by common sense to keep her (icons) in its museums, for some are priceless works of old Byzantine art. For it was from the Greeks that the first Russian monks learned the difficult art of painting icons. What matters where she is placed? Whether in a museum or a house, the fact remains that she is in Russia, enshrined forever in the hearts of her people.



CUBA

Montreal — Martí

SISTER MONIQUE D'OSTIE¹, m.i.c.

On the evening of September 24, 1955, Dorval Airport was, as usual, alive with brisk activity. But even bustling travellers loaded down with luggage stopped in their tracks long enough to stare at our missionary group. Among those waiting to have their passports checked, I was delighted to meet one of my fellow pupils at Vincent d'Indy School last year. We shook hands cordially. She told me that she was on her way to the United States where she intended to pursue her musical studies in Boston and New York. I could not help reflecting way down inside how much more fortunate was my lot compared to hers. Here she was leaving "on her own" for a country where she had neither friends nor relations, to prepare for her public life while I for my part was affectionately surrounded by members of my two families who provided for my every need; and I would be met in Cuba by devoted Sisters and kind friends who would help me launch the beautiful hidden life of the missionary nun.

At eight o'clock the roar of the engines punctuated our last farewells. With her most engaging American smile, Sister St. Nina², our travelling agent, bade us follow the other passengers into the plane. A last hasty embrace, and as if in a dream we entered our airship. The steadily falling

¹ Mamie Martel, Quebec.

² Nina Ennis, Salem, Mass.

rain blurred the windows so that strain as we might, it was all but impossible to catch a glimpse of the beloved faces below. While our hostesses distributed pleasant words and reviews I nearly knocked the head of a passenger as I tried to stow my "Jumbo" sweater in the rack overhead. The first and second time, my victim escaped with slightly rumpled hair, but the third attempt very nearly proved fatal! Almost before we had time to realize it, we had been whisked over the air lanes and gently deposited at the New York airport. It was still raining dismally but this failed to dampen our spirits. Our hearts bubbled over with joyful gratitude, for we were now nearing the goal of our desires. Here once again we were required to show our papers and to declare our age, weight, but not the colour of our hair, thanks be to God! At one minute before midnight we boarded the Pan American plane en route for Miami. Among the passengers were some gentlemen of leisure and entire families fresh from the market judging from their luggage. The New York leek must certainly taste better than the Miami species since people think it worth while to fly north four hours in order to purchase some! No matter at what altitude we climbed the pungent odour of leek was wafted aloft for our enjoyment. At this point, Sister Mary of the Crucifix¹, began to show signs of nervousness. Glancing out of the window and noticing the flames that leaped from under the wings, she remarked with trepidation in her voice, "Sister, look! The wings are ripped and fire is escaping underneath!" I vainly tried to shoo her fears away telling her what others had told me that this was a normal way for a plane like this one to behave. She remained skeptical. Perhaps being a nurse she cannot help suspecting pathological conditions everywhere even in the body of a plane.

We reached Miami at four in the morning. The passenger agent at first seemed to wonder whether we were in our right senses when we declared we would wait for the eight o'clock plane at the airport. After trying to explain how much more sensible it would be for us to go to a hotel and rest, he finally gave us up as hopeless, saying he would return later to check our passports. As soon as his back was turned, I found a bench and settled down, determined to let the rest of the world go by while I snatched forty winks. Although the seat was no "lazyboy" I was just about to sink into blissful oblivion when a peculiar noise brought me to with a start. The agent having changed his mind wanted to examine our papers right away. Pulling up the corners of my mouth into a faint smile I produced for his scrutiny my photograph and the documents testifying to my respectable age and weight.

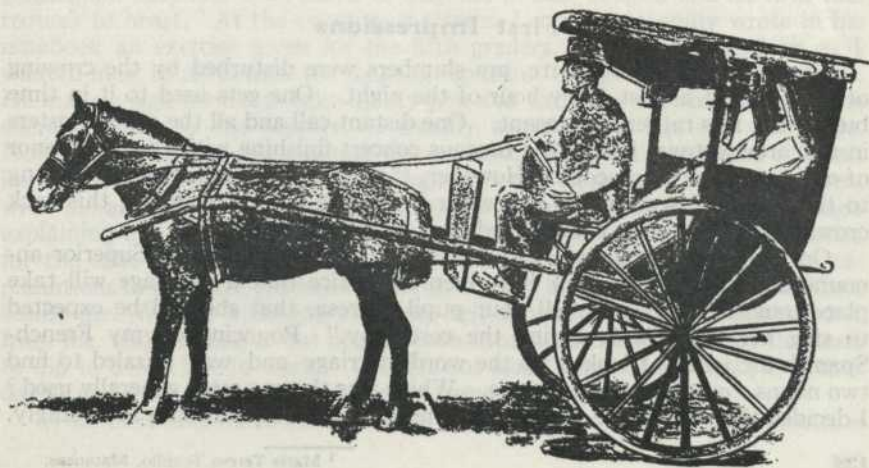
At eight o'clock sharp, we stepped inside the huge blue and white "bird" which was to take us to Cuba. Much to my companion's relief the wings of this particular plane seemed to be *sewed* on right, for no fiery tongues were pulled out at her when she examined it through the window. Inexperienced travellers that we were, we chose seats in the middle of the plane with the wing tips as only vista. A more seasoned passenger kindly offered us to exchange places with him in the rear. I tried my best *Muchas gracias* (thank you) on him whenever he drew our attention to the magic sights unfolding above and below. At times our blue ship skimmed through billowy seas of

white clouds, edged in blue or rosy tints according to the refraction of the light. Flying over the Gulf of Mexico, we admired how the sparkling purity of the light and the absolute calm of the waters created the illusion that one could see right through the water to the sand floor of the Gulf. Hardly thirty minutes after leaving Miami, we noticed, looming nearer every minute, a large building with glass windows whence emerged familiar white-robed, black-veiled figures. Havana Airport! Already we had reached our dear promised land. Sister Pauline Marie¹ and Sister Leo Joseph² gave us a warmly affectionate welcome. After exchanging greetings we left for the customs where we learned, to our dismay, that our baggage had been left behind at the New York airport. Sister Superior wisely decided we would first have breakfast to have the strength to bear up under our disappointment. Then she left on pressing business in town accompanied by Sister Mary of the Crucifix, while I went with Sister Leo Joseph to see what could be done about our missing luggage. Sister talked and argued in voluble *Castellano*; I could not understand a word of what she said but from the *simpatico* look on the face of the agents I concluded that they would do their best to oblige us.

It was nearly evening when we met Sister Superior and her companion again and boarded the homeward bus for Marti. In spite of our missing valises we still had a sizable amount of luggage. For my part I had in one hand my Pan American bag and a nondescript smaller receptacle; in the other, two bulky, greyish blue paper bags bursting with two umbrellas and parcels of all shapes and sizes. I almost forgot to mention my Canadian Jumbo sweater thrown over my arm. We arrived at Matanzas towards six. The weather was so torrid that Sister Superior thoughtfully bought each of us a refreshing glass of fruit juice. Hurrying back to the bus stop we were chagrined

¹ Rita Leblanc, Jonquiere.

² Simonne Sabourin, St. Isidore of Prescott.



to find our bus had pulled out a few moments before with all of our belonging inside. At Matanzas lives Mr. Trujillo, father of our Cuban Sister Maria Tereza of Jesus¹. Sister Pauline Marie called him on the phone telling him about our mishap; in less than five minutes he had us in his car and was driving us to his house for refreshments. Then he had somebody take us to the Cardenas bus station where we were supposed to find our baggage. But from the bus conductor we learned that our bags had been checked and carried for greater safety to a shed at the other end of the city. Nothing left to do but to go and claim them there. We were now too far from the Marti bus station to walk, that is if we wanted to reach destination before midnight. No other vehicle being in sight except a dilapidated barouche in the style of the one-horse shay, Sister Pauline Marie hailed it and off we went at a more than leisurely pace. I was not without misgivings regarding the solidity of the conveyance; the seat where I found myself sandwiched between my four bags began to creak and sag in an alarming manner. Evidently my 153 lbs were a trial for the venerable carriage unaccustomed to such heavy weights. We had reached what appeared to be a select theater when Sister Superior signalled to the driver that we would get off here. Groups of fashionably dressed Cubans loitered about on the sidewalk and looked on with politely amused smiles as we alighted. I leave you to imagine what a graceful figure I cut as I lumbered down not without dropping a parcel or two.

It was already dark when at long last we reached the dear haven of our Marti Convent. The Sisters had been watching for our arrival ever since supper, wondering whether we had met with some accident along the road. With what heartfelt satisfaction I greeted each one of these my new companions in the apostolate! I had to pinch myself to make sure that I was really and truly on the missions. Later, I knelt before Our Lady's statue in the chapel and fervently renewed my act of consecration while the Sisters sang a vibrant Magnificat.

First Impressions

During my first week here, my slumbers were disturbed by the crowing of the cocks at almost every hour of the night. One gets used to it in time but at first it is rather unpleasant. One distant call and all the other roosters in and around town join in the raucous concert finishing with the clear tenor of our handsome black cock. However, the rhythm seems to vary according to the time and seasons. I will enter into more details regarding this cock crowing business when I have lived here for a longer while.

On the third day after I had started teaching music, Sister Superior announced, "Sister, our pastor has given me notice that a marriage will take place tomorrow. Kindly tell your pupil, Teresa, that she will be expected to sing her *Ave Maria* during the ceremony." Pouncing on my French-Spanish dictionary I looked up the word marriage and was puzzled to find two nouns, *casamiento*, *matrimonio*. Which was the one more generally used? I decided that it must be the first one and composed my sentence accordingly.

After memorizing it, I approached the unsuspecting Teresa, "Sister Superior wants me to tell you that there will be a *casamiento* tomorrow . . ." The poor girl looked blank. I was bravely determined upon repeating my sentence when a Sister passing that way informed me I had used the wrong term. *Casamiento* is a formal word not in general usage. The news soon spread throughout the Colegio that the newly arrived Sister spoke only high class Spanish! If ever you visit Cuba and have to mention anything that relates to marriage, I advise you to use the common word *matrimonio*.

Since then I have had two other *matrimonios* on my hands and I expect to have many more. These ceremonies are held in the evening, usually between five and seven. The program is as follows: wedding march, elaborate train-dress, blessing of the ring, extraction of the mutual "yes", singing of the *Ave Maria*. While formalities are being signed in the record book, another march is played and the wedding party is not slow in leaving the church.

When I received my assignment to teach music at Marti Colegio I began to wonder what my pupils would be like. But never did I dream of such a wonderful variety in height, age, and colour as confronted me on my first morning in the classroom. Children of five, six, and seven, and a group of older pupils up to the age of sweet sixteen all welcomed me with sunny smiles. There were boys and girls with fair skin, blue eyes, and blond or brown hair; there were others of a rosy chocolate colour with black eyes and raven hair; and still others with rich ebony black skin and frizzly hair. In our Colegio the pupils must wear the school uniform consisting of a dark blue jumper and a white blouse. But at home, after taking their evening bath, they dress in such neat, dainty frocks that they look like little fashion plates.

During the last week of October, I followed classes of Spanish with the fifth and sixth grade pupils of Santa Maria Colegio as this seemed the most practical way of learning the language quickly. I was given a seat on the rear bench beside Senor Leopoldo, a twelve-year old Cuban, every inch a gentleman. He had been asked to help me in case of need and he took this request to heart. At the opening of classes, Leopoldo carefully wrote in his notebook an exercise given for the fifth graders. I merely looked on as I wanted most of all to hear the language spoken. Leopoldo judged otherwise. He made a sign for me to take up my pen and write the date and title of the exercise given by the teacher. I meekly obeyed then laid my pen aside. Noticing that I was not copying the exercise, my mentor gave me such an imperious look that I hastened to comply. I was closing my copybook when, with the air of a Spanish grandee, Leopoldo slipped his ruler into my hands explaining that it was the custom to draw a line at the bottom of the exercise for the sake of clarity and concision. While the teacher gave lengthy explanations to the sixth graders I furtively opened a grammar lying on the desk beside me. With a withering look, my self-appointed instructor snatched it from me, and pushing it out of my reach intimated that it was not the time to dip in books but to work! If I did not learn much of anything else that day, I certainly did practice the art of obeying orders promptly.

What impresses me most favourably in Cuba is the teaching of the doctrine

in the *campos*. The chief sponsor of this apostolic venture in Marti is a millionaire who owns the local sugar cane *centrale*. On Saturdays and Sundays the Sisters go out into distant villages to catechize groups of boys and girls. At the end of the year, these youngsters receive, according to their punctuality to the doctrine classes, enough cloth to make a suit of clothes. Can you figure out how much money goes into this purchase? The rich family mentioned defrays the payment of the cloth as well as the Sisters' travelling expenses. I am struck with admiration for this noble enterprise and think it is the gem of the mission where God has transplanted me for a while.

It is with regret that I bring to a close this letter which tells of my deep-felt happiness, but I know that those to whom it is addressed will read between the lines many things I would like to say, things that are too deeply felt to be expressed in mere words. The happiness which is mine in my missionary vocation will keep on increasing as long as I am a Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception, of that I am perfectly sure. To all those who have helped develop in my soul the spirit of our great apostolic vocation goes my loving and sincere gratitude.

PRINCE AND PRINCESS BAPTIZED

Prince and Princess Lee, members of the Korean dynasty dethroned by the Japanese some forty years ago, have recently been baptized at Seoul. Their conversion was brought about by the efforts of Mrs. An, a lady-in-waiting who had embraced Catholicism twenty years ago. At that time her husband had strongly objected before allowing her to be baptized. "We who are in the royal family's service must not abandon the old traditions of honouring the spirits of our forebears through the Confucian rites." The catechumen replied: "The holy sacrifice of the Mass is infinitely superior to the offerings prescribed by Confucius." She received Baptism and her son later followed her into the Church.

Mrs. An often conversed with the Princess about her new Faith. On Pentecost Sunday 1955, the Princess accompanied her to the cathedral to hear Mass. Two weeks later she began to study the doctrine. "During my sixty-two years of family life" she admitted, "I have experienced much happiness but nothing can compare to having found the true faith." The Prince who had meantime become grievously ill was baptized at his residence on August 10. Two days later Msgr. Ro, Vicar Apostolic of Seoul, administered to the venerable patient, the Sacraments of Confirmation and Extreme Unction. The Princess was baptized on the eve of the feast of Our Lady's Assumption under the name of Mary.

Baptized on the same date was the wife of Ambassador Chough Pyeng Ok, a representative of Korea at the U.N. in 1948. *Fides*

Unforgettable Day



LEFT TO RIGHT: SISTER MARIE VICKTORYIA, SISTER MARIA RUFINA,
SISTER BERNADETTE OF FRANCE, SISTER MARIA ANASTAZIA, SISTER MARIA BEATA.

SISTER MARIE BEATA, r.s.

Who can ever hope to tell the deep-felt joy of the Rosarian Sisters on the day of their first religious profession ceremony! It took place at the modest mission of Katete, in the heart of Africa, on September 24, 1955. How I wish I had the voice of a seraph in order to relate these blessed events in a worthy manner!

You have probably heard about our little Rosarian Society founded in November 1951 by our devoted Pastor, Msgr. J. M. St. Denis. During the last few years we had been preparing for the great day on which we would be allowed to make our vows. How we yearned to offer ourselves as holocausts to God for the salvation of our own people! But we waited patiently knowing that we could not hope to prepare well enough for this favour.

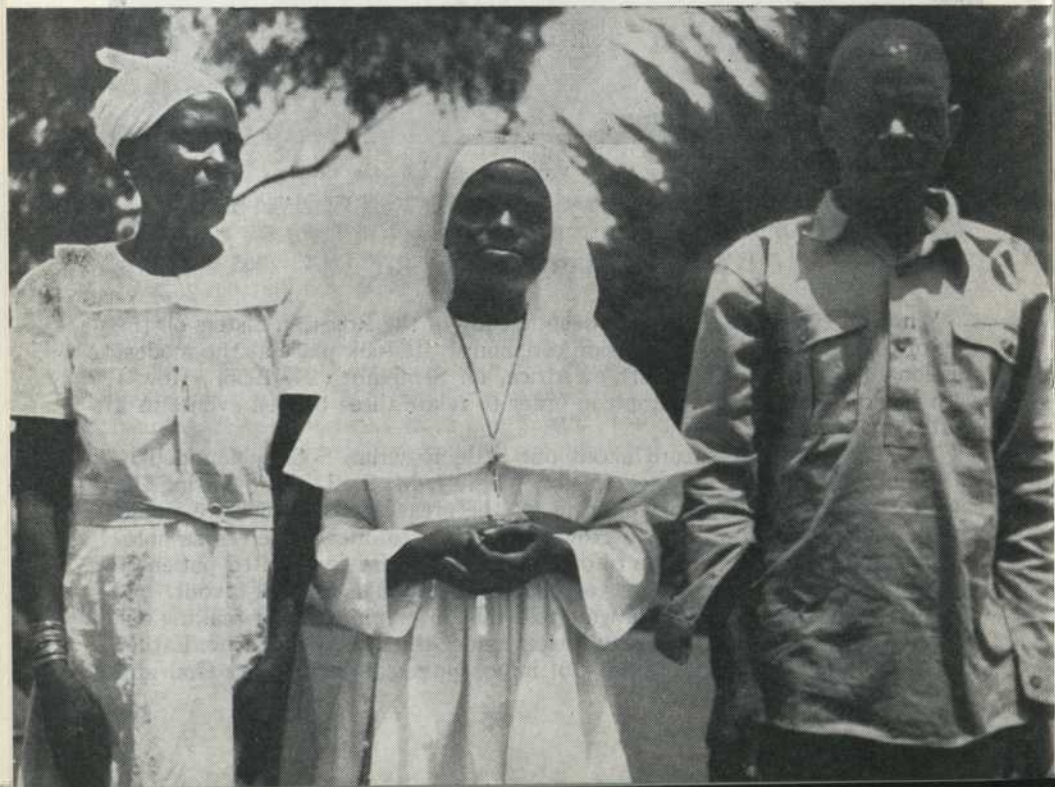
At last on September 14, we were told that in preparation for making our vows we would begin an eight-day retreat under the direction of Rev. Father J. Meyer, w.f. During those days of inner conversation between God and

His little black children, our souls were filled with peace and joy. We prayed, we begged pardon for our own faults and those of others, we asked for numerous graces. How precious were those silent moments when God seemed very near! Time flew so quickly that the eight-days of our retreat appeared to us as one short day.

At last dawned the day of our profession, September 24, 1955. On that blessed morning at half past five Msgr. St. Denis himself came to give us the closing sermon. "My dear little ones," he said, "I cannot help thanking God that in spite of difficulties of all kinds, you have persevered in your desire to consecrate your lives to God. The time has come for you to make your vows. Remain faithful to your religious rule and trust in the Blessed Virgin to help you always. She is your mother and patroness."

At half past eight, Msgr. J. M. St. Denis offered a low Mass in the mission church of Katete. Our hearts beating with joy, we knelt in front of the altar. The hour had come at last the hour of which we had so often dreamed, the hour when we would become the spouses of Jesus. Before Mass, Monsignor explained the ceremony to the people. During Mass, the Missionary Sisters together with the novices and postulants sang beautiful hymns which deeply

Sister Marie Vicktoryia with her proud parents on her vow day.



moved the hearts of our villagers especially of the young girls present.

After Mass we had Benediction opened by the chanting of the *Veni Creator*. Again Monsignor preached: "Dear men and women. Listen well while I tell you of the happiness felt by the families who are privileged to offer one of their members to God in religious life today. I know that at first you found it difficult to give up your daughters. You did not understand the meaning of this holy vocation. But today you are very happy, are you not, dear parents of our first Rosarian Sisters? Let us now all kneel and thank God together for his mercies."

Then came the all important moment. The four of us went to kneel in front of the altar and Monsignor questioned us according to the Profession Ritual. Then, with hearts overflowing with happiness we pronounced the formula of our vows. Monsignor blessed our veils and while we went out to put them on, the Sisters sang, "Receive, O Lord, my will, my memory . . ." We reentered the church and again knelt before Monsignor who blessed our crosses and rosaries. The profession ceremony over, a postulant came forward to receive the white habit of our Society. She read an act of consecration to Mother Mary, then returned to her place with a new name, her religious name. Finally, two girls who wished to be admitted as postulants came to the altar where Monsignor blessed their medals. They also read the act of consecration. When we came out of church, we met many people; our beloved Fathers, two White Sisters from Nkhamanya Mission, and our dear Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

Is it surprising that finding ourselves really consecrated to God, we wept for joy? Who would not weep on such a happy day! We felt as if we were in Paradise. We would have liked to go to heaven at once, for all earthly things appeared, as they really are, vain and useless.

I will add only a few words. I beg you who read these lines to remember us and all our compatriots in your prayers that God may bless us and lead many other Black girls and boys to embrace the religious or priestly vocation if it is granted them. Many, many among our countrymen are still in the darkness. They need someone to teach them, someone to lead them on the way to Paradise, someone to open for them the treasures found in the Gospel. Pray, pray for us.

HIS HOLINESS, POPE PIUS XII, has founded a Pontifical Society to Promote Vocations to the Religious Life through works of piety, penance and charity. The new society is under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation for Religious. Prospective membership in the new association includes congregations, secular institutes, existing vocation units, and individual members of the clergy and laity particularly interested in vocation work.

Recommended works of piety for the society are special daily prayers as well as fast and abstinence on the vigils of the Assumption and Christmas, offered for vocations. The Pope suggested also that the sick offer up their sufferings on a special day for religious vocations.

PONT VIAU NOVITIATE

The first step in being admitted into

Our Lady's missionary army.





The second step . . .

The bonnet does not make

the postulant

but it starts her on the way

Ceremony of Investiture and Final Vows

His Eminence Cardinal Leger deigned to personally preside the ceremony of investiture and perpetual profession at our Pont Viau Novitiate on February 11.

For the sake of those who on this feast of Our Lady's Smile pledged themselves in an irrevocable manner to the service of God, His Eminence expounded in eloquent terms the beauty of a life totally surrendered. He added that from their consecration flowed a lesson of joy wedded to the apostolate, for the Gospel is above all a tidings of gladness.

To begin with the Cardinal recalled the humble figure of St. Bernadette whose life brimful of suffering was yet illuminated by Our Lady's smile. Then he explained how the Blessed Virgin's consecration to the Lord was for her the cause of untold bliss when she became the Mother of her Saviour. "When Mary had fully comprehended what the Angel's message implied, she surrendered herself wholeheartedly as attests her reply 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord'. Nowadays we hardly know what a servant, a handmaid is. I belong to the last generation who has experienced the faithful care of old family servants. Bright among my memories of the past is that of Alice, a maid of all work the first to rise and the last to retire. The children loved her, for she was always patient and kind helping the harassed mother with all her household chores. Everyone called her Auntie and we little ones never doubted that she was really our aunt. It seems that in our modern times such servants have vanished from our homes, but in God's service there will always remain many because of Mary who was the first to say 'Ecce ancilla Domini'. Let us consider her together hastening along difficult mountain roads to the house of her cousin Elizabeth. She wants to share with her something of the happiness that floods her soul since she has heard the message of the Angel and the news of her divine maternity. In her womb she carries the salvation of the world. As soon as she sees Mary, Elizabeth exclaims, 'Blessed art thou amongst women because thou bearest within thy womb the cause of our joy.' This joy does not ring out with the boisterous clash of wordly orchestras. It is the peaceful joy of a conscience faithful to the call of grace, the impulsive gesture of the servant eager to spend herself to the very end. Mary comes to a dwelling overshadowed by sadness, for Zachary has been dumb all of six months. But gladness with her steps across its threshold. The jubilant strains of two songs sung on this occasion have echoed down the centuries. 'Blessed be the Lord... who has visited His people according to His promise. My soul magnifies the Lord... My spirit exults in God because He has looked upon the lowliness of His hand-

maid.' I urge you every one to be cheerful servants of the Lord, servants who smilingly do as they are told, who are always ready to spend themselves for others. Fervent religious accomplish all this in the simplicity of their hearts for the love of their dear Master."

Turning to the young girls present, His Eminence declared, "Some among you will perhaps return home saying 'Oh, this life is very beautiful but it is not meant for me.' It may indeed be meant for you and you have no right to refuse the call. You also are bound to love God with your whole heart and with all your strength . . . Perhaps is He relying upon you to save a multitude of souls."

Were clothed in the holy habit: Miss Lisette Verreault, Chateau Richer (Sister St. George of the Cross); Miss Raymonde Pelletier, St. Louis du Ha! Ha! (Sister St. Hermenegilde); Miss Cecile Sauvageau, Champlain (Sister St. Nivard); Miss Jacqueline Morin, Three Rivers (Sister Alice Florida); Miss Denise Leger, Hull (Sister St. Leger); Miss Yvonne Ayotte, New Lisk-eard, Ont. (Sister Yvonne of the S. H.); Miss Jeannine LeBel, Squatteck (Sister Jeannine of the Saviour); Miss Claudette Lambert, Lowell, Mass. (Sister Frances of the Passion); Miss Francoise Veillette, Coaticook (Sister Marie Gracia); Miss Ange Marie Brisson, Ascension, Lake St. John (Sister Catherine Tekakwitha); Miss Gisele Vachon, Saint Ambroise, Chicoutimi (Sister St. Aurele); Miss Constance Charette, Sudbury, Ont. (Sister St. Martial); Miss Cecile Scott, Granby (Sister St. Antonia); Miss Rejeanne Saint Amand, l'Abord à Plouffe (Sister St. Amand); Miss Ghislaine Dion, Lachine (Sister Ghislaine of the Holy Angels); Miss Estelle Fontaine, Valcourt (Sister Estelle of the Trinity); Miss Angele Alix, Farnham (Sister Marie Angele); Miss Lise Lambert, Three Rivers (Sister St. Reginald); Miss Cecile Fortin, Shawinigan Falls (Sister St. Yvon); Miss Aline Dumas, Grand Falls, N.B. (Sister Aline of the Assumption); Miss Madeleine Patenaude, St. Alexander Iberville (Sister St. Clarisse); Miss Marie Berthe Dion, St. Dominic of Bagot (Sister Marie Dominic); Miss Lucienne Maltais, of Saint Coeur de Marie, Lake St. John (Sister St. Lucienne); Miss Marie Reine Tessier, Louiseville (Sister St. Judith); Miss Juliette Ouellet, Squatteck (Sister Marie Juliette); Miss Claudette Bouchard, Manchester, N.H. (Sister Joanna Marie).

Have made their final vows; Sister Marie Honorius (Veronique Therrien, Saint Julian of Wolfe); Sister St. Josaphat (Therese Pare, Saint Denis sur Richelieu); Sister Joseph of the Good Shepherd (Jeanne d'Arc Fontaine, Quebec); Sister Leonie of Jesus (Leonie Therrien, Saint Julian of Wolfe); Sister Ange Marie (Francoise Poirier, Montreal); Sister St. Jean Vianney (Madeleine Grenier, St. Jean Baptiste Vianney, Megantic); Sister Yvette of the Holy Angels (Yvette Dion, Lachine); Sister Colette of Jesus (Colette Dufour, Saint Alexis of Matapedia); Sister Dominic Savio (Lina Bourassa, Montreal); Sister Marie Armand (Lucille Baril, Lorrainville); Sister Andrew of the Saviour (Andree Menard, Quebec); Sister Marie Yvonne (Claire Guerard, Quebec).

NOTE: *In Hong Kong, on the same day, Sister Helena Marie (Helena Fong, Canton) also made her final vows.*



KATETE, NYASSALAND

Adventure in Locomotion

SISTER MARIE OF LOURDES¹, m.i.c.

I usually go to town once a year when fresh recruits arrive from the homeland. Always, on such occasions something out of the ordinary is bound to happen. Thus it was that the three latest newcomers to our mission field got a taste of blowouts, cups of tea, and Nyassaland policemen before even reaching destination.

On October 4, at half past ten in the morning, two groups of Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception arrived at the Fort Jameson airport. The Sisters from the city drove in a Ford, we from Katete in a beautiful grey jeep. At the same moment, exactly on time as per schedule for a change, the plane from Lukasa glided down the runway and our four new treasures

alighted. Sisters Alphonsus Marie ¹, Marie Edwidge ², St. Ephiphane ³, and St. Valerie ⁴. The latter, a registered nurse assigned to Mzambazi, immediately boarded another plane with Sister St. Bonaventure ⁵ who was to enter the hospital of Zomba for medical treatment.

At noon, the rest of us convened at our Fort Jameson Convent to enjoy a family dinner and get acquainted. Some hours later, Sisters Bernadette of France, Alphonsus Marie, Marie Edwidge, and I left by jeep for Katete. True to missionary traditions, we had more baggage than passengers. There were parcels of all weights and sizes for every one of our mission posts, the most remarkable being a wheelbarrow painted a vivid green. As there seemed no means of stowing it inside some one had the bright idea of perching it high on the hood. The bird's eye view was so spectacular that Sister Superior of Fort Jameson photographed our loaded vehicle before we started.

On the boundary line between Rhodesia and Nyassaland we came across a Black policeman. His eyes roved inquiringly over our mountain of luggage. Perhaps he suspected us of being smugglers; at any rate he decided it was his duty to investigate. With a sweeping gesture at the jeep, he solemnly inquired, "What's the meaning of all this baggage?" Pointing at my companions, I hastened to inform him, "These Sisters have just arrived from Canada..." He looked the trio over, then, "Well, I suppose it's all right. You may move on..."

We should have been with the White Sisters at Lilongwe within a few hours after leaving Fort Jameson. But we had not reckoned with two successive blowouts. The second time as we had no spare tire we were stalled by the side of the road until Providence sent us help. One fine thing about African highways is that none be they black or white or brown are ever left without a helping hand or a lift. This once our rescuers were some kind English people. While the men obligingly changed the tire, their wives insisted on taking us to their homes for a cup of tea. It was ten in the evening before we could leave. The White Sisters had been expecting us for supper but we reached Lilongwe around midnight.

Upon waking we were told that our jeep would have to be hospitalized at the garage as it needed a general checkup. Making the most of this delay, Sister Bernadette of France and I went shopping on foot despite the glaring sunshine. We returned to the convent only to learn that repairs on the jeep would not be done that day. There was nothing left for us to do but to profit by the White Sisters' gracious hospitality for still another night.

On the following morning jeep and driver, fresh and bright after their long rest, were impatiently waiting to cover the 150 miles to Katete. But as we were ready to start, we had to face the hard fact that with our latest purchases added there was really too much baggage. I resolved to consign two bags of cement for Sister Mary of the Angels ⁶ and the green wheelbarrow for Rumphu to the care of a forwarding company. Then we began juggling

¹ Marie Jeanne Fortin, St. Bonaventure Octave, Matane.

² Marie Paule Gaudreau, Rimouski.

⁴ Marie Jeanne Dumas, St. Eloi.

⁶ Alice Pepin, Warwick.

³ Gemma Ouellet, St. Epiphane.

⁵ Hedwidge Lapierre, St. Marie de Beauce.

with the rest of the parcels trying to find a place for all. Climbing on top of the jeep I helped the more or less disgruntled chauffeur to place some empty oil drums ordered by Sister St. Imelda¹ for her school. In our African classrooms, all too often bare of any cupboards or without sufficient desks, these drums come in very handy.

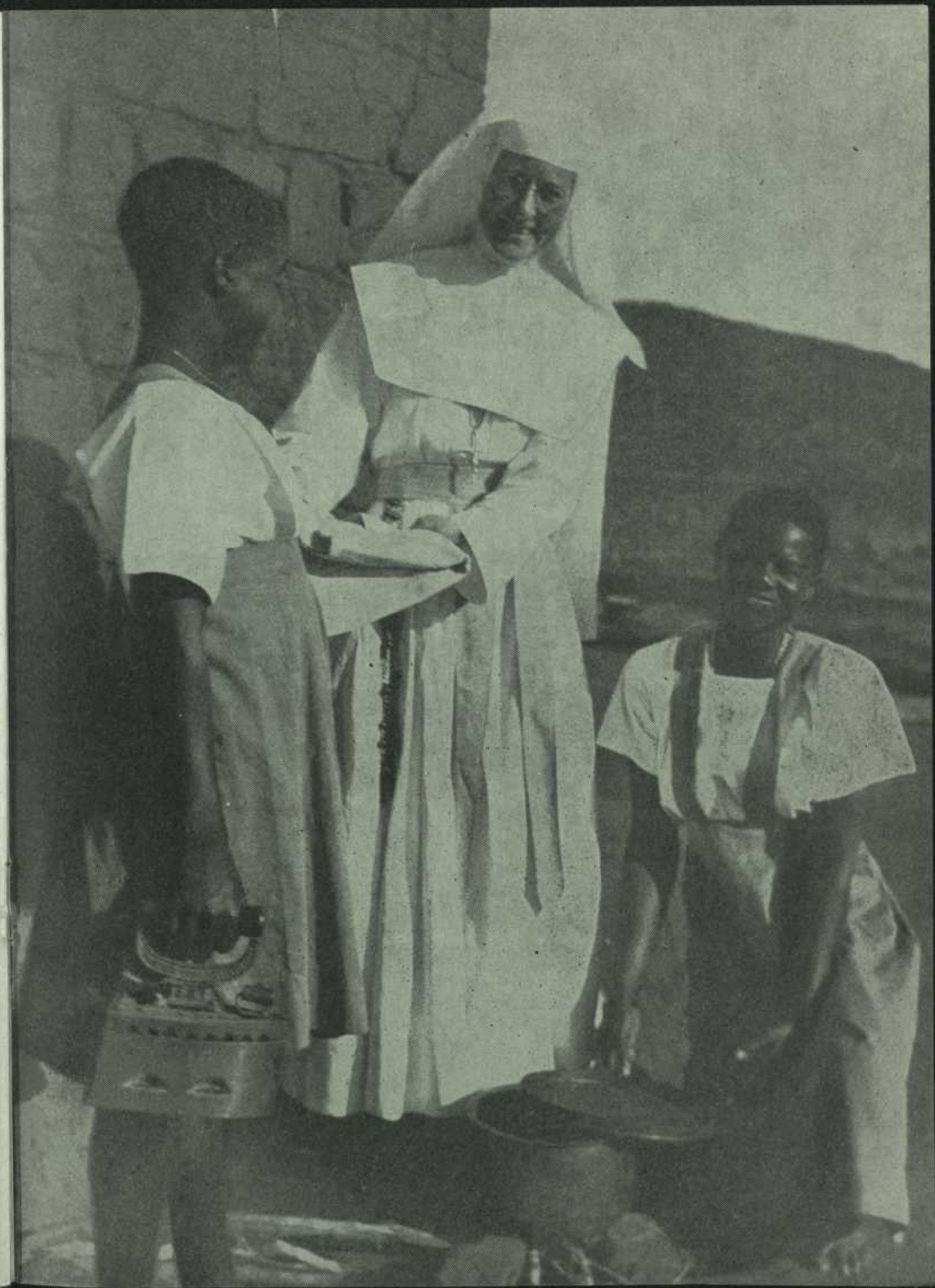
After a while it became evident that there was still too much baggage to proceed safely home. So back to the forwarding company we went lugging this time some heavy piping and a transformer for the hospital, a mere knick-knack weighing about 90 lbs. We were returning to the convent when a policeman asked to see our license and inquired, "Is this a private car or a truck?" I was so taken aback for a few moments that I did not know what to answer. Taking advantage of my momentary confusion, he added, "Your car is much too loaded for a private vehicle. Buy yourself a truck." He repeated his injunction several times and the black chauffeur chimed in, "Haven't I told you over and over again that what you need is a truck or a lorry?"

Interiorly I sent numerous S.O.S. to St. Jude. "Listen, dear Saint! You've just heard what these people said. What we need to carry our baggage is a good stout lorry!" After this fervent appeal to my favourite saint I felt brave enough to palaver with my friend the policeman. "Don't be too hard on me," I urged. "Don't forget that I live at a distance of 150 miles and can come into town only once a year. So you see that I have to take all the luggage I can with me. If you only knew all I have already had to leave to the good offices of the forwarding company, you would not think of stopping me..." The poor man looked hard at me than with the air of someone who is resigned to the inevitable, he shrugged his shoulders and muttered, "I suppose I'll have to let you go." I did not need to be told twice. Thanking him profusely, I made a sign to the chauffeur to drive back to the convent immediately. When, after a few minutes, we again drove in front of his beat on our way home this time, he became engrossed in examining a shop window next door while our overloaded jeep rumbled past.

At seven o'clock that same evening we reached Katete. The boarders had a hilarious time helping us unload. For them it seemed almost miraculous to see so many parcels coming out of a jeep. St. Jude from his heavenly throne above had not turned down my fervent plea. If anyone reading this should feel inspired to give the Katete Sisters a lorry in his honour, I am sure the good saint will grant the generous donor unlimited protection for the rest of his life in all his needs.

Once the baggage had all been unloaded and safely stowed inside, the two tyro missionaries to Katete renewed their consecration to Mary and all the personnel sang the *Magnificat*. A feastday supper and a reception followed and this was the end of another perfect day on the missions.

¹ Imelda Saurette, Letellier, Manitoba.



Statistics of Closed Retreats — 1955

	Re- treats	Persons attending	Recol- lections	Persons attending
Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Retreat House 314, St. Catherine Road Outremont, Montreal (8)	78	2,502	6	307
Bethany Retreat House Nominique, Labelle Co., P.Q.	21	474		
Immaculate Conception Retreat House 750 St. Louis Street, Joliette, P.Q.	66	2,242		
Our Lady of the Cenacle Retreat House 1073 West St. Cyrille Street, Quebec	152	4,505	19	941
Our Lady of Missions Retreat House Cenacle Street, Chicoutimi	70	2,627	13	742
Mary Mediatrix Retreat House 35 Dufferin Street, Granby, P.Q.	58	1,462		
St. Bernadette Retreat House 430 Champlain Street, St. Johns, P.Q.	74	1,955	2	47
Our Lady of the Rosary Retreat House St. Mary, Beauce Co., P.Q.	47	1,350		
Our Lady of the Angels Retreat House Dorval, P.Q.	19	325	1	6
Our Lady Queen of Missions Retreat House 187 Pleasant Street, Marlboro, Mass.	32	846	1	40
Immaculate Conception Retreat House Les Cayes HAITI, West Indies	5	171		
Immaculate Conception Retreat House Tokyo, JAPAN			4	105
Our Lady of Good Counsel Retreat House DAVAO, Philippine Islands	14	679		
Totals	636	19,138	46	2,188

OUR BELOVED DEPARTED

Msgr. S. Bluteau, **St. Felician**; Miss Leontine Lapiere, **St. Hermas**; Mrs. J. L. Blanchet, **Lambton**, mother of Sister Marie Leopold, m.i.c.; Mrs. Damase Gaudreau, **Rimouski**, mother of Sister Marie Hedwidge, m.i.c.; Mrs. Charles Farrell, **Plantagenet, Ont.**, mother of Sister St. Margaret, m.i.c.; Mr. Alvarez Brisson, **Cornwall, Ont.**, father of Sister Marie Alvarez, m.i.c.; Mrs. J. E. Noiseux, **Montreal**, mother of Sister Mary of the Archangels, m.i.c.; Mr. Joseph Routhier, **Thetford Mines**, father of Sister St. Joseph of Bethlehem, m.i.c.; Mrs. Leon Roy, **Montreal**, mother of Sister Jane of the Visitation, m.i.c.; Mrs. Yvan Trepanier, **Waterbury, Conn.**, sister of Sister Irene of Jesus, m.i.c.; Mrs. Joseph Robert, **St. Cecile of Milton**, sister of Sister Peter of the Cross, m.i.c.; Mrs. Levis Ferland, **Granby**, grandmother of Sister Rose of the Eucharist, m.i.c.; Mrs. Amedee Beaumont, **St. Peter of Montmagny**, grandmother of Sister Marie Laure, m.i.c.; Mrs. A. Trudeau, **St. Lambert**, sister of Sisters St. Constance and St. Bernadette, m.i.c.; Mrs. Ernest Thiffault, **l'Abord-a-Plouffe**, sister of Sister Jane of Jesus, m.i.c.; Mr. Raymond Legrand, **St. Philip of Laprairie**; Mrs. Alphonse Durivage, Mrs. Real Dore, **Outremont**; Mr. Eugene Laliberte, **Montreal**; Mrs. David Beauvais, **Caughnawaga**; Mrs. Errol Lindsay, **Roberval**; Mrs. William Gilbert, Mr. Emile Langlois, Mr. Ignace Simard, Mrs. Jos. Cote, **Chicoutimi**; Mrs. Adjutor Girard, Miss Valentine Bisailon, Mrs. Blanche Aubut, **Lowell, Mass.**; Mrs. Albert Beauchaine, **Lawrence, Mass.**; Mr. Ernest Leclerc, **Salem, Mass.**; Mrs. Albert Hardy, **Ahuntsic**.

The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

CANADA

Motherhouse, 2900 St. Catherine Road,
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26, P.Q.
Novitiate, Pont Viau, Montreal 9, P.Q.
Outremont, 314 St. Catherine Road,
Montreal 8, P.Q.

Chinese Hospital,
112 Lagauchetiere Street West,
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.

Ottawa, Ont., 211 Bronson.

UNITED STATES

Marlboro, Mass., 187 Pleasant Street.

CHINA

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.

