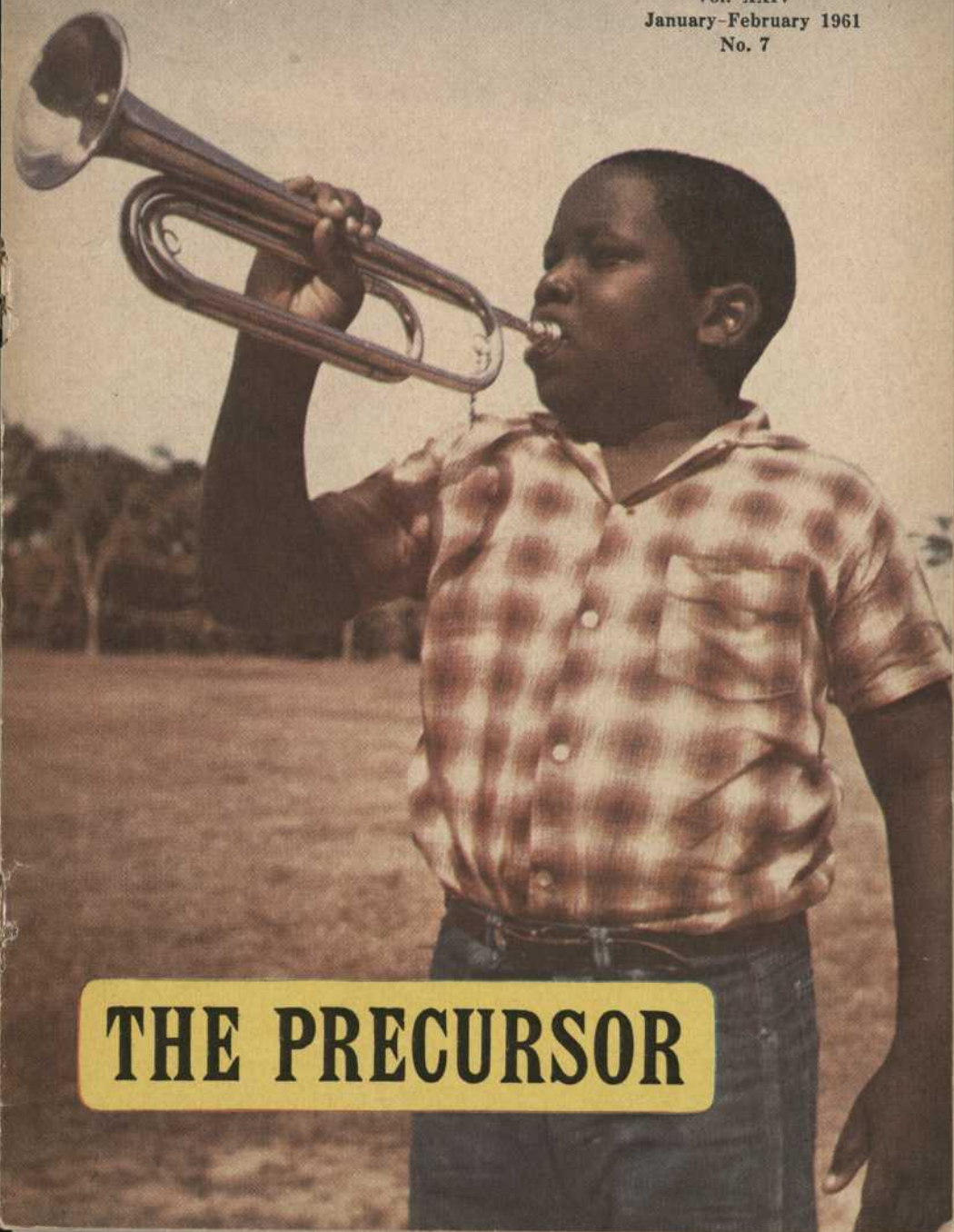


Vol. XXIV
January-February 1961
No. 7



THE PRECURSOR

The Precursor

2900 ST. CATHERINE ROAD — COTE DES NEIGES, MONTREAL (26)

Imprimatur : † Mgr Paul Touchette, P.A.V.G., December 31, 1959.

Nihil obstat : François Brouillette, ptre, August 25, 1960.

Vol. XXIV - 38th year

Montreal, January-February 1961

No. 7

Bi-monthly review published
by the Missionary Sisters of
the Immaculate Conception.

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Cover-page : *HAPPY NEW YEAR !*



In
my
hand
a branch
of plum blossoms...
I speak
the greetings
of the
New Year.

Shiki

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CHRISTMAS CUSTOM IN CUBA

It is the custom in Cuba to prepare *canastillas* (baby garments) for the children born at Christmas in the homes of the needy.

I remember how surprised I was when, shortly after coming to Cuba, I saw a dainty *canastilla* on display in the show window of a restaurant with the tag attached *Canastilla ofrecida por la Logia No. X, 25 de diciembre* (Layette offered by Lodge No. 10, December 25).

"Do even Freemasons give layettes at Christmas?" I queried of a group of young Catholic Action members.

"Such is the custom around here, Madre. Everyone who can gives a *canastilla*. I myself am preparing one."

This girl who spoke thus in the name of her companions was a fashionable dressmaker who had more work than she could do and who was, moreover, in rather straightened circumstances.

Sister MARIE HERMINE¹, M.I.C.

Years have gone by since that December day when the *canastilla* custom was explained to me.

At the beginning of the school year 1959, I found myself in charge of a number of young aspirants to the feminine section of a Catholic Action group. Means of apostolate were discussed in one of our initial classroom meetings. As there was much to be done in favour of children, each aspirant promised to spend at least one hour a week teaching the doctrine to them. A charitable adolescent suggested, "Madre, how about making a *canastilla* for a poor baby due to be born at Christmas?"

The whole group voted assent. Mrs. Laura, the mother of one of our pupils having agreed to teach the girls how to proceed they immediately placed at her disposal \$15.00 taken out of their charity fund. A few days later they set to work during the hour assigned for sewing lessons, cutting tiny garments,

¹ Veronique Bernatchez, Pont Rouge.

Sister Marie Hermine with the pupils
and the professors who worked
at the CANASTILLA.



stitching quilt and sheets, knitting booties and jacket. The *canastilla* hour they called it.

As the layette neared completion, the girls began to discuss what place would be best for the classroom exhibit. I did not say anything, for I planned to surprise them. One evening with the help of my companions I hung pale blue draperies in front of some empty book shelves and installed the statue of the Holy Child in the centre. At his feet I placed the first completed items. Entering the classroom on the following morning, the pupils were overjoyed, "What a happy idea

Madre to offer our work in homage to the divine Child! It is for Him we work, after all."

The pupils of the other classes were invited to see the *canastilla*.

"*Madre*. Mamma told me to ask you if you will accept a knitted jacket?"

"*Madre*, my elder sister says she will embroider a little shirt."

"*Madre*, Papa owns a drugstore and wants to send some soap and powder. Is it all right?"

"*Madre*, Grandma would like to see the *canastilla*. May I bring her?"

I said, "Yes, yes, yes!" to one and all with the result that the *canastilla* soon overflowed its blue corner and threatened to spread all over the classroom.

Two of our lay teachers started to knit while awaiting dinner. The third too busy to do so herself bought yarn which she gave to an elderly aunt who contributed three *abriguitos* (jackets), a few bonnets, and a number of booties. The mothers of our pupils grew enthusiastic over this classroom project. During recess, the younger children brought little parcels containing dresses, underwear, blankets, towels, condensed milk...

One afternoon, after their weekly assembly, the Catholic Action ladies visited my classroom.

"*Qué belleza! Qué preciosidad,*" exclaimed the President. "Only one thing seems lacking, the cradle."

"It would be nice if we had one to complete the *canastilla*," I replied.

"*Madre*, just leave the whole thing to me. I will send a little bed complete with mattress and pillow."

Imagine the pupils' delight when one fine morning they found their display enriched by a lovely pink bed draped in pale blue silk.

Meantime, the news spread that the pupils of Santa Maria Colegio would this year provide a *canastilla*.

Early in December the names of eligible candidates to the Christmas gift were registered. By then, three

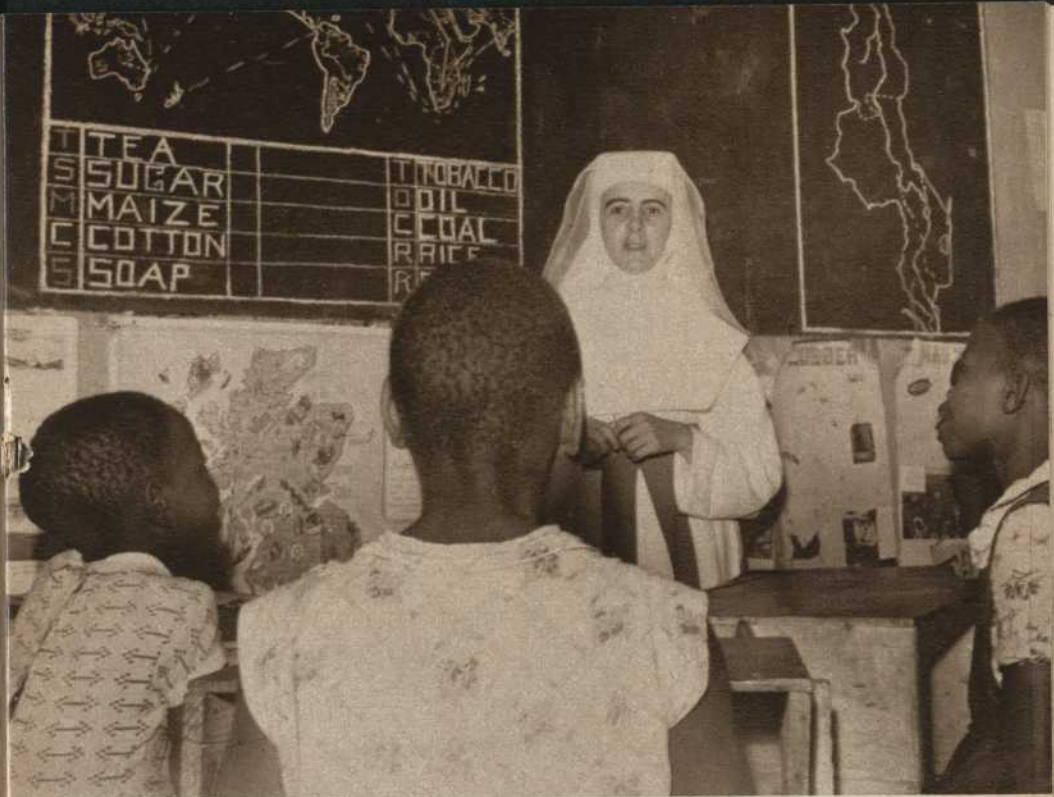
complete layettes were available. On December 8, the Catholic Action ladies presented theirs; the Federates whose patroness is Saint Lucy had their turn on December 13, and the Colegio's turn came on December 25. Thanks to the generosity of pupils and parents, four needy mothers received a complete layette, while six others benefited by numerous articles of clothing.

Besides the condition laid by Catholic Action leaders that the parents of the newborn infants should have had their union blessed by the Church, the Colegio authorities further decided to give the *canastilla* only after the babies had been baptized. This was to prevent the parents from postponing Baptism as is usually done in these parts until the chosen godmother or godfather should find it convenient to attend the ceremony. Santa Maria Colegio had its own godchildren in the person of a chubby Oscarito and a lovely Caridad.

During the distribution of their gifts, the pupils lovingly looked on the babies who cooed and gurgled seeming to understand how much tenderness had gone into each frill and tuck.

As we looked on rejoicing with our seniors we reflected, "How charitable the Cubans are! No wonder! Their patroness is Our Lady of Charity."

Should not such an inspiring Christmas custom be adopted by missionaries everywhere?



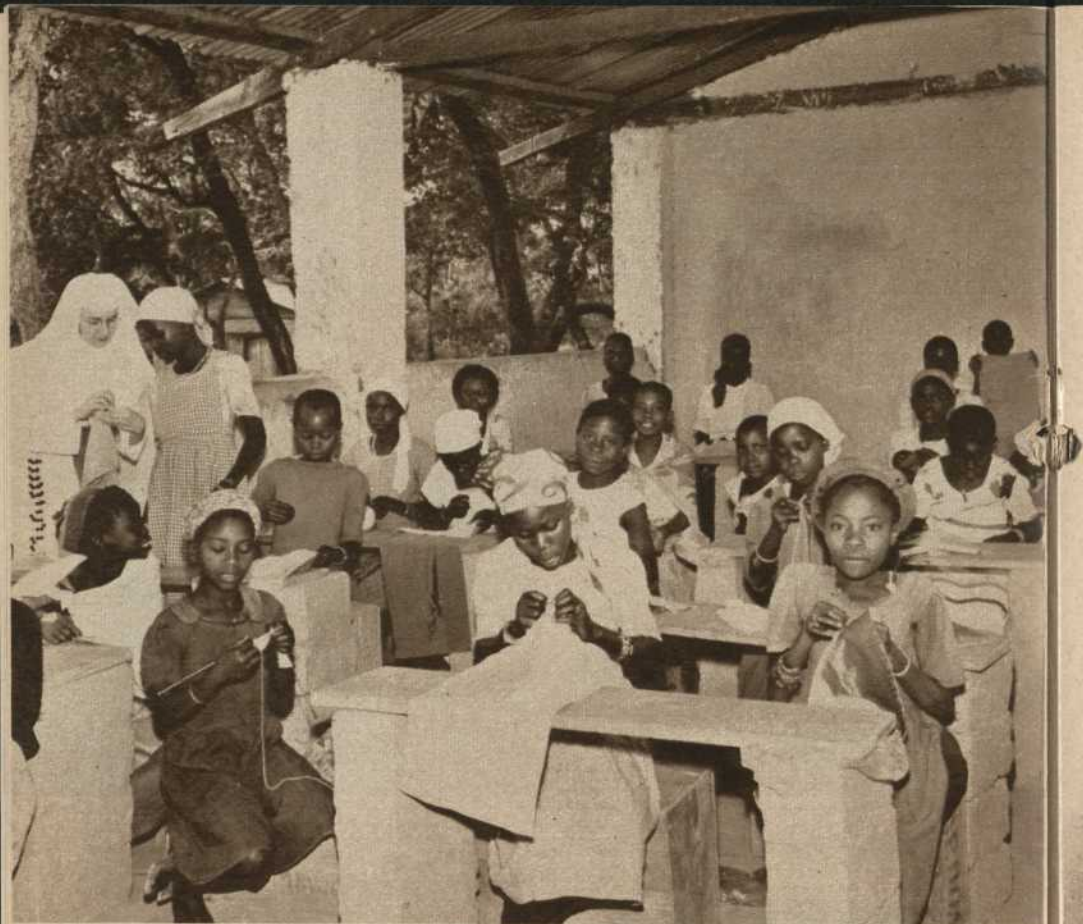
NKATA BAY, NYASALAND

MARITA'S CHRISTMAS

Sister AGNES OF JESUS, M.I.C.

(Rita Desaulniers, Shawinigan Falls.)

Among the pupils of Standard Four, the first class I was assigned to teach upon my arrival in Africa in 1958, Marita gave me more trouble than all the others put together. This laughing-eyed Tonga girl of fourteen enjoyed nothing better than skipping her homework and playing pranks on her companions. At the close of the school year, her fate hung in the balance. Should she be re-admitted to the mission school in 1959? I thought



Home Economics in Nkata Bay,
Sister Jane of the Cross (Yvette Demers, Quebec).

not as her influence on her classmates was not of the best.

She had, however, one redeeming point which finally induced Sister Superior to show her *lusungu* (mercy). A fervent catechumen in spite of the fact that her entire village was pagan, she never missed doctrinal instructions or Sunday Mass.

During the first week of the new school year, things went smoothly enough, but soon the girl's frolicsome nature again broke out of bounds. We decided to call her parents to the Mission to discuss the situation with them, situation which could not be allowed to go on. Although we were ready to give Marita another chance, it would

have to be the last. One more escapade, and much to our regret she would have to be returned to her village without reimbursement of the tuition fee already paid. The parents accepted this decision and left after having tried to hammer some sense into their daughter's kinky head.

Was it fear of being expelled? From that time onward, the girl became transformed into a model of docility and faithfulness to duty.

At first I could hardly help being somewhat skeptical. The transformation seemed too good to last. But,

as weeks and months proved the solidity of her "conversion" I began to think that a nobler motive than fear stimulated the girl. Eventually, she won her younger sister over to Catholicism. Only once did she drop back into her old ways when, during a sewing lesson, she started an animated conversation with a classmate. At my look of reproach she rose and of her own accord squatted in front of the classroom with her work, out of reach of temptation.

Throughout December that year all my pupils although non-Christians made a fervent preparation

Exquisite representation
of the Nativity in Africa.



for Christmas. Marita was outstanding in generosity. On December 22, I was making my way to school after breakfast when I was surprised to find the girl lying full length on the ground, her head covered with a *saru*, in the throes of a severe attack of malaria. The Sister Nurse at the dispensary was called to give her adequate medication, then we had someone take her back home to rest.

While I was constructing the Church crib with a group of pupils on Christmas Eve, a messenger came in with the news that Marita who was rapidly losing ground had asked

to be carried to the Catholic Mission. Sister Superior offered to send a stretcher, as we had not even a jeep, but the man refused saying he would carry her in pickaback, African fashion.

The five jogging miles to the Mission were sheer torture to the fever-racked girl. Although she was still conscious when she arrived, she was no longer able to speak. Her condition soon worsened so that in the early evening hours Sister Saint Justinian, R.N., thought it prudent to baptize her, the pastor of the Mission being absent. When he re-



turned some time later, Marita's shriven soul was already in possession of eternal happiness.

Meantime, the drums were beating out the rhythm of a welcome to Christians and catechumens converging on the central mission from various outposts. But the usually festive atmosphere of Christmas Eve was saddened by the news of the girl's death.

In his sermon during midnight Mass Reverend Father Van de Wynckele, W.F., Superior of the Mission, recalled how Marita had lovingly prepared her heart for the birthday of the Christ Child little dreaming He would so soon call her to Himself. The assistants were deeply moved by this untimely departure of one who, until a short time ago, had been so full of vitality.

On the following day, accompanied by Marita's classmates we cycled to Kasweswe for the funeral. Reverend Father Superior recited the customary prayers and sprinkled the bier with holy water; the father and mother then drew near to take a farewell look at their beloved daughter.

Instead of the usual lamentations on the way to the cemetery, the

rosary was recited and hymns on the joys of heaven were sung in Citumbuka. According to the time-honoured custom, the dead one's belongings: garden hoe, mat, pillow, etc., were buried with her. Once the grave had been filled, the women brought white stones or pebbles to outline the spot.

Reverend Father Van de Wynckele celebrated a Requiem Mass for the repose of Marita's soul on December 30. All the pupils of the mission school being present, Father took the opportunity of stressing the lessons of courage and perseverance that might be drawn from Marita's life. She had, he remarked, remained a fervent and faithful catechumen notwithstanding the defection of many among her closest friends.

The girl's classmates felt more keenly than others the wrench of separation. They had known as it were two Maritas: the prankish, rebellious student of the first year and the model student of the last. The striking example she gave proved that with the help of *Ciuta* (God), and a good dose of courage and perseverance, conversion is always possible.

The good which you cannot do to God who needs nothing,
you may do to your neighbor for love of God.

St. Ignatius Loyola



NORTHERN RHODESIA

Things Seen in Fort Jameson

Sister ALFRED MARIE¹, M.I.C.

On the verandah...

"Here we are!" Mother Regional exclaimed as our car rolled to a stop. "This is our Fort Jameson Saint Pius X Convent and Social Centre. What do you think of it?" she asked quizzically as I stood blinking in the strong sunshine.

It took me several minutes¹ to drink in the full beauty of the site on which stands the large white house (ex-Hotel Rangeley) set against the lacy green foliage of flamboyant and the silvery bluish

tints of tall eucalyptus trees. Opposite, rose a Lourdes Grotto, grey stones splashed by the vivid red of huge poinsettias.

Sister Superior² was on the porch carrying on a brisk conversation in Cinyanja with a young African woman. As soon as she heard the car door slam, she hurried forward to bid us welcome. The woman followed,

¹ Marcelle Prévost, Quebec.

² Sister St. Alexandrine (Evelyn O'Neil, Quebec).



EUCALYPTUS



Thatch-roofed schoolhouse.

examining us curiously as we exchanged greetings. Mother Regional inquired about her.

"Oh, hers is a special case," sighed Sister Superior. "She has been pestering me with requests to give her

employment at the Catholic Mission, but we already have our hands full with the young girls of the Social Centre. Besides, I am sure she could not live here in peace. Married according to the local customs to a man who already has another wife,

she now wants to leave him. You know enough of Africa to guess this is sooner said than done."

Always ready to help those in distress, Mother Regional offered. "There might be an opening for her in Kanyanga. The Sisters there are in need of a helper. If she is willing, I can take her along with me as I will be travelling in that direction tomorrow morning. Let her meet me here with her *katundu* (luggage) at seven sharp."

Mother's proposition was accepted with alacrity. Smiling and bowing in the gracious manner of people around here, the woman murmured a fervent "*Zikomo* Thank you" and was gone.

Although Sister Superior had reasons to doubt she would be at the rendez-vous the following morning, I espied her, bright and early, making her way to the convent. She squatted on the porch, probably congratulating herself on having prepared her evasion without giving the alarm at home when her lord and master suddenly appeared around the corner.

"What's the meaning of this?" he queried of the truant belle, gesturing towards the *katundu*. "Didn't I marry you according to the law?" There was a note of reproach in his voice, but he did not seem angry even though she maintained an inscrutable silence. To Sister Superior who had meantime put in an appearance, he said, "Please tell my wife to go home. Why do you keep her here?"

Sister explained that the young woman had repeatedly asked to be employed at the Catholic Mission, but that no pressure whatever had been used. She had done so of her own accord; she was perfectly free to go or stay as she liked.

He again started to plead his cause, "What have I done that you want to run away?" he asked. "Haven't I always been good to you?"

She answered in sulky monosyllables without once raising her eyes. Meantime, Mother Regional and Sister Mary of the Angels¹ sat in the jeep waiting for the woman to make up her mind. The chauffeur disgusted with the whole affair, impatiently sounded the klaxon and stepped on the starter. Up sprang the woman and without casting even a look of farewell on her erstwhile partner climbed into the vehicle. The man watched her in openmouthed dismay, but made not the slightest attempt to detain her.

Some time later, I was surprised and happy to learn that this man, turning over a new leaf, had enrolled at the Catholic Mission catechumenate.

During my stay in Fort Jameson, I was to witness on the convent porch many another romantic adventure with a diversity of themes and a complexity of situations barring all monotony.

Late one evening, a feminine voice called from the garden shadows. The voice belonged to an elegant

¹ Alice Pepin, Warwick, Que.



Sister Imelda of Jesus (Adrienne Larouche, Nashua, N.H.) and her star pupil. The sewing machine is a portable African "Singer".

young Miss in a blue skirt and white nylon blouse like those worn by fashionable ladies in Lusaka. During the course of the conversation we learned that she, a Catholic, had been affianced by her relatives to a young Anglican. She opposed the

match on two grounds: first, because she did not want to place herself outside the Church by a mixed marriage; secondly, because she was in love with a catechumen. The Anglican suitor, however, had paid the dowry price to her mother

ALAND

Making mango jam.
Sister Saint Epiphane (Gemma Ouellet,
St. Epiphane).



who had promptly spent it, buying clothes for her daughter. He now claimed the repayment of the sum threatening the family with a *milan-du* (law suit) in case of refusal. Too poor to reimburse, the mother furious

at the girl's stubbornness in refusing to marry him, finally threw her out of the house. Where could she go for protection if not to the Catholic Mission Social Centre?

A School for Wives

I staid for a whole month at Fort Jameson observing the Sisters at work. If I were asked what method they use to ensure the success of their Social Centre, I would reply, "They love the Africans and they are entirely devoted to their welfare. That is all there is to their method."

In this little town operating under a certain plan of colour-bar or at the least of provisional segregation — section for the whites and African compound, European club and African Welfare, European schools and African schools — the Catholic Social

Mission Centre appears as a symbol of racial brotherhood and friendship. This is best expressed by the works undertaken by the missionaries and by the manner in which these works are conducted. To the method of education for women through the teaching of domestic sciences, a method appreciated throughout Northern Rhodesia, is added as complement weekly visits to the homes of students. The efficacy of this procedure consists in the fact that it is no longer the African women who come to the white women as to their teachers, but the whites who go out to the Africans as friends, to discuss with them on a familiar basis the problems of daily life. This way of presenting domestic science courses has the



She attends

Domestic Science

with her twin babies.

advantage of leveling the barrier of colour-bar and of establishing cordial, comprehensive relations.

At first, the Sisters used to teach domestic science courses at the town Welfare. When subversive influences forced them to retire, some good emerged from the event, since the Catholic Mission obtained governmental authorization to open its own Domestic Science Centre dispensing the regular course. The women enrolled without distinction of religion: non-Christians, Protestants of the Free Church of Scotland and of the Dutch Reformed Church. A good number had already met the Sisters at the Welfare. Two small buildings on the property were transformed into classrooms. This arrangement was far from being ideal, for although thatch roofs do keep the house cool, the overhanging eaves keep out the light. Nobody com-

plained, however. While waiting for better days and more adequate equipment, the women cheerfully installed old fashioned sewing machines on the verandah where the lessons took place.

The students arrive early in the morning. A few ride bicycles, others walk often carrying babies picka-back and leading small children by the hand. Except twice a week, they spend the afternoons at the Centre. The course extends over an intensive

Baby rides a modern carriage.



A street in the African Compound.



period of eighteen months and comprises cutting, sewing, knitting, cooking, hygiene, and a smattering of familial pedagogy emphasizing Christian principle.

While the women work or study, the little ones amuse themselves with toys or snatch forty winks in the small homemade cots placed at their disposal. These Bantu women can read and write in their own tongue; several know a modicum of English, but are usually too shy to use it. The majority have had a scanty two or three years of schooling. Their aim in following the domestic science course is to balance their education in order that it may

not fall too short of that acquired by husbands who have gone through the secondary course.

How I enjoyed visiting the classrooms! The students always greeted me with smiling *selani bwino* to which I returned the traditional *zikomo*. What struck me most was their good humour, their spontaneity, and their easy courteous behaviour towards the Sisters. On my first visit, I tried to say a few words in Citumbuka only to learn that this dialect is not understood in Fort Jameson where the people belong to Chewa stock and speak Cinyanga. Similarities exist between the two languages with regard to accidence

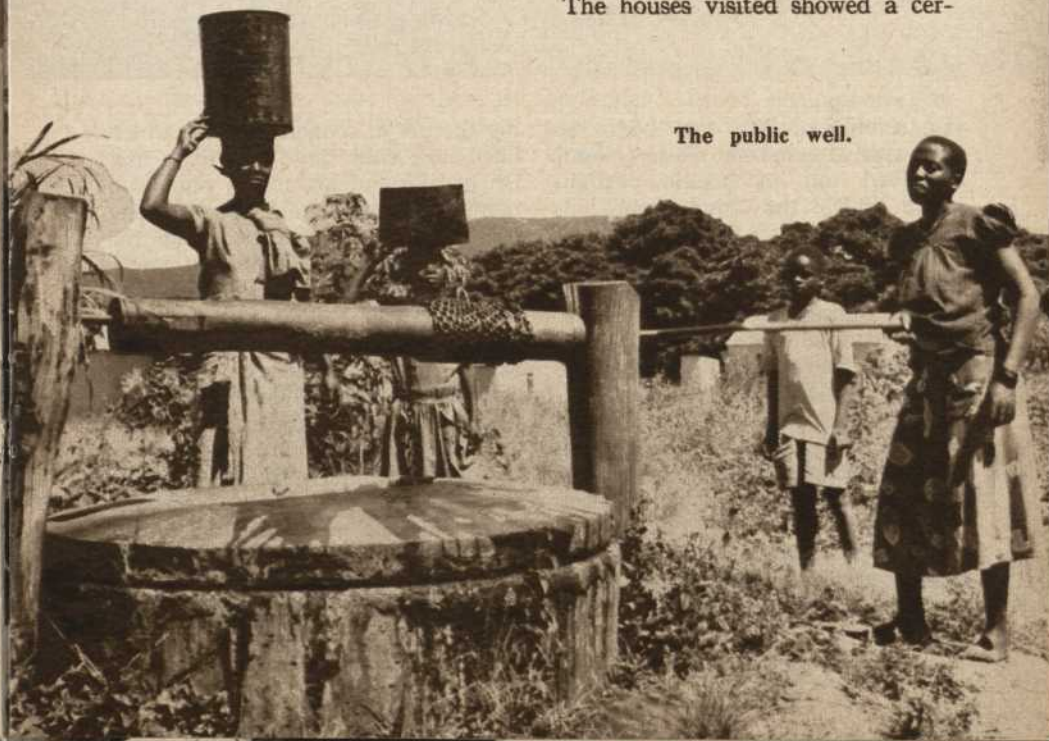
and syntax; indeed 60% of the words are alike although they may have entirely different meanings. Such being the case, I often understood anything but what was meant.

What I liked best was to accompany the Sisters on their home visitations. All the students live in the African Compound whose population is approximately 8,000. The Compound is divided into three sections: the first is made up of three-room houses built half European, half African style; the second of five-room houses with corrugated tin roofs, glass windows, and cement flooring; the third of one-room, thatch-roofed huts such as those

of the primitive bush villages. Except for the "straw village" as this section is sometimes called, the African Compound leaves one under a favourable impression especially if it is visited when the rich yellow flowers of the cinderella trees form a graceful arch over the main avenue. Some of the houses set close together have pretty gardens planted with flowers and shrubs. A three-room house may be rented for one pound, ten shillings a month (about \$4.50). This seems absurdly cheap to people in America, but it is in proportion with African not American salaries. On the other hand, the Compound has neither running water nor electricity. Oil lamps or lanterns are used, and the women fetch water from the artesian well provided by the Administration.

The houses visited showed a cer-

The public well.





She is proud of her
"Made in England" dishes.

tain evolution. We saw bedrooms with neatly made beds, clothes closets contrived out of plastic curtains inside which the family wardrobe hung. In the combination dining room living room were tables and chairs. Some families had small dry battery radios, sewing machines, various utensils, and table china. A good sign that rules of hygiene were put into practice was the jar containing boiled water carefully covered with a clean napkin edged with bead ornaments heavy enough to keep the wind from playing tricks.

The radios, sewing machines, and furniture found in these homes prove that the Africans are gradually learn-

ing the art of economizing for which until now they have had little use. On a salary of about ten pounds a month (approximately \$30.00) they must contrive to get food, pay the rent and the school fees, buy medicine, clothes and other necessities of life. When the women can sew, this is so much saved on the family wardrobe. With the money put aside they can once in a while buy a worthwhile piece of furniture or some useful household item. The Sisters, therefore, often have to discuss budgeting with their students. Necessity is the mother of invention. Forced because of their poverty to make the most of things they are in a measure to offer practical suggestions.

Happiness is another subject that comes in for frequent discussions, a subject that gives the Sisters golden opportunities of pointing out in what direction true happiness lies, at what cost it must be obtained. Tragedies of the heart may exist under a charming exterior. Marsera, admired and envied because of her pretty dresses and lovely little home, once confided,

"My husband is unkind... How can I be happy? My friends think I am very fortunate. If they only knew! When things get too hard, I am tempted to run away and never come back..."

And Kefi's lovely mamma, "My husband wants to take another wife. I cannot prevent him from doing so."

Are the Africans living in the compound satisfied with their lot? Apparently, the women are more content than the men, since life there is much easier for them than it used to be when they had to fetch water (often polluted) from distant pools or streams, hoe the vegetable patches, pound their own maize. On the other hand, I heard one of the men vent his discontent,

"How can I bring up my children to be good Christians when they are continually mixed up with pagan children initiated in questionable customs? If only we each had our fenced-in property as Europeans have! We are told there is not enough land... But after all isn't this Africa and doesn't the land belong to us?"

Well educated, reliable and hard-

working, this man was bookkeeper for a firm directed by an Afrikaner. (a native white of Dutch ancestry). Convinced of the honesty of his bookkeeper, the employer often left him in sole charge while he went off to his club or on hunting safaris. The employee could not help comparing his salary and standard of living with that of his patron. He would have liked to enjoy modern commodities, a comfortable home, but his meager wages would not allow him such things. Finally, he moved with his family to Nyasaland where he had been promised a salary three pounds higher than that given him in Northern Rhodesia. As he was a good Catholic, he refused to merge his dissatisfaction with that of the Congress Party, declaring to those who tried to get him to join, "I'd rather be a Christian than a Congress member."

The thoughts and feelings of this particular African demonstrate the crisis of the evolution reached in Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Can the Africans be blamed for claiming land that is theirs by right of birth and a comfortable standard of living such as that of Europeans around them? It seems doubtful, however, that the Africans of not so many years ago would have agreed to live in a town built entirely European style. I can hear them object, "Why the fences?" and look about for a common *bwato* (yard) and the community life of villages.

The Centre

Ten girls from fifteen to eighteen years of age were boarders at the

Sister Saint Rodrigue (Francoise Pageau, Quebec) teaches Guiding to young girls at the Centre.



Centre when I visited Fort Jameson. This social work is closely connected with the "school for wives" with this difference that while the latter accepts students without distinction of religion, the former functions especially for young Catholic girls or steady catechumens who in their familial environment have been deprived of cultural advantages.

The boarders live in a pretty little house next door to the Convent. As they all contemplate marriage in the near future — the Achewa marry early — they follow the same domestic science course as the wom-

en to which are added lessons in doctrine, arithmetic, and hygiene; the illiterate are taught to read and write in Cinyanja while those who have had a primary education are given lessons in English. Each pupil receives a small sum as pocket money. Before buying trinkets of which they are so fond, the young girls thus get used to think first of necessities and of charity, and to balance their desires with their budget.

The Centre's primary aim is to promote the foundation of true Christian homes. Its students are trained

to take an active part in Catholic Action. They also belong to the excellent Guide movement, which has already worked wonders for the feminine youth of Fort Jameson, and to the Legion of Mary. A dynamic senior praesidium has been organized at the Mission.

On Sunday afternoons, young men (Catholics or catechumens) visit the boarders. Some couples like to stroll about the beautiful grounds; others sit and chat on the verandah. Since Christianity regards woman as the equal of man, the young Achewa girls of the Centre do not kneel when talking to their friends or suitors; neither will they do so

after their marriage. According to the traditions of certain Bantu tribes, the young girl must kneel whenever she speaks to her father, the wife to her husband; but in *evolué* circles and at the Centre such tradition is not one that should be maintained.

Once in a while the girls are visited by their relatives. Teresa, an orphan crippled by polio, has never known such popularity with her family as since she has been enrolled at the Centre. When she first came, she crawled about on all fours. Equipped with crutches, she soon learned to walk again, much to her prideful satisfaction and that of her friends.

About to leave on home visitations.





Sr. Andre Raphael
(Bernadette Haque,
Frammingham, Mass.)

PHILIPPINES



Sr. Saint Guy
(Pauline Rock,
Quebec)

ROME



Sr. Saint Josephat
(Theresa Carr,
St. Denis and Archelus)



Sr. Marie Auguste
(Blanche Gresh,
Coaticook)



Sr. Saint Camillas
(Helen Guillemette,
St. Hyacinthe)



Sr. Marie Emile
(Rita Ouellette,
Lemington, Me.)



Sr. Martha of Bethany
(Bertha Polhem,
Three Rivers)

BOLIVIA



Sr. Clare of Providence
(Claire Desrochers,
St. Charles of Mandeville)



Sr. Saint Emilien
(Emilienne Marchand,
Tremblant)



Sr. Saint Nemise
(Claire Gagnon,
Three Rivers)

PERU



Sr. Saint Donat
(Gabrielle Fontaine,
Granby)



Sr. Eugene
(Lucille Miller,
St. Nazaire)

MADAGASCAR



Sr. St. Catherine of Siena
(Theresa Forest,
St. Paul of Joliette)



Sr. Saint Monica
(Monique Parrot,
Montreal)



Sr. Saint Clemence
(Claire Desrochers,
St. Alphonse of Joliette)



Sr. Marie Odette
(Marcelle Benoit,
Cap de la Madeleine)



Sr. Marie
(Lucille Miller,
St. Nazaire)

HAITI

DEPARTURES



ile
(re)

Sr. Martha & Bethany
(Berthe Polhem,
Three Rivers)

Sr. Saint Rupert
(Lucie Dyerme,
Montreal)

Sr. Lucile of the L Heart
(Lucile Picard,
Village du Autnaies)

BOLIVIA



lien
hand,

Sr. Saint Nimise
(Claire Garsau,
Three Rivers)

Sr. St. Peter Nolasco
(Fernande St. Pierre,
Manseau)

Sr. Francis of Providence
(Lucile Gilmour,
Chateauguay Bassin)

PERU



Saint Donat
(elle Fontaine,
Granby)

Sr. Eugenie of Rome
(Lucille Mallette,
St. Nazaire of Bagot)

MADAGASCAR



Marie Odette
(Ariette Bonville,
ap de la Madeleine)

Sr. Marie-Rose
(Lucille Gilson,
Montreal)



Sr. M. of the Reparation
(M. Ange Provost,
Sherrington)



Sr. Marie Lucile
(Lucille Bessault,
Val Jacine)



Sr. Saint Isotilde
(Germaine Beauchemin,
St. Isotilde de Boston)

HAITI



Sr. Saint Isotilde
(Lucienne Constantine,
Montreal)



Sr. Paul of Damas
(Pauline Chabert,
Drummondville)

CUBA



Sr. Saint Hubert
(Gertrude Poiré,
Chateauguay village)

AFRICA



Sr. Saint Julian
(Marquerite Julien,
St. Augustin de Steineuf)

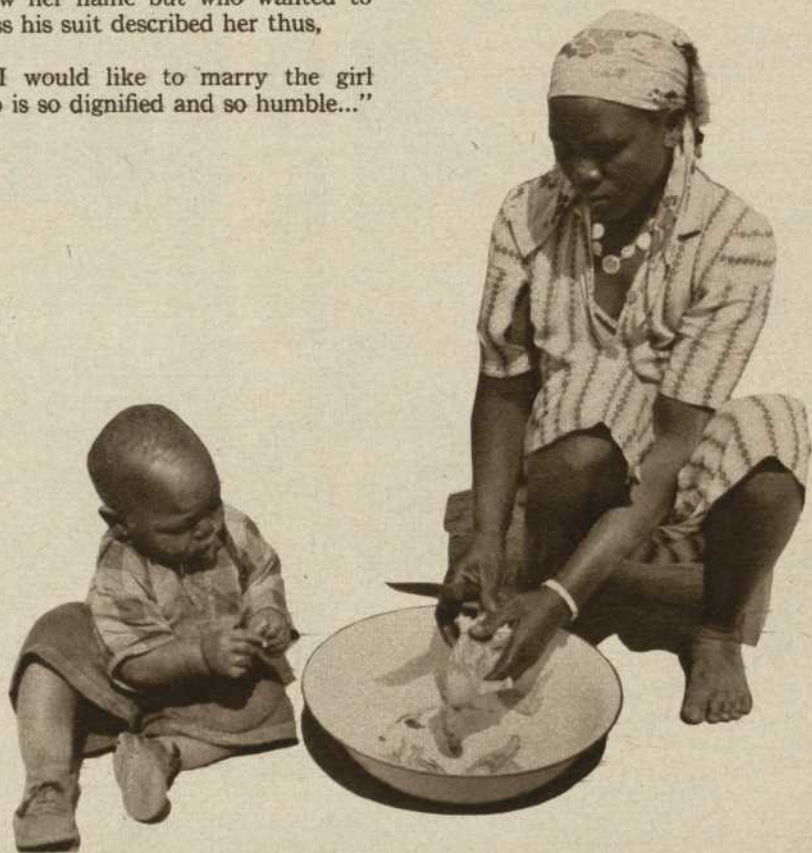
1960

Alert and studious, she followed all the courses given to the other students; her application was so remarkable that she stood high in her class. Her uncles developed a sudden interest in their handicapped niece, shrewdly guessing she would yet bring in a good dowry.

A graduate of the Nkamenya School of Home Economics, who acted as monitor at the "school for wives" and as *capilano* among the Guides of the Centre, was much sought after by promising youths of Fort Jameson. A young man who did not know her name but who wanted to press his suit described her thus,

"I would like to marry the girl who is so dignified and so humble..."

But the young lady in question declined. To Sister Saint Alexandrine who expressed some surprise upon seeing her refuse advantageous offers of marriage she gave the laconic answer, "I don't want to marry." Every evening she spent much of her time in the convent chapel, absorbed in fervent prayer. She eventually left for her native Nyasaland where she entered the Novitiate of the Rosarian Sisters.





**Sister Alfred Marie learns the elements of CITUMBUKA
with Sister Marie Rosaria
of the Rosarian Sisters as her professor.**

Social Varieties

The "school for wives" and the Centre are not the only social works conducted by the Sisters; several times a week, Sister Superior visits the local prison and the African hospital. I accompanied her to the prison on a few occasions. The matron took us inside the barbed wire enclosure where the prisoners sat on straw mats. Perched on two overturned buckets with folded burlap bags as cushions, we taught them how to sew. Sister Superior then

gave a simple doctrinal instruction to which they attentively listened. It was hard to tell whether they welcomed these visits merely for the recreation afforded or out of a genuine interest in seeking the Truth.

Prisoners in the women's ward are never numerous and their sentences are light. Their crimes? Most of them land there for beating their husbands when they had had enough of being themselves beaten.

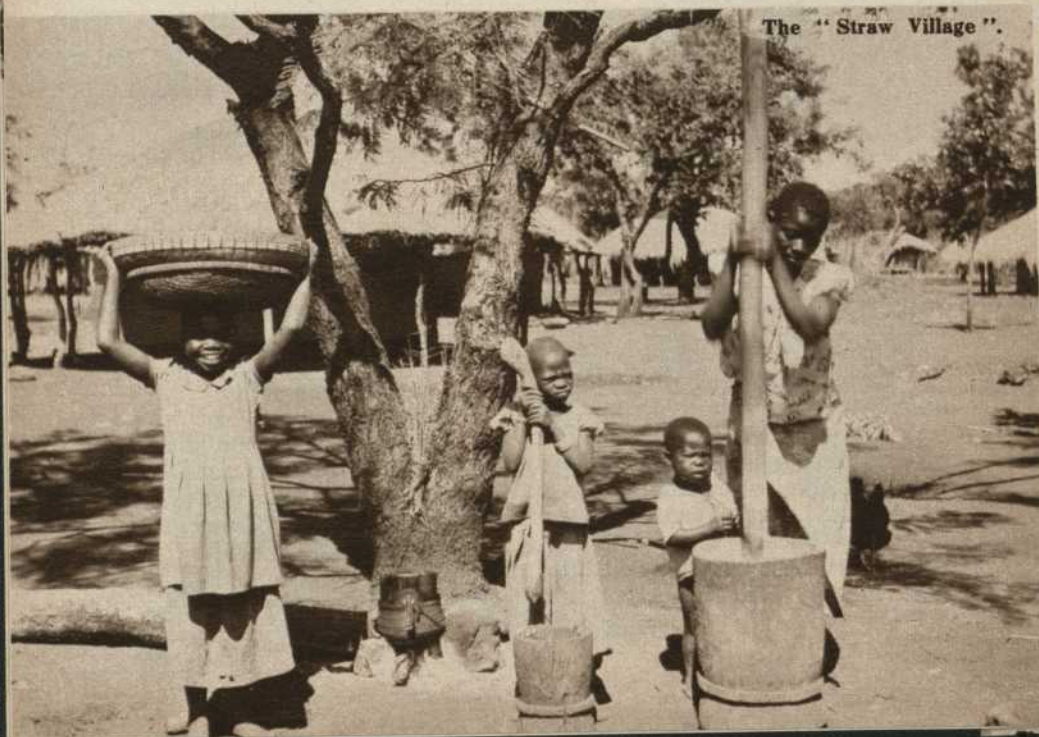
Even if it does not give immediate

results, the prison apostolate is not entirely fruitless. The prisoners have at least caught a glimpse of the charity of Christ reflected in His missionaries.

Visits to the sick bring more consolations. The African Hospital consists of a main building which houses the direction bureau together with the various services and of several separate buildings where in vast wards the different categories of patients are cared for: on the men's side, wards for TB patients, newly operated cases, accident cases, and for patients with non-contagious diseases. On the women's side there are as many divisions to which are added a maternity ward and a nurs-

ery. A European head doctor and a head nurse direct an all African personnel of medical assistants, male nurses, and a few women nurses.

On the whole, the patients look forward to Sister Superior's visit. They know that her basket always overflows with mangoes, papayas, bananas which she distributes along with sweets on special occasions. To the intellectuals she brings newspapers and magazines more especially the "Afrikan" a Catholic publication printed in English, Cinyanja, and Citumbuka. Those who can read English enjoy more or less recent copies of the *Little Messenger*, the *Catholic Digest*, the *Ave Maria* or whatever such literature we can



The "Straw Village".



Sister Saint Alexandrine visits the women's prison.

dispose of for distribution. Books written in Cinyanja are also in great demand; we never have enough to satisfy all who ask for them.

One day, an Anglican patient who had kept distant and aloof, asked Sister for some magazines to while away the time. The latter replied,

"Too bad. I've only a few Catholic periodicals left."

"I'll take them, Sister. I must have something to read."

Mangoes and reviews facilitate friendly contacts. First step: an exchange of ideas on religion takes place; second step: the patients agree to pray; third step: Catholic patients who have long neglected the practice of their religious duties accept to have a priest called. Frederico, Mateo, Enriko, to name only a few are indebted to the missionaries for having recovered peace of soul through the ministrations of good Father Feliciano whom the

The T. B. ward at the African hospital of Fort Jameson.
Sister Saint Alexandrine teaches catechism.





Sisters had called to their bedside to reconcile them with their Maker.

Non-Catholic Christians willingly pray the *Pater* with the missionary Sisters. Never had I been witness to such a testimony of true and touching ecumenism as when I heard Sister Superior reciting the *Pater* with an aged catechist of the Dutch Reformed Church. This sincere, religious-minded gentleman was dying alone, far from all his relatives who live in the South. On Sister's first visit to the ward, he confided how lonely he felt. She promised to call on him every time she visited the premises, adding,

"Would you like to pray with me?"

"Oh, yes, yes. How kind you are to think of this. Nobody ever comes to me and I can no longer pray alone. If only God would call me to Himself! Why does He delay..."

One day Sister told him about Our Blessed Mother.

"I don't know her. Tell me who she is", he pleaded. He listened with rapt attention while Sister explained in simple terms the glory and goodness of the Mother of God. This same catechist, grown old in the service of the Dutch Reformed Church, who loved to pray with the Catholic missionary Sister was baptized one

Mateo's funeral.



"It takes the people of the Catholic Mission to do such things for us," they say. When Mateo died, for instance, his son asked the Sisters to provide a coffin for his father. Of course, they do not keep coffins on hand at the convent, but they do keep straw matting which they are happy to furnish on occasion. The very poor are content to bury their dead in mats, as this is in the Bantu

tradition. Those who insist on having a "European" coffin may fashion one out of old packing cases which the Sisters then obligingly line with black cloth. I gladly shared in this work of mercy with my companions when a Catholic patient died while I was in Fort Jameson. The Sisters left me the honour of the finishing touch — a cross of gold braid sewed on the makeshift coffin lid.

But furnishing a coffin or a mat is not the end of the matter. In the mission Baby Austin, Sister Superior, moreover, drives the dead to their last resting place! She allows four members of the family to ride along as the diminutive vehicle cannot evidently accommodate the entire clan. The only restriction placed on this funeral service is that non-Christians abstain from the customary pagan lamentations, for the way to the graveyard lies through the heart of the city, and Europeans are not over enthusiastic regarding such an original form of social service.

On an average, the Sisters assist at one *maliro* (funeral) a week, sometimes at two or three. In his book *Africa Today* Doctor Aujoulat remarks that Africans make much of sensitiveness and emotion, and that their favourite theme is life. Reflecting upon this aspect of African psychology, it clearly appears that the best way to reach the hearts of these people is exactly that followed by the Sisters in their manifestations of sympathy in times of sickness and death. The most violent xenophobes of Fort Jameson admit that the *Azimayi* live only for the Africans,

The children like to watch Sister Joseph de l'Esperance cutting altar breads.



to render them every service in their power. One particularly rabid enemy of the whites told Sister Superior,

"If I had to kill the whites, I would kill you quickly so as not to let you suffer, because I know you love the Africans and you do them good." Queer manner of appreciating the good done by people, this! It was probably not intended to be taken seriously.

During the 1959 political riots, the Church affirmed its independence from temporal powers, indicating the sense of Christian social justice. Africans of goodwill whether Christian or non-Christian cannot doubt

that the Catholic Church is their tender mother when they hear how the sovereign Pontiff and the Bishops uphold their rights and protest that "only murder is a greater injustice than being discriminated against because of one's colour".

It is with filial obedience to the teachings of the Church that my five companions of Fort Jameson do their little share in bringing about the triumph of Christian Charity and of social justice in a land where colour bar hits at the source of the African's rights and of his very humanity.





THE JAPANESE IN CANADA



Our Answer to PRINCEPS PASTORUM

Sister Saint Francis Xavier¹, M.I.C.



One hundred years ago, following Commodore Perry's intervention, the United States of America and Japan signed their initial commercial treaty. Eventually, the door to the Empire closed fast for over two hundred years was opened wide to Western powers.

With the exchange of commercial relations with the peoples of other lands started the flow of emigration. As early as 1907, there were already more than 8,000 Japanese in Canada, a good number among whom worked in the coal mines of B.C. 444 while others found employment on the construction of the Canadian Pacific transcontinental railway.

The majority of these immigrants

afterwards settled down in the region of British Columbia where they took up agriculture or fishing. Their children were sent to schools where English was taught.

From the spiritual point of view, Protestants were ahead of Catholics in holding out a helping hand to these immigrants. Miss Kathleen O'Melia, a woman of rare tact and of boundless devotedness, visited their homes to teach the elements of Christian doctrine. When in September 1912 this fervent Protestant entered the Catholic Church, her zeal for the conversion of the Japanese increased in such a way that, encouraged by His Excellency Archbishop McNeil of Vancouver, she founded a mission school for the benefit of those who wished to be instructed in Catholic doctrine. Two years later Miss O'Melia joined the

¹ Marie Antoinette Jodoin, Worcester, Mass.

Third Order of Saint Francis and inaugurated with the help of two other tertiaries a regular school for Japanese children. One of the tertiaries had some time before become acquainted with the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement of Graymoor, a former Anglican community living in the state of New York, and recently converted to Catholicism. Thanks to this tertiary's intervention, the ecclesiastical authorities in Vancouver entered into negotiations with these Sisters to obtain their cooperation in the apostolate among the Japanese. The Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement assumed the direction of the work in July 1926, while Miss O'Melia left for Graymoor where she entered their Novitiate.

Towards the close of the year 1927, the Reverend Franciscan Fathers of the Montreal Province who had established a monastery of their Order in Vancouver accepted to act as chaplains. They devoted themselves to this task until July 30, 1930, when they passed it on to the Friars of the Atonement of Graymoor.

When in February 1942, the federal government of Canada compelled the colony of 20,000 Japanese in British Columbia to evacuate the coast for Slocan City, New Denver, and other ghost towns (abandoned mining centres), the flourishing mission established by the Friars and the Sisters of the Atonement was entirely destroyed. The Japanese Catholics ruined materially as were their compatriots were, moreover, threatened with the loss of the spiritual treasure of the faith so recently acquired. Responding to a call for help from His Excellency

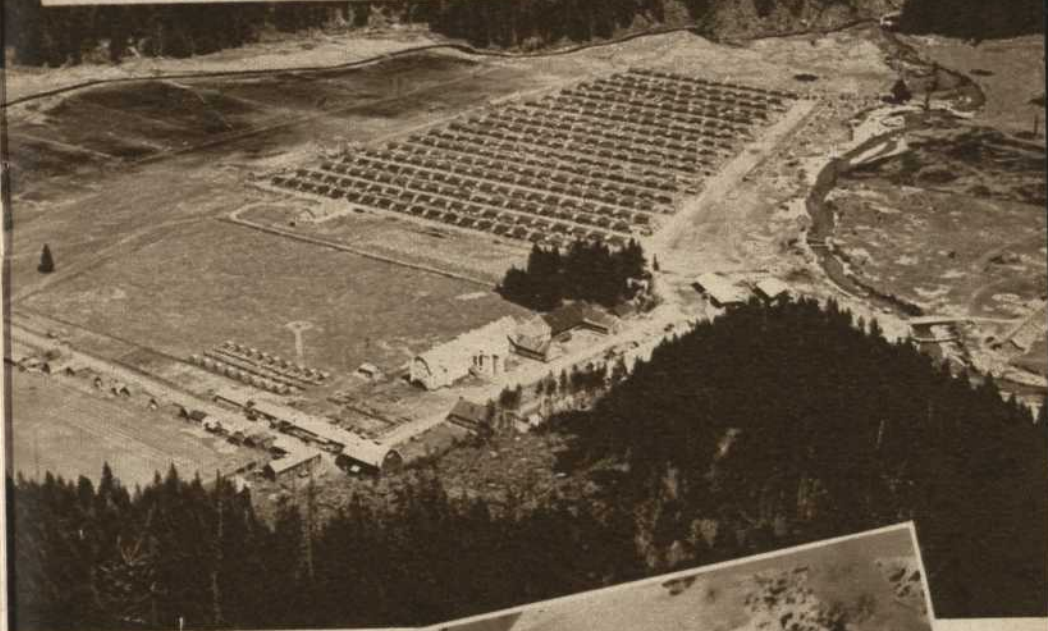
The Most Reverend M. M. Johnson, Bishop of Nelson, the Reverend Franciscan Fathers of the Montreal Province appointed two of their members to minister to the needs of uprooted Japanese Catholics. For their part the Sisters of the Assumption of Nicolet, the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Angels, and the Missionaries of Christ the King assumed educational work among the children for the duration.

When the war came to an end in 1945, the Japanese population was again on the move, this time eastward. At present 10,000 Japanese live in Ontario compared to the fifty who had settled there before the conflict; 1300 in Quebec where only a few had ventured before; 3000 in Alberta; 1500 in Manitoba; 500 in Saskatchewan. Our metropolis now has 1000 Japanese residents; Toronto has 7000; Vancouver has 2500 — a total of 22,000 scattered from east to west.

What about present-day apostolate among the Japanese? Sad to say, the collaboration of Catholics is infinitesimal. In Toronto where 7000 Japanese live not one priest is affected to exercise his ministry among them. Japanese Catholics in Vancouver have to attend religious services at St. Paul's parish under the direction of the Reverend Franciscan Fathers, for they have no church of their own.

It may be objected that as the Japanese now residing in Canada know English for the most part it should be easy for them to frequent English-speaking churches. True, but will the often overworked pastors or curates of such parishes find time to hem in the sheep not yet of the Fold? Even supposing that pastors

Tashme in the Rockies,
one of the GHOST TOWNS
where the Japanese were assembled
during the war.



could manage to assume this supplementary work, they would still need a special formation in dealing with people whose mentality and culture is vastly different from our own, and who cling to cherished customs and traditions brought from their homeland.

I remember the case of an old Japanese gentleman whom I used to visit while he was hospitalized. A University graduate with the courtly manners of his race, he had been offended when an ecclesiastic had jocularly called out as he passed by his bed, "Hello, Johnny!" The good breeding of the Japanese patient forbade him to show any resentment at this familiar treatment, but the unfavourable impression received was not easily forgotten.

This slight incident proves the importance for those exercising their apostolate among the Japanese to study beforehand the customs and the mentality of the latter. A delicate attention, a pleasant word will often suffice to win souls and lead them to Jesus Good Shepherd, while on the other hand an unkind remark or an ungracious act may do untold harm. The Japanese never forget kindnesses shown to them. One of our Japanese acquaintances upon his arrival in Canada several years hence was befriended by Protestants. At present he and his family feel great admiration for and interest in the Catholic Church and its teachings. A daughter recently married asked to have the *Ave Maria* sung at her wedding, and wore on her toilette the miraculous medal we had offered her on this occasion. But the admiration and interest of these people is limited to exterior manifestations

for fear their first benefactors might feel slighted.

In praise of our separated brethren we must confess that they show greater and more active zeal for the conversion of the Japanese than the Catholics do. Wherever settles a group of immigrants from Japan, the Protestants lose no time in establishing contacts. The United Church more particularly has put afoot several organizations in their favour: a kindergarten in Montreal, the Japanese Pavilion in Vancouver; works of social assistance among which a Home for the aged in Toronto; a Japanese Church on Dovercourt Road in the same city and another in Montreal with a minister of Japanese ancestry, Carré Amherst, in charge.

In Vancouver and Toronto may also be found Buddhist temples with bonzes in attendance. Montreal has its own Buddhist Sunday School but no temple; a bonze occasionally comes from Toronto to preside at weddings or funerals.

As far as it has been possible to ascertain, Montreal is the only city where Catholics are doing something tangible to win the Japanese immigrants to Christ and that something could easily be amplified.

Towards 1946, our Sister Promoters for "The Precursor" in their rounds of the metropolis discovered among recently resettled Japanese a few Catholics from Vancouver who had kept faithful, but who were at a loss to know where they could attend religious services. Proud of their discovery these two Sisters who had formerly been missioned in Japan, started visiting these families regularly, finding work for the unemployed,





Reverend M. C. Labrecque, P.S.S.,
with a few of his little Japanese friends at the kindergarten.

having the sick hospitalized, placing the children in Catholic schools. Their chief preoccupation, however, was to put the Catholics in relation with a priest. On special occasions, meetings were held at our Mother-house to create an atmosphere of friendliness. These meetings left a lasting impression on the Japanese and were even the means of leading at least one lady among them, to our knowledge, to enter the Church on her deathbed.

At present, our work consists in visiting the Japanese in their homes

and in hospitals when they happen to be sick (about 250 visits a year) to impart doctrinal instruction to those who desire it, and to oblige them in any little way. The Sisters also operate a circulating library of some four hundred Japanese and three hundred English books. They offer these books when visiting homes and take them up on later visits. Each month, 72 copies of Catholic juvenile magazines such as "Mine" 1 - 2 - 3, "Hi" and "Treasure Chest" are distributed by mail among the children.

Shortly after World War II, the Sisters of Christ the King of Gaspé opened a hostel on Ontario Avenue where numerous homeless Japanese found lodgings. They had besides the use of a hall and of the Sisters' chapel where a priest designated by the Archbishop said Holy Mass.

In 1951, when Reverend C. Labrecque, P.S.S., formerly a missionary in Japan was appointed as pastor of Japanese Catholics in Montreal, the latter requested some sort of a Social Centre they might call their own. Consequently, Reverend C. Labrecque rented for this purpose a house situated at 175 Sherbrooke Street East, house which he subsequently bought. Sunday Mass has been celebrated there ever since for the Catholic Japanese, and on week days the Centre is used for gatherings where Japanese no matter to what religion they belong fraternize. In September of the same year, the devoted pastor opened with the help of the School Board a kindergarten for the youngest of his flock.

But the zeal of those interested in the Work cannot rest satisfied with what is being done. They dream of the day when they will be able to provide a spacious Home, where convalescents may be taken care of and where Japanese visitors may find a hearty welcome.

At present immigration being restricted to close relatives, other newly arrived Japanese are intellectuals, University graduates and professors admitted in view of studies or researches. Often accompanied by their wives and children, these Japanese do not easily find persons who are willing to help them obtain suitable lodgings and acquaint them with

local customs. The Home would be an ideal place where these students would find security and sympathetic service during their stay in Canada. Its direction could be entrusted to a Congregations of lay Sisters with whom the guests would feel more at ease than with religious.

Many devoted and generous Canadians would doubtless be happy to help with such a worthy enterprise. Individual instances of splendid co-operation in the missionary cause might well be cited here. To mention only one, a fervent Catholic couple of Montreal have "adopted" a Korean Franciscan and have represented his father and mother at his ordination. They have since welcomed in turn a Japanese Franciscan and a student as honoured guests or better as members of the family.

Among Japanese University students who spend as many as three or four years in Canada, many return home without having heard about Catholicism. Would not the Newman Club whose directors do such admirable work for the conservation of the faith among the Catholic students at McGill find a very effective extension of their apostolate in preparing meetings between Japanese student youth and militant members of Catholic Action groups? When the students would be ready to go back to Japan, further arrangements could be made to put them in contact with the priests of their own land.

Regarding the apostolate among students from foreign countries, our Holy Father Pope John XXIII wrote in the encyclical *Princeps Pastorum*, "If each one of you, venerable brothers, takes these things into

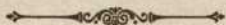
account, and if you are moved by the awareness of the missionary duty which is incumbent on all holy pastors, you will provide for them with solicitous charity and in the most apt ways.

It will not be difficult for you to find these students, entrusting them to priests and laymen particularly devoted to this ministry, assisting them spiritually, making them know and experience the fragrance and resources of the Christian charity that makes us all brothers and solicitous for one another. To such bountiful and tangible help that you give to the missions there is added that which makes immediately present to you a world which is geographically far away, but which is spiritually also your own."

Motherhouse, August 15, 1960.

Should we not in response to the Holy Father's desire take active interest in our Japanese brethren whom various circumstances have led into our midst? Their natural delicacy of sentiment will appreciate our Christian charity, and our common Father will cover us all with His divine blessing.

NOTE. — As we are going to press we learn that by decision of His Eminence our Cardinal Archbishop, the direction of the Japanese Montreal Mission has changed hands. To the Reverend Fathers of the Foreign Missions who in the person of Reverend G. Leduc will take charge of the work we offer our best wishes for success.



MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

JANUARY: That a worthy liturgical celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar may lead all peoples to the true Church of Jesus Christ.

FEBRUARY: That in their efforts for the conquest of independence nations avoid all that is contrary to the common good.

APOSTOLIC VICTORIES

Sister MARIE JOSEPHINE¹, M.I.C.

An introspective glance at the apostolate in Suao reveals among non-Catholics a certain movement towards Catholicism. The instigator of this movement is Mrs. Liu, M.D., who for the past thirty years was a fervent Presbyterian.

Her abjuration cost her a great deal, for her coreligionists did all in their power to dissuade her from embracing the Catholic Faith. Grace was victorious at last, and on the day following the Feast of the Sacred Heart together with her husband and two dear friends of hers she retracted her errors; in gratitude to Our Lady who had been at the heart of their conversion, the three women upon becoming Catholics took her blessed name. When they had started to study the doctrine, noticing how Catholic women and girls offered flowers to deck the Marian altar, they had asked to be allowed to share in this public homage of veneration towards the Mother of God.

The three neophytes have proved first-rate apostles among their Protestant relatives and friends. Their ambition is to lead as many as they can into the true Fold.

At the dispensary, we have not as yet been able to do much direct religious propaganda. A number of patients have, nonetheless, found a cure for their soul even when human medication could do but little to restore their bodily health. One of our regular patients, Mrs. Linn, was a fervent Buddhist who observed with meticulous care the various prescriptions of her creed but who failed to find therein security for her storm-tossed soul. After she had grown too weak to come to the dispensary we visited her at her home for treatment. On such occasions she herself always steered the conversation to religious subjects.

Late one evening in October when she suffered a stroke that her family thought fatal, we were hastily summoned to her bedside. As she had already been instructed in the principal truths of our holy faith, we asked her whether she desired Baptism. "No," she replied. "My conscience will not allow me to change my religion. Moreover, I have lately made a vow... How could I be unfaithful to what I have solemnly promised? It will be time enough to think about your proposal when I recover." In

¹ Eliane Gravel, Saint Prosper of Champlain.



Sister Marie Therese (Marie Therese Roux, Montreal).

the face of this refusal what could we do except pray?

Towards the end of October, convinced at last that there would be no earthly recovery for her, she said to us one day, "Sister, I have thought much about what you told me regarding the necessity of being baptized, and I have decided to give up Buddhism." Soon afterwards she was received into the bosom of Holy Mother Church by the pastor of Suao.

A test of fidelity came for her on the first day of the lunar month. She who from early childhood had

always observed the Buddhistic rites and abstinence marking this date experienced an almost irresistible urge to keep them on this last occasion. The mission catechist who answered her call in this struggle against the pull of old habits helped her to keep firm and serene.

Having heard that a priest passed her home several times a week carrying the Blessed Sacrament to a bedridden Catholic of the neighbourhood she pleaded, "I also want to receive this celestial food the Father gives to the Christians. Why should I be deprived of it?"

Her wish was granted as soon as she had been sufficiently instructed on the sublime mystery of the Eucharist. Mrs. Linn died peacefully on December 7. All the members of her family being Buddhists, they had the bonzes officiate at her funeral, but they left attached to her shroud the rosary and Our Lady's medal.

Souls are led into the Church by providential ways as varied as they are mysterious. Among the twenty catechumens baptized during 1959, Mr. Nou's case and that of his family is perhaps the most impressive. In the work of bringing about conversions, missionaries are usually the first to approach prospective converts. Mr. Nou on the contrary came to the mission and asked for doctrinal instruction on his own account. Once, on a visit he paid to the dispensary, he said to the Sister in charge, "I have been told that you have a Formosan catechist in your employment. My wife is eager to be taught catechism, but she does not understand Mandarin and, besides, she cannot leave her babies. I would be very grateful if you could send your catechist to my home."

The very next day, we called on the family. Mr. Nou related that he had been born of Catholic parents and had been baptized as an infant, but he was completely ignorant regarding Catholic teachings, for his

parents had lived in a remote village of the mainland rarely visited by missionaries. At fourteen he had enrolled as a soldier and had later followed his regiment into Formosa. Honourably discharged after ten years of service, he had married a Formosan girl whom he persuaded to give up her pagan beliefs and practices.

Mrs. Nou set to work with a will to learn the catechism, repeating the lessons learnt during the day when her husband returned home from his work in the evening in order to have him benefit by them.

On Christmas Eve, Mrs. Nou was baptized with her three boys aged respectively, five, three, and two while Mr. Nou received conditional Baptism, no serious proofs being obtainable that he had really been regenerated.

"Joseph and Mary" then had their union blessed and received their First Communion. Their children were given as Christian names Michael, Raphael, and Gabriel. Surely under such powerful patronage this family's perseverance must be secure!

Similar cases are rare, for as Paul Claudel once remarked, "conversions are brought about less by a great single victory than by a lengthy series of tiny persevering efforts."



WITH THE IGOROTS

Sister JOHN OF GALILEE¹, M.I.C.

March 24, 1960, was a gala date for the good people of Bekkel. Coincident with the celebration of the local *fiesta* took place the First Communion ceremony of thirty young mountaineers a few among whom had been baptized on the previous day. For several months, a team of catechists from Baguio composed of Sister Saint Marcel, a lay teacher, and four Filipino novices had daily travelled to Bekkel to teach the First Communicants the elements of doctrine and the principal prayers. How elated the catechists were when the pastor of Saint Joseph of Pacdal announced that all their candidates had passed the examination!

Besides contributing their most fervent prayers and hours of teaching the catechism, the novices had busily prepared white apparel for every one of the First Communicants, poorest of the poor, who had nothing

fit to wear on this great occasion.

Early on the morning of March 24, Sister Saint Marcel² and I with a group of four novices boarded the bus for Beckel. The passengers looked up in surprise as we entered. In our white dresses and blue sashes we probably seemed to them like celestial apparitions.

As the bus rolled along, we looked in silence on wide vistas of surpassing loveliness. The thin scarves of mist wreathing the green mountain slopes were slowly dissolving in the rays of the morning sun. Zigzagging through the foothills, the highway suddenly took us out for a breathless view of the little town demurely sitting below on the valley floor. Overhead, the pine tops were dark canopies with little pools of azure visible through the rifts of green.

¹ Marguerite Labreche, Pointe Gatineau.

² Antoinette Castonguay, Montréal.

Floating on the morning air came the sound of Bekkel's little church bell pealing out a message of gladness. Soon we espied the church itself perched on a hilltop, at a short distance from the town. A group of youngsters gleefully surrounded us as we alighted forming a noisy escort right up to the entrance.

While my companions saw to the immediate preparation of the First Communicants, I laid out the vestments and decked the altar with flowers and greenery. Already, the

small edifice was packed with people lost in admiration before the flowers, lights, and laces. When the cortege of white-clad boys and girls entered and slowly made its way to the front, all necks were craned in its direction. Reverend Father Wilhelm, C.I.C.M. officiated at the altar while Reverend Father Baute conducted the responses of the dialogue Mass. After the Gospel, the celebrant gave a short but inspiring sermon to the motley crowd of Igorots and Filipino assembled before him: "You are the branches, Christ is the vine; you are

On the morning of the great day at Bekkel.



the lamps, Christ is the electric current; you are the seedlings, Christ is the Sun that will make you grow; come to Him, then and partake of His divine Banquet not once only but as often as you can. He alone will be your strength, your stay, your consolation..."

Listening to this invitation I could not but deplore the spiritual poverty of our mountaineers who have, it is true, a small church but as yet no resident pastor. Never before had I so keenly felt the sad dearth of missionaries to minister to the needs of Christians new and old who in these parts have to be content with one Mass a month.

My thoughts involuntarily wandered to the great number of indifferent Catholics who in certain countries where spiritual abundance reigns neglect or refuse the imperishable riches within their reach to run after worthless baubles.

Lost in prayerful reflections, I hardly noticed that Holy Mass had come

to an end. Suddenly, a group of youthful Igorots had me surrounded. A little boy twined my large rosary around his wrists, another pulled at the crucifix hanging from my neck, a small girl wriggled under my veil draping it over her raven hair, others admiringly fingered my blue sash. Rising to go, I smiled at one and all recalling the "Let the little ones come unto me".

A few years hence these children will need missionaries to teach them the doctrine. Who will come to Bekkel? Who will break unto them the Bread of Truth?



The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

CANADA

MOTHERHOUSE, 2900 St. Catherine Road
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26.
NOVIATTE, Pont Viau, Montreal 40.
OUTREMONT, 314 St. Catherine Road,
Montreal 8.
CHINESE HOSPITAL, 112 Lagauchetiere St., West,
Montreal 1.
NOMINIQUE, 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.
TROIS RIVIERES, P.Q., 1325 de la Terriere Street.
GRANBY, P.Q., 35 Dufferin Street.
GRANBY, 50 Saint Joseph Street.
CHICOUTIMI, P.Q., 766 Cenacle Street.
SAINTE MARIE, Beauce County, P.Q.
SAINT JOHNS, P.Q., 430 Champlain Street.
OTTAWA, 30 Goulburn Street.
PERTH, N.B., P.B. 259.
EDMUNDSTON, N.B., 18 Saint John 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 TSE, Catholic Church,
Hsinchu Hsien, Taiwan.

TAIPEI, 363, An Tung Chieh, Taiwan, Free China.

SUAO, Catholic Mission, P.O. Box 2,
Suao Yilanhsien, Taiwan, Free China.

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.

MADAGASCAR

MORONDAVA, Madngascar.

AMBOHIBARY, Madagascars.

BOLIVIA

COCHABAMBA, Academia Comercial,
Calle Oruro No 300, Casilla 1667.
IRUPANA,

PERU

PUCALLPA.

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

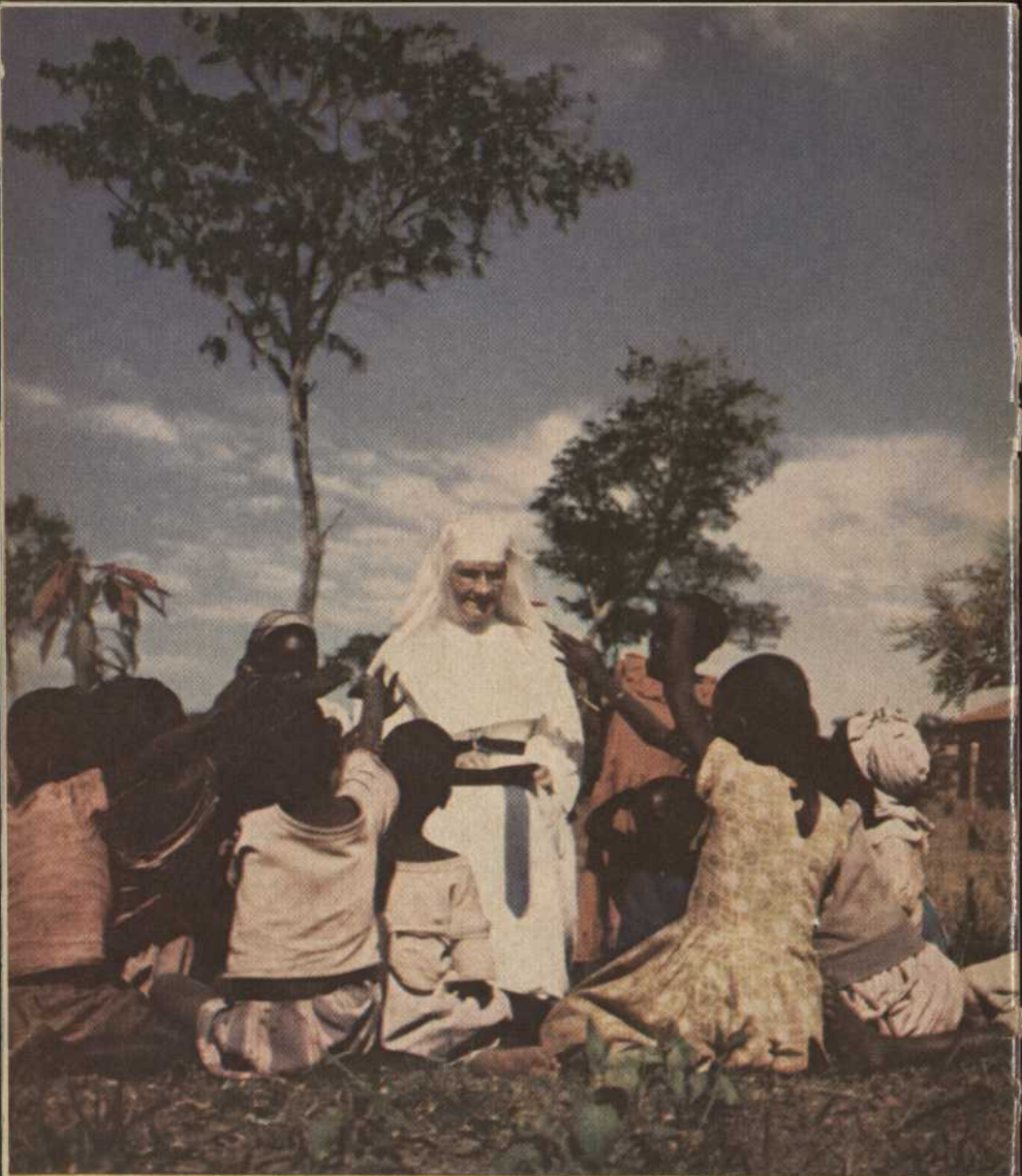
MANILA, Immaculate Conception Anglo Chinese
Academy, Gen. Luna St., Intramuros.
MANILA, 2212 S. del Rosario St., Tondo.
LAS PINAS, Rizal.
MATI, Davao Province.
DAVAO City, Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall.
PADADA, Davao Province.
BAGUIO City, 11, Pacdal, Mountain Province.

WEST INDIES

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 No 2, Haiti.
DESCHAPELLES, Albert Schweitzer Hospital
Post Box No. 4, Saint Marc, Haiti.
LA BOULE, 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.
SAN JOSE de LOS RAMOS, Prov. of Matanzas, Cuba

AFRICA

KATETE MISSION, Champira P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
MZAMBAZI MISSION, Kaufkule P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
RUMPI MISSION, Rumpi P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
KARONGA MISSION, Karonga P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
KASEYE MISSION, Fort Hill P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
MZUZU, Convent School, Mzuzu P.O., Box 24,
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
NKATA BAY MISSION, Nkata Bay P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
FORT JAMESON, P.O. Box 107
Northern Rhodesia, B.C. Africa.
KANYANGA MISSION, Lundazi P.O.
Northern Rhodesia, B.C. Africa.
NYIMBA MISSION, Sacred Heart Hospital
Northern Rhodesia, B.C. Africa.



Sunday school at Kanyanga, Northern Rhodesia
(Sister Saint Peter of Alcantara)