

# The Precursor

Vol. XXI, 34th Year, No. 6 — November-December 1956 — Montreal



# The Precursor

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Our cover picture: "Hello, folks!  
I'm from Fort Jameson!"

Back cover: Baby enjoys a personal taxi service.





Through the voice of their review "The Precursor", the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception wish to thank His Excellency The Most Rev. P. Courtemanche, Vicar Apostolic of Fort Jameson, for permission to publish the circular letter sent last May to the missionaries under his jurisdiction. This telltale document is appalling in its precision. One has only to place between its lines certain events reported in the press

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# Communist Blueprint for Conquest

*to ascertain how actively the U.R. S.S. is working out its plan for the conquest of Africa.*

*May the diffusion of this text jolt back to a sense of reality those who still choose to believe in Communist smiles. The Reds may vary, camouflage, or adapt their methods, their objective remains the same — the conquest of the world.*

*Note from the Editor's desk*

Secret details of the Red blueprint for the conquest of Africa were revealed lately to the Western world by a newly defected Iron Curtain intelligence agent, intimate with names, places, and other significant facts.

The plan was executed in Moscow last summer shortly after the Bandung conference rallied 1.4 billion Asians and Africans in common struggle against the remnants of colonialism. After bitter argument between old-line traditionalists and architects of the bold "new-look", the Kremlin decided to give highest priority to :

1. Infiltration of Africa, from Tunis to Cape Town, and from Dakar to Madagascar.

2. Enlistment of all existing Communist-front organizations behind nationalist movements in each country and territory.

3. Full support to all forms of revolutionary violence and religious fanaticism.

To implement the new policy the Soviet Party boss Nikita S. Khrushchev chose A. Suslov, who quickly intensified these three main activities :

1. Special training schools for natives recruited in all countries of Africa. The main agitator training is in Czechoslovakia with a branch school in Budapest.

2. Czechoslovak "expeditions" to Africa. Highly trained propaganda experts travelling under the guise of scientific exploration, roam Africa establishing and maintaining a network of agents and correspondents.

3. Infiltration of religious missions. The spiritual needs of White Russians who, after the Russian revolution, settled in the African colonies and have become wealthy and influential, are being met by missionaries of the Russian Orthodox Church, many of whom are Communists agents.

With this apparatus, Suslov has mapped out this program of action:

EGYPT: Supplying the country with arms and technicians.

ETHIOPIA and LIBYA: Kremlin offer of economic aid and cooperation to shake the pro-Western attitude of these two independent countries.

Portuguese ANGOLA and MOZAMBIQUE : Red penetration through the Department of African Affairs to be greatly intensified and racial unrest fomented.

French WEST and Equatorial AFRICA: Several new separatist movements are planned, with native Communist rather than French Reds in the driver's seat.

French CAMEROONS: Native terrorists, who believe in rifles and knives, will replace old-time agitators, who campaigned peacefully for economic, political, and other reforms.



**Belgian CONGO:** Efforts to stir social unrest will be stepped up in the colony's mushrooming industries. Witch doctors are to be told by Red agents that their ancient power won't return until the Belgians have been thrown out.

**Union of SOUTH AFRICA:** Opponents of G. Strijdom's apartheid or racial segregation will be given full support. The aim is to whip up the same kind of militant agitation that now threatens France's hold on North Africa.

The arms are part of a master design by the Kremlin to infiltrate and envelop all Africa and its 193 million natives now stirring to nationalist drumbeats. The objective is familiar and irrevocable: conquest by subversion. Only the timing is flexible, in the manner of Soviet strategy elsewhere in the world.

#### CONCLUSION:

The battle for Africa has clearly begun. Let us be realistic, without however being over-pessimistic over the situation. Let us warn by words our people of the real danger that threatens them and their country, and let us show them by our whole attitude that

all we want is to save them from a certain material, moral, and religious disaster. Africa is at a turning point and unfortunately many of us do not seem to realize it even now. According to Msgr. Provost, ex-Prefect Apostolic of China, Africa is at present at the same stage as China ten years ago. He came to that conclusion after a three months tour in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika. He is perturbed at the calmness and security in which missionaries live, without suspecting the danger which is at their door-steps, exactly as missionaries did in China until it was too late.

A real danger is threatening us and our Christians, there is no doubt about it. Let us come out of our false security; let us keep our eyes open, look and see significant facts; let us keep our ears open and listen to resentful and malicious talks among the Africans; let us be convinced of the necessity of doing, without any more delay, all in our power, by fervent prayers, persuasive words, and charitable deeds, to save our dear Africa from COMMUNISM.

His Exc. Msgr. F. Courtemanche  
Vicar Apostolic  
of Fort Jameson

\* ————— \*

#### MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

**NOVEMBER:** *That social order in Indonesia may rest on Christian principles.*

**DECEMBER:** *Catholic schools in Africa.*

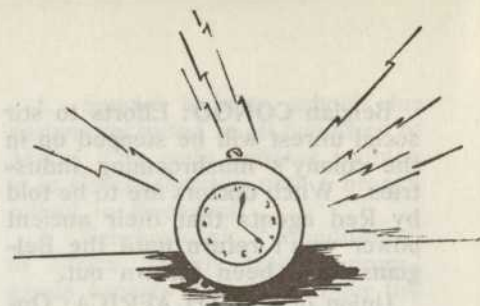
MERCEDES, CUBA

# Juanito

Sister St. COLETTE<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

Until he was ten, Juanito knew no other world than the green and gold world of the sugar cane plantation where he had been born and reared. He grew up as free as the breeze that blows from the sparkling Caribbean. But though his limbs, kissed by the vitalizing sunshine, were lithe and strong, his soul remained listless, deprived as it was of the beneficent sunshine of God's grace, for Juanito lived in a land where there was dearth of Catholic priests and still greater dearth of Catholic schools.

One day a startling rumour began to be tossed about his "barrio". It seemed that a chapel was to be constructed in the very centre of



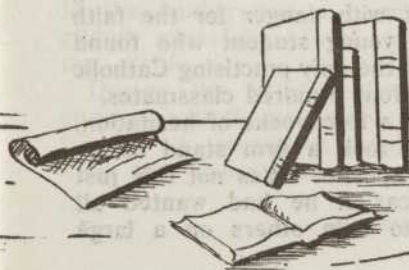
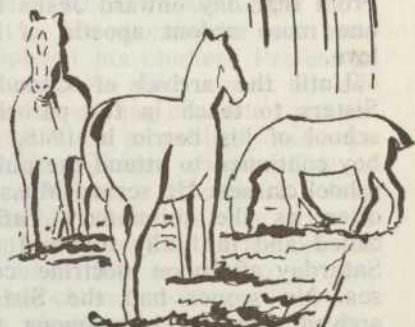
the region where the coloured population lived, and that a Canadian missionary would say Mass there every Sunday. At first, Juanito visited the chapel simply out of curiosity. But in his warm little heart soon developed a strong attraction for the place and a deep affection for the Padre. During the first weeks, however, he shyly kept in the rear benches; then he gradually wormed his way right to the front where he listened enraptured to his first catechism lessons. To him they sounded better than any fairytale he had ever heard.

In such excellent ground did the good seed fall that the boy soon begged permission to make his First Holy Communion. The Padre agreed on one condition—

<sup>1</sup> Lucienne Constantin, Montreal.







Juanito must first obtain his parents' assent. This was far from being an easy matter. His father was a freemason who hated the Church and priests in particular; his mother was completely indifferent as far as religion was concerned. Neither were disposed to beam approval upon their little son for wanting to become a practising Catholic. Juanito, courageous in every one of his growing inches, was in no way daunted. With gentle tenacity he kept on importuning his parents until he finally won the much desired permission. His First Communion was not marked by any solemnity it is true, but in his heart the boy tasted the purest and sweetest joys of his short life. From that day onward Jesus had one more ardent apostle of His love.

Until the arrival of Canadian Sisters to teach in the parochial school of his barrio in 1948, the boy continued to attend the public school classes. He served Mass as often as the missionary Father called and faithfully followed the Saturday afternoon doctrine courses. No sooner had the Sisters arrived than he was among the first to enroll in their Colegio. Gifted with a lively penetrating intellect and blessed with a genial happy disposition, he became a leader in studies and sports. This did not keep him from playing all sorts of merry pranks. One fine day during a lesson, an alarm clock shrilled long and loud much to the amusement of the pupils. Juanito kept a straight face but nobody was duped. Another time he placed a "salbadera" (wild

fruit that explodes with a deafening noise when ripe) on a classmate's desk almost causing a panic when its particles hard as wood flew in every direction. Still another time, with a group of boys of his own age, he sheared the tails off a number of horses to furnish models of hairdos for young ladies fancying horsetail style.

A leader in scholastic achievements, a leader in sports, Juanito also proved a leader in the apostolate. One May morning, at a ceremony kept private so as not to arouse the animosity of his family, together with four companions the lad took the engagement to become an active Catholic Actionist. His zeal and devotedness far outstripped the expectations of his teachers. The new fountain of happiness springing up in his soul began to overflow in hearts too long parched and barren by religious indifferentism.

His elementary studies over, the boy wished to enter a secondary school. But although his parents were not exactly poor they could not afford to pay his way to a higher education. In the hope of winning a bursar that would defray his expenses, he presented himself for the State examinations and won his way through. This success, however, was not without being fraught with danger for the faith of the young student who found himself the only practising Catholic among four hundred classmates.

After a few weeks of hesitation, Juanito took a firm stand as an ardent apostle. Was not this just the occasion he had wanted all along to help others on a large



scale? He immediately set to work among those with whom he was on more intimate terms, taught them their prayers, gave them doctrine lessons. Every Saturday, he found a cordial welcome with the Brothers of the Christian School who encouraged him and showed him friendly interest. How happy he was at Easter when six of his fellow students made their First Holy Communion! These youths soon became the nucleus of a fervent Catholic Action group. Things did not always work out so smoothly but Juanito was impervious to discouragement. He kept on his merry way, riveting affections, winning followers, making use of every occasion to draw others after Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Nothing he enjoys better when holidays come around to call at his Alma Mater of Mercedes and talk things over with the Madres. No matter how busy he is he always finds time to play some roguish prank or other. Thus last Christmas, while waiting in the convent parlor for Sister Superior to come down, he noticed a picture of the Nativity of Our Lord chalked on the blackboard. In a trice he drew above the scene, a flight of fighter planes from which a bomb was dropped on Herod's palace, while in the background a parachutist glided gracefully down towards the stable.

During the holidays he inaugurated, with the cooperation of his friends, a recreative centre to keep the young men away from

the clubs of freemasonry. Private courses given there free of charge opened with an enrollment of thirty pupils. The Canadian Madres willingly lent tables, chairs, and furnished pencils and writing material for this purpose. These classes produced unhopd for results and even aroused the admiration of non-Catholics. In September as a climax to their summer courses, the students at the head of the movement offered a banquet to more than two hundred militant Catholic Actionists. Juanito went back to school overjoyed at the success of his apostolate. He had proved to the skeptics around him that there is no more genuine happiness for youth than to work at leading others to Christ.

In a few months he will have completed his studies. Professors and students alike cannot but admire his sterling character and estimate him a promising youth with a brilliant future ahead. One of his teachers, a freethinker, once declared, "Juanito, you are one of my best pupils. In my opinion you have only one defect — you are too chummy with the Padres." This significant expression in the mouth of a secondary school teacher denotes the hostile spirit of godless schools. On the other hand it also perfectly outlines the lad's aspirations. Will he become an engineer, a physician, a priest? We cannot as yet know what the answer to this perplexing question will be, for unless someone helps him on to the University, he will not be able to keep on studying.







**Catholic  
Actionists  
in  
Cuba.**



**Three  
friends  
of  
Juanito's.**

# Adopting a Missionary

Sister MARIE THERESE<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

From the sunlit shores of the Beautiful Isle, I send you all most heartfelt thanks dear friends of the "Philip's" as I like to call you. You may be sure we appreciate the help you give us in our work of apostolate.

I admire your mission-minded initiative which prompted you, a group of young working girls, to adopt a missionary. It was Jane's idea to be sure but what could she have done alone and unaided? You shouldered her plan and promised her your valiant co-operation. Result — you chose as your own missionary the sister of one of your companions on the Chinese Missions these past eighteen years.

Your first letter explaining all this brought me great consolation. How gladly I signed the contract you sent for my approval! And so, from now on, the thirteenth of every month will have a special significance for us. On this day you will offer your Mass, your work, your alms and sacrifices for your missionary; she, on her part, will offer her prayers and

her works of apostolate for your intentions.

I know that you are all proud of your Faith. You are not, thank God, among those timid Christians who would not want everybody to know they have a small crucifix hidden somewhere in their bedrooms and, O yes, a rare copy of the Madonna hanging in an obscure corner of their living room. The cross of our Saviour, Our Lady's statue, these are the principal ornaments of your workroom for everybody to see. And at the feet of Mary's statue, you have placed a mission mite-box. If it could talk, this tiny charity bank, what eloquent tales it would tell! Your generous deeds may be hidden from a selfish thoughtless world. Nevertheless, they reach souls in strange, distant lands, and assure you at the same time untold riches in the heavenly kingdom.

For three years you have been faithfully forwarding me the contents of your mission mite-box. Even during my furlough spent in the homeland, you very kindly





let our mission of Hong Kong continue to benefit by your generosity. Now that I have been assigned to a totally new mission field, you have resolved to help me all you can in a spiritual and material manner. Here, everything is to be done and there is not much of anything to do it with. So your gifts will really prove a godsend. Thank you in my own name and also in the name of our beloved Formosans, beneficiaries of your charity.

I rely on you to keep up your

important work as homefront missionaries. Your precious little bank will unfailingly produce one hundred percent interest, not in earthly dividends but in terms of eternal currency. What a wonderful thing it would be if all the workrooms in Montreal followed your example! The work of the missionaries is too often hampered for lack of sufficient funds. May the dear Lord of the harvest bless you and be, as He has promised, your reward exceeding great.

# MALAGASY

## FUNERAL RITES

The Malagasy sacrifice huge sums of money for the erection of their funeral monuments. Some there are who even give up all they possess in order to secure a vast and magnificent burial plot. The same applies to the *lambamena* (shrouds). What does it matter if one has to go half naked during the present life which is so short as long as one makes sure to have numerous *lambamena* after death which will last so long? This is the way the good people around here reason.

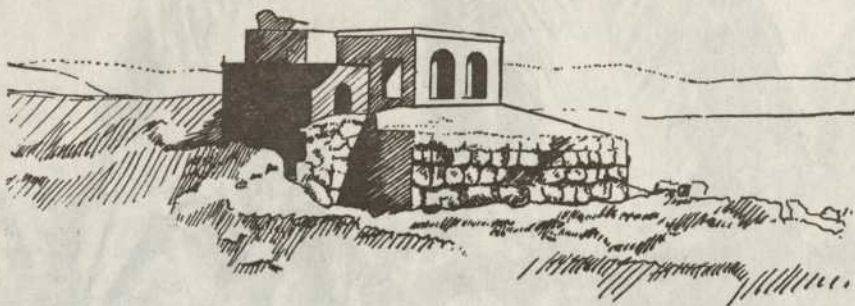
When a villager dies, all his relatives and acquaintances are invited to his funeral. After the deceased has been duly washed and anointed, he is clothed first in his *salaka* (linen loin cloth) and then in a neat *lamba*. In many regions instead of being laid out on a mat, the corpse is placed upright against a wall. This is the chosen moment for the women to break out into loud lamentations while the men begin to serve dishes of rice and meat to their guests.

On the first day of the wake, the numerous *lambamena* are exhibited before admiring groups of neighbours and acquaintances. Wealthy people may have as many as a hundred of these on display. Immediately be-

fore placing the dead person in the *trano-vorona* (coffin) a coin is inserted in his mouth, after which he is lovingly and carefully wrapped in his funeral garments. In the cemetery, the women surround the tomb with wailing and lamentations. Finally, the opening having been filled up with stones and gravel, the men folk climb on top of the monument to express their gratitude to all those present.

A few years later takes place the exhuming of the dead, what is known around here as the *revirement du mort* literally the turning over of the dead. For this event, professional singers and musicians are hired. There are usually two troupes on hand who compete one with the other, chanting the praises of the departed, while crowds of relatives and acquaintances stand by and give unstinted applause. Decked in their feastday finery, all the women who can claim even distant kinship with the departed, squat on mats in the midst of the assembly. On the second day of this celebration, they dance folk dances to the accompaniment of drums and much clapping of hands. Scores of animals are butchered for the numerous banquets offered to the guests. Wine flows freely, it goes without saying.





The ritual ceremony takes place at the close of the second day. After exhumation, the corpse is wrapped up in fresh shrouds and repeatedly borne in solemn processions around the new coffin. Such is the old Malagasy custom which stems from the sayings of the ancients, "Turn me over often... wrap me up in fresh

*lambemena* ... Set up a splendid funeral monument to my memory, and I will give you children... I will protect you always and everywhere." Catholics replace the *revirement du mort* by the singing of hymns and liturgical prayers.

SISTER ST. ADELAIDE<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

### Our Moslem neighbours

There is a mosque just across the way from our Convent. Its devotees belong to a reformed brand of Islamism founded by a certain son of Mohammed or Moshomet who suffered death at the hand of his father's disciples. Since his demise which took place centuries ago, members of the sect use mourning apparel in his honour. The men wear black shirts, the women black dresses and veils; even six-months-old mites are wrapped in sable swaddling bands! Late every evening, these Moslems assemble in their place of worship to hear endless harangues. Towards ten, the men begin scourging themselves with chains. High walls hide these religious ceremonies from the

profane but such is the men's ardour for penance, that they sometimes whip themselves in public until the blood flows. Once in a while they organize processions to the cemetery, carrying relics of their founder enclosed in a small jewelled shrine which appears to be very heavy. Women are never allowed to take part in such public demonstrations but they must weep as the cortege sets out. I have seen the handkerchiefs they use on such occasions if not the tears! The men walk backwards chanting in monotone and rhythmically striking themselves with the left fist on the right shoulder. Once in the graveyard, they prostrate themselves and kiss the tombs of their ancestors. These pilgrimages last late into the night.

<sup>1</sup> Adélaïde Tremblay, St. Cyprian, Temiscouata Co.



No, this is not a picnic. Our boarders are leaving to do their weekly laundry chores at a large pool in a distant garden. Sister Marie Viateur (Therese Drainville, Laval des Rapides) supervises "operation laundry".



## Death of a Christian

At the outset of the holidays, one of our boarders was saddened by the sudden death of her foster father, Emmanuel, a recent convert to the Church. On the previous evening he had called at the boarding school. After fervently making the Way of the Cross, he offered to take Pierrette, his daughter, home with him right away but she begged to postpone her departure until the next morning. She wanted to win a wager of five francs taken with a classmate of hers. Little could she then guess that this was the last time she would ever see her parent alive. Emmanuel often suffered from sick headaches. He woke up around four the next morning feeling violent pain in his head. Three times he repeated the invocation "My God, forgive me all my sins." Turning to his wife he said, "Give Pierrette my *velouna*. I will never see her again..." In a last burst of energy he succeeded in slipping to his knees and thus he died with the Holy Names on his lips. The priest arrived too late to administer the Last Sacraments.

Meantime the unsuspecting Pierrette kept waiting for her father at

the boarding school where he had promised to meet her. It was nearing the noon hour when a kind neighbour brought her the sad news and took her home. In the afternoon we visited the bereaved family. The small house was so crowded with people that we could hardly make our way inside. As soon as we entered, the professional weepers set up a dismal dirge. Prostrate beside the bed where her father lay in state, Pierrette announced to him in a lugubrious tone of voice the name of each person who called.

The women related to the family wore their *lamba* in the particular fashion used only in mourning. Instead of having their hair done up in numerous little braids, they had it hanging in one fat braid down their back. As is customary among the Malagasy, their faces wore a woe-begone look. To act otherwise would be courting disaster. They might then be accused of having poisoned the dead. This last occurrence is by no means rare in this region. On the following day, a *Libera* was chanted at Emmanuel's residence and he was buried that same afternoon.

Sister St. FELICITE<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

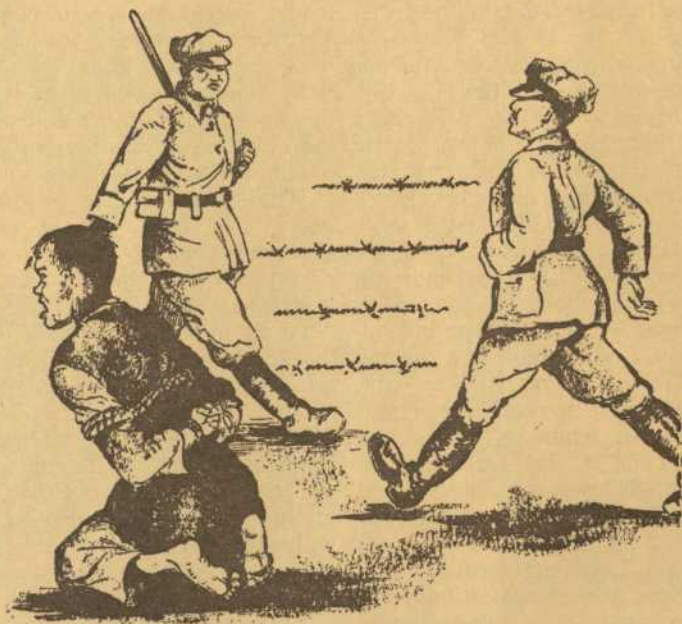


The time has come for us to implore her who borrows her light from the *Lux mundi* as the moon borrows her light from the sun, to intercede for us. For our world has for too long sinned against the Light. It may be that God's non-intervention is His judgment on a generation which has loved darkness rather than light, or it may be that this is one of the periods in which sanction is given Satan to try the souls of men and nations that in the end the lovers of light may prevail. Assuredly, this is the acceptable time in which to implore the Woman clothed with the sun, whose feet crushed the serpent's head, under the most apt and beautiful invocation of Our Lady of Light.

— Liam Brophy

<sup>1</sup> Therese Leblanc, St. Sylvere.

# Under the



# Hammer and Sickle

Sister St. EDMUND<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.



The early morning mists were lifting from the valley. Sunrise was breaking over the rugged mountain peaks that stood as ramparts about a secluded hamlet of northern Manchuria. Long before cockcrow, Blue Pearl the widow, had been astir helping her son, Teu Hae (Ocean of Virtue) with the barnyard chores, tidying her mud-and-wattle hut, preparing their humble meal of millet and pickled vegetables. She threw another bundle of sorgho stalks in the fire and set the millet pot to boil; then she paused for a few moments of prayer and recollection. How she loved this quiet hour of the day! Outside, tender fingers of light glorified each thatched roof, played a gamut of colour over the lazy river that meandered through the hollow. Always, it seemed to her deeply Christian soul that this rosy radiance was a symbol of the Lord of Heaven's blessing descending upon the earth.

She started when a voice resounded almost at her elbow. An indulgent smile lit up her face as she watched her son humourously berating the ducklings who had followed him right up to the doorstep and insisted on waddling into the kitchen. Rising, she put away her worn prayerbook and bustled forward, "Breakfast is almost ready," she declared as she ladled out the millet porridge into a large bowl to cool. Teu Hae gazed fondly after her while she came and went. He was a tall, square shouldered youth, with an honest face and clear brown eyes that looked fearlessly at life. Climbing up on the *kang* (brick bed used as seat) he remarked, "Fine weather we're having today. I have a mind to go down to the 'Vale of Peace' to harvest our share

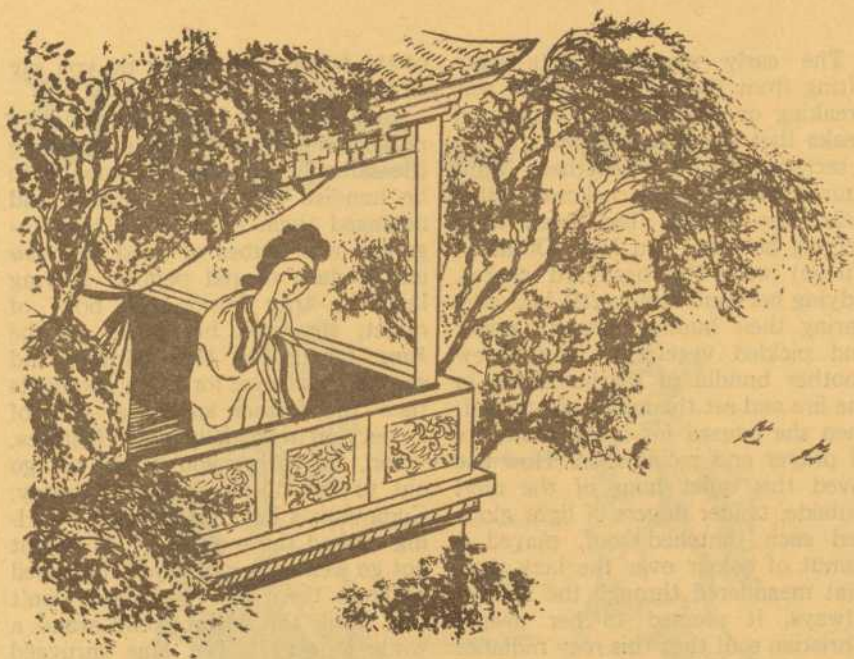
of the wheat crop. What do you say to this, Mother?"

Blue Pearl did not immediately reply. She busied herself chopping the salted vegetables fine enough to be handled by the chopsticks, and arranged them on a small tray together with cubes of fried *teou fou* and a dash of red pepper. Having laid the tray beside the bowl of millet, she took her place on the *kang*, facing Teu Hae. Mother and son ate in silence for a few moments then the former spoke, a look of anxiety on her usually placid features, "Son, I'd rather you would not go out to the 'Vale of Peace' today. Communists have lately been prowling around those parts... All might not go well with you if you happened to cross them on your way. Don't you think the wheat could stand a while longer?" Teu Hae shrugged his shoulders. "What could they do to me who have never bothered them? I've promised our neighbour Tchang to help him tomorrow and the day after. If I put off cutting the grain for three whole days, there would be risks of losing our crop. We can't afford to do that. Please don't worry, Mother. The 'Vale of Peace' is an almost deserted place, you know. The Reds probably prefer livelier regions."

He finished his meal in silence; then putting on his large volcano-shaped hat, he took a hand scythe from the wall and opened the door. But Blue Pearl laid a detaining hand on his arm. "Wait a moment, Teu Hae. If you must go, I want you to take along the Holy Mother's picture for protection." She turned into a curtained alcove and came back with a small picture yellowed with age.

<sup>1</sup> Irma de La Durantaye, Cap St. Ignace.





"This is one of my dearest treasures," she said slipping it inside her son's belt. "A missionary Father gave it to me long ago, on my First Communion Day. I want you to have it today because of my heart's misgivings..." She impatiently brushed off the tears that kept rolling down her cheeks, for a Chinese mother must be brave and strong and serene at all times. "*Tien Tchou kiang founi* (God bless you)," she whispered as he strode rapidly away to hide his emotions. For a long, long time Blue Pearl stood there gazing after his retreating figure. This sturdy son of hers was doubly dear to her since he was now the only remaining link with the past. She had seen all her dear ones perish, engulfed in the maelstrom of war.

Swinging down the narrow streets lined with small shops, Teu Hae made a brave attempt at humming snatches of popular songs. Try as he might, however, he could not quite succeed in shaking off the gloomy forebodings awakened by his mother's anxious words. Too well he knew that she had reason enough to worry. Ugly rumours regarding the ruthless enforcement of the hated agrarian reform had eventually seeped into their province; any day now the peasants might expect to see their lands wrested from them. At this thought Teu Hae's heart bled. Above all he prized the peaceful country life, the daily wholesome contacts with the soil. He could not bear to think that these fields watered by the sweat of generations of ancestors



might be his no longer. Would it not be a real desecration if strangers should tread them under foot? In every furrow it seemed to him that the forefathers had left something of their indomitable faith, their sturdy self reliance. If only he knew a way to stem this tide of evil threatening to submerge everything! Alas, he was only a poor peasant, an untutored youth whose influence weighed less than a feather in the balance of public opinion. Better stick to his work in the fields while yet he was free to do so. As he turned into the deserted country road that led into the valley, he pondered deeply over the various events that had led to this sad state of things.

For the Reds the war's aftermath of chaos and misrule had been a golden opportunity to make secure their hold on the harassed masses. They had posed as liberators, promoters of peace, sworn enemies of the old tyrannical rule, builders of a sound new social order. No longer need the weak be crushed and oppressed! No longer would the capitalists grind the faces of the poor! The great Chinese nation would know prosperity, social justice. The Chinese millions would stride forth together towards a marvelous future of brotherhood and progress. This was the first act of the play — *to seduce and to lull the victims*, to win them over by false promises, to





flatter the proletarians and exploit them for the advancement of the Red cause.

Leaders of the party successfully carried off this initial phase of their programme. They studiously avoided altering anything in the traditions of the people more especially of the farmers. During those first months, Communist officers could often be seen doing their share of farm chores, helping the villagers, taking part in working bees. Obliging and considerate, they used towards the peasants of the time honoured appellations "elder brother", "honourable sister-in-law", "venerable grandfather". The Chinese were properly impressed. Who could be found to criticize such model behaviour? Thus Communism at first appeared to the "hundred families" (the people of China) as a regime that had much to commend it.

While they lulled their victims to the tune of blandishments and benevolent promises, the Reds diligently gathered in secret the information they needed to blast the ancient Chinese society and raise up on its shambles the basis of collectivism. To the era of obliging phrases, succeeded that of fervid Party slogans. Centers of indoctrination were established in all the cities, towns, and villages. Citizens were strongly urged to unite in order to guard the interests of the working classes and to oppose the so-called imperialists, enemies of socialism.

Now the stage was set for the second part of the program — *compromise*. Each individual person was expected to collaborate, by denouncing to Communist authorities all that might in any way counteract

their influence. Delation eventually grew into an epidemic. Was it not the sole means of being absolved of one's past "crimes", of keeping a precarious hold on one's liberty? Whoever showed reluctance in accusing neighbours, acquaintances, and even members of his own family, was convicted of sabotaging the regime and shoved behind prison bars.

Fear of imprisonment and torture overrode scruples. Each district, each family, each person came to have its own particular warden. It became dangerous to visit friends or relatives, or to converse with them on the street, for the most innocent remark might be construed as a criticism of the Party. Gone were merry laughter and gay bantering. Joyous family reunions were canceled. In such an atmosphere of hate and suspicion, those dearest and nearest no longer found any pleasure in one another's company.

The next step ushered in *perversion* and *brain washing*. Intensive "purges" destroyed the ancient social hierarchy and liquidated "criminals", that is to say, wealthy landowners, officers in the nationalist army, influential men whose professions were declared "illegal". Condemned by People's Courts, these unfortunates were murdered either publicly or in secret. Reactionaries were dealt massive doses of indoctrination until they submitted or were driven to insanity or suicide. New syndicates were formed which excluded all chiefs and notables of the old regime. Manufacturers were systematically ruined by excessive taxes and endless vexations. The Communists frowned on everything that savoured of private enterprise. Even street peddlars of



hot tea and corn cakes were deprived of this means of independent livelihood and forced into collectivized labour. Farms were seized from their rightful owners and managed according to Red laws.

The so-called liberators had thrown off the mask. Communism had finally appeared under its true light — a regime of terror, a cruel dictatorship cunningly devised to exploit and enslave as never the old social order had exploited and enslaved. No alternative was left but to sacrifice to the Party family, country, religion, and life itself. Christians could in no way hope to come to terms with Communism, the atheistic Marxist philosophy being essentially perverse as Pope Pius XII has often declared. A ruthless hammer was crushing out the very soul of ancient Cathay. Too late its people realized that they had been tricked into signing away their traditional love of freedom and their age-old cultural heritage.

\* \* \*

All that balmy summer morning, the quiet "Vale of Peace" thrilled to the merry song of the scythe cutting the golden sheaves of grain. Teu Hae worked with unwonted activity hoping thereby to dispel inner clouds of apprehension. Towards noon he stopped for a while to rest under the shade of gingko trees that grew by the side of a clear little stream. He was straightening himself after bathing face and arms in the cool water when he suddenly heard the tramp of a heavy footfall. Three armed men were coming towards him pushing a prisoner ahead of them. The latter, a slightly built

man with a mild strangely serene countenance, had his arms tightly bound behind his back. The three armed men insolently stared at Teu Hae. Then a fiendish look crept into the eyes of the officer. "What are you doing here?" he snarled. "Harvesting," answered the peasant.

"We need your help, comrade. Come along." The chief's voice was hard and metallic. Teu Hae dared not resist. He fell in step behind the party until a halt was called in a little wood at the edge of the sorgho fields. What were these evil-looking men up to? The prisoner's bonds were loosened, and a shovel was handed him with which he was bidden to dig — his own grave. This matter settled the leader turned to the horrified Christian youth, an ugly leer twisting his coarse features. "We want to make sure that you are a good enough shot to work as soldier, comrade. You are going to shoot this traitor and be quick about it." Teu Hae's blood froze in his veins. He blurted out, "Why should I kill this man?"

"Just do as I tell you and no recrimination."

"But my religion forbids me to take another man's life without a legitimate reason..."

"Never mind your religion... any religion. Just do as I say or..." The gesture he made was eloquent. Still, Ocean of Virtue refused to be cowed. "You have no right to tell me to kill an honest man who has never done me the least harm and you know it..." Purple with rage, the chief yelled, "An innocent man! You dare call this sniveling dog of a capitalist an innocent man? Count yourself lucky to be a green head,



young man. Otherwise you would already be fodder for the ants... But, remember my patience has limits. I allow you one minute of reflection; then you will obey orders or rue the day."

The youth stood his ground. In his heart, he was fully determined to forfeit his life rather than commit a crime. He kept his eyes fixed on the grave-digger whose noble and courageous attitude in the face of a cruel and undeserved death fascinated him. Suddenly the prisoner looked up

from his gruesome task and flashed him a smile which seemed a mysterious message of good cheer. Then he bent over his shovel again. A moment later, however, before anyone had time to realize what was happening, he bounded out of the hole and dashed in the direction of the woods on the other side. Rifle shots cracked but missed their target. The four Red soldiers set out after the fleeing figure in hot pursuit.

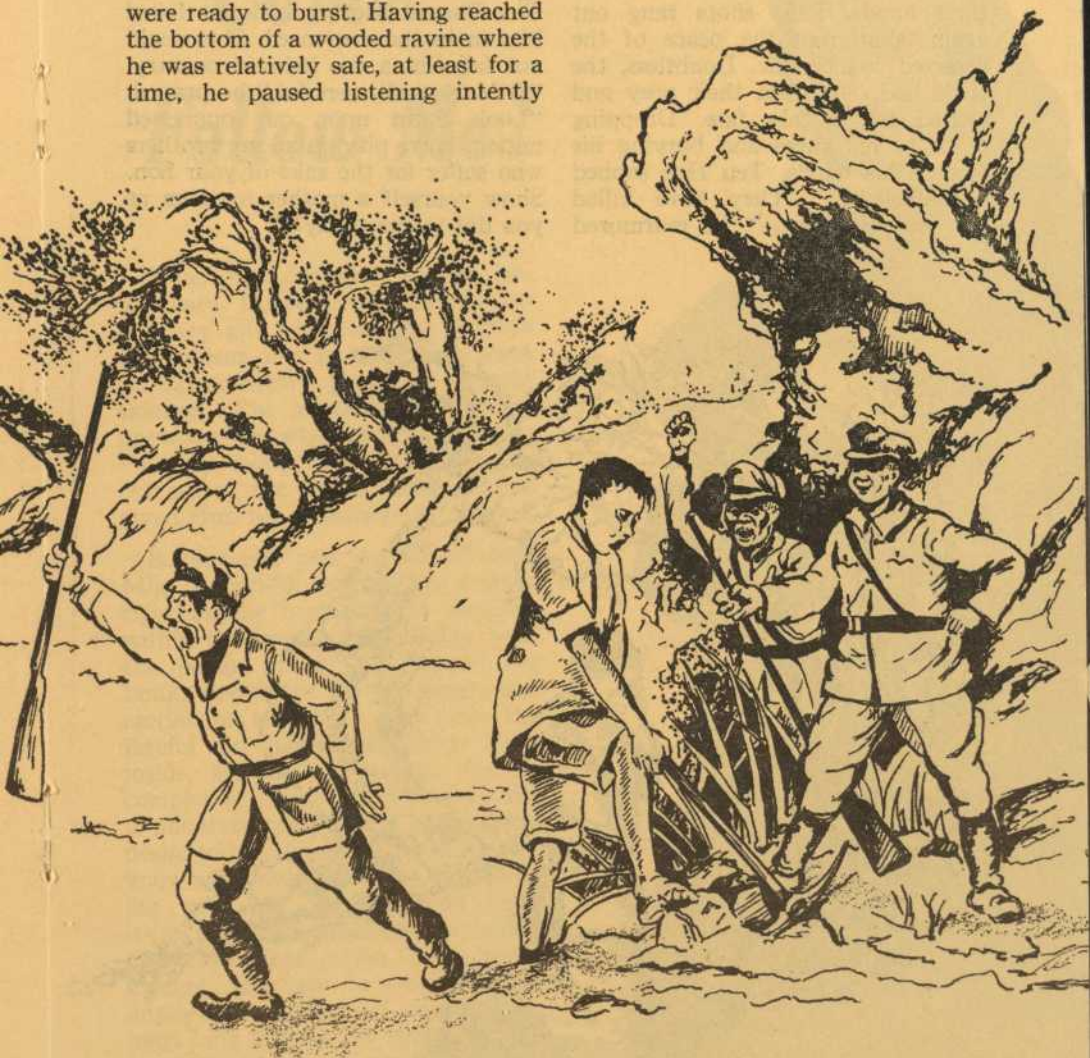
Meanwhile Teu Hae stood petrified as if in a grotesque nightmare until





an interior voice seemed to urge, "Quick! Make good your own escape!" A wild hope surged in his heart a hope that lent him wings. On and on he ran until his lungs were ready to burst. Having reached the bottom of a wooded ravine where he was relatively safe, at least for a time, he paused listening intently

for any sounds which might reveal the final fate of the fugitive. It came to him now as in a flash what that enigmatic smile on his face had



meant to convey. Surely the man knew he could not long outrun his captors. His flight had been a bold expedient to save him, Ocean of Virtue, from torture and death at their hands. Rifle shots rang out again, shattering the peace of the deserted countryside. Doubtless, the Reds had overtaken their prey and settled his earthly fate. Dropping down to his knees and burying his face in his hands, Teu Hae sobbed uncontrollably. "They have killed the soul of China..." he murmured

over and over again. Gradually, the storm of grief that had burst over him abated. He remembered his mother's parting words that morning and the picture she had given him. The Blessed Mother had not failed him in his hour of need. She would not fail China, his beloved country. "O Mother all merciful," he prayed, "Look down upon our oppressed nation. Have pity on all my brothers who suffer for the sake of your Son. Show yourself a mother to them as you did to me today!"





# Come Follow Me!

What is a postulant of the Immaculate Conception? She is an ordinary girl who has said goodbye to her dear ones in order to become an extraordinary person — a missionary. The heavenly Bridegroom has wooed her, whispering to her heart, "Come, follow me . . . to the far reaches of the earth," and she has given Him her wholehearted consent.

Businesslike and matter-of-fact, Miss Twentieth century has started right at the beginning by securing within the least possible delay from the pastor of her parish and her family doctor the various papers and certificates required. And now, the fateful day has come. Deep down inside, she feels a strange modern complex of elation over the step she is about to take and of half-formed desire to be refused. Does she really know what she wants? As the parting with her family draws near, issues appear confused and the reasonableness of her action is no longer evident. Perhaps to cover up her annoyance with herself she spends a long, long time before the mirror for this her ultimate séance of make-up.



So that when she rings the convent doorbell, her pretty mask in no way betrays the battle still raging within. One last time her highheeled shoes play a sharp staccato along the tiled corridors of the novitiate. They sound for all the world like the march of soldiers storming a citadel.

In less time than it took her to choose her Easter hat, she finds herself clothed in the postulancy outfit: black dress and cape, sky blue sash — thank You, dear Lord, for this flash of gaiety — frilly bonnet hiding only half of her bouncing curls — thank You, dear Lord, for this flight of fantasy. Evidently, religious life does not catch one by the hair! From now on, there will be no more worry over her appearance, no more dawdling over the choice of this or that toilette and accessories. "Get thee behind me, all ye wordly vanities!" she exclaims as she firmly ties the strings of her black bonnet. Nothing matters now but training wholeheartedly for her new way of life.

Numerous and varied are the things she has to learn. Getting up in the grey hush before the dawn, taking her part in the community prayers, practising the restful rule of silence, keeping her eyes modestly cast down... She finds that the intellectual side is not neglected. Daily she bends her intellect to the discipline of religious and secular studies such as will prepare her for her future missionary tasks — English, plain chant, solfeggio, music. Has not the Holy Father himself given His sanction to these pursuits in his encyclical letter of December 1955 on *Sacred Music*? In this remarkable document numerous are the passages that underline the

importance of music as a means of apostolate and of sacred music in the missions.

Being a missionary-in-the-making, our postulant is not above lending a hand in every kind of household tasks. She learns to sweep clean without slighting the corners! It appears that a common failing of modern girls is that they have lost — perhaps they never had it — the notion of corners... Need one be surprised? For the last twenty years or so life has been whirling at such a pace that corners unavoidably do get overlooked. The pattern of her lives as a modern writer puts it is "essentially circular". In the sewing room, the postulant gets initiated into the fine art of sewing on patches and mending tears. Each and every one of these homely tasks, she endeavours to wreath with a pleasant smile. The Psalmist's song she has taken to her heart, "Joyful be the thoughts that well up from my heart! The King's honour forms my theme." But her new existence is by no means all work and no play. In summer, games of volley ball or tennis, in winter skating over the novitiate rink provide outlets for youthful energy. Cannot even these recreational activities teach unique lessons in that self-possession which is basic to habits both of practical charity and of union with God?

Among the most important of all the lessons to be mastered during the postulancy is the "Know thyself!" of the ancients. Admitting her limitations, being ready to laugh at her mistakes, developing a character strong enough to cope with all difficulties, such is her programme. A







MARTHA

Serving the Lord of the Eucharist







GARDEN-PARTY ?



staunch spirit of generosity and a sense of humour are essential to a missionary Sister. Else she might risk becoming a sorry apostle, one powerless to adapt herself to the demands and eventualities of life on the missions.

It would be unfair to say that a postulant constantly glimpses the world through rose coloured glasses since the postulancy is a time of training and adaptation. What is the real meaning of adaptation if not, the softening of angularities, the planing out of knots, the adjustment to ever varying conditions that include the unexpected and the contradictory at every turn? These character transformations are achieved slowly but surely through the grace

of God, the power of prayer, the stimulus of good example.

As her Community studies her, the postulant studies the Community. Both must make sure that they are really and truly meant one for the other. We might compare the postulancy to the period of courtship before marriage! At the end of six months, a first bond of kinship is knit; the postulant receives the white habit and a religious name. The big family of the Immaculate has one more novice. What is the worth of one more novice? One more novice, one more life burned out for the glory of God like a taper consumed before the altar.

Sister ALINE, novice

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## POWER of EXAMPLE

Once, when giving a talk to the Basutho Sisters, His Excellency Msgr. Mabathoana, recalled how he had been encouraged to persevere in his vocation by the inspiring example of Sisters of his own race. "I was then a young seminarian who found the discipline of an ordered life almost unbearable. I had grown up a carefree herder like the other boys of my tribe. How I hated living inside the four walls of a house! I felt like a captive cub. A day even came when it seemed that I simply could not go on. I decided to return to the free wild life of my people. Before going home, however, I took one long last look around the seminary and surroundings. In the vegetable garden of the Roma community garden, I noticed some Basutho Sisters hard at work. Half ashamed of my still secret resolution, I said to myself, 'These women of my race have persevered... Will I be coward enough to turn back? I will at least wait a few more days...' I did wait, not a few more days but all the time needed to become a priest, thanks to the good example set by Sisters of my own race working courageously and patiently at the humble tasks assigned by holy obedience."

What wonderful fruit bore the seed of a humble task performed for the love of God! Did you ever stop to think that your own hidden acts of self-denial might help a seminarian or a novice overcome temptations of discouragement? How many souls might have missed eternal joy if the youthful Mabathoana had not been faithful to the end?



# Igorot Hospitality

Sister St. MARCEL<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

*BAGUIO, P.I.*

We set out, Sister Marie Albert<sup>2</sup> and I, under the tropical heat of a summer afternoon bent on an errand to Beckel, an Igorot village set in the mountains back of our convent. For a whole hour we trudged along the solitary trail that climbed ever upward, at times skirting the brink of yawning chasms. After a while a few thatched roofs peeped here and there from the thick foliage, nestling down the slopes of ravines, or perched on boulders close to Beckel chapel. The panorama all around held us entranced by its wild, majestic beauty.

As we neared destination, we noticed unusual animation on the mountainside. In the daytime, Igorot

villages are practically deserted, for all the villagers spend their time in the rice paddies or in the *camote* (sweet potato) patches. Even the babies ride pickaback to the fields with their sturdy mammas who share in farming activities.

Someone had signalled our coming. We had not yet entered the compound when a young man ran forward to meet us and extend a cordial invitation. "We are holding a *canao* (religious celebration) at Dampilog's house. The guests have arrived and everything is ready. Won't you join in the festivities, Madres?" While he spoke, groups of Igorots dressed in G. strings and bolos passed us in

<sup>1</sup> Antoinette Castonguay, Montreal.

<sup>2</sup> Madeleine Alarie, Trecesson, Abitibi.



direction of the headman's house. This invitation caught us unawares. Of course we had long been on the lookout for a favourable occasion to meet the Igorots in their own territory, but we had hardly expected to be invited to a *canao*. We looked at each other questioningly. Should we accept? There was really nothing else to do, for our refusal would surely hurt their feelings.

The Igorot *canao* consists in a ritual sacrifice meant for the appeasement of tribal deities. According to local legends, Kabunian, chief divinity of the Igorots, once sent his son Lumawig to earth to lay down rules of good moral behaviour for human beings and to teach them how to till their rice fields and vegetable gardens. After a while, his mission being duly accomplished, Lumawig returned home to his father in heaven. How surprised one is to find in these old legends a faint fragmentary resemblance to Catholic teachings! Besides Kumanian and Lumawig, the Igorots honour *anilos*, spirits special to each clan. The *canao*, as far as we could gather, is the sacrifice par excellence, agreeable to sundry tribal gods. How often must the *canao* be offered? It seems that no fixed rule exists regarding the frequency of its celebration. According to the various petitions made, its name may even vary. Thus, it is called *cafev* when a cure is implored; *savang* when riches or prestige are desired; *pechil* when it is supposed to be a thanksgiving offering. In the latter case, five pigs must be immolated as ritual victims. Weddings, births, plentiful harvests, usually call for a *canao*. Besides, should a daughter-in-law happen to dream about her late father-in-law,

a *canao* is forthwith organized to appease the spirit of the dead.

Dampilog, the chief, gave us a right cheery welcome. "Naimbag nga bigat yo!" (Greetings to all.) Igorot ladies crouching on one side of the enclosure, examined us curiously while smoking their pipes. On the other side, their men folk wearing crowns of pretty flowers, prepared to dance the ritual dance of the *canao*.

When everything had been made ready, the *mambunung* (officiant) rose and solemnly drank a libation of *tapey* (red rice wine). Then he squatted and intoned the following prayer: "Spirits of the mountains, come! Share this repast with us. Grant that the animals slaughtered in your honour may bring us profit." Crouching in a wide ring, the elders took up the prayer in low, monotonous tones, punctuated by the dull throbbing of drums. The dancers then jumped up and, with frenzied shouts, started circling a spear stuck into the ground and decorated with banana roots. This was repeated thrice. Then the dancers sat down quietly much to the relief of Sister Marie Albert who felt somewhat overawed by this bizarre spectacle. Seeing her perplexity Dampilog drew near and courteously explained the meaning of the performance. The banana root set on top of the spear represented, he said, a human head with its hair flying in disorder. Just then I recalled with a little shudder tingling down my spine, how much the Igorots enjoy recounting tales of the grand old days when their ancestors were renowned head-hunters. At present, thanks to severe police surveillance, such high feats are very rarely recorded except perhaps in cases of

vendettas. Even then, the murderer carefully bides his time before exhibiting to the tribe elders tangible proof of his bravery. Such happenings are practically unknown in Beckel, however. Its inhabitants are rec-

ognized as the most civilized of all Igorot clans.

Once the wicked genii have been placated, the ritual offering is made. Catholics may not take part in this phase of the *canao* as it is considered

**The pot in which stews the carabao meat.**  
**In the rear centre, Chief Dampilog in his Igorot costume.**





an act of idolatry. The ceremony consists in presenting to the *anito*, a basket containing cloth, wine, tobacco, and a certain sum of money, usually amounting to ten pesos (five dollars).

Squatting on a straw mat, the officiant chants a prayer in low rumbling tones. He interrupts his orisons for a few moments when the main victim,

a *carabao*, is let forward and tied to the basket. Afterwards, he prays again and declares the sacrifice complete. No more trouble with the *anitos*, at least for a while! Now comes the second part of the *canao*, the most joyful part enjoyed by young and old. The young men spread a grass carpet in the yard and the guests all sip some *tapey*. Meanwhile



the *carabao* is butchered and the meat is set to cook outside in a huge *calisi* (iron pot). Part of this meat is always put aside for the gods together with a bowl of rice. At the opening of the banquet, the officiant standing apart intones the offering prayer: "Kubunian! Lumawig! Kabigat! Uwigan! Bojan! Gatan! Hear ye! Deign to partake of this food which we offer that all of us may enjoy length of days, that the organizer of this celebration may have a long and happy life and thus be enabled to hold many more *canao*..." The host and hostess then taste of the food prepared for the gods and this is taken as the formal opening of the festivities.

The women are responsible for the table service. The chief rule is that each guest must get as much meat as he wants. Some parade around sucking popsicle and exhibiting a dozen big hunks of meat strung on sticks. The pot is kept boiling as long as the banqueting lasts. When the family is rich, two or three days are spent this way singing, feasting, and dancing.

We went from one group to the other, saying a few words about the true God, offering miraculous medals. The pagan priest asked, examining a medal, "Whose picture is this?—Yours?" This furnished us the occasion to tell the Igorots about Our Lady, mother of Our Saviour whose name is not Lumawig but Jesus. "We never heard about them," remarked the priest. "We elders have to keep up the ancient traditions, you know, but it would be a good plan if our children were to get instructed in this new religion." Needless to say these words warmed the cockles of

our hearts. How we long to see them realized!

Just as we were preparing to leave, Dampilog stopped us. "No, no, you must not leave our village without eating at least one meal. Carmencita, my wife, has prepared some American food for you inside my hut. Please, do not refuse." To the Igorots, since the war, all foreign persons or things are American. The headman led the way inside and we sat down in front of pyramids of rice and sweet potatoes garnished with slices of fried *carabao*.

After reciting our Benedicite we cautiously attacked the rice using our fingers native style. But we soon experienced the truth of the old axiom, "Practice makes perfect." Practice we never had had eating rice with our fingers, so we were in for a little harmless humiliation. Laughter rippled as the Igorots crowding around watched us with grains of rice sticking not only on our hands but on our nose and cheeks as well. Dampilog was all considerateness when he noticed our plight. "Try, doing it this way," he counselled deftly rolling a neat little ball of rice in the hollow of his hand. It was easy for him who had practised since childhood but quite a trick for us, foreigners. He made a discreet sign to his wife and a few moments later we were equipped with spoons, perhaps the only utensils of the kind in the village. We thanked the headman for his courtesy but we kept practising at moulding each mouthful with our fingers. Our friends must not be left under the disagreeable impression that we preferred our table manners to theirs.

A little red in the face from the effort to eat rice gracefully, we at



length finished our meal and recited grace. The ice was broken. Dampilog, Carmencita and Co., surrounded us pleased and flattered to have had the Madres assist at their *canao* and eat at their table. Weeks later, they were still spreading the news far and wide. Before leaving Beckel we in turn invited them to assist at the *canao* held every Sunday at the Catholic Mission. All promised to do so. May the Holy Spirit enlighten these simple hearts

and flood them with sanctifying grace.

To the friends of our missions, we would like to make a suggestion. The little Igorot mission of Beckel is very poor. Any gift in kind even the smallest would be received with deep-felt gratitude: rosaries, altar linen, English books, clothing, etc. Above all, we beg your prayers and sacrifices which will help plant in these hill villages, prosperous centers of Christianity.

### THE BANQUET.





*LES CAYES, HAITI*

# FANNY

Sister JOSEPH of the CHILD JESUS<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

Fanny had been working at our place for several months when she incidentally revealed that she had not yet made her First Communion. I was amazed, for she is over sixty and has a family of

eight children. "Would you like me to teach you a little catechism every day?" I inquired. She clasped her hands to her heart and her face became a study in appreciative thankfulness. "Oh,

<sup>1</sup> Lise Mercure, Normandin.



Mother Joseph, if you only would! Nobody ever took the trouble of teaching me because I am too stupid."

From that day onward, as soon as she had a little time left between her chores, Fanny faithfully tried to learn all there was to learn in order to welcome Jesus into her loving heart. As she was no longer young it did not always prove easy for her to memorize prayers and catechism. Although I explained the principal mysteries of our holy faith over and over again, she kept on getting mixed up. One day, after I had told her the story of Pentecost when the apostles had been filled with piety, courage, understanding, and numerous other spiritual gifts, Fanny suddenly exclaimed, "I wish the same Holy Spirit would come into my old head and make me understand things!"

Her goodwill was so evident that she was allowed to make her First Communion after only two months of catechumenate. She did so on the feast of Our Lady's Visitation. Her companions shared her happiness, accompanying her

to the altar rail all dressed in white. Appropriate hymns were sung during Mass and a special sermon was preached. In the afternoon, the whole group came back to the chapel to pronounce an act of consecration to "Maman la Vierge"; Fanny's heart had never known such deep-felt happiness. All the day long she repeated to everyone she met "If Mother Joseph had not had the patience of teaching me the catechism, I would never have been able to receive Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament."

On the octave day of her First Holy Communion, as she began her usual work in the laundry, she confided to the Sister in charge, "I'm going to offer my whole day to God who did something for me, last Saturday. I want Him to know how grateful I am..."

If numerous Haitian chapels and churches were razed by the devastating hurricane *Hazel*, infinitely more numerous are the immaterial tabernacles where the God of the Eucharist has not yet been housed. Will you not hasten by your prayers the day when all hearts will acknowledge His reign of Love?



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

# CALICI CABWINO

Sister St. ALEXANDRINE<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

Our class on Home Economics was about to resume its activities at the opening of a new semester. Among the last pupils to enroll was Agnes, a young native woman of pleasing personality, the proud mother of a lovely girl baby. Her husband Alexander who works at a city store encouraged his wife to learn all she could so as to become a good housekeeper.

From the outset, Agnes showed remarkable ability in the household arts of cooking and sewing. Her gentle, considerate manners endeared her to all who came in contact with her. As she seemed eager to become a Catholic, we hoped that closer relations with the Catholic missionaries would soon bring this about.

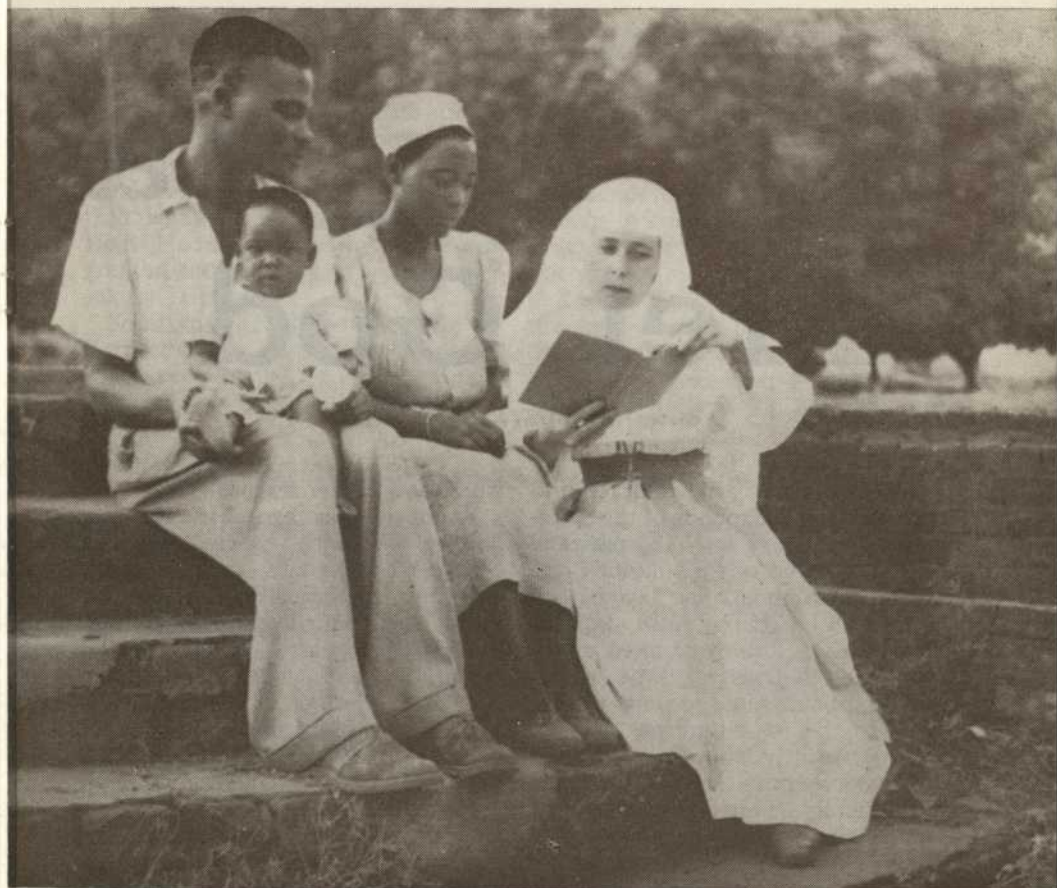
But our surmises did not prove right. One day, Agnes called to announce that she regretted not being able to continue attending our classes. She went on to explain how she would have to spend all her spare time from now on, following religious instructions at the Dutch Reformed Church to which her husband belonged. This decision was not exactly good news, but what could we do? The regulations of non-sectarian schools forbid all religious discussions or propaganda within the schoolroom.

Agnes went the way her husband led but we determined to lay this matter in Our Lady's hands. She alone was powerful enough to straight-

en out the tangled skein of this couple's erroneous convictions. The answer to our prayers came sooner than we expected. A few days later, Agnes called at the convent accompanied by Alexander under the pretext of exhibiting their little Dofi's new frock. Incidentally, we inquired on what date Agnes was to be baptized. "Oh, we don't know yet. The ceremony has been postponed," replied the husband. Without further beating about the bush, I asked "Are you quite sure that you have found the true religion? Have you ever examined the claims of the Catholic Church?" Instead of angering him, this reflection of mine seemed to bring him relief. "Indeed I have, *Amayi*," he immediately replied. "For a certain time we have been both considering whether we should not ask for doctrinal instruction from the *Bambo* and the *Amayi*..."

The pair left as happy as children and well provided with books on the Catholic doctrine. Since then, many are the visits they have paid us Sisters. It seems that there are never enough explanations given them to satisfy their thirst for truth. Like the good catechumens that they are, they never miss their Sunday Mass. Both of them are still marveling over the happiness of having found out what Alexander likes to call *Calici Cabwino*, the true Church of the one true Shepherd.





**The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men  
of all races and colours, this is what**

**Sister St. Alexandrine (Evelyn O'Neil, Quebec)**

**teaches this merry African trio,**

**Alexander, Agnes, and Dofi.**

# Mr. Fujita Met God

Sister St. EUSTACHE<sup>1</sup>, M.I.C.

We first came across Mr. Fujita while making the rounds of the Suka-gawa Sanatorium for T.B. patients. At that time he was a militant Communist even though he lay all but helpless on his shabby *futon* (Japanese mattress). Nothing daunted by his countless rebuttals we kept on inquiring about him on our weekly visits to the establishment.

Until recently, it was the custom in Japanese hospitals for members of the family or hired servants to attend to the patient's personal needs. For five years Mrs. Fujita thus took vigilant care of her ailing husband who, it must be admitted, had nothing of the gentleness and docility of the lamb. She always greeted us pleasantly whenever we stopped to inquire after her patient, and accepted with a shy grateful smile the flowers or dainties we sometimes brought. On such occasions, Mr. Fujita showed himself in an even gruffer mood than usual or turned his face to the wall pretending sleep. But while we talked religious matters with his wife or the other patients, he missed not a

word, as we later learned.

About a year ago, Mr. Fujita's mother, who until now had assumed charge of the young couple's three children, fell critically ill and summoned her daughter-in-law to her bedside. She passed away shortly afterwards, and there was nothing left for the young wife and mother to do but to hire herself out in order to provide for her little ones. The poor patient was forcibly left to fend for himself as best as he could. These trials were not made to improve his cantankerous character. When he no longer had the strength of flinging abuse at those who believed in a merciful God, he glared at anyone, even his Buddhist acquaintances, who dared mention spiritual values in his presence.

His conversion came about when it was least expected. In the first days of November, last year, his illness suddenly took a turn for the worse. He fell into a coma which lasted three whole days and which the doctors judged would prove fatal. While he thus wandered in that dim borderland



between life and death he "met God" as he afterwards recounted. For the first time in his life, he prayed desperately that he might be spared and be given time to repent of his evil ways. "I really met the Master of Heaven" he once confided to us. "Oh, what a kind, honourable person He is! He told me that my prayer was granted and that I must immediately ask for Baptism."

So attentive had he been while we instructed his roommates and his wife on our numerous visits to Sukagawa that he was now found suffi-

ciently instructed to be baptized. This ceremony which occurred on October 15, was a surprising event in the ward and even in the entire hospital where the patient had long been known for a rabid atheist. Some of his friends did scoff at him for his change of heart but numerous were those who were touched by the evident sincerity of his conversion. Not content with the selfish possession of the pearl of great price, he forthwith became as ardent an apostle for the truth as he had been for error. His first thought was for his wife and

**Sister St. Eustache frying fish "Japanese style".**



children. Reduced to working as waitress in a restaurant, Mrs. Fujita did not even possess sufficient means to visit her sick husband at the San, Nagoya being at a considerable distance from Sukagawa. How often he expressed the wish to have them share in his new found happiness!

Every time we called, Mr. Fujita would broach some new plan of apostolate. But always his own family was uppermost in his thoughts. "Sister," he said, "I can hardly wait for my wife to come... I've written her about my becoming a child of the heavenly Father through Baptism and how much I want her to have part in my good fortune. I've made her promise to have our children baptized as soon as she can contact a priest." Meantime, the patient who had rallied somewhat, asked for further doctrinal instruction to prepare for his First Communion. On November 13, Reverend Father Reid, the pastor of the Catholic Mission at Koriyama, who regularly visits the patients of Sukagawa, said Mass at the hospital and, on this occasion, Mr. Fujita met Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for the first time. We helped him with his thanksgiving. When we were about to leave, he exclaimed, tears coursing down his cheeks, "Arigato, arigato (honourable thanks!) Never have I tasted such happiness. Now, I know that I shall never again feel alone... I have Someone with me. Someone with whom I can converse, Someone to whom I can turn for solace." The look of joy on his emaciated face was like the radiance of spring sunshine on a denuded landscape. As we turned our steps homeward, the catechist

remarked, "This is the most wonderful conversion I have ever witnessed. *Seibo Maria Sama* (honourable Mother Mary) must have had a hand in it." To this we heartily agreed. Celestial seeds had we sown, innumerable Aves, as we paced the endless corridors and huge wards of the Sanatorium. They had germinated and produced this rare celestial fruit of conversion. Laudate Mariam!

During Mr. Fujita's "meeting" with the Master of Heaven, when he lay for three days unconscious, he had begged the grace to live long enough to be baptized and to repair the harm he had done to others. Both these petitions were granted. He lived three months longer for the edification of all concerned. His closest friend, whom he had won over to Communist ideas before he was baptized, at first resisted his efforts to win him over to Christ. The convert prayed, offered his sufferings, and hoped against hope. As he gradually became weaker and could no longer be wheeled into his friend's room, he resorted to writing letters, sending him eloquent epistles which met all objections halfway. At last the besieged one surrendered to grace and asked for doctrinal instruction.

In the evening of February 11, feast of Our Lady's Smile, we learned that early that same morning, Mr. Fujita had been called to bask in the sunshine of God's presence forever. We had visited him the previous day and found him very low. He was perfectly content at the prospect of going home to his heavenly Father.

Dear reader, will you not say a prayer that the whole Fujita family may soon be reunited to its chief by entering the one true Fold?



# *The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception*

## CANADA

MOTHERHOUSE, 2900 St. Catherine Road  
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26.  
NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Montreal 9.  
OUTREMONT, 314 St. Catherine Road  
Montreal 8.  
CHINESE HOSPITAL, 112 Lagauchetiere St., West  
Montreal 1.  
NOMINQUE, Labelle County, Que.  
RIMOUSKI, Que.  
JOLIETTE, 750 St. Louis Street.  
QUEBEC, 1073 St. Cyrille Street West.  
VANCOUVER, Oriental Hospital, 236 Campbell St.  
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, 766 Cenacle Street.  
SAINTE MARIE, Beauce County, Que.  
SAINT JOHNS, Que., 430 Champlain Street.  
PERTH, N. B.  
OTTAWA, Ont., 443 Gilmour Street.

## UNITED STATES

MARLBORO, Mass., 207 Pleasant Street.

## CHINA

OUR LADY OF FATIMA HOUSE  
103 Austin Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.  
OUR LADY OF PROTECTION HOUSE  
Clear Water Bay Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

## FORMOSA

KUANHSI, Catholic Church, Hsinchu Hsien, Taiwan.  
SHIH KUANG TASE, Catholic Church, Hsinchu  
Hsien, Taiwan.  
TAIPEI, Ho Ping Tung, 2nd Section, An Tung  
Chieh 363, Taiwan.

## JAPAN

KORIYAMA, 96 Toramaru, Koriyama Shi,  
Fukushima Ken.  
WAKAMATSU, 480, sakae machi, Aizu Wakamatsu.  
TOKYO, 108-4 cho me Fukazawa cho, Setagaya ku.

## ITALY

ROME, via Giacinto Carini, 8.

## PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

MANILA, Immaculate Conception Anglo Chinese  
Academy, Gen. Luna St., Intramuros.  
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LAS PINAS, Rizal.  
MATI, Davao Province.  
DAVAO City, Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall.  
PADADA, Davao Province.  
BAGUIO, City, II, Paddal, 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.  
TROU DU NORD, Haiti.  
PORT AU PRINCE, cité Magloire, No. 2.  
DESCHAPELLES, Albert Schweitzer Hospital  
Post Box No. 4, Saint Marc, Haiti.  
MERCEDES, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.  
MARTI, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.  
MANGUITO, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.  
LOS ARABOS, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.  
MAXIMO GOMEZ, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.  
COLON, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.

## AFRICA

KATETE MISSION, Katete River P.O.  
Nyasaland, B.C.  
MZAMBAZI MISSION, Kafukule P.O.  
Nyasaland, B.C.  
RUMPHI MISSION, Rumph P.O., Nyasaland, B.C.  
KARONGA MISSION, Karonga P.O.  
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