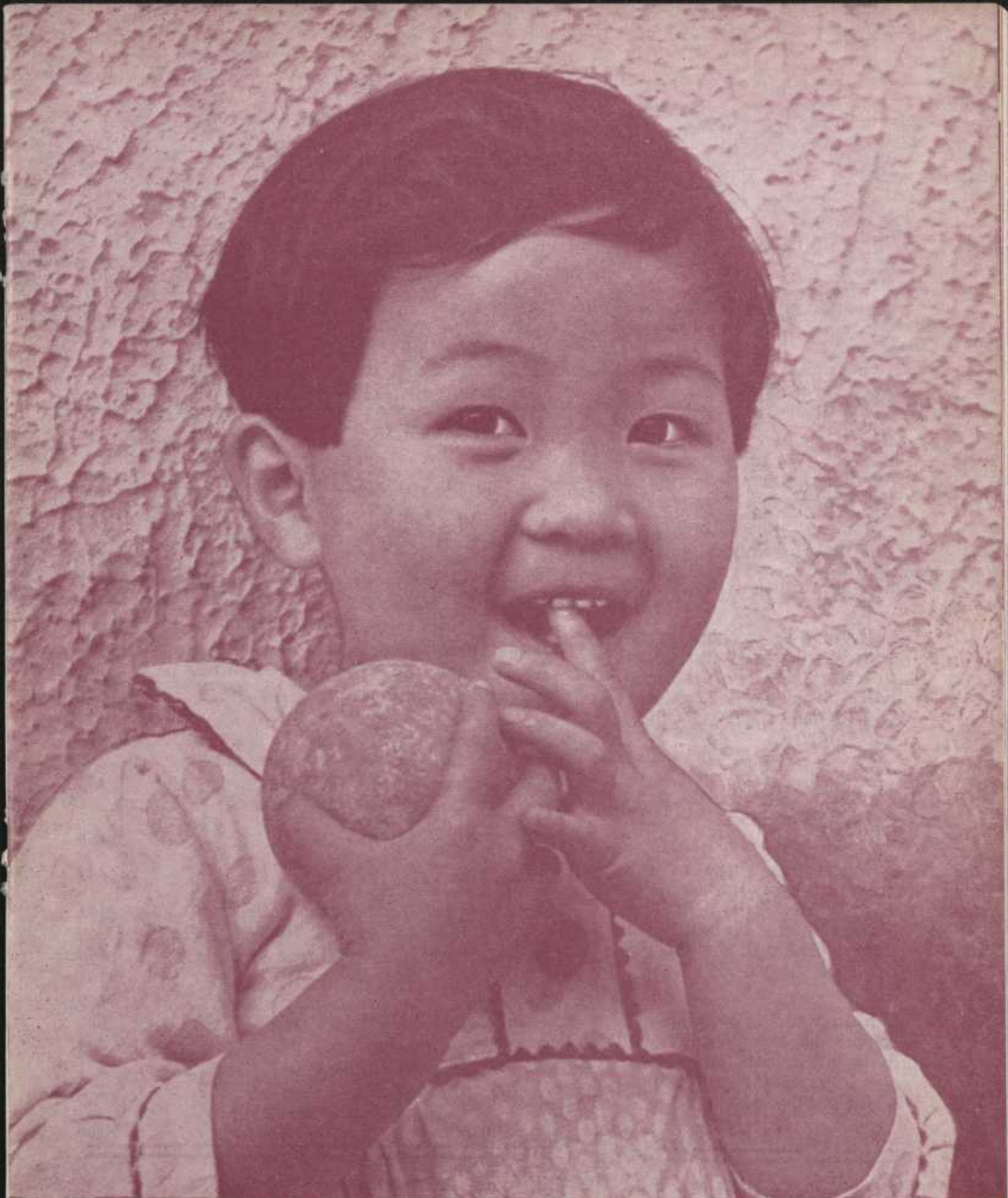




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The Precursor

The Precursor

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Our cover pictures:

1. "Who wants to play ball with me?"
2. A Chinese labourer, Kowloon.



PADADA, Philippine Islands

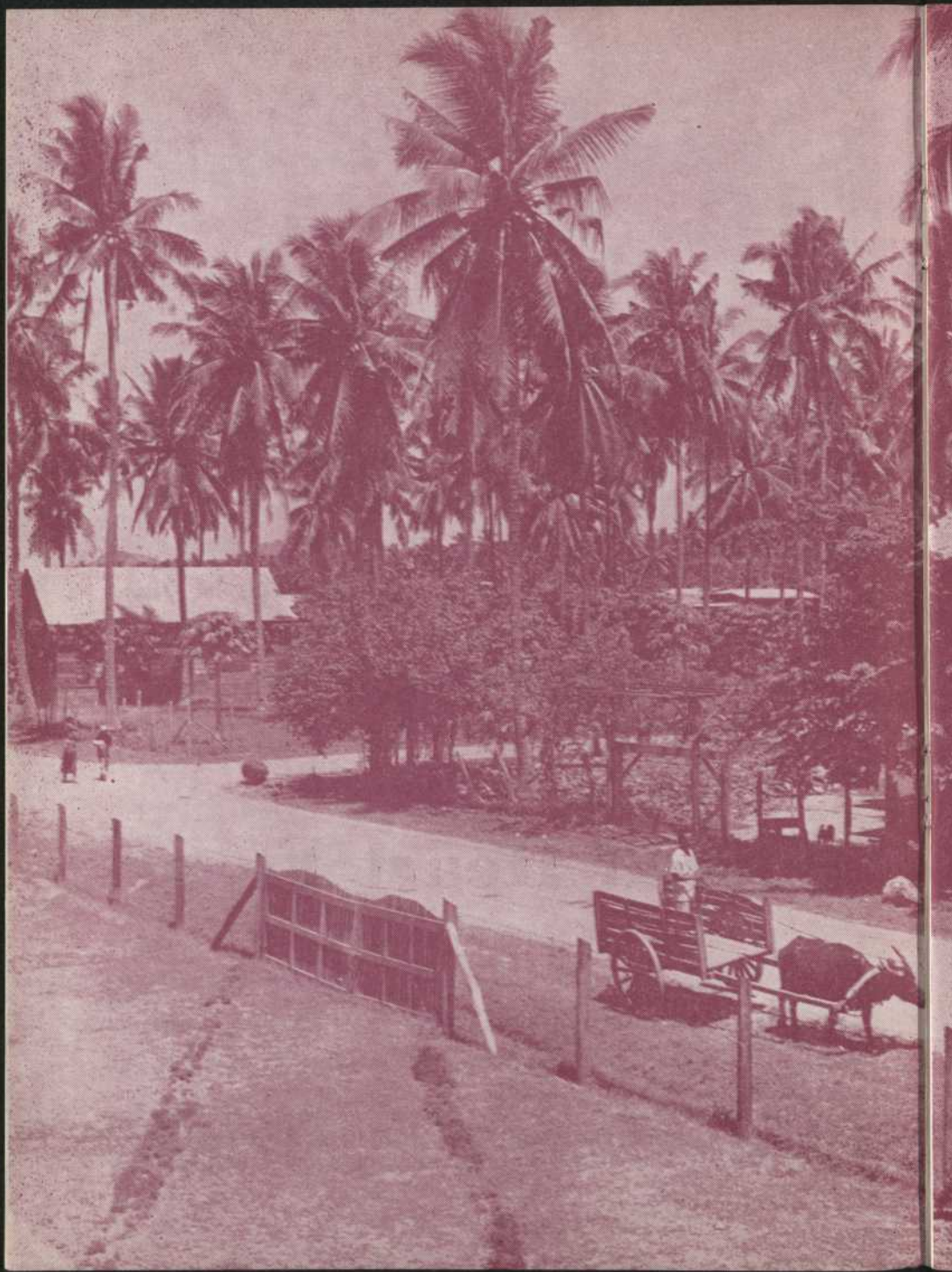
Centenary of the Sacred Heart Feast

Sister CLARE OF THE EUCHARIST¹, M.I.C.

Where was this centenary celebrated with greater fervour than in Padada? I wonder. At the opening of the school year, our Academy resolved to centre upon devotion to the Sacred Heart the theme of its manual work as well as of its literary and

artistic essays. On the occasion of the *fiesta* an exhibition dedicated to the divine Heart would crown the most remarkable among these "masterpieces". Professors and students caught the flame of enthusiasm. The sublime promises of the Sacred

¹ Claire Fontaine, Quebec.





Heart were being accomplished right before our gaze; tepid hearts were growing fervent... fervent hearts were growing in generosity.

As each one was eager to produce something original, vast researches were set on foot to learn all there was to be learnt about this precious devotion. Before long the Academy library saw dwindle its supply of books, statues, pictures. No stone was left unturned to secure more inspirational material. It was at once consoling and amusing to follow these feverish activities on the part of our pupils. Someone has said that necessity is the mother of invention. Never have I seen this proverb better exemplified. Our budding artists, who do not as yet enjoy the advantage of a genuine studio at St. Michael's, made up for a lack of brushes by utilizing split stems of the cocoanut palm. What a quandary they found themselves in one day! Their supply of red paint for the numerous hearts included in their decorations ran short. Again they got around this difficulty by stretching the thorns that served as links. Our Lord surely smiled indulgently upon the oversized thorns... Who, better than He, knew of the pious intention behind the apparent cruelty of the symbol?

On Sunday, September 23, took place in Padada, the parochial eucharistic congress in preparation for the diocesan and national congresses of October and November. Our pupils offered on this occasion a splendid spiritual bouquet. Before the special Mass celebrated for the students, each one deposited in a large golden ciborium set before the altar a note on which was written his personal sheaf of prayers and sacrifices. All day long groups of student youth followed one another before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altar. Meantime, others gave a hand at the erection of a repository,

Where a coconut plantation once prospered now stands Padada Academy. Palm trees still frame the school with beauty.

for in the evening a procession was to climax these eucharistic manifestations.

The school festival prior to St. Michael's *fiesta* was held on the following Thursday. To the accompaniment of much handclapping, His Worship Mayor G. Matas solemnly inaugurated the exhibition by cutting the red and white ribbon barring the entrance to the exhibits. Visitors swarmed inside with ohs and ahs of admiration. None could leave these precincts ignorant of the promises made to St. Margaret Mary, for these were commented upon in manifold pictures, niches, sculptured objects, embroidered panel, collections of cards and poems, well documented essays. The first prize was awarded to a small bamboo niche, a real gem of Filipino artistic inspiration. It was far from an easy task for the judges to deliver their verdict, so numerous were the works worthy of admiration.

During the festival, under the high patronage of His Excellency Msgr. Clovis Thibault, the school artists presented outdoors a play based on an incident related by Reverend Father Mateo, apostle of the Sacred Heart devotion the world over. All the dialogue parts were in Visayan. The story of this conversion told of an atheist who had allowed his wife to have the ceremony of the enthronement of the Sacred Heart performed in their home. He meant this to be a birthday gift to her. Although he refrained from being present at this ceremony, the Saviour made good His promise to touch the most hardened sinners... Another student group presented an

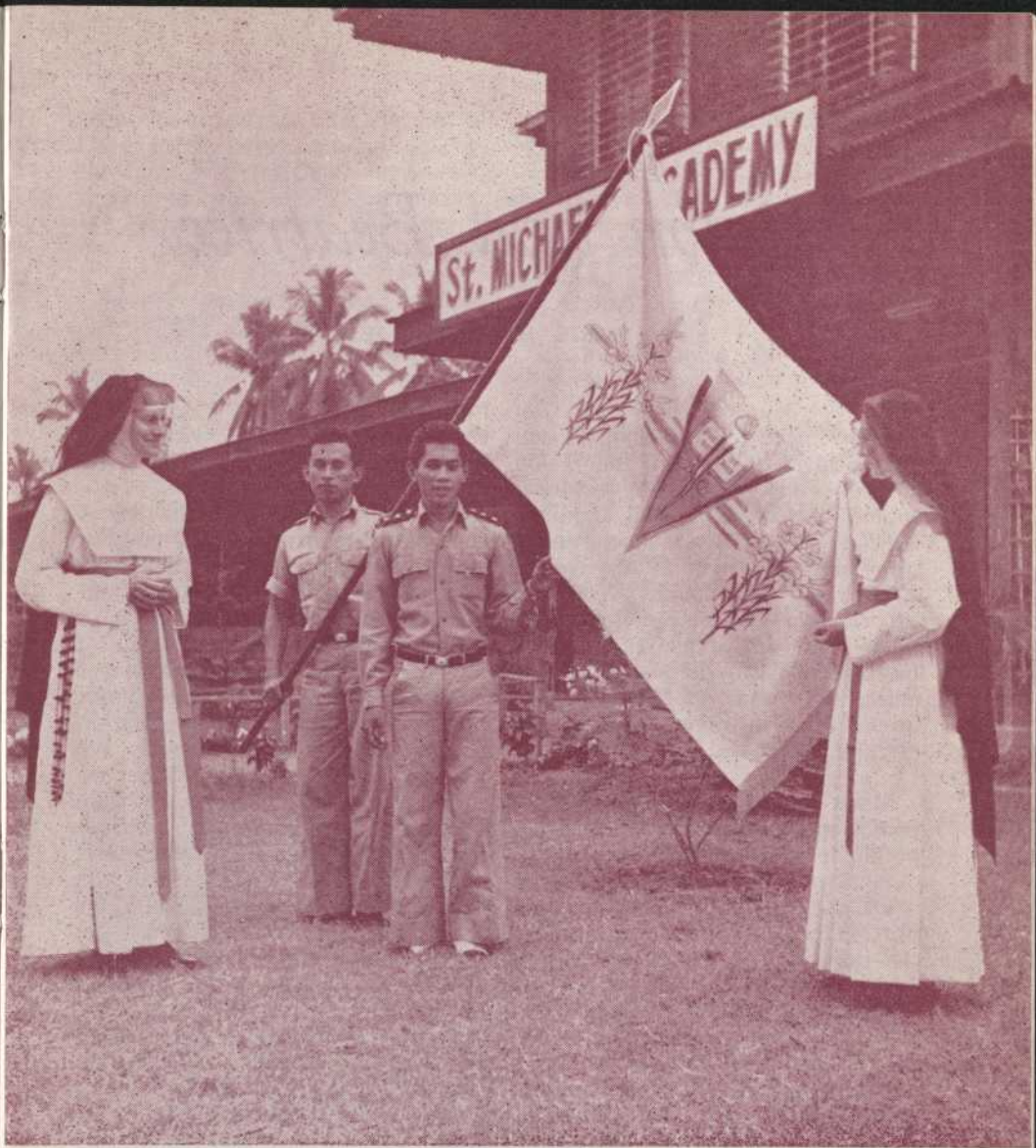
episode of the life of Rizal, national hero of the Philippines, as noted in the book "Rizal's Unfading Glory" recalling the part played in this conversion by devotion to the divine Heart. While he was in prison Rizal discovered a statue of the Sacred Heart he had once sculptured. This put him in mind that man's highest glory is the glory of being a Christian.

The literary and musical essays of those who had won prizes served as interludes. Heavy showers prevented the entire programme to be gone through. "Flowers For the King" a pageant, and the final act representing the apparition of Our Lord to St. Margaret Mary were executed before a crowded assistance at the closing of the *fiesta*.

Twenty new Catholic Actionists were enrolled during the centenary celebrations at Padada. His Excellency Msgr. Thibault personally presided their reception.

An era of spiritual renovation has been inaugurated. And for this the parish is in great part indebted to the dynamic zeal of St. Michael's pupils. They have seen to it that not one of their families remains minus a picture or statue of the Sacred Heart. Jesus cannot but bless these homes. Has he not promised to bless every place where His most loving Heart is honoured?

And we also who are privileged to work in the vineyard of Padada, we rejoice at knowing that our names are inscribed within the Book of Life. A pledge of this we find in the 11th promise, "I will engrave forever on my Heart the names of those who propagate this devotion."



PROUD OF THEIR FLAG.

Two pupils attending Padada Academy are proud to present their school flag to Reverend Mother Magdalen of the Sacred Heart, Superior General of the Society of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, on a visitation of the Society's Missions in the Philippine Islands. At left, Sister Clare of the Eucharist.

Talon and Beatrice

Sister MARIE EDWIDGE¹, M.I.C.

Allow me to tell you about Talon and Beatrice. No, not the Talon mentioned in Canadian historical annals but about a tall dignified African with courtly manners and a surprising gentleness in one so big and strong. The couple arrived at our *citapala* (dispensary) one day with their three children in tow. Having walked the distance of twenty miles, the young mother, suffering from a grave infectious sickness, was literally exhausted.

Much to her disappointment, the poor woman realized that she could not make herself understood; a native of southern Africa she could neither speak nor hear the local Citumbuka. Fortunately Talon was there to handle the situation. Never could she have asked for a more expert or a more faithful interpreter to explain each ache and pain with the most precise details. Besides, Talon was a model father. Attentive to his children's needs, he daily kept his little brood washed and fed, swept the cabin clean, cooked the family meals. During the fortnight that Beatrice remained in one of the huts doing duty as hospital rooms, we never tired admiring his gentle kindness and

the delicate attentions with which he surrounded his sick wife.

At first, worn out with the almost superhuman efforts she had made to reach the mission and with a high fever that burnt her body, the patient did not even have the strength to look at her baby, a frail wisp of humanity that would not linger long here below. After a few days, however, thanks to careful medication she began to rally somewhat. We allowed her out of bed or rather up from her pallet. While we were busy with the dispensary patients one day, she ventured outdoors and decided to take a walk around the compound. She had not gone far when her legs betraying her, she stumbled and fell. We found her in a gutter, her whole body twisted in agonizing pain. Death seemed imminent. As she was a catechumen and wished to become a Christian, we immediately baptized her *in extremis*. All night long the battle raged between life and death.

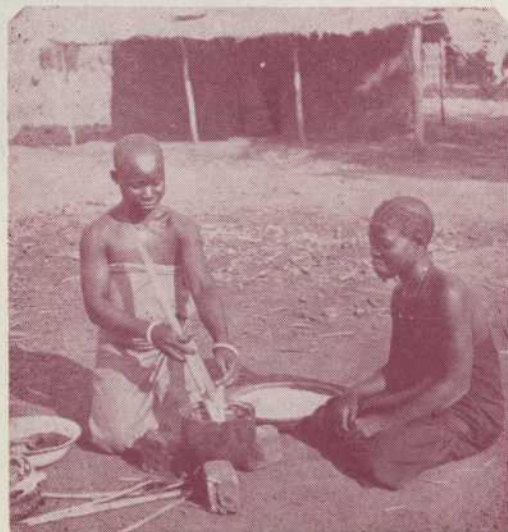
In the morning Beatrice being still in a critical condition, we pinned to her *saru* a picture of our venerated Mother Foundress, entreating her to

keep this mother to the affection of her children. Lying on a mat nearby, the little ones watched her quietly, their eyes pools of anxious concern. What would become of them if their mamma died?

Several days went past without any notable improvement. Then Beatrice slowly began to recuperate. She called her children to her side and fondly caressed their sad little faces. On my rounds of the in-patients, one morning, I found her sweeping the hut; Talon beamed at her as he proceeded with the children's toilet. "What a good wife I have!" he exclaimed. "See, how courageous she is. Thanks to the good care you have given her, she will soon feel as good as new." His glistening black face was a study in jubilation. Beatrice was finally well enough to return to

her home village when God required of her a very painful sacrifice. Claude, her baby boy, died in spite of all we did to save him. And so it happened that the young mother's first visit was for the mission church and the graveyard to attend the funeral of her child.

Talon, Beatrice, and their two children returned home a few days later on foot as they had come. Far from being pampered, African women are models of endurance and patient fortitude. Hard work holds no terrors for them, accustomed to it as they are from their earliest years. Beatrice came to the *cipatala* to find health for her ailing body; she received with it precious life for her immortal soul. May she in turn carry the light of truth into the pagan fastnesses where her village is situated.



PREPARING MEALS.

Visiting

MADAGASCAR

Sister SAINT MARY MAGDALEN¹,
M.I.C.

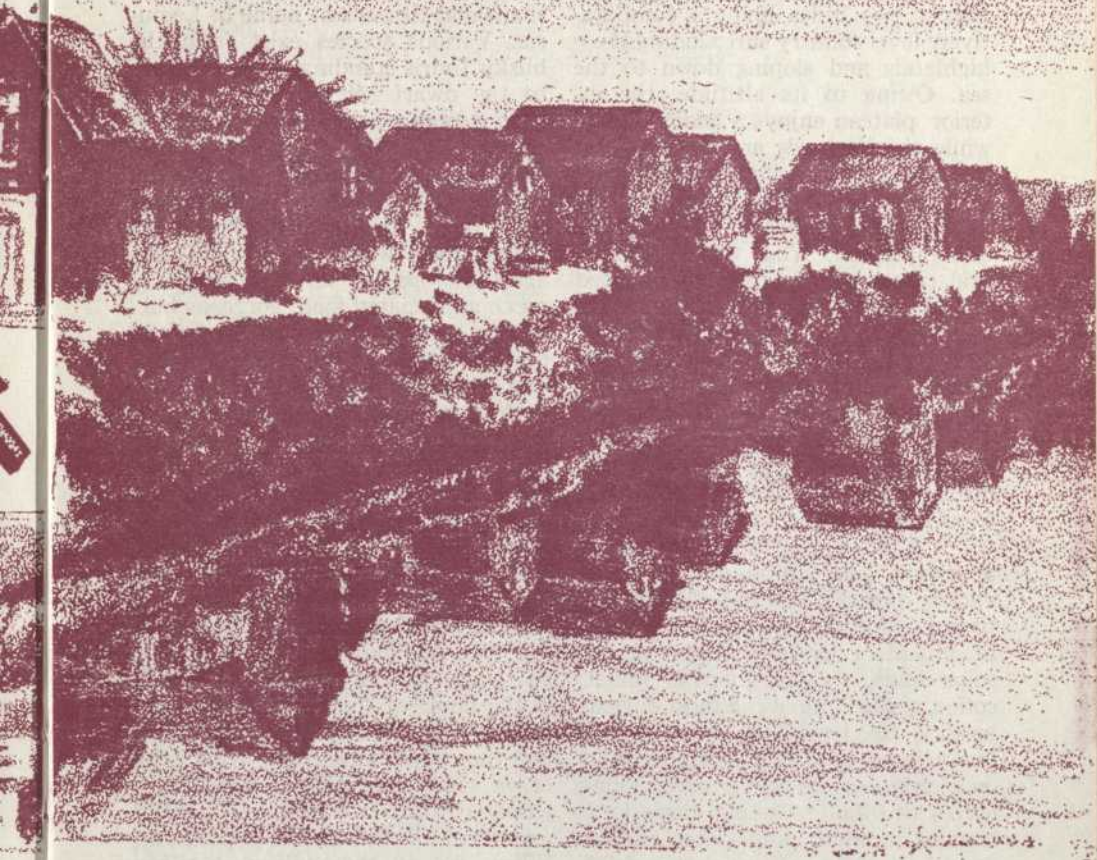
GEOGRAPHICAL and HISTORICAL ASPECTS

Like a huge sabot riding the waves, Madagascar lies southeast of Africa, at about 240 miles from Mozambique. No European knew of its existence until the summer of the year of grace, 1500, when a Portuguese fleet of thirteen ships sailed the waters of the Indian Ocean on a voyage of exploration. August 10 dawned in a scowling mood. By noon, a furious tempest raged, mercilessly lashing the vessels and tossing them about like nutshells.

Although the hardy explorers bravely struggled to keep steering a straight

course, it happened that the vessel commanded by Diego Dias finally drifted apart from the rest of the fleet. Suddenly, above the howling winds, a sailor's voice rang out, "Land! Land!" The astonished Diego saw that indeed they were nearing what he at first imagined to be the coast of Mozambique but which in reality was a large island. He had stumbled unawares upon the conti-

¹ Anne Marie Magnan, Berthierville.



nent of the Indian Ocean, the mysterious isle the Arabs called the Land of the Moon and the natives, *Izao tontolo izao* (this is the universe).

In 1506, another Portuguese mariner, Admiral Fernan Soarez, landed on Madagascar and attempted to establish in the south a permanent settlement in the name of his king. From the first, however, European colonization proved difficult. The

Dutch and the English followed the Portuguese but without more success. It was left to the French to succeed in founding the first permanent white colony of Fort Dauphin at the southeastern tip of the island.

The world's third largest island after New Guinea and Borneo, Madagascar consists of two great natural divisions: an interior plateau rising several thousand feet above the sea

with mountain peaks some of which almost two miles high; a comparatively level country surrounding these highlands and sloping down to the sea. Owing to its altitude, the interior plateau enjoys a good climate while the lowlands are swampy and insalubrious. A verdant belt of thickly wooded forests circles these low lying districts and extends far up the slopes of the plateau. What wonderful natural riches the Creator has lavished in this enchanted spot! In the north-east is found rare and valuable timber such as rosewood, mahogany, palisander, ebony; lacy ferns and bouquets of exquisitely beautiful orchids swing from the branches of these precious trees. The south yields fibers such as *rafia* and *musatextillis*, copal and other gums, India rubber. On the high plateaus are grown abundant rice crops and a great variety of vegetables and edible fruits: banana, pineapple, guava, mango, breadfruit, orange, citron; peas, maize, sugar cane, vanilla, manioc, millet, coffee, cocoa. One of the most curious trees is the traveller's palm shaped like a large open fan. Extending out on each side of its lean trunk are long leaves with hollow stems; these form troughs in which rain water collects in such large quantities that a drink can always be secured wherever these trees are found. Among the most widely distributed minerals are gold, platinum, and iron. Many of the Malagasy are stock breeders and men's wealth here is estimated by the herds of cattle they possess.

Exception made for caimans which infest the waterways of the warmer lower regions Madagascar has neither beasts of prey nor venomous serpents or insects. Its most peculiar

animal is the famed lemur that gave the island its ancient name of Lemuria. Various species exist from the husky Indris standing three feet tall, to the dwarf *Microcebus* no larger than a man's fist. Superstitious reverence connected with ancestor worship is paid the Indris whom the natives call *babakoto* (grandfather-little boy). Insects abound such as grasshoppers which periodically ravage the crops but serve in turn as a much appreciated food; gorgeous butterflies sporting every colour of the rainbow; bees, giant spiders *halabe* weaving magic webs of golden tissue.

On the whole, the country is thinly populated its population averaging little more than thirteen to the square mile. Ethnographically, Madagascar can be divided into three divisions: an eastern belt occupied by the Tanisi, Taisaka, and Betsimisaraka; a central belt where in the north live the Tanala or forest tribes, in the middle the Betsileo and the Hova, in the south the Bara; a western belt which is the home of the Sakalava divided into twenty-five tribes or clans. By far the most important tribe, the Hova which for centuries was Madagascar's ruling race, number at least one third of the entire population. Where did all these different tribes originate? Although opinions differ, the greater number of anthropologists incline to think that for the most part this population belongs to the black Indonesian race and is one of the chief groups of the Malayo Polynesian countries. At present the island has about five million inhabitants of which a good four million are indigenous. The rest are Europeans, Asiatics, Chinese, and Hindus.

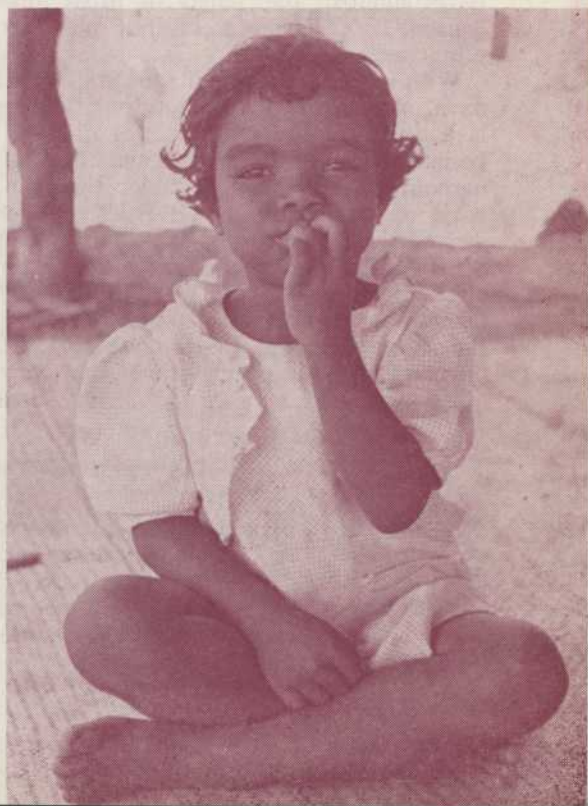
Tananarivo the capital, seems to be the only really important city in Madagascar. Flowers of every hue

brighten its sober gray walls and splash its narrow crooked alleys with exotic beauty.

CATHOLICISM IN THE ISLAND

The first priests to bring the Gospel to Madagascar after the discovery of the island came with the Portuguese. Old documents mention religious who about 1540 accompanied a colony of emigrants to the southeastern part of the island where they were all massacred. Along the centuries, numerous other attempts were made to evangelize the Malagasy but nearly all were fruitless at least insofar as exterior results are concerned. The real implantation of Catholicism began July 8, 1855, when Père Finaz, S.J. secretly offered the first Mass at Tananarivo. In the joy and exultation of his heart, the courageous missionary wrote, "At last I am at Tananarivo of which I take possession in the name of Catholicism." Only seven natives were present at this ceremony. Over this kingdom of the sea then reigned the cruel queen Ranavalona — known for her fierce hatred of foreigners in general and of Catholics in particular. One hundred years later this first Mass was commemorated by splendid ceremonies attended by 50,000 faithful. The Church which in 1855 boasted not even one Catholic now numbers 994,545 (catechumens included).

Comprising one archdiocese and ten dioceses, the Church hierarchy in Madagascar is fully organized. There is one Malagasy bishop, His Excellency The Most Reverend Ignace Ramarosandratane. In 1955, 109 Malagasy priests together with 408 foreign priests carried on their ministry in the island. In spite of its relative youth, the Church in Madagascar is proud to have already presented a candidate to the glories of beatification in the person of its



noble, fearless woman apostle, Victoire Rasaomanarivo.

Measuring 100,000 square kilometres, the diocese of Morondava entrusted to His Excellency Bishop Girouard lies on the western coast between the 17th and the 22nd degrees of southern latitude. No Catholic missionary resided there before 1928. From a religious point of view, was it not the least promising part of the land? Be that as it may, when in 1928, the Missionary Fathers of La Salette saw themselves entrusted with the clearing of this spiritual savannah, they bravely met the challenge. Today the diocese numbers 21,000 Catholics on a total population of 225,000. Of the remainder, 185,000 are pagans, 2,000 have adopted the tenets of Islamism, 17,000 belong to divers Protestant sects.

With its 4,000 inhabitants, Morondava, chief town of the department, is a centre of some importance especially owing to its airport and its harbour. In this mission, under the aegis of Our Lady of La Salette, arrived the first group of Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception on September 19, 1952. The four pioneers set to work at once, for they were expected to assume the direction of a boarding school, an orphanage, and a workshop being

regretfully abandoned by the French Sisters of Providence who lacked subjects to carry on. At present, the interesting Malagasy family entrusted to the care of our Sisters, numbers 400 big and little girls. It is the missionaries' noble task to equip these children with a culture that will not only benefit them but that will raise the moral level of all. The workshop affords young women and orphans an opportunity of earning their own living in a wholesome atmosphere. Unfortunately, obstacles of an economic nature hamper the development of this useful institution.

Missionary Sisters in Madagascar at times dream of a fairy godmother whose wand would produce ordinary balls, volleyballs, nets, rackets, and other equipment to be used during recess. Just now, the pupils after dancing a few rounds and playing native games have no other alternative but to squat on the white sand of the playground, under the shade of the cocoanut palms. As the Sisters can hardly make both ends meet, there is never any money left to buy these much desired objects. Who knows? Perhaps some kind Canadian or American reader will feel inclined to play the role of fairy godmother and set a ball or two rolling on their way to Morondava's silver strand. Stranger things have happened!



In the modern pagan world, where missionaries are accomplishing many conversions amid difficulties, Christ is being driven out. We live amid the greatest apostasy from Christ and God in history. If we would be truly loyal to Jesus, we must not only offer our prayers and our sacrifices, but our apostolate, toward winning the favor of God in order that He may withhold His justice from destroying the entire world as He destroyed Jerusalem.

Our Sunday Visitor

New Style Examinations

Sister SAINT AMEDEE¹, M.I.C.

During her long teaching career, Sister Mary of the Precious Blood², directress of St. Joseph School, Las Pinas, has accumulated many and varied experiences. Still, she was taken quite by surprise on her last patronal feast.

Early that Friday morning, teachers and students gathered to offer her thoughtful gifts and sing a hearty "Happy Feast". Then classes began as usual. The Directress entered the classroom of Fourth Year, High School, and proceeded to give the students the scheduled examination in English. Sheets with exercises of the kind "fill in the blanks" were distributed. All seemed serene on the schoolroom front. When time was up, she gathered the copies and returned to her office.

Imagine her surprise when she started correcting, to find saucy "Happy Feasts" grinning up at her from the first, second, third, and, yes, all the other blanks down to the bottom of the page. Taking up another paper she found that a musical-minded pupil had embellished his

"Happy Feasts" with the notation of the song "Happy Birthday". From first to last, all the papers contained nothing but good wishes!

One student had apparently suffered qualms of conscience. There was affixed to his paper a timid postscript: "Perhaps I should not have done this, Sister Directress... But I feel very happy and I want you to feel happy too..." Another, prudent and wise, had written, "I really have doubts about doing this but it was class orders... At any rate, I'm very sincere in wishing you a happy feast. May God grant you many, many returns of the day."

The Directress was in a dilemma. It was the first time she had ever encountered such a pedagogical problem. After thinking the matter over, she decided that it would be wiser to ignore this collective prank. That same evening, however, the school bulletin board bore a notice to the effect that English examinations in due form would take place the following Monday.

¹ Emilienne Vezina, Quebec.

² Aurore Racette, Limoges, Ont

HOMECOMING

Sister SAINT PETER OF VERONA¹, M.L.C.

Her name was Tamika. She came to our dispensary one day from her distant bush village, a little old woman, bent and decrepit like a gnarled apple tree. Among other ailments, she suffered from a festering sore so large I could have introduced my whole fist into it. How pleased I was when the Sister-nurse entrusted her to my care!

I installed her as comfortably as I could in one of the huts serving as rooms for the in-patients. By dint of frequent injections and of daily careful dressings I soon had the ugly sore almost completely healed. This was the only consoling result I had to show for my care, for my little old friend instead of recuperating, gradually lost hold on life. For a while she appeared quite contented to live on at the mission. But one fine day she stated, "I want to go back home." There was no mistaking the firm ring in her voice, the fire in her eye . . . No mere caprice was this but a crystallized resolution. What was I to do? As yet a non-Christian, Tamika was not sufficiently instructed to warrant her being baptized before she left. One of the catechists came to the rescue. Every afternoon, he spent hours with the patient teaching her the principal truths of our

holy Faith. What an inspiring picture they made, this earnest young African apostle and the aged woman who drank in his words with the docility of a child!

Once she had been baptized Tamika seemed to get over her homesickness. Not for long, however. One morning I found her fussing about the hut, trying to make a bundle of her scanty belongings. "What's going on here, Grandmother?" I asked, "You seem to be moving . . ." She straightened herself, tossed her grizzled locks defiantly, and shot out at me, "I'm going home — today." At that very moment some of her old cronies looked in at the door. They wagged their heads meaningly, "Amayi," they cautioned as I passed them on my way to the dispensary, "Watch her carefully. She says she's going to run away from here."

If only we had a jeep! But the fact was we had nothing else in the shape of conveyance than bicycles. Sister St. Yvette² and I talked the matter over and we finally took a heroic resolution. To prevent any escapade which might result in an accident we would hoist our patient on a bicycle and take turns holding her in place until we reached her home village.

¹ Marie Jeanne Plante, Levis.

² Yvette Carle, Joliette.

Heaven helps those who help themselves. We were preparing to leave when a truck passed in front of the convent going in exactly the right direction. The Indian driver obligingly agreed to take on Tamika, an African aide, the two Sisters, and their bicycles. Thus we drove along the highway until we arrived in the neighbourhood of the village situated

at a distance in the bush. From then on Tamika rode with me on my bicycle, held in position by Sister St. Yvette while the aide walked behind, Sister's bicycle balanced on her head.

A good three quarters of an hour it took us to reach the river on the outskirts of the village. The patient forgot her exhaustion as she joyfully



pointed out her little hut on the opposite bank. In the twinkling of an eye we found ourselves surrounded by excited groups of Blacks, who advised us to wait at our halting place while they ran on ahead to warn Tamika's old man. Gently, very gently we laid the sick woman on a blanket spread on the sand and waited. From near and far people continued to arrive and gazed spell-bound at our little caravan. Hearing the guide explain that the Sisters had accompanied the ailing one all the way from Karonga because they feared she might collapse en route, many thanked us effusively. "You certainly are godly persons," they exclaimed, "to devote your lives to the relief of our sick people." Others clapped their hands and prostrated themselves African fashion, "*Wewo Amayi!*" (Thank you, Sister) they kept on repeating.

It was growing late and still the old man failed to put in an appearance. We decided to return home without further delay to avoid the darkness which falls swiftly in this part of the world.

Early on the following morning, we were startled to find Tamika's husband standing at the door of the dispensary. At first we dreaded to hear bad news. But, no, his wrinkled face was creased in smiles as he thanked us for the good care we had taken of his wife.

On returning to the mission for a visit to the sick, the next day, we learnt that our little old friend had died during the preceding night. The family expecting us to be present at the funeral we left immediately accompanied by the catechist.

Inside the hut, lay the dead woman still wrapped up in her blanket, a straw mat thrown over her. I was strongly tempted to lift up a corner of the mat to catch a last glimpse of her face, but I refrained from doing so this being against the native customs. We knelt to recite a part of the rosary then we were called outside, for the funeral lamentations were about to be launched. "I... ta...ta...ta...ta...I...ta...ta...ta...ta...ta!" On and on always in the same dismal tone. Tamika's only child, a daughter, came out to greet us. She wanted to keep us company but she was dragged away by the women folk who said that her role was to weep aloud beside her mother. Mourners slipped pennies inside her *tawulo* (band encircling the head) and peanuts in the folds of her *saru*, (cloth wrapped around the torso).

Two other mourners now arrived each bringing a bolt of white cotton. At this sight, the distraught husband threw himself down violently against the ground and broke out in louder laments. Then he sprang up and took refuge under the shade of a tree. Meanwhile, the corpse was tightly bound in bands of the white material brought for this purpose. Four women then carried it to a grave dug at a short distance from the hut. Before the men started shoveling the earth, the daughter of the deceased dropped in the pennies and peanuts received, as a pledge that she would not abandon the soul of her mother. We prayed and sang a few hymns while the *nyifwa*, the proper funeral ceremony, was in progress. Lamentations and elegies for the dead will be

kept up for several days perhaps even weeks we were told.

In my dreams I often see Tamika in the ranks of the blessed; no longer old and decrepit is she but radiant with eternal youthfulness. May she remember to pray for her dear home

village lost somewhere in the wilds of Africa, and also for the missionaries who work there. Their task is often arduous and unpredictable although they consider it the most rewarding in the world.

BRITISH WEST INDIES

WILLIAM THE "SAINT" OF THE ASYLUM

This is the true story of a young leper boy who lived in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, in the British West Indies as told by Mother John Mary, Superior of the Canonesses of St. Augustine.

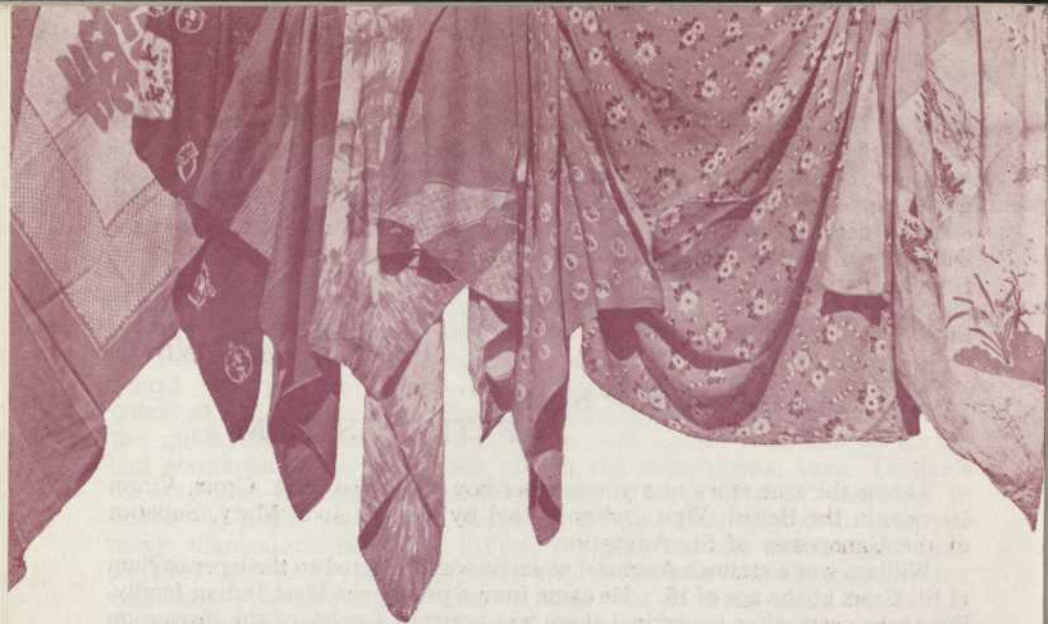
William was a staunch Anglican when he was admitted to the leper asylum at St. Croix at the age of 16. He came from a prominent West Indian family. For three years after his arrival there was scarcely a mark of the disease on him, which made the Sisters wonder if he had leprosy at all. Then, suddenly, it broke out all over his body.

"He was one mass of bleeding sores," said Mother John Mary, who came to know and admire this young leper during her many visits to St. Croix. "There was not a pin-point on his body that was not terribly affected by the disease. He was completely bandaged, with slits in the bandages only at his eyes, nose, and mouth. He was forced to fan himself constantly as he hobbled along, in order to keep the swarms of sandflies out of his wounds."

Shortly after he came to the asylum, William began attending Catholic instruction out of curiosity. But he was drawn deeper into the faith, and finally he was converted. After his conversion, his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and his good deeds among his fellow lepers, earned him the title of "The Saint of the Asylum".

"William used to say that he was thankful for leprosy, as without it, he would never have come to know the true religion," continued Mother John Mary. "In spite of all he suffered, there was never a word of complaint from him. He was the confidant and adviser of all his fellow-lepers. He spent hours in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. The Sisters had to force him to leave the chapel and go for his meals."

He was a daily communicant. During his last days, his tongue was so raw and painful that Father broke the Sacred Host into quarters and gave him a small piece on one occasion, for he thought the whole Host would be too much for William to swallow. After receiving Communion, William went to the sacristy and said, "Father, regardless of how painful it is for me, I want to receive the whole Sacred Host. I can stand it." From that time on, Father gave him the whole Host.



TOKYO, JAPAN

The Romance of the Furoshiki

Sister MONICA OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT¹, M.I.C.

Famed neither in story nor in song, the humble *furoshiki* nonetheless enjoys unparalleled popularity through the length and breadth of Japan. For travelling or shopping purposes most people here prefer it to handbags or valises because of its elastic versatility, of its willingness to adopt the shape of non-descript articles and give them an appearance of bourgeois respectability. It is a favourite with all classes of society. Professors use it to carry

their books, business men wrap it around their wallet, society ladies use it as a camouflage for compacts, housewives slip under its discreet cover the carrots, fish, and *tofu* (bean cheese) they have just bought for dinner, school children use it as a cosy for their *bento* (lunch boxes).

The origin of the *furoshiki* is obscure. An easy way out would be, after dissecting the word, to explain that *furo* means bath and *shiki* mat;

but you would have to take this assertion for the little it is worth. Who knows if this may not be its origin after all? The bath-conscious Japanese first carried their toilet articles in a square of cloth when visiting the public bath; their soaking and scrubbing over, they used the cloth as a mat when emerging from the tub... Shades of historical accuracy! Be that as it may, *furoshiki* are among the necessities of life in Japan, on the same footing — or almost — as toothbrushes, combs, towels, and soap.

Let us suppose that, obsessed by the desire of ridding yourself of surplus cash, you make up your mind one fine day to go on a shopping spree. Why encumber yourself with fragile paper bags, yawning baskets, or other such receptacles? Use assorted *furoshiki*. You will enjoy your walk to the business centres without having your arm distressingly stretched out, for the *furoshiki* can be neatly folded up and stowed away in your pocket while waiting to be used. At the bargain counter the articles you buy can be done up separately then reunited like the members of a happy family within the bosom of one large *furoshiki* which you may tie solidly once, then swing on your back and tie again across your shoulders.

Or perhaps you are a student, with pyramids of books and notebooks to carry. Why double the weight of science by using heavy leather brief cases or uncouth school bags that dig a furrow into your shoulder blades? Use a *furoshiki* of moderate size and tie it up prosaically. There you are! Neat and light and efficient, isn't it? Moreover, once inside the

classroom, you need not worry lest your empty brief case lying on the floor beside your desk become a stumbling block for your fellow classmates. Your *furoshiki* will tactfully await, rolled up inside your desk, to oblige you again.

Wearing your Sunday best, why hanker after a smart purse as you stroll along to church? Just gracefully balance on your left arm, your missal and rosary encompassed by a dainty *furoshiki* matching the general colour scheme of your toilette. Your friends will approve you as entirely *comme il faut*.

You wish to offer a whatnot to a friend and rack your brains to find a suitable box that will enhance the present. Take my advice; use a *furoshiki* of the more elaborate type in pastel shades, with glints of gold and glimpses of exotic birds or flowers in its perfumed folds. You need have no fear that you will thereby be losing something. No. The *furoshiki* is all the more a favourite that it clings to its owner in life and in death. Never must it be kept when presented with a gift. One must return it on the spot — meticulously folded in a certain manner — or send it back later enclosing the traditional return gift.

Furoshiki come in all colours and sizes. There are large ones, large enough to hold your bedding; middle-sized ones for ordinary shopping; smaller ones for presenting gifts; dainty ones about the size of a pocket handkerchief for more romantic occasions. Usually they are spun of stout cotton or coarse silk; nowadays there are even waterproof *furoshiki* made of plastic. As for



“ For shopping purposes, there’s nothing like a *furoshiki*,” says Sister Monica of the Blessed Sacrament. At left, Sister St. Gabriel Lalemant (Francoise Lacoursiere, Three Rivers) presently missioned in Hong Kong.

their colour, every hue of the rainbow is put under contribution.

Not even the use of *furoshiki* escapes being regulated by etiquette in this land of conventions. When used on formal occasions, the thing to be wrapped must be placed in the middle of the cloth; the topmost end is first brought over the object and firmly wedged under it; next, the left then the right sides are folded; finally the embroidered corner is arranged to lap gracefully over the whole. A package thus arranged must be carried on the left arm, not under it. For everyday uses the square is securely tied but always in a certain approved fashion. It may then be carried basketwise.

Missionaries make extensive use of the ordinary *furoshiki*, sober in colour and moderate in size. It is a tried and faithful friend in all their comings and goings over hills and dales. If Reverend Father Charles, S.J. the lamented friend of missions and missionaries, had noticed the Japanese *furoshiki* he would doubtless have given it a paragraph in his delightful book, "Prayer of All Things". Might it not have run thus? "Grant, dear Lord, that I may imitate the pliability of the *furoshiki* in my dealings with others, its readiness to oblige all kinds of people, its indulgence in lending a smooth appearance to awkward forms and ugly bulges. Amen."

PEARL of GREAT PRICE

Thousands of Catholics today have chosen to give up everything in order to keep the Pearl of Great Price. In Vietnam for instance, hundreds have been drowned attempting to flee from the Communists!

A family of sixteen persons escaped by night across the rice paddies. When they reached the seashore where a boat was to take them South, they found that it had already left. For fear of being captured, they remained in water up to their waist all the following day hoping to be picked up by some other refugees. The grown-ups held the children pickaback to prevent their being drowned. All prayed fervently. Thus they waited, shivering with cold and hunger, until nine in the evening when a French boat at last found them and carried them to safety.

Among the crowds of refugees who fled South, was a venerable old man from Than Hoa, 102 years old. He arrived at Saigon after an almost incredible trek of eighty days on foot. He was accompanied by 120 members of his family.

The exodus of these heroic Christians is according to Msgr. Rodhain, one of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of Catholicism. It can be explained only by the simple, unshakable faith of the Catholic populations of Vietnam who during the last two centuries gave the Church 100,000 martyrs.

"Por Lil' Brack Sheep"

Por lil' Brack Sheep dat stray'd away,
Done los' in de win' and rain,
An' de Shepherd He say, "O hirelin',
Go fin' my sheep again."
An' de hirelin' frowns, "O Shepherd,
Dat sheep am brack an' bad."
But de Shepherd He smile like de lil' brack
sheep
Is de onliest lamb he had,
Is de onliest lamb he had.

An' he say, "O hirelin', hasten!
For de win' and de rain am col',
And dat lil' brack sheep am lonesome
Out dere so far from de fol'."
An' de hirelin' frown, "O Shepherd,
Dat sheep am ol' an' gray."
But de Shepherd He smile like de lil' brack
sheep
Wuz fair as de break ob day,
Wuz fair as de break ob day.

An' He say, "O hirelin', hasten!
Lo, here is de ninety an' nine,
But dere way off from de sheep fol'
Is dat lil' brack sheep ob mine."
And de hirelin' frown, "O Shepherd,
De rest ob de sheep am here."
But de Shepherd He smile like de lil' brack
sheep
He hol' it de mostes' dear,
He hol' it de mostes' dear.

And de Shepherd go out in de darkness,
Where de night was col' an' bleak,
An' de lil' brack sheep He fin' it,
An' lay it agains' His cheek.
An' de hirelin' frown, "O Shepherd,
Don't bring dat sheep to me."
But de Shepherd He smile, an' He hol' it
close,
An' de lil' brack sheep — is me!
An' de lil' brack sheep — is me!

Anonymous



Thank You!

In the first days of April took place the distribution of the last parcels of clothes received through Catholic Welfare. Notwithstanding immense American charities which have touched us to our heart depths, we have given up trying to succour all of Hong Kong's unfortunates. It simply cannot be done. The poor most deserving of pity only too often are reluctant to ask for help because of their having previously known comfort and ease while beggars of profession brazenly show up at every distribution centre. No mean art it is to discover these poorest of the poor.

At this last distribution we were very happy to slip inside each parcel a ration of powdered milk equally donated by the United States of America. If only the generous American people could witness the joy they have spread in hundreds of hovels where tiny creatures cry out in hunger! I cannot resist recalling here the following touching scene, one among thousands. We knocked at the make-shift door of a miserable shack. A gaunt woman, utter weariness and exhaustion etched all over her figure, answered, four frail, ragged children clinging to her. That they had not had a full meal in many a day was painfully evident. No matter how

hard the father works there is never enough money to buy sufficient food and clothes. The enormous parcel we brought them that day, seemed to have dropped right out of heaven. With tears of joy coursing down her face, the mother squatted on the floor, exclaiming over each item. Just think! There was powdered milk for the baby, a suit for father, shirts, sweaters, and slacks for the boys, neat little frocks for the girls, a coat, blouses, and skirts for herself. A bountiful Providence through the instrumentality of the generous American people had brightened this poor dwelling with a ray of beneficent sunshine.

Dear benefactors, we make ours the three love-laden words of an unkempt little lad pressing his "Charity" bundle to his heart, "God bless you!" This child who knew only those three words of English is so to say the spokesman of all those who having been succoured and being powerless to express their unbounded thankfulness call down heavenly blessings upon their benefactors.

They also say thank you . . .



God Bless You!

WE KNOW TWO LITTLE WORDS,
THANK YOU!
WE SEND THEM, MAGIC BIRDS,
TO YOU!
DEAR FATHERS AND MOTHERS
FROM FAR ACROSS THE SEAS,
YOU HAVE BEEN TRUE HELPERS,
THANK YOU!

THREE LITTLE WORDS WE PRAY,
GOD BLESS YOU!
WE SAY THEM NIGHT AND DAY
FOR YOU,
FOR PRECIOUS MILK AND RICE
FOR BLANKETS SNUG AND WARM
FOR GIFTS THAT HAVE NO PRICE
GOD BLESS YOU.

The little refugee children
of Hong Kong





Sister SAINT AMEDEE¹, M.I.C.

Every June 19 throughout the archipelago colourful manifestations unfold in honour of the great patriot, Jose Rizal. The day is highlighted by inspiring harangues, concerts of folklore, and a splendid parade where figure numerous bands and pictur-

esque floats. Needless to say, Rizal's statue dominates the cortege, greeted all along the way by thunderous applause.

Why is it that Rizal thus lives on in the hearts of the Filipino people, the object of their fervent admira-

¹ Emilienne Vezina, Quebec.

tion? This national hero was born of the marriage of Francisco Rizal and Leonora Alonzo, June 19, 1861. Of Malay ancestry, his parents were honourable and well-to-do citizens. Seventh in a family of eleven, Jose early gave signs of unusual precocity. When only three he mastered the alphabet and at five, spoke Spanish fluently. He composed an original drama in Tagalog when he was scarcely eight. At eleven, he knew Latin well enough to be admitted by the Jesuits to the Manila Ateneo. Bachelor of Arts at sixteen, already a brilliant poet and an expert painter and sculptor, he took up the study of philosophy and medicine at Santo Tomas University. A short time later he won the first prize in a national poetry contest with his famous ode "To the Philippine Youth".

Imbued with a deep patriotic sense and saddened by the severe measures taken against Filipinos by the Spanish government of the Islands, he resolved to dedicate his talents and energies to the uplifting of his people. He left for Spain with the intention of pursuing there his medical studies. On the continent as well as at home, he showed himself to be a diligent, methodical student, a gentleman every inch, averse to flightiness, ever leading a serious, frugal life. At twenty-four, he was awarded a degree as doctor in sciences and medicine by the central university of Madrid. In between his studies he found time to share the activities of the little Filipino colony in the Spanish capital, patiently elaborating plans to bring about a reform in the condition of his compatriots. Another ideal haunted him during these years. He wanted to

bring relief to his mother whose eyesight gave cause for alarm. To gain experience, with this end in view, he worked for a time in the clinic of an eminent specialist in ophthalmology.

Afterwards he left for Germany where he did postgraduate studies in the universities of Berlin, Leipzig, and Heidelberg. Numerous voyages in Europe, America, and the Orient furnished him with the opportunity of observing at first hand the customs, the culture, and the economic and political situation of various nations and peoples. Rizal was also a literary genius who excelled in all fields of literature: the novel, poetry, the essay, history, the drama, satire, folklore, sociology, ethnology, and linguistics. He spoke twenty-two languages.

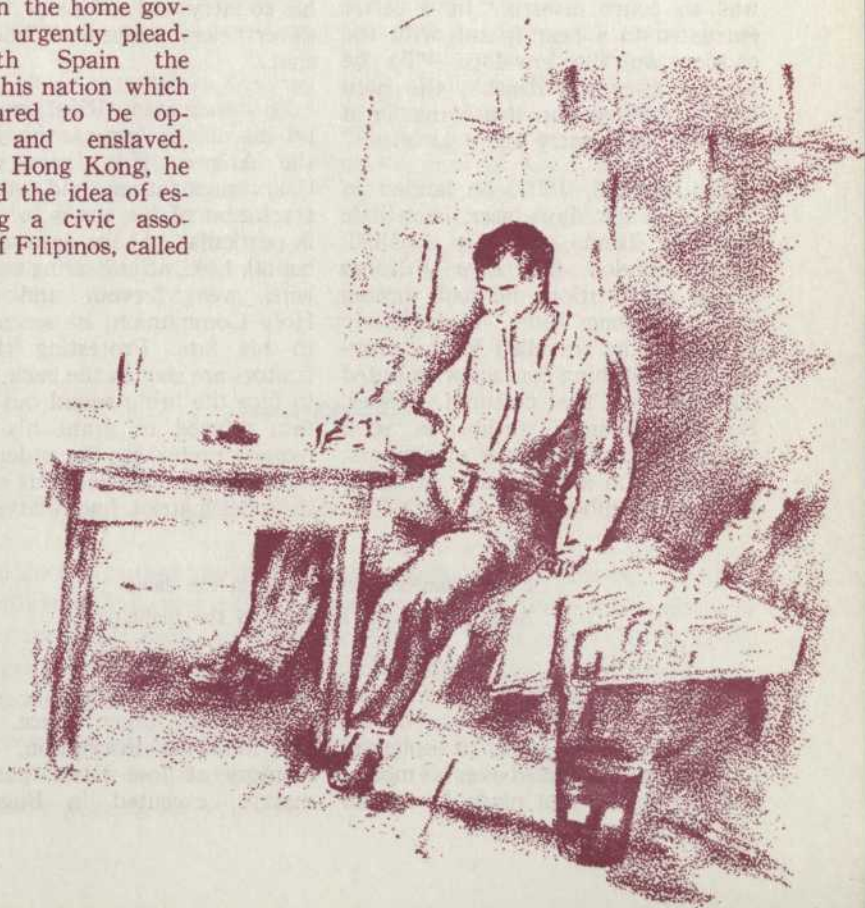
It was during his sojourn in Germany in 1887, that he wrote his famous novel *Noli Me Tangere* in which he exposed his views on the shortcomings of the Spanish government together with the sufferings and helplessness of his people. His travels across Europe over, he returned to the Philippine Islands where a cordial welcome awaited him on the part of Filipinos. Immediately settling down to the practice of medicine he opened a clinic with his beloved mother as first patient. How ardently he longed to restore her eyesight! After meticulous preparation he performed a surgical operation that was a complete success. The young doctor's reputation spread far and near so that people came to consult him from all over the country. But these happy, prosperous days were shortlived. His book *Noli Me Tangere* which was beginning to be

widely read, aroused the ire and suspicions of Spanish rulers who prohibited its circulation throughout the land. Its author being accused of pernicious conspirations was threatened with severe reprisals. Doctor Rizal judged it wiser to leave his country for a while. Notwithstanding official restrictions, smuggled copies of his book continued to be secretly circulated, read, and commented upon by a great number of Filipinos.

Abroad, Rizal kept on working in favour of a reform in the home government, urgently pleading with Spain the cause of his nation which he declared to be oppressed and enslaved. While in Hong Kong, he conceived the idea of establishing a civic association of Filipinos, called

the *Liga Filipina*. What was the aim of this association? None other than the union of the archipelago into a strong, compact, homogenous whole and the opposition to all violence and injustice. How eloquent its motto, *Unus instar omnium* (One Like All).

At this period of his life during a second trip he made to Europe, Rizal associated with a group of English and German rationalists.



Under their deplorable influence he cut himself away from the Catholic Church, became a freemason, and imbibed the political ideas which later cost him his life. In the midst of pressing financial difficulties, he published in 1891 his novel *El Filibusterismo* a sequel to *Noli Me Tangere*. It is a satire of Spanish misrule under which Filipinos suffered. Haunted by the desire of helping his compatriots and of being reunited to his aged parents, Rizal resolved to return home once again although he was not unaware that to do so was to court disaster. In a letter entrusted to a dear friend, with the caption on the envelope "To be opened after my death", the hero wrote, "What can death matter if one dies for country and dear ones?"

On June 26, 1892, he landed in Manila. A few days later, in a little house of Tondo, on July 3, 1892, Rizal founded the *Liga Filipina* whose constitutions he had written while in Hong Kong. Immediately afterwards he travelled in the provinces, establishing contact with noted members of the cultured classes. But the Spanish authorities soon accused him of seditious maneuvers; they had him arrested and exiled to Dapitan Zamboanga.

Meanwhile none of the reforms so urgently required by pacific reclamations had been granted. Little by little the fire of armed insurrection spread to all parts of the country; no sooner was a revolt crushed in one place than another flared elsewhere. The Spanish Government imputed the rebellion to Rizal, and recalling him from Dapitan imprisoned him in Fort Santiago. Tried by a military court under the charges of rebellion, sedition, and illicit associations, Rizal protested that he was innocent of the crime of treason to his country and to Spain. The Court nevertheless sentenced him to be shot.

In his prison, Rizal was visited by his old professors, the Jesuits of the Ateneo. He gladly welcomed their ministrations and wrote a retraction of his errors, of Masonry in particular. At the dawn of December 30, 1896, after hearing two Masses with great fervour and receiving Holy Communion, he serenely went to his fate. Protesting that only traitors are shot in the back, he asked to face the firing squad but the captain refused to grant his supreme request pretexting the orders he had received. On the eve of his execution, the poet patriot had written,

I die when heaven purples in the dawn
And day at last is risen on the night.

Rizal was only thirty-five when he laid down his life for love of his countrymen. In 1912, a splendid monument was erected over his mortal remains on the vast plaza *La Luneta*

near the spot where the execution had actually taken place. It bears the following inscription, "To the memory of Jose Rizal, patriot and martyr, executed in Bagumbayan

field, Dec. 30, 1896, the people of the Philippines have raised this monument."

Each Filipino city possesses a monument in Rizal's honour and one of the provinces in the neighbourhood of Manila has been renamed after him. Besides, numerous streets, ships, colleges, institutions, public buildings, companies, artistic societies bear his glorious name. His native home in Lazuna has been preserved at governmental expense, and Dapitan where he spent four years of exile has been transformed into a public park. December 30, the anniversary of his death, is now a national holiday.

Among his literary works, the two famous novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* recently became the object of sharp controversy in the Philippines. They are certainly the expression of Rizal's ardent patriotism. Unfortunately, as they were written while the patriot was under the influence of masonry, they con-

tain satires and criticism of the Catholic Church, its priests, its beliefs, its religious practices. This explains why, in a pastoral letter dated April 24, 1956, the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Philippines forbade Catholics to read these works.

Rizal's conversion long denied by enemies of Catholicism has been definitively proved on a historical basis in the documentary volume of his retraction "Rizal's unfading glory" published by Rev. J. M. Cavanna, C.M.

Because he died that they might yet be free, Rizal has won a right to the undying love and gratitude of his countrymen. By his return to the Catholic Faith of which he said, in the retraction of his errors "In her I was born, in her I have grown, and in her I wish to be in life and in death," he has gained his true and imperishable greatness. In the eyes of his people he thus remains a national hero, doubly immortal.



DO YOU KNOW?

Do you know . . . that about 25,000,000 pagans will die this year? Most of them will never have met a Catholic priest; many of them will never have even heard the sweet names of Jesus and Mary. What can YOU do about this? A great deal. How? By praying for VOCATIONS to the priesthood, to religious and missionary life.

Your prayers may give some hesitating young man or young woman the courage needed to enter the Seminary or the Convent. Who knows? You might thus be praying for yourself!



HONG KONG, CHINA

Clear Water Meets the Ocean of Love

Sister SAINT LAZARE¹, M.I.C.

Like thousands of her compatriots, So Tsing (Clear Water) had fled from her native village before the onrush of Communism. Disguised as a peasant woman going to market, she concealed the youngest of her brood in one of the baskets of vegetables hanging from her shoulder pole. Her husband pretending to be a peddler, took with him the two oldest children, a seven year old boy and a five year old girl. Thus they started out on foot for the arduous trek of hundreds of miles to Hong Kong and liberty.

To evade the vigilance of Red spies swarming everywhere, they chose the safety of less-travelled roads. Rain or shine they went ahead bravely, making light of hardships, patiently enduring hunger and fatigue. In towns and villages they sold their wares in order to deflect suspicion. The strain soon began to tell on the travellers more especially on the poor young mother whose health

¹ Juliette Rainville, Beauport.



"Far better is a hovel in Hong Kong than a palace in Communist China," say these refugees visited by Sister St. Lazarus.

had never been strong; before they were even halfway to Hong Kong, she fell ill, but she dragged herself on, knowing full well her life was at stake. The several hundred miles that remained to be covered were a veritable way of the Cross for the exhausted woman.

At long last the group reached destination. Although free, they were yet to experience the distress and perplexity of refugees arriving in an overcrowded city where they had neither friends nor acquaintances to help them out. So Tsing's condition grew from bad to worse. When her husband was finally able to take her to a hospital, it was already too late;

in her weakened frame tuberculosis had made such appalling inroads that she was declared beyond any human medication.

It was then that two kind neighbours of hers helped her reach our dispensary. Gasping for breath, barely able to stand, So Tsing was indeed in a pitiable state. After giving her what remedies we could, we spoke to her of God, of her immortal soul, of that only "permanent city" towards which we are all journeying. Was it not her heavenly Father, whose infinite wisdom guides atoms as well as galaxies, who had allowed her exodus and her present grievous sickness in order to lead her more surely

and more swiftly to the eternal homeland?

During ensuing months So Tsing attentively studied the Catholic doctrine. As she spoke only the dialect of her native province, A Ming, her little boy, served as interpreter of Cantonese which he had quickly picked up. How proud the lad was to translate prayers and the catechism text for his sick mother! It was a deeply touching scene to watch this pagan boy explaining the way of eternal life to her to whom he was indebted for his own earthly existence.

In her simplicity So Tsing once asked, "I can't speak anything but my native dialect. Do you think God understands me when I pray?" After we had explained that God is all-knowing, she sighed blissfully, "Oh, how happy I am to think that God knows about my sufferings... that He surely hears my prayers..."

When the ailing woman suffered alarming spells of suffocation some weeks later, we judged it safer not to

postpone her Baptism any longer as she was by now sufficiently prepared. With fervour she repeated acts of Faith, love, and contrition; then, the clear waters of Baptism flowed into her soul, and her miserable hovel became irradiated with the glory of Paradise.

Only a short time before, she had consented to do away with some superstitious symbols hanging on the wall. To replace them we had given her a Sacred Heart picture. When we returned, on the day after her Baptism, we noticed this picture had been decorated with flowers and a band of red silk. Notwithstanding his poverty, her husband had wanted to honour the Lord of Heaven in his own fashion.

Three days went by before the call. So Tsing died peacefully at the hospital where she had finally been removed. Like a stream of clear water she felt herself irresistibly drawn into the Ocean of Love for all eternity.



NEGRO BISHOP CONSECRATES WHITE BISHOP

Sunday, March 25, 1956, was one of the happiest and most significant days in the history of the missions — the day on which, for the first time, a negro bishop consecrated a white bishop.

In Kabgayi Cathedral, Ruanda, in Central Africa, Bishop Bigirumwani, Vicar Apostolic of Nyundo, consecrated a Swiss White Father, Msgr. Andrew Perraudin, as Vicar Apostolic of Kabgayi.

Yet less than 90 years ago the Name of Our Lord had never been heard in this part of Africa. Monsignor Bigirumwami himself was consecrated on June 1, 1952, barely 50 years after the first baptism. He is a descendent of a Gisaka king, son of one of the White Fathers' first converts in Ruana.



NOVITIATE

PONT VIAU



THE Answer

Like the good little liturgist that she is Sister Frances was following the prayers of the Mass in her missal. At the Gospel which touched on the mysterious problem of vocation, her mind slid down the coast of a pious distraction. Why was it that the Lord had chosen her instead of others in her graduating class — of Judy, for instance, Judy who knew she had a call to the



Thank you, dear Lord,
for my wonderful vocation!

missionary life but who apparently did not have the courage to follow it...

In the silence of the chapel, the sanctuary bell tinkled. Sister Frances gathered her straying thoughts, and imagining herself holding in her hands a huge paten laid thereupon the intentions of all her dear ones plus her distraction wrapped up in a fervent prayer: "Thank you, dear Lord for the gift of my religious vocation. Please, help Judy discard the baubles of earth to find the pearl of great price."

After breakfast, together with the other novices, Sister set out, armed with mops and dusters to chase the dust from halls and parlours. So intent was she on giving the chair rungs a thorough cleaning, that she did not hear the rattle of the Portress' rosary as she entered the room. The latter even had to call her name twice before the novice heard her and looked up startled. Sister smiled pleasantly. "Good news for you!" she said, "One of your friends who is passing through Montreal has asked to

visit you. She will be here around three this afternoon." How Sister Frances longed to ask the visitor's name! But, this was too good a sacrifice to let it slip by unoffered. So she merely nodded assent when, turning back at the door, the portress cautioned, "You'll be ready, won't you?"

The rest of the forenoon dragged past at snail's pace. Somehow Sister found not the slightest interest in the lesson of applied pedagogy. She was woolgathering. Of American nationality, she had seldom had any visitors since entering the Pont Viau novitiate. No wonder she found this blind date so intriguing! Who could the visitor be? In her imagination she saw the merry parade of her friends and classmates go by without quite deciding on a particular name.

Three o'clock chimed at last. Like an angel all in white, Sister entered the large parlour and stood hesitant at the door for a split second. Then, "Judy, it's Judy!" she cried joyfully as her friend rose and came forward to greet her. "My,



*A novice comme il faut
never snubs the chair rungs.*

how wonderful you look!" Judy exclaimed as she examined habit and veil and sash.

For a blissful half hour the pair talked of home and the home folks, of school days, of friends and acquaintances. Then Judy asked point-blank. "Whatever made you give up all that? Yours was such a happy home... You know I have often felt I ought to enter a convent too but I really am not brave enough to leave everything behind?"

"Yes, Judy, I led a happy life back home, but I lead an even happier one here. You see, for a long time past, I had been yearning to spend myself entirely in the service of others. But how could I do so while remaining where I was? I encouraged myself with the thought that if I took one step in the right direction God would help me go the whole royal way for His sake. And... here I am."

"But, tell me, what was it that motivated your choice of this particular community?"

"The chief allurements, if I may call it that, was its beautiful spirit of thanksgiving. Our society, you know, is entirely dedicated to the foreign missions in a spirit of gratitude to God for His countless mercies. This was the aim which our revered Mother Foundress ever kept in view. How deeply her noble heart felt the sting of mankind's ingratitude towards its Maker! Acting upon this, she resolved to found a community whose every member would offer herself as a holocaust of per-

petual thanksgiving in her own name and in the name of all creatures. All of us want to share the treasures of our faith, the most precious of all treasures, to prove to God how grateful we are for having received it. That is all there is to it but I assure you that our life is spilling over with genuine happiness."

Judy was silent. In the depths of her blue eyes which searched the brown ones of her friend, a new light seemed to dawn... Suddenly, the deep rumbling tones of the convent bell called the novices to Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Sister Frances rose. "Well, Judy, we have had a pleasant time together. Thanks so much for calling." She added wistfully, "You will come again, won't you?"

"Sooner than you think," Judy replied enigmatically as she waved her friend a gay goodbye.

Kneeling before the altar, a few moments later, Sister prayed fervently, "Thank you, dear Lord, for my wonderful vocation." Then her mind slid down the coast of another pious distraction, "Whatever could Judy have meant by her 'sooner than you think'?"

The answer came two months later. On the very day when Sister Frances exchanged the white veil of the novice for the black of the professed, Judy's unruly locks were framed in the black bonnet of the postulants and she knelt in the front bench joining in the Magnificat of thanksgiving.

—————

The test of all happiness is gratitude. — G. K. Chesterton

Mi Querido Pueblo

Sister SAINT EVELINE¹, M.I.C.

Nine o'clock in the morning and the weather is already torrid! Brandishing a parasol like a shield to ward off the broiling rays of the sun, I set out on a round of the village accompanied by a young Cuban woman. Verdad! Although I have lived here for over a year there are certain families, parents of our pupils, I have not yet been able to meet. These good people being free-masons keep the Madres at distance.

Maximo Gomez is situated in the vicinity of Cardenas, a rather important seaport. A little further on, at one hour's bus ride, stretches Varadero, one of the world's most splendid beaches where thousands flock each year to enjoy the delightful climate of the months of January and February.

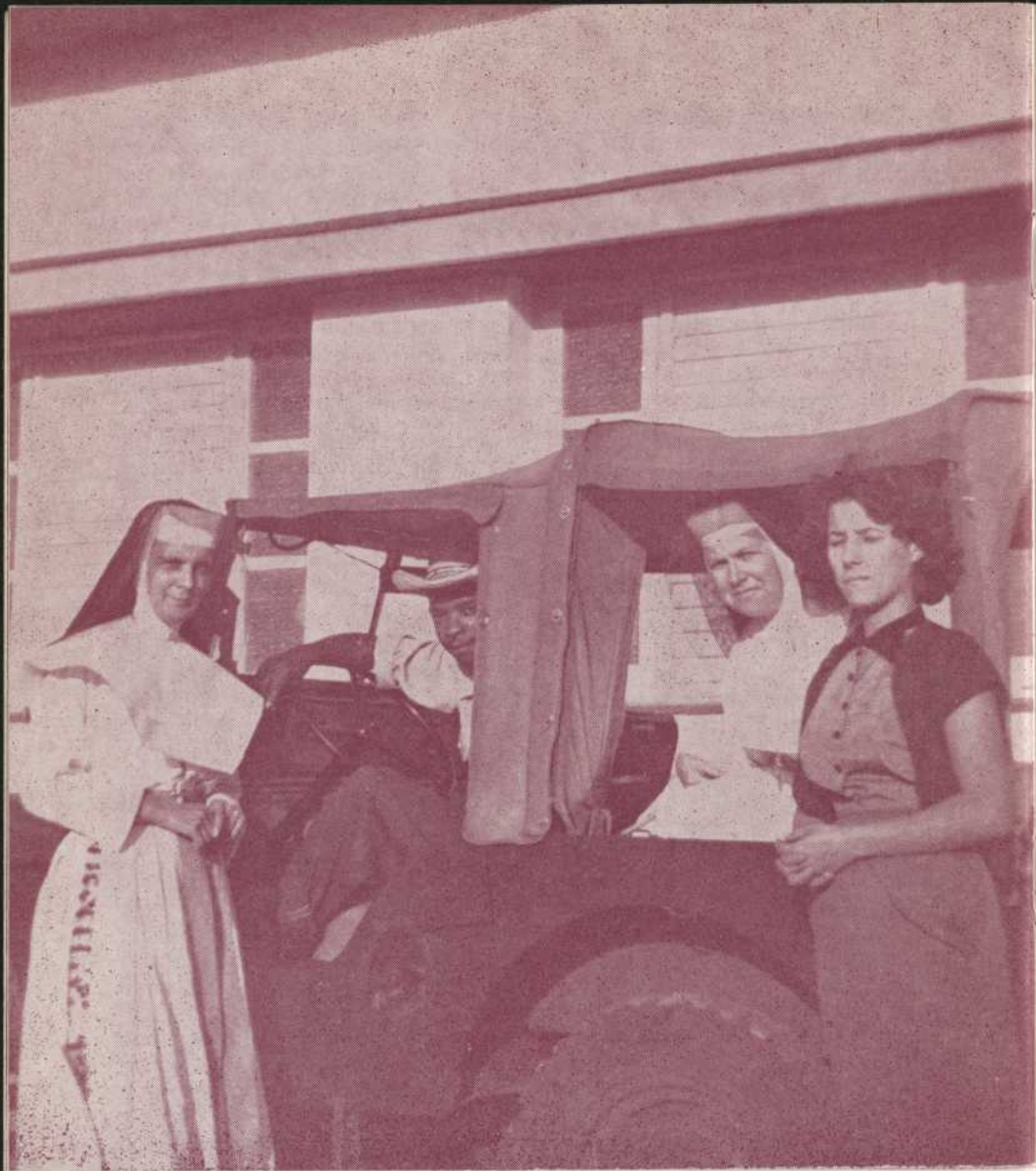
The municipality of Maximo Gomez has a population of 10,000 distributed among three *barrios* composed of twenty-three *fincas* or sugar cane plantations, each grouping between twenty to forty families. During the *zafra* (sugar cane harvest) season from January to May, a *majoral* directs the labourers at work in every plantation. These are the most

prosperous, carefree months for the folk of the *barrios* as during the rest of the year in spite of their good will there is absolutely no way of earning a penny, so poor is the land in resources.

Need one be surprised then to find that poverty reigns supreme in Cuban *barrios*? Merchants are not more fortunate than labourers since they are forced to sell their wares on credit. Only in February will labourers be able to settle their accounts. A milkman recently put the case before me, "I have distributed fifty dollar's worth of milk to Mr. X. who just now is unable to pay. What can I do? I cannot very well let his children die of hunger because he has no money on hand . . . The pity is I cannot give milk to all those who need it just as badly." One consoling aspect of the situation is that the poor help one another. Those who possess some property or a piece of land forego any benefice they might derive therefrom, allowing poorer neighbours to make themselves at home free of charge. Not in vain is Our Lady of Charity the patroness of Cubans!

The same distress extends to the

¹ Eveline Bergeron, Kenogami.



Sister Leo Joseph (Simone Sabourin, St. Isidore of Prescott, Ont.) and Sister St. Odilon (Constance Dubois, Megantic Co.) leaving their *querido pueblo* for a catechetical expedition in the *campos*.

spiritual domain. Owing to the dearth of priests to minister to their needs, the greater number show appalling religious indifference; they have grown up deprived of the Sacraments and of even elementary religious instruction. It is no easy task to help them overcome pride and ingrained habits of indolence in order to take up the serious study of catechism and the steady practice of religion. Processions, however, have the power to move the most nonchalant to action. How they love these colourful manifestations! They will not budge to attend Mass on Sunday the whole year round but should they hear of a procession in honour of a favourite saint out they troop decked in their best finery, their arms laden with flowers, their hearts lilting with song.

Missionary action is working slowly but surely to stir the leaven of Faith into this indifferent mass. For instance, on December 3, feast of St. Francis Xavier, the traditional procession in the evening was climaxed by a Mass offered outdoors. Sixty persons received Holy Communion on this occasion. This is all the more remarkable that when Reverend A. Asselin, P.M.E., arrived here in 1949, there were only four communicants in the entire parish. In 1953, was organized the initial Catholic Action group. Then, pious associations for women and girls came into being, precious auxiliaries to the labours of missionaries.

Threading my way through the streets and alleys of my *querido pueblo* furnishes me with many an opportunity of encouraging the good

folk and sympathizing with them in their troubles. At every house I leave, as heavenly talisman of happiness, Our Lady's miraculous medal. Through the generosity of kind Canadian friends I am happy to relieve the poverty of the most destitute with bundles of clothing. One young girl in particular was an appreciative beneficiary of these gifts. No other footgear had she but a pair of old galoshes belonging to her father; her dress was the latest in tatterdemalion style. She was so favourably impressed by the charity of those who had sent me the means of clothing her decently from head to foot, that she took up again the practice of her religious duties neglected since childhood.

My round of the *pueblo* has convinced me of the extreme poverty in which many families live. I have realized what heavy sacrifices numerous parents are making in order to have their children educated; they literally snatch the bread from their own mouths to pay the modest *Colegio* tuition fees. Some kindhearted Canadian visitors to our mission who observed this state of affairs, gave us before leaving a gift of \$50.00 to cover the schooling expenses of a needy Cuban child for a year. Once back in Canada, these good friends of missionaries have drawn the attention of others to this sad situation. Their generous initiative has resulted in providing the tuition of six Cuban boys and two girls. Heartfelt thanks to the generous Canadian benefactors to whom we are indebted for this much appreciated favour. May God and Our Lady multiply imitators of their *beau geste*!

Today . . . In Paradise

Sister SAINT RAYMOND OF JESUS¹, M.I.C.

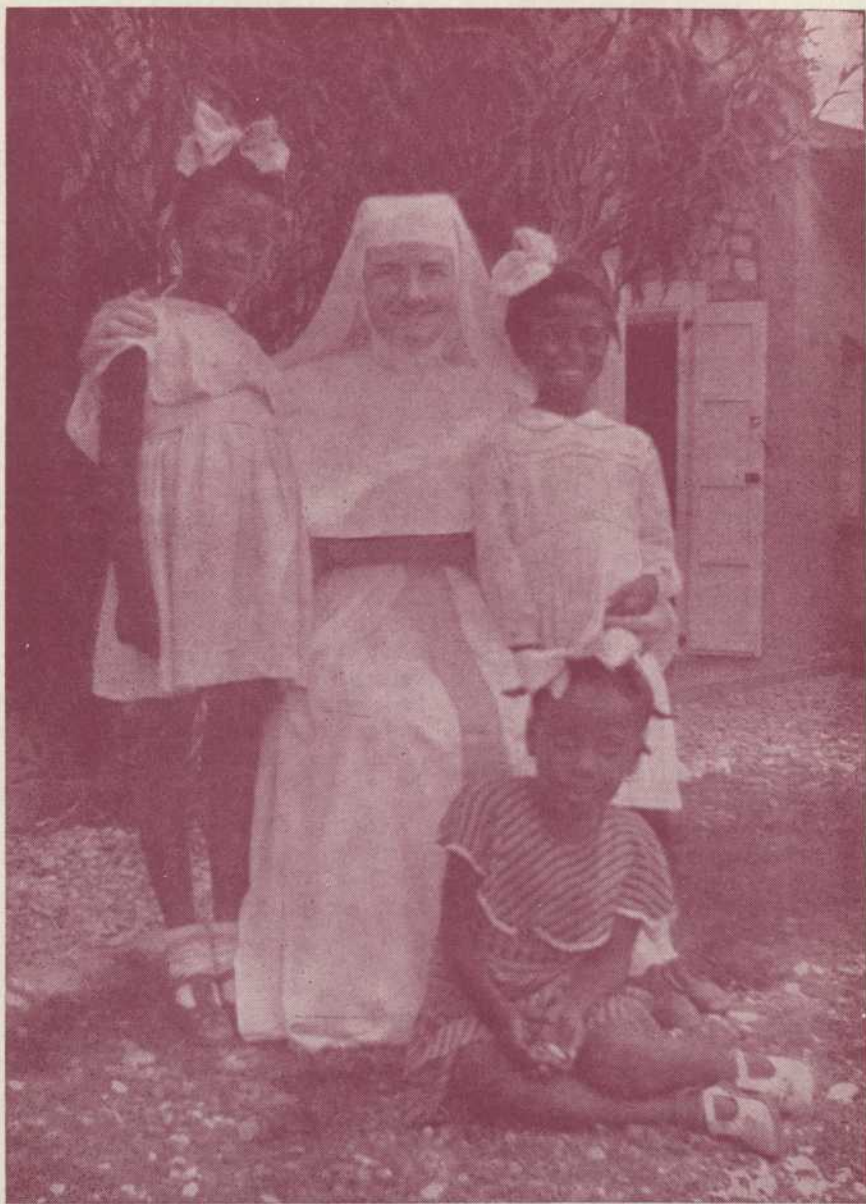
The ceremonies of the Holy Week which unfolded according to the recent liturgical regulations, left me profoundly impressed. On Good Friday, while I pondered over our Saviour's promise to the good thief crucified beside Him, I felt inclined to pray that He might deign repeat these saving words to all the sinners of the whole wide world today. I was soon to experience a consoling answer to this prayerful wish of mine.

On Holy Saturday, while we were yet at breakfast, a messenger knocked at the door of our dispensary. He wanted to borrow a stretcher to carry in his sister, an unwedded mother, who was in a desperate condition after giving birth to a child.

Towards evening the whole family clan arrived jostling one another around the stretcher where Erelay lay in deathlike stupor. I made rapid arrangements to have the patient installed in a *caille* next door to the dispensary. Even at first glance it appeared evident that the poor girl

was beyond earthly medication. Her baby had died immediately after birth but her relatives had postponed calling on a doctor although Erelay's condition had been worsening for the ten last days.

Upon inquiry, it was found that the girl was Catholic so I hastened to call the pastor who immediately administered Extreme Unction. Father then prepared to leave, cautioning me to call him again if the patient should recover consciousness. It took rather a long while for the injections given to take effect. At last, however, the eyes of the moribund opened wide in wonder and she feebly murmured, "Where am I? In the Mothers' *caille*?" After explaining to her how she had been brought to the dispensary because she was in a very serious condition, I went on to inquire whether she had made her First Communion. She replied that she had but that she did not intend receiving the Sacraments just yet. "Later on," she said. "I'll go to confession, but not just now." As



Was this her farewell to Roche a Bateau? Sister Raymund of Jesus now devotes herself as missionary-nurse at the Albert Schweitzer Hospital.

gently as I could I urged, "Erela, you were anointed when you were first brought in... We may not be able to help you, for your condition is very, very grave. There may not be any 'later on' for you. Why not make your peace with God while you may?" She scanned my face, a frightened look in the depths of her brown eyes; then, tugging at my habit, "Mother, I know you are kind and that you want only my good but I did not think the end would come so soon... Please call the priest..."

A few moments later, Erela shriven and comforted, resignedly offered the sacrifice of her life to her Maker. I left her resting quietly in the peace of her thanksgiving after she had received Viaticum, to attend to the needs of my several other patients. Before I had time to enter the dispensary I heard loud cries and lamentations issuing from the *caille*. I retraced my steps but even before I entered the hut Erela's soul had already slipped beyond the veil into the joys of Paradise. How deeply touched I was as I recalled this swift answer to my Good Friday prayer.

In spite of his heartfelt grief at his

sister's passing, her brother who was very fond of her, remarked, "Mother, it was perhaps better so... Erela was my only sister. She was good and religious minded always, and oh, so gentle... She was not entirely to blame for what happened. You who know the deplorable customs around our villages, will understand how she was coerced into an impossible situation by those who were her natural guardians." This is, alas, only too true of the majority of young girls led astray in these parts. How grateful I am to God for giving me fervent Christian parents to whom I owe in great part my religious vocation! My thankfulness also goes out to my beloved missionary congregation for the great privilege of caring for Christ's suffering members in Haiti. I wish I could have shared the joy I felt at witnessing this last hour conversion with the hidden soul who perhaps obtained it by fervent prayers and generous sacrifices from the fount of all mercies, the divine Heart of Jesus.

What are the pain of parting from our loved ones, our daily labours and trials on the missions compared to such rare spiritual joys?

Do you think that sainthood is something reserved for priests and nuns alone? It's not! No special profession has ever held a monopoly on holiness. There's no such thing as "cornering the market" on sanctity, for the simple reason that God gave EVERYBODY a vocation to sainthood. "This is the will of God, YOUR sanctification."

John M. Leacy, c.ss.r.

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Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26.
NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Montreal 9.
OUTREMONT, 314 St. Catherine Road
Montreal 8.
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Montreal 1.
NOMININGUE, Labelle County, P.Q.
RIMOUSKI, 85 St. Germain Street, P.Q.
JOLIETTE, P.Q., 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.
TROI RIVIERES, P.Q., 1325 de la Terriere Street.
GRANBY, P.Q., 35 Dufferin Street.
GRANBY, P.Q., 279 Main Street.
CHICOUTIMI, P.Q., 766 Cenacle Street.
SAINTE MARIE, Beauce County, P.Q.
SAINT JOHNS, P.Q., 430 Champlain Street.
PERTH, N.B., P.B. 259.
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OUR LADY OF PROTECTION HOUSE
Clear Water Bay Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

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

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WAKAMATSU, 480, sakae machi, Aizu
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TOKYO, 108-4 cho me Fukazawa cho, Setagaya ku.

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LAS PINAS, Rizal.
MATI, Davao Province.
DAVAO City, Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall.
PADADA, Davao Province.
BAGUIO City, 11, Pacdal, Mountain Province.

WEST INDIES

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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 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.
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Nyasaland, B.C.
MZAMBAZI MISSION, Kafukule P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C.
RUMPHI MISSION, Rumphu P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C.
KARONGA MISSION, Karonga P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C.
KASEVE MISSION, Fort Hill P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C.
MZUZU MISSION, Nyasaland, B.C.
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