



THE PRECURSOR

January-February 1967

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

(January 18-25)

Theme : Called in the same hope (Eph. 4, 4).

General intention of the Week of Prayer :

*The Unity of all Christians such as Christ
wills and by the means He wills.*

Particular intentions for every day :

18.- The Unity of all Christians.

*19.- Suffering on account of the separations
among Christians.*

20.- The sanctification of Roman Catholics.

21.- The sanctification of Orthodox.

22.- The sanctification of Anglicans.

23.- The sanctification of Protestants.

24.- The sanctification of Missionary Churches.

*25.- The Unity of all mankind in the love and
truth of Christ.*

OUR COVER :

A group of student members of Legion of Mary with Sr. Andrée Ménard.
Close by, Aizu Wakamatsu parish church.

Authorized as second class mail Post Office Department, Ottawa.
Postage paid at Montreal.

THE PRECURSOR

2900 St. Catherine Road
Montreal (26) Canada.

Bi-monthly magazine published by the
Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
with the approbation of the Ordinary of Montreal.

NIHIL OBSTAT: Reverend A. Cossette, P.M.E., August 22, 1966.

No 7
January - February 1967
Vol. XXVII

IN THIS ISSUE

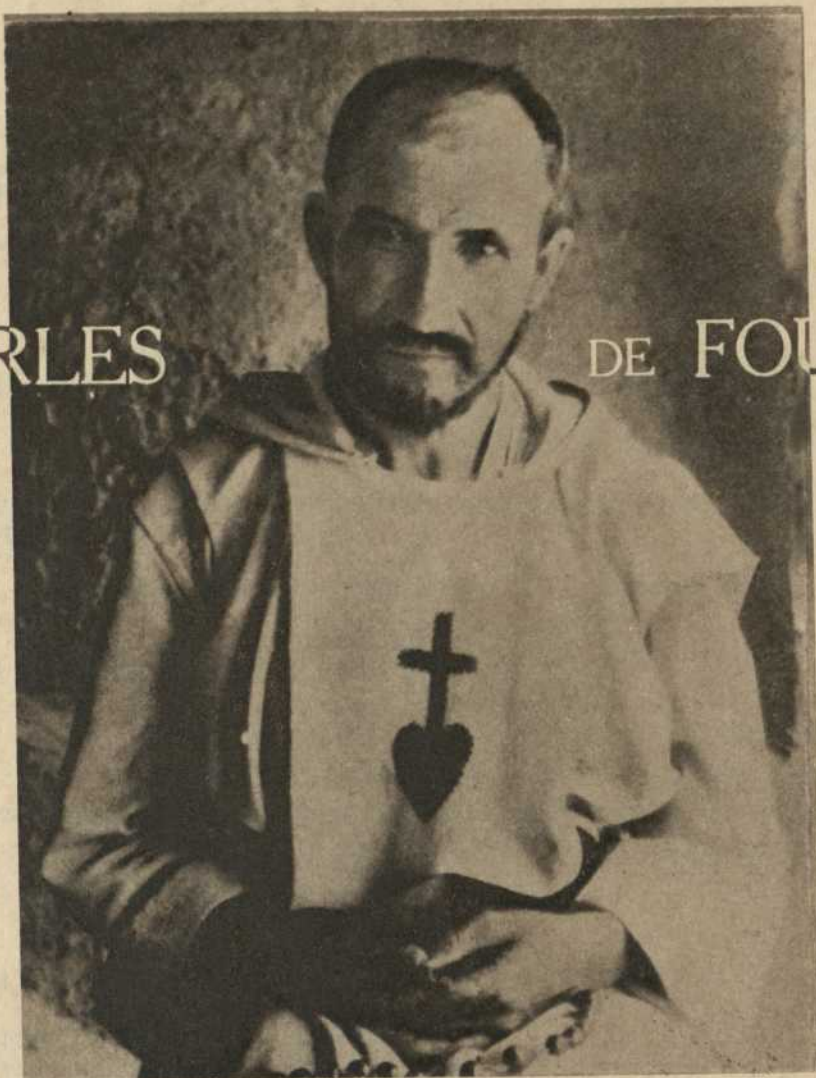
Charles de Foucauld — Universal Brother <i>by Sister Gisèle Villemure, M.I.C.</i>	242
Canadian Church Rejoices	250
Interview <i>by Sr. Monica of the Blessed Sacrament, M.I.C.</i>	251
Our Subscription Drive	264
New Year's Customs <i>by Sr. Joseph of the Holy Family, M.I.C.</i>	266
New Year's Eve in China <i>by Sister Thérèse LeBlanc</i>	268
Merry Christmas in Hinchey <i>by Sr. Jeanne d'Arc Nolin, M.I.C.</i>	270
Influence of Christianity on Philippine Music <i>by Sister Maria Rosalina Abejo, R.V.M.</i>	273
Stonecutters of the Red Isle <i>by Sister Agathe Durand, M.I.C.</i>	277
Tsaramasay <i>by Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart, M.I.C.</i>	281
Musings at Dusk <i>by Sister Thérèse Côté, M.I.C.</i>	286

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\$ 2.50	2 years
\$ 5.00	4 years
\$30.00	for life

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CHARLES

DE FOUCAULD



December 1, 1966, marks the 50th anniversary of the death of Charles de Foucauld. How ardently he had desired to die a martyr's death. In his diary, he had written, "Live as if you were today to die a martyr, stripped of everything, lying by on the ground, naked, unrecognizable..." He died because he truly loved the Tuaregs. In these fierce denizens of the Sahara he discovered Christ and showed himself their brother, becoming as one of them. "The Precursor" pays homage to this heroic apostle of brotherhood.

One can hardly touch upon the subject of brotherhood without at the same time remembering the sublime example given by the apostle of the Tuaregs, Charles de Foucauld. During this year which will see Montreal transformed into an extraordinary

international city, is it not highly advisable to recall at least a few of the milestones which marked the life of the "universal brother"? Just as the islands of our Saint Lawrence River will play hosts to the world, the heart of Brother Charles was loving-

ly opened to all human beings. His vocation was a vocation of brotherhood; he was bent on bringing enlightenment to the whole world.

Biographical milestones

His was a tenacious, flamboyant nature. Never would he learn to conserve himself, to measure

Foucauld made himself Arab unto the Arabs, French unto the French, Targui unto the Tuaregs. He translated into practice the Pauline theory of the "all to all". It was in order to identify himself with the desert tribes that he left country and family.

In a letter to his cousin, Marie de Bondy,

UNIVERSAL BROTHER

by Sr. Gisèle Villemure, M.I.C.

himself out in teaspoonfuls, to be content with mediocrity. His conversion (at 28) was instantaneous, bringing to an end the follies of his rebellious, spendthrift youth. For him God became "Someone", the sole driving force in his life, the one goal of his activities. He was convinced that love calls for resemblance between lover and beloved. "From the moment I believed there was a God, I knew I could not help living for Him alone."¹

Beginnings are usually laborious. The Lord sternly prepares His disciple for the tasks ahead. For Charles de Foucauld, the trail that led to the frontier of Morocco was to be a long and devious one, winding from the Trappist Monastery of Our Lady of the Snows, to the Clarist Monastery of Nazareth, and finally to the Hoggar. The last years of his life he spent among the Tuaregs, making himself their brother through his friendly offices and the apostolate of kindness. He was murdered, at the instigation of treacherous Senusis, at the door of his hermitage, December 1, 1916. How true the words of his friend Moussa, Amenokal of the Hoggar, in a letter to the martyr's sister, "Charles the Marabout, has not died for you alone; he has died for all of us."

From a worldly point of view, his life was a failure. And yet from this very failure were born three spiritual families, and the world today still draws from his life of prayer and friendship a message of brotherly love.

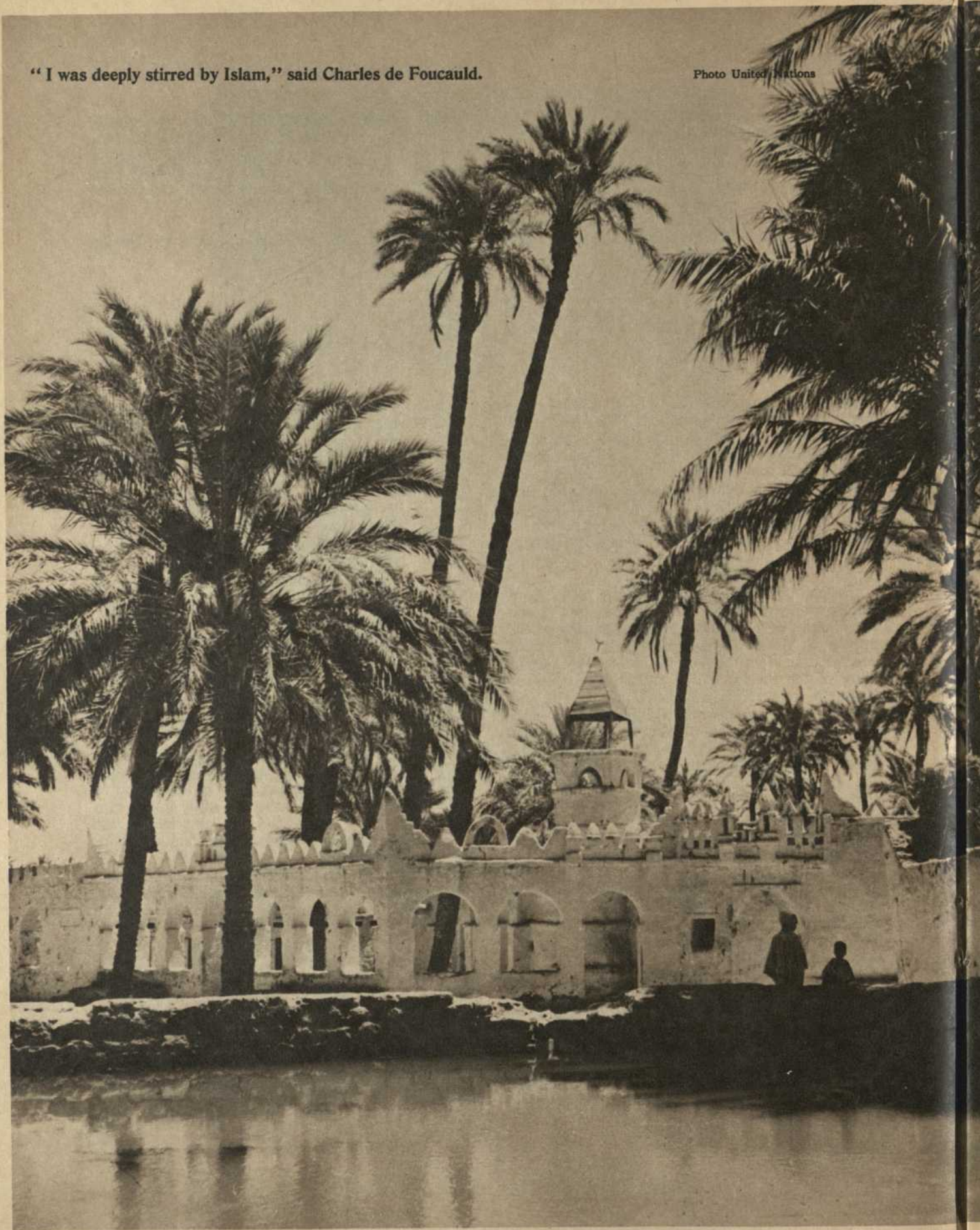
Testimony of universal brotherhood: his silent presence

Following in the footsteps of the Son of God made man in order to live among men, Charles de

January 7, 1902, he wrote, "I want all the inhabitants whether Jews, Christians, or pagans, to consider me as their brother — the universal brother. Much to my delight they have begun to call my house the KHAOUA, the Fraternity," Charles de Foucauld's intense desire was to fraternize. With each person he came into contact with, he initiated a friendly dialogue. He was not a qualified educator, nor did he possess the eloquence of an orator. But he felt the urgent need to spread the Gospel in North Africa, and he gambled his life away in a courageous response to the particular call of God bidding Him love the inhabitants of the desert and fraternize with them. For him, the essence of Christian life consisted in having a soul overflowing with apostolic *élan*. He viewed the work of evangelization in accordance with his calling as a missionary hermit. In imitation of the Holy Family of Nazareth living a contemplative life in the midst of men, Brother Charles of Jesus at Beni Abbès as well as at Tamanrasset united the eremitical life to a life of friendship with men. He befriended them all so that they might come to know and to love the Lord Jesus. Just as the softly falling rain infiltrates parched fields, the silent presence of this "universal brother" impressed those among whom he lived, manifesting as it did the sturdy virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Does not a saintly life instruct with far-reaching effects? It was not with a view to evading the world and fleeing the presence of men that he chose to live in the desert. On the contrary, he went there with the firm purpose of sharing the treasures of the Gospel with the most miserable outcasts. He wrote to Marie de Bondy, "From four in the morning to half-past eight at night, I am besieged with callers... Slaves, the poor, soldiers, the ailing, travellers, the merely curious keep me busy every minute..." In the oasis of Beni-Abbès, he placed himself at the disposal of all, he threw open wide the door of his hermitage. Something radiated from him, some

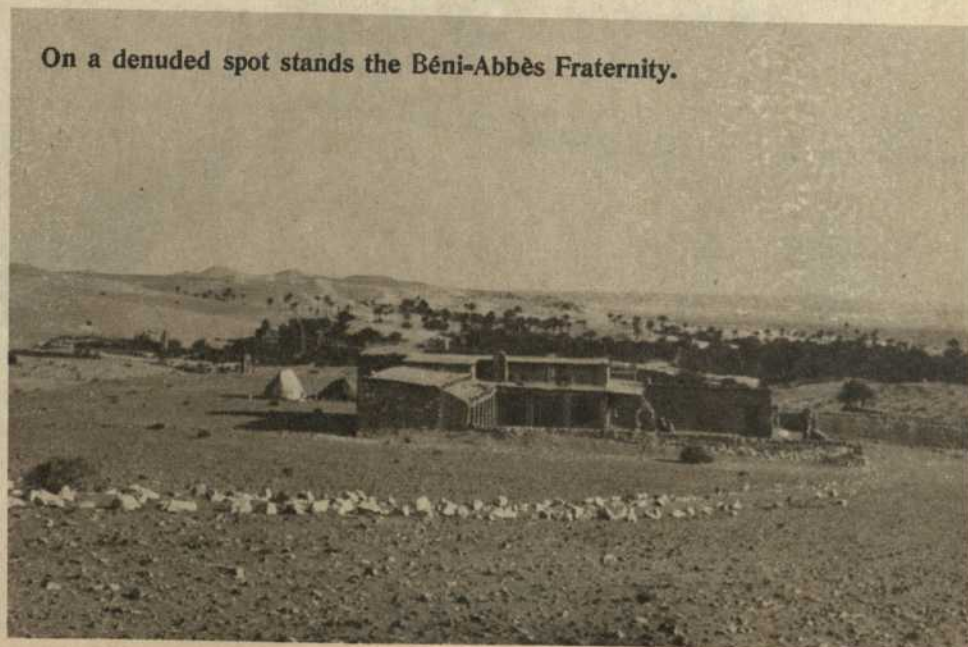
"I was deeply stirred by Islam," said Charles de Foucauld.

Photo United Nations





Chapel of the Sacred Heart Khaoua at Béni-Abbès.



On a denuded spot stands the Béni-Abbès Fraternity.

trapped yet freed sunlight, the sunlight of considerate charity, of faithfulness to the call of daily duty. It is this faithfulness to the ideal of the "universal brother" which we find at the core of the dynamic apostolate exercised by the spiritual family of Brother Charles de Jesus.

Thanks to universal brotherhood, he unceasingly endeavoured to find means of inspiring a desire for the faith. Life for him was Christ and he was convinced that the sole riches of the baptized is the Lord Jesus. These riches he sought to communicate to all men, his brothers. For this purpose he took upon himself the translation of the Gospel into Tamashek; he made another foundation; he undertook long journeys in the desert;

finally, he laid down his life. Out of burning, apostolic charity, Charles de Foucauld chose to dwell in the bleak uplands of the Hoggar. He, the universal man, lived there as friend and brother to the Tuaregs, for in order to know men we must become one with them. He became one of them because he saw in each human being a soul to be saved.

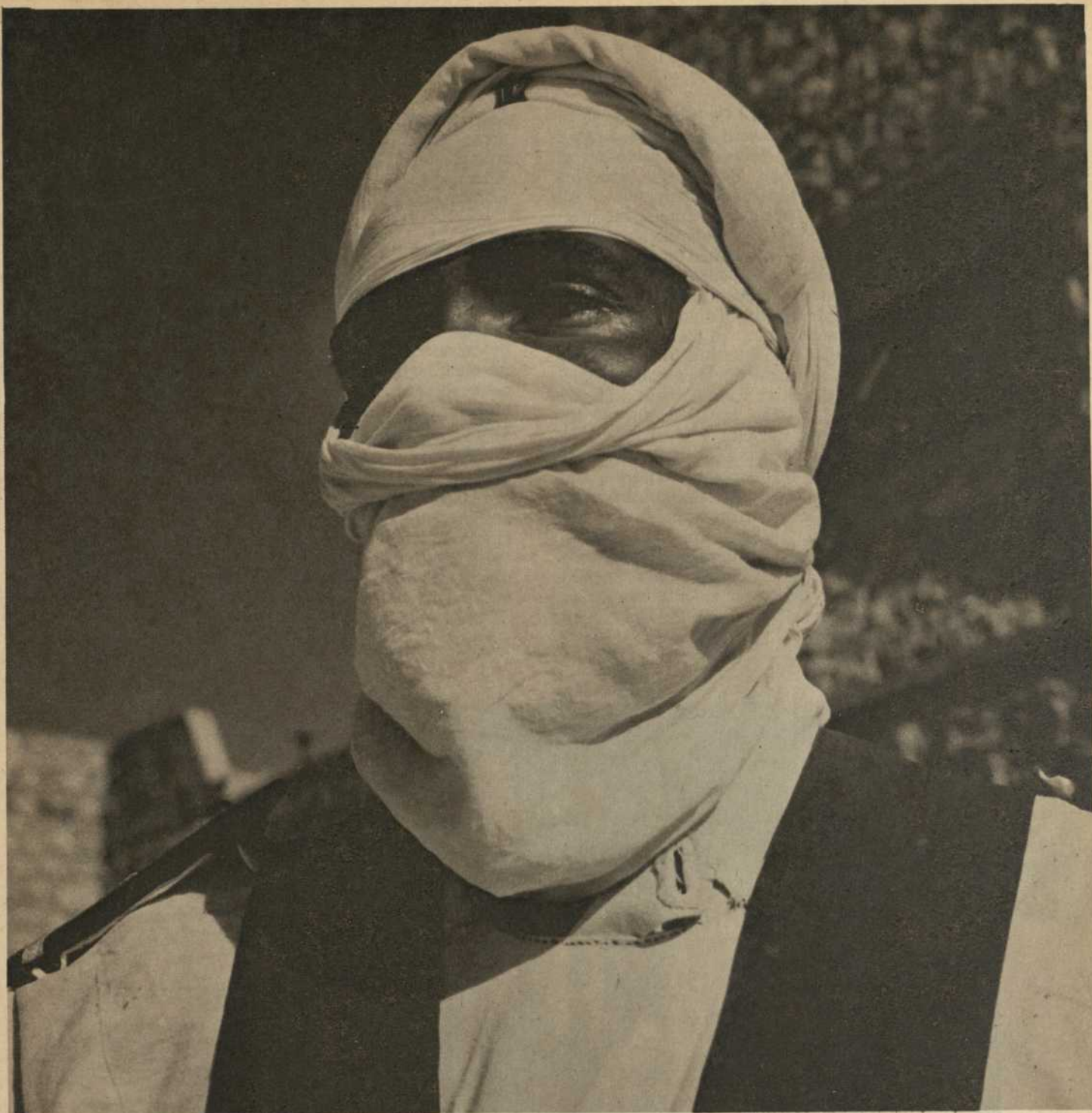
Testimony of universal brotherhood: his prayer

No matter what vocabulary is used to define prayer, it remains essentially a union with God through faith and love. Brother Charles did not seek in his prayer striking thoughts, psychological

The silence of the desert awakened in Charles de Foucauld the sense of the greatness of God.

Photo United Nations





Brother Charles became the brother of the Tuaregs through the apostolate of kindness.

Photo United Nations

comfort, original formulas, success in his activities. The only thing he did look for was the one necessary thing — the union of love. In his writings which testify to the universalism of his prayer, we

can, at the same time trace its evolution. Brother Charles found in his contemplative prayer the importance and the efficaciousness of the apostolic life. Very dear to him was the mystery of the

Visitation urging him to go to the ends of the earth to save it. His chief concern was to become a "saviour" in and with Jesus. The salvation of his brothers haunted him always and gave his prayer a universal missionary character. "All must teach, even we, hermits. We must teach by obtaining from heaven through our prayers interior light for all men."² He advocated three principal means of evangelization: the silent presence, the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, universal prayer. Brother Charles of Jesus attached great importance to these forms of apostolate. In his letters and in the Rules he wrote for the Little Brothers, he stressed in various ways this same fundamental principle, "Carrying to non-Christian nations their altar and their tabernacle, they (the Little Brothers) will silently sanctify these peoples just as Jesus at Nazareth silently sanctified the world during thirty years."³ To his way of reasoning, adoration and apostolate are complementary. From this harmony arises an enrichment of the life of prayer and vice versa. In a letter to Reverend Father Caron he explained the manner of his apostolate among the Tuaregs: "First of all, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament must be placed in their midst, Jesus coming down upon the altar daily in the Holy Sacri-

fice. Then, we must also place in their midst the prayer of the Church, no matter how miserable he who offers it... Souls must be won through friendly offices so that, later on, others who will come after us may be able to do them good."⁴

He was aware that the missionary, he who through his prayers reaches out to the non-Christians to bring them to God, enters into a dialogue between God and men. Brother Charles took upon himself this mission of mediator which he wished to express by his prayer. Not only did he pray for men; he prayed also in their name. His prayer assumed several forms: adoration, praise, contemplation, supplication. "I never pray for myself alone. All that I ask for in prayer, I ask for God or for men."⁵

"God refuses nothing to prayer and He grants nothing without prayer, not even the spreading of His kingdom." Brother Charles drew his zeal from the wellsprings of prayer. To the extent that his prayer was rooted in Jesus, Master Missionary, he felt urged by the desire to lead the nomads of the Sahara to God.



A Little Brother prays inside the Tamanras-set hermitage.

Missionary concerns held a central place in his prayer ever since his ordination to the priesthood, more especially in 1901. During the last years of his life, this universal prayer guided and inspired all his activities. His was the prayer of a soul looking to the future, afire with the desire to save. "You inquire whether I am ready to go to some other place beside Beni-Abbès to spread the Gospel? For this purpose I am ready to go to the ends of the world and to live until Doomsday." He pressed forward on desert trails in the quest for abandoned tribes, remembering the Saviour's words, "The task I have appointed you is to go out and bear fruit, fruit which will endure" (John XV: 16).

However, Brother Charles ever kept in mind that the grain of wheat could bear fruit only if it died in the furrow and that his work would fructify only after his death.

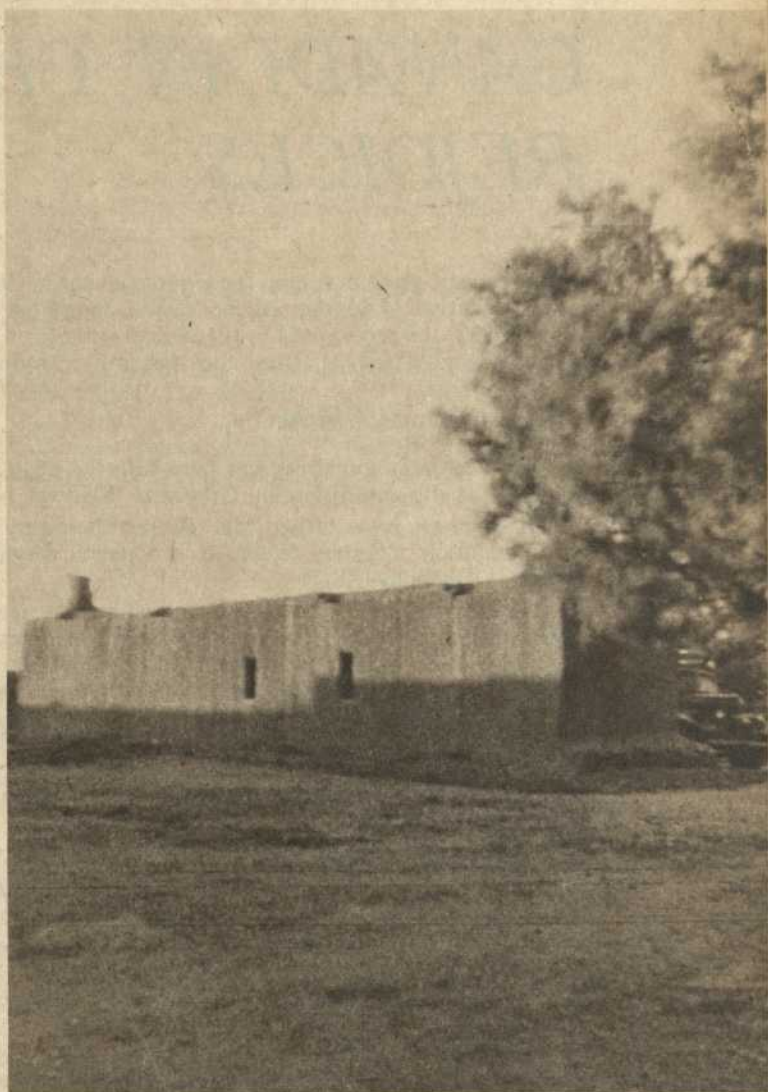
Message to the modern world

The urge to live a more genuinely evangelical Christian life is one of Charles de Foucauld's messages which still re-echoes with intensity in our twentieth century. The examples he gave, as well as his writings, are fully consonant with the renewal of the Church's ecumenical era. He practised evangelical virtues with vigour and extraordinary sincerity. He was witness to universal brotherhood for man and his world. Far from minimising the value of the contemplative life, he tightened the bonds which unite contemplation and action, showing how the two are interdependent. Apparently, he was the most solitary of all missionaries inspired by the Spirit. In reality, he did not stand alone. Through faith, he lived with Jesus and acted through Him. While casting the seed into the furrow, he hoped in the Lord who would give his work fruition according to the words of Saint Paul. Under the cloak of a humble, monotonous, and seemingly unproductive life, Brother Charles was at once a contemplative and a missionary.

Fifty years have passed since his death at Tamanrasset. We can now see in proper perspective the luminous path laid out for him in God's plans. Thanks to his silent presence and to his universal prayer he has accomplished a work of world-wide dimension. In this world of ours he has been a witness, the witness of universal love, the universal brother.

In the words of one of his disciples, Louis Massignon, "He was a man of violent action who charged with such headlong momentum, that he was alone when he reached the top."

It may not be given to every one of us to imitate this "big brother" of ours in a concrete fashion.



The fort of Tamanrasset where the "universal brother" died alone, December 1, 1916.

Nevertheless, we are all capable of imitating his spirit of prayer based on unshakable faith in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and his brotherly and universal openheartedness.

Sources

- ¹ Letter to Henry de Castries, August 15, 190
- ² *Itinéraire Spirituel*, Jean-François Six, pp. 2
- ³ *Oeuvres Spirituelles, Anthologie*, p. 433

CANADIAN CHURCH REJOICES

One of the great events in the Church's year in Canada for 1966 was the introduction in Rome of the cause of beatification of Mother Marie Léonie, foundress of the Little Sisters of the Holy Family of Sherbrooke. On May 17, the reports of the theological experts on the writings of the servant of God were presented to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, thus formally introducing the cause.

Mother Marie Léonie

The venerable foundress was born May 12, 1840, at Saint Margaret of Blairfindie, of the marriage of Mr. Joseph Paradis and of Emilie Grégoire. She was baptized under the names of Virginie Alodie.

At fourteen years of age, she entered the Saint Lawrence Novitiate of the Marianites de Sainte Croix, a congregation of Sisters dedicated to domestic service in religious institutions. In 1871, she was assigned to a post in Indiana, U.S.A.

Three years later, her superiors appointed her as supervisor of domestic services at Saint Joseph's College, Memramcook, N.B. It was in this peaceful little town that on May 30, 1880, Mother Marie Leonie laid the basis of the community which came to be known by the name of Little Sisters of the Holy Family. During the following years, she applied herself entirely to the formation of Acadian Sisters.

In 1885, Bishop Paul Larocque, Ordinary of the Sherbrooke Diocese, invited Mother Marie Léonie to establish the headquarters of her community in the city of Sherbrooke. Four Sisters arrived in July. After several months spent as guests at the Bishop's residence, they were authorized to open a novitiate in one of the houses belonging to the seminary. Only in 1896 was the young congregation in a situation to build a house of its own.

Mother Marie Léonie died unexpectedly May 3, 1912, at Sherbrooke. At that time, her religious family numbered 448 professed Sisters, and 187 novices and postulants. The foundress was interred in Saint Michael's cemetery.

When, in 1935, her mortal remains were transferred to the Community's cemetery, her bones were found to be intact.

The community work

The congregation founded by Mother Marie Léonie knew a remarkable development. In 1930, the Mother-house was transferred to Galt Street. At present, more than 1,000 Little Sisters of the Holy Family dedicate their lives to the service of the clergy through prayer, sacrifice, and the practice of the domestic arts, in apostolic delegations, bishops' residences, seminaries, and in various houses conducted by religious priests. Their field of activity comprises Canada, the United States, Rome, Honduras, and Brazil. They have in all 77 houses. A second novitiate has been opened in the United States, and a third in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Cause of beatification

Official canonical inquiries into the foundress' writings were launched in November 1951. A commission was organized in Sherbrooke, on December 11, 1922, to report on her virtues and on the holiness of her life. The court held 156 sessions and recorded 72 testimonies; the court of non cultus took place in September 1952. Four miraculous cures attributed to the intercession of Mother Marie Léonie were the object of deliberations. Shortly afterwards the postulator of the cause transmitted the documents to the Sacred Congregation of Rites. His Holiness Pope Pius XII signed the decree of approval of Mother Marie Léonie's writings on October 6, 1956. These writings have been gathered in 11 volumes, a total of 6,000 pages.

NOTE, For further information, apply to

The Office of Mother Marie Léonie's Cause, Mount Holy Family, 1820, Galt Street W., Sherbrooke,

Sister Monica of the Blessed Sacrament headmistress of Saint Francis Xavier High School, Aizu Wakamatsu, on a short stay in Canada after 15 years spent in Japan, is interviewed by Sister Mary of the Redemption, formerly a missionary in this same country.



Q. — First of all, Sister Monica, let me ask you whether you found in Japan the realization of your missionary dreams?

A. — Yes and No. No as far as the manner is concerned. Yes as regards the substance. When I left for the missions, at twenty-six, I dreamt of easy conquests, for I imagined that after the 1945 catastrophe, the Japanese would feel a thirst for the truth which Catholicism alone could quench. With the years, however, I realized that the mentality of a people could not be altered overnight and that, moreover, a strong web of traditions and social proprieties held Japanese souls captive.

Getting in touch with adults is not easy. Nevertheless, there exists a fruitful field of apostolate among the Japanese youth enrolled in our Catholic educational establishments. Here the seed falls into virgin soil, free from prejudice, opened to the message. So I can truly say that all my missionary dreams have come true even though I have often had to curb my impatience. Like other missionaries in Japan, I have learned to sow the seed broadcast without worrying too much about statistics. My gaze is turned to the future and I try to detect even the slightest signs that point to an abundant harvest to be.

Q. — You have, I think, been at work chiefly among young people. Tell me about student life at your school in Wakamatsu...

A. — Of my fifteen years in Japan, I have spent about twelve at our Wakamatsu educational establishment which houses classes from kindergarten to high school inclusively. Enrollment, at the present time, is close to one thousand. The establishment is coeducational up to high school exclusively.

A word now on the Japanese educational system. The school year starts in April. Holidays are of one month in summer and of two weeks in spring and in winter, respectively. Classes are taught on Saturdays also (until noon). Public

INTERVIEW

education is divided into four stages: primary (six years), secondary (three years), high school (three years) and university, normally, (four years). Education is compulsory and free for all children for nine years, in the primary and secondary schools. Pupils are automatically promoted to higher classes, regardless of their capacities, throughout the primary and secondary course. At the end of the ninth year, however, they must pass the prefectural examinations before they can be admitted to high school. Upon completion of the high school course, students are all awarded a diploma, but this paper does not enable them to apply for college or university matriculation. Because the country's 300 colleges and universities are not sufficient to accommodate the 100 million population, entrance examinations to higher institutions of learning are organized in such a way as to eliminate candidates. In the best and most famous universities, only 1 candidate out of 30, 40, or even 50, is successful.

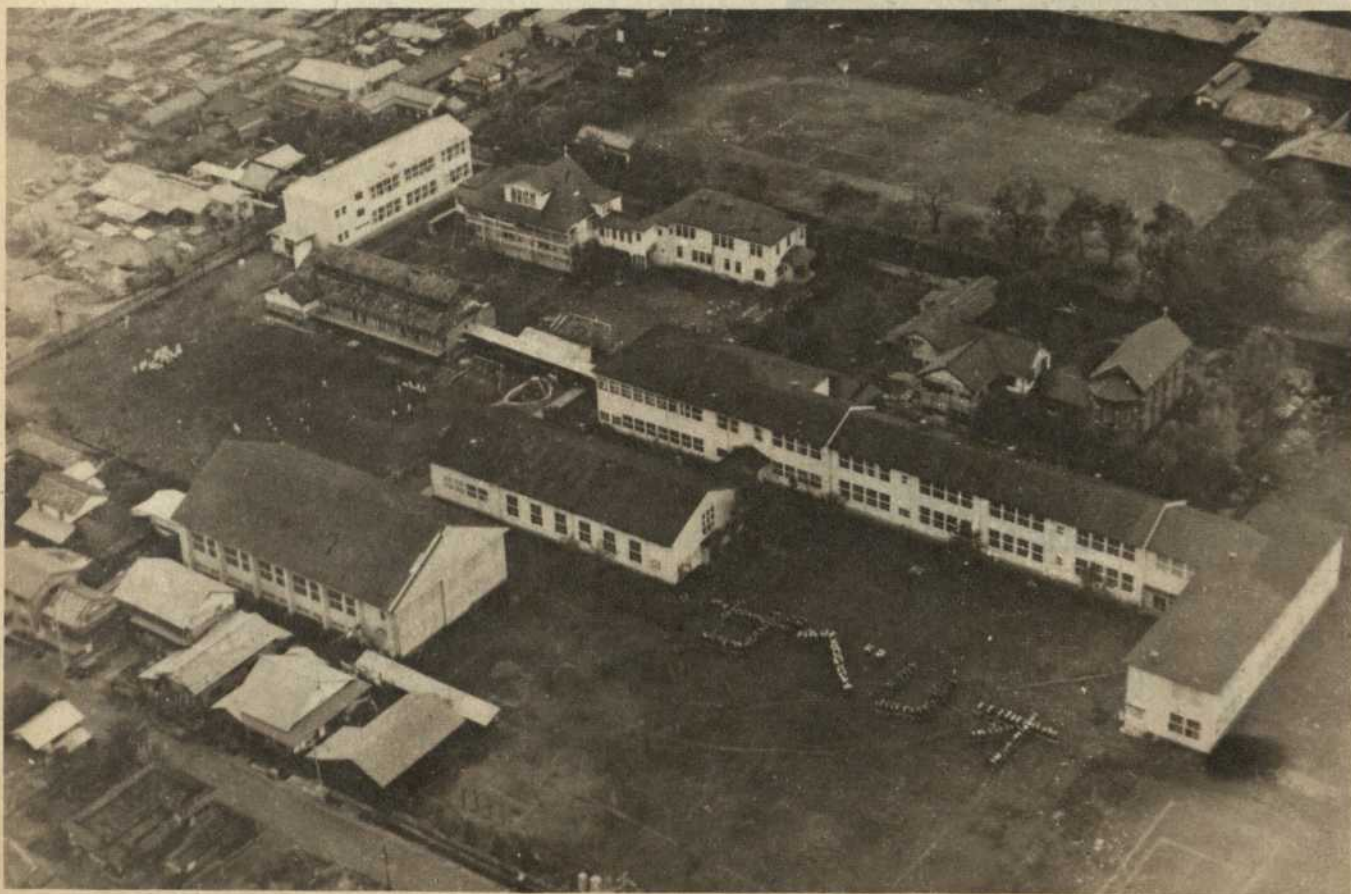
This state of things deeply influences the lives of high school students desirous of pursuing higher studies. Throughout the three-year course, they are haunted by the perspective of matriculation. In order to secure more adequate preparation, they follow supplementary courses during the all-too-

short winter and summer vacations. Their leisure time is therefore extremely curtailed.

In the classroom, the students are attentive and diligent. However, due to the crowded conditions found in most houses, they can manage to do very little serious study at home. They have so many subjects to tackle that they seldom have time left to read or to participate in social or artistic activities which might contribute in rounding out their education. Although they are not lacking in initiative, their chief care seems to be to identify themselves with the group whose directives they all too readily follow. I find the girls in our school frank and lovable. The centuries during which Japanese woman was cast in a submissive role have left their imprint. There is in her temperament an element of pliability which makes of her an ideal wife. A humorist once remarked that a man could wish for no greater earthly contentment than securing an American house, a Japanese wife, and Chinese food!

Regulations regarding the deportment of high school students in and out of school throughout the land are so detailed that the girls forcibly retain, to a remarkable degree, a childlike simplicity in dress and manner. For instance, officials in charge

The Wakamatsu campus.



of education require all girl students to wear their hair short or braided. Curling tongs and cosmetics are taboo. School uniforms and coats must be of the same cut and colour. Students are forbidden to enter restaurants or dance halls. They may go in the evening only when accompanied by their parents. Associations of teachers make rounds in order to see that these regulations are observed.

With regard to religious teaching, I have always found our girls extremely eager to hear the word of God. The proof of this is that they have enrolled at a Catholic school instead of at a public school where fees are negligible. (As they receive no governmental financial assistance, Catholic schools are obliged to demand higher fees in order to be able to provide for the teachers' salaries, pay yearly bonuses, and maintain standards). During religious doctrine courses, they manifest the spiritual hunger stressed by our Lord when He said, "Man does not live on bread alone..."

Q. — Things have probably changed a good deal since the end of World War II...

A. — Remarkable changes have indeed taken place, but I do not think you would notice them so much if you come back to Koriyama or to Wakamatsu. These changes have more particularly affected large urban centres such as Tokyo, Kobe, Osaka, where American influence was more deeply felt. Of course, nearly all Japanese housewives today have modern gadgets at their disposal; foreign products flood the home markets; the *kimono* is rarely worn. Nevertheless, generally speaking, ancient traditions still hold their own in rural areas, although the young tend to rebel against them.

The paradox of modern Japan is that it has, for instance, invented pillows that lull you to sleep by producing sounds of raindrops — and yet it still has to discover a religion that harmonizes all values, material as well as spiritual, temporal as well eternal.

Q. — Is the teaching of religion allowed in school? On what basis is Catholic doctrine taught?

A. — Private schools are free to include the teaching of religious doctrine in their regular schedule. Notwithstanding the fact that the vast majority of the students are non-Christians, we endeavour to create within our school a truly Christian atmosphere. Every week, a one hour-period of Catholic doctrine is taught in every class, from the kindergarten to the high school inclusively.

At the kindergarten, the children enjoy a monthly illustrated Catholic magazine which dispenses religious instruction appropriate to their age. During the primary and the secondary course, textbooks are used which gradually develop Christian doctrine so that all will have learned its rudiments by the time they reach high school. In the higher classes, we use as manuals the catechism prepared by the Japanese bishops, and the Gospel of Saint Matthew which places great emphasis on the divinity of Christ. After a review has been made of both dogma and ethics, the sacraments are clearly explained. Thus, those students who, after graduation, make up their minds to enter the Church can do so without prolonged preparatory instruction.

The religious teaching dispensed is accompanied by practical training in every day school life; the formation of the conscience and of moral judgment are emphasized. In high school, this is done in relation with the study of the great trends of ancient and modern thought. Once every three months, the pupils are asked to write a report giving their evaluation of the different courses, asking questions, proposing problems to be solved. Interviews are always granted those who desire further information. No pressure is ever brought to bear on the students to win them over to Christianity. Our role consists in heeding the Lord's command, "Going therefore, teach..."

Religious activities of several kinds contribute in creating an atmosphere conducive to the flowering of the faith: prayers said before and after classes, weekly talks on ethical problems, religious lectures on the occasion of the beginning and closing of each term, visits to the parish church, Sunday Mass for those who wish to attend, retreat for graduates, religious club for non-Christians, association of Christian youth, Legion of Mary...

The religious club for non-Christians has no definite programme. Each year, members decide what activities to undertake. They meet once a week. Each meeting comprises a talk of about twenty minutes followed by a forum, each member being free to state her point of view or to ask questions regarding religion or daily activities. Every other month, members visit hospitals or orphanages to spread good cheer and Catholic literature which they distribute in co-operation with the members of the Christian Youth Association.

This latter association is a genuine centre of apostolate. Its members also meet once a week to deepen their spiritual life and to devise the most efficient means of apostolate among the non-Christians.



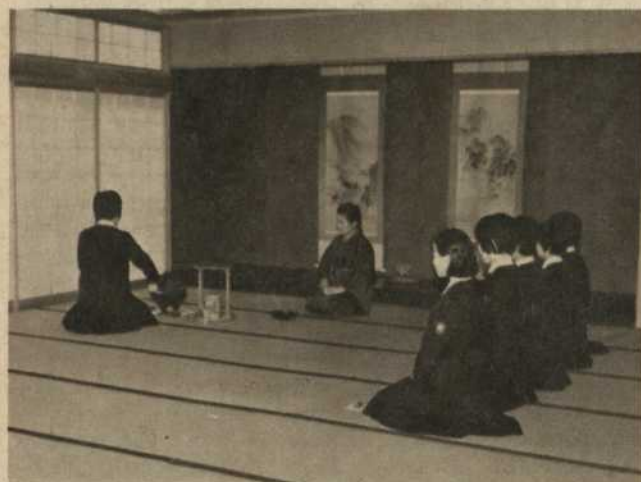
High school students
are kept busy with
various activities.



tians. Under the direction of a Sister, they organize various religious activities on the campus: special devotions during May, June, October, December; posters put up on the principal liturgical feasts; sentences of the Scriptures written and posted on billboards, pamphlets distributed...

Our apostolate is not limited to the students but is also exercised among the staff of fifty lay teachers, the majority of whom are non-Christians, as well as among the parents of our young charges. Once a month, a meeting of the teachers is called. On this occasion, the spirit of the school is commented on, directives are given regarding the exigencies of Christian education, religious festivals and activities are explained, and occasional lectures

are given by a priest. For their part, the parents receive a monthly Catholic booklet titled "The School and the Family"; the complete series of these booklets presents a general idea of Christian doctrine. A monthly letter is sent to the students' families, presenting news of activities on the campus. Those who wish to do so, may subscribe to the newssheet, "Catholic Education". Occasionally, lectures are delivered by the headmistress or by guest educators of renown. Every month, the mothers of the students are invited to spend one whole day on the campus. During the forenoon, they attend lectures and panels; during the afternoon they have friendly contacts with the teachers in charge of the various classes. The fathers have their turn in the evening. All are receptive to



guidance, and while their initial desires were more for intellectual training and preparation for the social life of their children, they gradually become interested in the moral and humanistic aspects of education and even in religious formation.

Q. — Is the students' outlook on life, materialistic? How much are they influenced by the religious courses and lectures? Are there any conversions?

A. — Here a distinction should be made between the children who enroll at our kindergarten when barely five years of age, and those who come from public schools to attend our secondary school. The former cannot be said to be atheistic or materialistic. They are open-hearted children, free from prejudice. As much cannot be affirmed of the latter who have already undergone the influence of a non-religious milieu. Their views are mostly opportunistic, mercenary, and self-centred. The majority disclaim any personal religion. (A recently taken survey reveals that in Japan 65 per cent have no personal religion, even though 72 per cent of this category admit that religion is important.) Our pupils usually belong to this latter group. They have no knowledge whatever of God's existence and of the very facts of creation, facts which for us are fundamental and susceptible of being perceived by reason alone. The basis of their ethical code is not divine law but customs, traditions, social proprieties, the opinion of the majority. For a Catholic, distinction between right and wrong is clearcut; white is white and black is black. But for the pupil of public schools, everything is of a vague greyish hue. According to W. P. Woodard in "The Japan Missionary Bulletin," "The problem of communicating the Gospel is not primarily that of making known the fact that God is revealed in Christ; but the far more difficult task of leading people to a faith that there is a God that is the Creator and sustainer of the universe." Although the children who have attended our Catholic schools from kindergarten up cannot entirely escape the influence of their milieu, the influence of the school predominates.

The chief benefit our students derive from the education received in our schools, is a sound moral outlook on life and lasting wholesome habits and attitudes. This education is at the same time a helpful preparation for leadership, as well as a positive preparation for the faith, which infiltrates the heart in a gentle imperceptible manner. Many students realize only after graduation that they are "different" from others and they are sincerely grateful for what they have received.

Eventually, their self-centredness melts in the flame of charity. They learn to forego personal interests in order to help others out as shown by their eagerness to participate in social welfare associations. On their own initiative, they prepare interesting musical programmes and take along practical gifts when they are allowed to visit hospitals, founding homes, hostels for the aged and incapacitated.

Witnessing these miracles of grace, the missionary Sisters unceasingly thank the Lord for the wonders He performs in the souls of their students. A newcomer in High School once explained, "Sister, how wonderful! I have just discovered that I have a conscience." Another student about to graduate wrote, "I am not afraid of life. Now that I know God's boundless love for me, it seems impossible that I should ever stray from the straight road." A non-Christian student confided during her pre-graduation retreat, "I think we should have these retreats twice a year..."

Nevertheless, few students enter the Church during their high school course. Why? Many reasons could be given for this low rate of conversions. For our part, we prefer to see our students wait until they are launched into the world of the university or of employment in order to have them arrive at a decision which will then be at once more personal and more enlightened. This is what often takes place. Surveys recently made show that nearly all graduates have acquired in school faith in God, the Creator and Father, whom they have learned to invoke in all their necessities. A certain number, however, hesitate to admit the divinity of Christ. Others — the greater number by far — believe in everything the Catholic Church teaches, cherish filial devotion towards our Lord and His blessed Mother, but shrink from the obligations of Christian marriage, obligations which they feel it will be impossible for them to assume with a non-Christian as partner. Still others would be ready to observe the Christian ethical code, but flinch before the spiritual isolation which would result from their conversion. Here, a parallel might be drawn between their position and that of young Catholic girls who, although they recognize the beauty of religious life and feel called to it, lack the courage to make the sacrifices entailed... There are also those who desire baptism but who have to reckon with their parents' opposition. This is especially the case with many parents of girls who are afraid that receiving baptism might prove an obstacle for convenient marriages for their daughters. However, once these girls have left their family to pursue their studies or to work in Tokyo,



The arts of public speaking and of domestic science figure on the secondary school programme.





Experts in "judoka" win trophies year after year.



they become more independent and sometimes carry off the permission once refused. This explains how, since the first commencement exercises five years ago, ten per cent of our graduates have been baptized. Apparently, ten per cent is not a remarkable number. But, if we reflect that Japanese Catholics number only 350,000 on a total population of 100 million, we find that each one of these conversions represents an act of high courage and an important milestone for the future.

At present, the family milieu still strongly attached to social proprieties and ancestral traditions, prevents the majority of our graduates from becoming Christians. Nonetheless, once they have founded families of their own, they will undoubtedly want to secure a Catholic education for their children and will put less obstacles in the way of their receiving baptism. The apostolate in Japan is a long and exacting labour. While we endeavour to instill a Christian mentality among the young, training them to obey the dictates of their conscience, we firmly believe that we are breaking the ground for the future harvests. We cannot present any impressive statistics, Japan being still in the period of pre-evangelization. It is not yet ready to accept, in its entirety, the Christian message be-

cause it has for too long remained retired within itself and its own conception of life. As in the first days of the propagation of the Gospel in Rome, it seems that a mere handful of apostles and Christians are at work trying to penetrate the dense pagan masses. But the divine leaven is stirring the souls of Japanese youth and the day will come when the whole mass will rise.

Q. — *Do you think that in Japan educational works are more important than social works?*

A. — To give an adequate answer to your question would have to be an ethnologist and a missionary expert. Being neither, I will venture a personal opinion. Yes, I sincerely believe that works of education are more important than social works in a country which is highly education conscious. Japan's culture is advanced, and from an economic viewpoint it progresses by leaps and bounds. Moreover, its social needs are adequately provided for. Of course, there is room here as elsewhere in prosperous countries for social welfare activities. However, it seems to me that the only thing we can give Japan through its youth is the Catholic faith. Social works certainly facilitate contacts with adults, but is it not easier to put someone on the right train from the start than to persuade him, once he is comfortably settled, that he is on the wrong track? According to an inquiry conducted in 1964, it is estimated that 70 per cent of Japanese catechumens were led to the Church thanks to the direct or indirect influence of Catholic schools.

Not only does the Catholic school dispense the systematic teaching of Christian doctrine and foster the slow maturation of the faith, it also trains in sound Catholic virtues, developing among youth wholesome habits which an ordinary doctrinal course given in preparation to baptism or on the occasion of social works could scarcely hope to replace. A Japanese priest once confided, "We who have received the faith as adults always feel in our new religion as if we were wearing new clothes." I think that the child who has been educated in a Catholic school from his earliest years would not find himself in this predicament.

Taking into account the dearth of missionaries in Japan — 2,427 for 100 million souls — the apostolate must be exercised in such a way as to carry as many Christian ideas as we can to the greatest possible number of people, namely sound conceptions about man, the family, moral and social attitudes. To bring these ideas to the people does not mean only to propagate theoretical knowledge. It means implanting them in the hearts and the

practical life especially of people in influential positions. The best way to do this, I think, is through the apostolate of the Catholic school which allows a small number of missionaries to communicate the Message to a great number of children, and through them to their families. At our Wakamatsu school, for instance, we are only six missionaries on active duty, and yet during the last twenty years, hundreds of students have learned to know and love God.

The Catholic school trains the elite of the nation, those who a few years from now will be its leaders in different spheres of life, and who will determine its fate. Theirs to enact the laws, to staff the Ministry of Education, to compile educational textbooks... Christian influence is even now felt in the National Office of Education which has lately published for the primary and secondary schools a series of textbooks on ethics founded on the Christian conception of the natural law. Occupying at the present time public functions of importance are several eminent Catholics as for example, Mr. Kotaro Tanaka, president of the Supreme Court of Justice. Catholic influence has penetrated even the sanctuary of the imperial court. The gracious and well-loved Princess Michiko received her entire education from the educational establishments of the Religious of the Sacred Heart in Tokyo.

To quote Reverend Joseph J. Spae in *Catholicism in Japan*. "In the intention of the Catholic educator, our schools are the quintessence of our gift to this nation, because they are our first line of contact with Japan through her youth, in the domain of morality and religion."

For all these reasons, I think that in Japan, educational works are more important than social works. Even if we cannot now measure our success, we know that by God's power our apostolate will be infallibly effective. Catholic schools perform a tremendous amount of groundwork in making Japan ready for the Message of Christ. Thus, little by little, a sounder and more positive attitude towards everything Christianity stands for is created.

Q. — *What about visiting the sick and the infirm in hospitals and homes?*

A. — I think that this is a commendable apostolate. During the three years I spent in Koriyama. I used to visit regularly the general hospital as well as a sanatorium for TB patients. At the general hospital, nothing durable could be done as the patients came and went. It was different with the



Juniors hold their own on the campus.





**Every month the school
welcomes mothers of
students.**

sanatorium where the patients usually spent several months or even years. A good number accepted instruction and I had the privilege of baptizing a few. In homes for the aged, it is practically impossible to do anything as the old people generally remain tenaciously attached to their Buddhist religion.

However this may be, this form of apostolate cannot be relied upon to establish the Church. Commendable in itself, it should not take the place of Catholic education and of other forms of apostolate in favour of those who will build the nation's future.





On several occasions, the students bring good cheer to the aged and the ailing.

Q. — One last question. We often hear it said that the Japanese being a prosperous nation, missionaries in Japan do not need financial aid as badly as those of other countries. Is this true?

A. — This is far from being the case. Although Japan is a prosperous country, it does not for all that subsidize private schools. Now, both as regards the content of school education and as regards school buildings and equipment, the requirements are often higher and more exacting than in many European and American countries. Thus it is easily understandable that the missionaries need all the financial assistance they can get if they are to maintain their standards.

Whether a Catholic school fulfills its mission and fully utilizes its great apostolic possibilities depends chiefly on the quality of its teaching staff. It must succeed in recruiting highly qualified educators. Securing the services of first class teachers will be impossible, if we do not offer them salaries as good as those in public schools. In spite of the reputedly high tuition that Catholic schools demand, the money collected per student amounts in most cases to less than what the State allots to the public schools for each student.

Caught on the horns of this dilemma, missionaries in Japan work hard and often deprive themselves of personal necessities in order to balance the budget of their schools. The impressive facade of Japanese Catholic institutions conceals a greater amount of heroism than might be imagined.



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JAPAN



NEW YEAR'S CUSTOMS

Fire, element of purification.

As an element of purification, fire has always played an important role in the Shinto ritual. Colourful festivals are still held in its honour in many parts of Japan. Among these festivals, one of the most remarkable is the *kagaribi*, bonfire, which takes place on New Year's Eve, in front of Shinto shrines or of public utility buildings.

Early on December 31, faggots are piled high, ready to be fired as soon as darkness sets in. A Shinto priest, circles each pile with *shimenawa* sacred hempen rope hung with strips of white papers cut into little angular bunches. These objects also possess a power of purification according to the Shinto ritual. Then, fire is set to the faggots, while the people cheer. The town and its inhabitants are purified of all misdeeds for another year.

Visits to Shinto shrines to call down the blessing of the gods on the opening year follow the *kagaribi*. At the entrance, the gong is struck and all bow reverently to the enshrined spirits of national heroes. On the way out, coins are tossed as good luck offerings into a large box placed before an altar.

On both sides of the courtyard, are small booths where fond parents buy sweets and toys for their little ones. Favourite toys at this time of the year are the roly-poly *daruma* dolls representing a legendary Buddhist monk who sat so long in meditation of nothingness that his limbs atrophied. These dolls are given to children as symbols of courage and perseverance for, no matter how often they are thrown down, they always spring right up again. They personify the old Japanese adage, "If you fall down seven times, rise eight times."

Another quaint New Year's Eve custom in Japan consists in eating *soba*, noodles, to bring the departing year to a happy conclusion. Some restaurants serve a particular dish of noodles called *kake*, the preparation getting its name from the fact that hot broth is poured over the noodles. *Kake* means "to pour" and it also means a "debt". The two meanings are associated by businessmen who, as they eat the noodles, fervently wish all their debts to be eaten up or cancelled.

Not all businessmen, however, can enjoy without qualms their dish of noodles on New Year's Eve. For those who have been unable to clear outstanding accounts before midnight, *Omisoka* as the last day of the year is called in Japan, has an ominous sound.

The usual tactics for a man with heavy debts is to disappear temporarily from the scene a few days before December 31. Creditors are then told that he will eventually be back to settle his accounts.

Sister Joseph of the Holy Family, M.I.C.



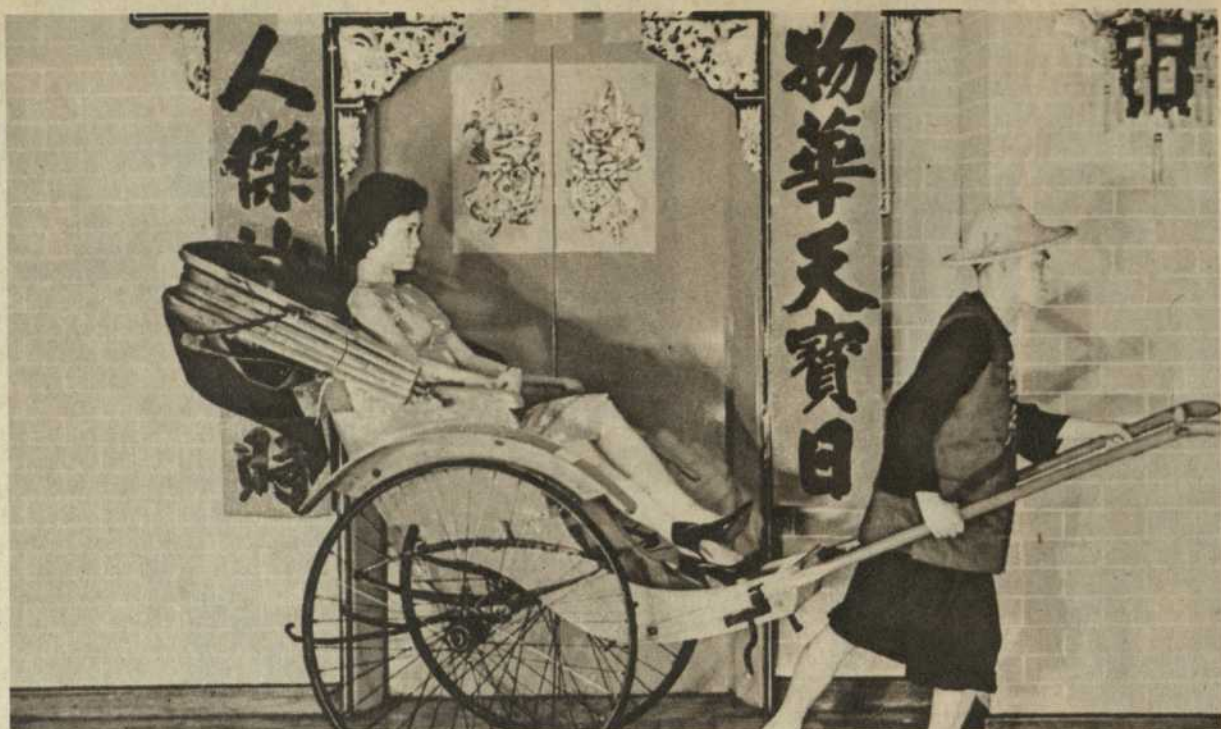
Welcome to the New Year.



Roly-poly "daruma" are favourite toys.



Coins are tossed as good luck offerings at the temple entrance.



House entrance decorated with effigies of good luck deities and New Year greetings.

New Year's Eve in China

Sister Thérèse LeBlanc, M.I.C.

For Chinese housewives there is perhaps no busier day in the year than New Year's Eve. Preparations for the three or four days of the festival involve getting in adequate food supplies. Meals must be prepared beforehand and the food carefully cut up, if need be, it being considered unlucky to use a knife or any sharp implement on the opening day of the year for fear of severing the family luck.

Gifts, especially of food, must be tastefully wrapped up and sent to relatives and friends. Someone must also be kept constantly answering the door to take in similar presents. Both gifts and decorations used on this festive occasion have to be carefully selected so as not to give offence. For instance, to give a clock is tantamount to wishing the receiver dead. The reason for this belief is that in the Cantonese dialect "clock" and "end" have the same pronunciation, and the phrase "giving a clock" sounds exactly like "fore-

seeing the end". The gift of a clock might, therefore, be interpreted in a rather grim manner. Likewise, no one will buy or give shoes as a present during the New Year period because "shoe" in Cantonese sounds like "a sigh of despair" and such a gift would be regarded almost as a curse. For children, the most common gifts are *lai tse* or lucky money, new coins and crisp notes presented in red envelopes printed with appropriate characters in gold.

Sufficient water for at least a couple of days is drawn from the wells and stored for usage. Is not the guardian spirit of the water entitled to a holiday as well as everybody else? To ensure that such spirits will be free from all disturbance, the well openings are closed and sealed. Then, they are decorated with scrolls thanking the water spirits for a bounteous supply of *liquid jade* in the past and soliciting a continuation of their favours.

Among decorations, cut flowers, shrubs, and



Firecrackers usher in
the new year.

plants play a prominent part, for it is thought to be of good omen if a flower blossoms in the home over the New Year. Narcissuses and peach blossoms are favourites. Red paper is plastered everywhere from door upright to pigsty, junk, or wheelbarrow, each sheet bearing some auspicious inscription. These "lucky" phrases are adapted to the calling of each family. Thus, the premises of a merchant may be decked with captions such as "Successful in all business!" "Acquisition of treasure..." A tavern-keeper may express the fol-

lowing wish, "May guests alight in swarms during the coming year." Favourite mottoes in the North were, "Accomplishment of wishes" or "Ten thousand generations and long duration". A very common inscription in Hong Kong is, "May the Heavenly Official bestow happiness".

The end of the old year is marked by the burning of pine branches and the letting off of firecrackers. Ancestral tablets kept in the family shrine are then honoured after which the family partakes of a specially prepared meal.

MERRY CHRISTMAS IN HINCHE

by Sister Jeanne d'Arc Nolin, M.I.C.

For the students of the Dumarsais Estimé Secondary School of Hinche, a town in the Artibonite region, Christmas 1965 proved a splendid manifestation of active charity.

Plans for the celebration were laid during a catechetical session of the Bible Culture Club. The following theme sentence written on the billboard fired the zeal of the club members, "The Nativity of Christ is a lesson in renunciation which produces joy." With the enthusiasm of youth, the students decided to translate this teaching into action.

Tentatively I offered a suggestion: "How about following the example of good Pope John XXIII who, on Christmas 1958, went on a fatherly visit of one of the Roman prisons? You might call on the prisoners in your own town..." The students thought this a good idea. However, there were at least two difficulties to be hurdled:

— What would be the reaction of this Christmas visit on the prisoners themselves? Would they feel annoyed or would this kind deed stir in their hearts memories of Christ Jesus, the Saviour born for love of all men?

— How could the prisoners be made to participate effectively in the manifestation?

Careful study of the new modes of catechesis helped us all elaborate a plan. First thing to be done was to obtain a permit from the military headquarters to visit the prison. I took this office upon myself. The colonel who gave me the required authorization smilingly remarked, "How good of you to remember these neglected unfortunates."

On the next Sunday, the students met to distribute the various roles and to give each group a share of responsibility in the planned activities. The girls agreed to shop for peas, rice, and sugar cane, while the boys undertook the rehearsal of songs and carols with the prisoners. These rehearsals were an excellent means of breaking the ice and of establishing friendly contacts.

Late on Christmas afternoon, the boys set out, pushing a wheelbarrow filled with an assortment of big pots filled with delicious spicy *pois et riz* (peas and rice), a favourite dish in Haiti. Thanks to generous contributions, each guest of the prison house also received as present a bar of soap plus ten pennies of spending money.

Standing at attention around the yard, thirty men joined with the boy students in a ringing rendition of traditional Christmas carols. Hearts were filled with bitter-sweet memories.



"Christmas 1965 was a particularly Merry Christmas in Hinche," says Sr. Jeanne d'Arc Nolin.



Sr. Marguerite Maltais helped with preparatives.



Villagers shared in the rejoicings.

After pleasant greetings to their guests, the girls went inside to lay the tables for the feastday meal. While they served at table, the boys sang merry songs and ditties.

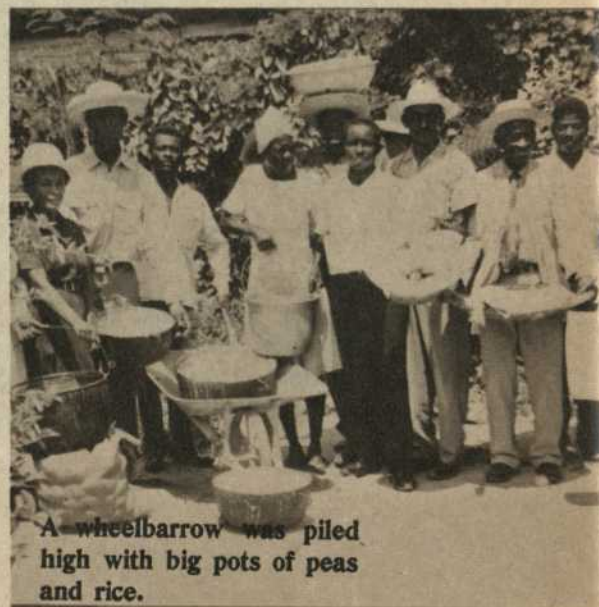
Never had these young people understood so well the deep significance of the words of Christ, "I was in prison and you visited me. I was hungry and you gave me to eat." It was the first occasion they had had to put these words into concrete practice. They felt elated, but at the same time they realized that the Lord Jesus required of them to see Him, at all times and in all circumstances, in each person

with whom they came into contact. "You have done it unto Me..." How strange were these other words of Christ and yet how disturbingly true!

Throughout the Christmas octave, this good example was followed by several groups in Hinche. "So shines a good deed in a naughty world." The Legionaries of Mary and their friends visited the poor, the ailing, the neglected.

Thus it happened that a catechetical lecture on the mystery of the Nativity prepared the young people of this town to recognize even in the outcasts of society the image of the Word made flesh.

Students of Dumarsais Estimé School on their errand of mercy.



A wheelbarrow was piled high with big pots of peas and rice.

Influence of Christianity on Philippine Music

by Sr. Maria Rosalina Abajo, r.v.m.



The impact of Christianity on Philippine music cannot be overestimated, writes Sister Maria Rosalina Abajo, R.V.M., Dean of Music, Saint Mary's College, Quezon City, P.I. Under the influence of Christianity, local talents gained cultural luster, embraced wider horizon, and climbed to loftier spiritual dimensions.

Although geographically Asian, the Philippines has been schooled in the style and idiom of Western music during the past four centuries of her history. Nevertheless, Oriental music, traces of which are definitely extant and which is now being feverishly cultivated and propagated for the appreciation that it deserves, has not been forgotten. Evolved out of several cultures, our musical taste has been chiefly developed thanks to Spanish influences.

Blended Culture

Spain whose history is closely related to that of France, Austria, and Germany, brought to us the idiom and style of these countries which admittedly are the cradle of Western music. Up to this day, the preference for Western music still runs in the veins of many educated Filipinos. Only a small percentage of this generation and of the past graciously appreciates the sound of purely Oriental music.

By Oriental music is meant the music of China, Vietnam, Burma, India, and of other Asian countries. This music is mostly constructed from the five-tone or pentatonic scale with percussion instruments. Definitely, Oriental music differs from what is popularly known as Philippine melodies.

Today, Philippine music makes use of the Western major scale of seven tones. It is safe to say that, had it not been for the Christian missionaries, our own music would sound today like the music of neighbouring countries, percussive and rhythmic rather than melodic.

Many bewail the fact that there is no music which we may call our very own. This is not quite accurate. Music of our own does exist although



Sister Abejo conducts Saint Mary's Choir and symphonic orchestra of Manila.

we have to admit that in the past it has not been properly appreciated, propagated, and polished.

For bringing attention to this culture of the past, credit is due to our music researchers, prominent among whom are Dr. Antonio J. Molina and Professor Jose Maceda who spent their time and effort in the very laudable cause of research.

As regards instruments, Dr. Molina in his "Music and Contemporary Aesthetics" (Cultural Foundation's Philippine Life) says: "In legend, chants, and lullabies, however, there is much use of longheld notes, conspicuous tremolos, and long florid flow. The rhythm is free but at times it is metric. When words of the Koran are used, there is an imitation of the Arabic melodies, but when native words are used, the five-tone scale dominates."

It may be noted that the discovery of Professor Maceda and of Dr. Molina brings into focus the similarity of our own music to that of the melodic

chants of India and to the percussion orchestra of Burma and of other neighbouring countries.

What the missionaries did for music

History relates that with the Spanish colonizers came the apostles of Christianity. These apostles had a mission: to bring to the Filipino people the message of the Gospel. To do this, the missionaries looked for means of uplifting the people from their superstitious beliefs and of thus disposing them to accept Christian teachings. There is no doubt that one of the most attractive means in conveying the teachings of Christ and one of the best auxiliaries in raising the minds and hearts of the people to God is MUSIC.

The missionaries naturally presented to the people the music which came with them from Europe. Therefore, the people were made acquainted with the polyphonic music of Orlandus Lassus, of Palestrina, of de Victoria, and of a number of other composers whose compositions were



Manila's symphonic orchestra.

closely associated with the highest form of prayer, the MASS.

While the Spanish Augustinian Fathers introduced varied chants, the Benedictines emphasized the uplifting Gregorian chant. The Fathers themselves taught their parishioners solfeggio in order to prepare them for a very active role in Church functions. Thus, the Filipinos learned the Western diatonic major minor scales; gradually, the *Pelog and Slendro* came to be neglected in favor of the new scale.

To enhance the singing of the Mass and of hymns, the missionaries made use of instrumental accompaniments. Hence, the rise of the orchestra and of the brass bands. In 1601, The Augustinian Fathers of Lilio, Laguna, organized their own orchestra. In 1643, Father Juan de Torres brought some musical instruments from Spain and organized another orchestra in Manila. In 1870, Father Toribio Varas organized the orchestra which was directed by Marcelo Adonay with three Adonay brothers as mem-

bers. The directorship of this orchestra was later taken over by Father Manuel Arastegui. The Cathedral of Manila organized its own orchestra to accompany its choir at church functions. Senor Blas Echgoan was director.

In 1893, a Franciscan, Father Cipriano Gonzales, organized the *Circulo Musical* for the purpose of promoting European music. Bonifacio Abdon was the youngest violinist of the group.

From the early period of Christianity in this country up to recent years, Masses in parish churches were accompanied by orchestras and even, at times, by brass bands. This practice was later tempered by the encyclical *Motu Proprio* of Pope Saint Pius X.

There are other vignettes of Christian tradition in this country which are definitely part of our musical culture. For instance, who can miss the music that pervades the air during the Christmas season?



After concert, Sr.
Marie Albertine,
congratulates Sr.
Maria Rosalia
Abejo.

Again and again, the story of the Nativity is recounted in music.

The doleful *Pabasa* (a popular feature of Holy Week in the Philippines) which narrates the sufferings of the Savior is another significant part of the development of music in this country. One has only to travel on Good Friday, for instance, from Manila to Baguio to realize the impact of Christianity on Philippine music.

The present

The transition from the Spanish to the American regime in this country brought some changes as regards popular music. This may be attributed chiefly to the popularization of the record-player and of phonograph records inspired by ever popular Hollywood movies.

As regards the formal music education of the young, the highly tutorial system of the Spanish missionaries was easily enough turned into a formalized system known as the school of music or the conservatory of music, in consonance with the advent of the educational institution known as the Public School System. But let it not be said that the Christian missionaries were not equal to this educational revolution.

Saint Scholastica's College was out front, the first to establish its College of Music in 1908. The University of the Philippines came next in 1916. After that, Catholic colleges and universities dominated the field of musical education.

Outside of Church music, it is gratifying to note that the Philippines now counts a good number of highly regarded composers whose repertoire include symphonies, sonatas, and songs in the Baroque, Classic, Romantic, Impressionistic, or Neo-Classic styles.

With the current nationalization movement, the present Philippine musicians are cooperating. Long forgotten melodies have been revived, polished, and in some cases modernized. Recently, in harmony with the ecumenical spirit, the prayers of the Mass in Filipino were set to music closely resembling indigenous tones.

Philippine music now is an interlacing of the Asian and the European style. While one may say that popular music fare among teenagers consists of American jazz, with a lingering echo of the *flamenco*, Spanish gipsy dance, a dash of the Italian serenade, and a delicate lacing of the European classic, it is more valid to say that in concert halls, the Filipino composers' works and higher art forms are winning general acceptance.

Threefold dimensions

The impact of Christianity on Philippine music cannot be overestimated. Availing ourselves of poetic license, the development and progress of Philippine music may be compared to a sonata, enunciated, developed, and recapitulated by the spirit of the Christian message.

Thus, Christianity added or developed a triple dimension. Philippine music gained more cultural luster, embraced wider horizons, and climbed to loftier spiritual dimensions.

Stonecutters of the Red Isle



MALAGASY REPUBLIC

Before I came to Madagascar I had never seen any stonecutters at work. Of course I had read about them, for instance in Claudel's *L'annonce faîte à Marie*, but I did not know that their art was still practised in these modern times. I had a vague

idea that they were archaic figures like the cathedral builders of the Middle Ages.

My curiosity was, therefore, aroused when our pastor announced one morning as we were leaving

church after Mass, "The stonecutters will be here on Thursday..." On the way back to the convent, Sister Superior explained that the new liturgy was about to be introduced in our parish of Saint Thérèse de Mahazoarivo and that Father had decided the occasion called for a new altar which could be placed according to the latest requirements. He had hired a squad of stonecutters who had quarried great blocks of stone on the top of a neighbouring hill called Soamiakatra, a word which literally means — *soa* the good and *miakatra* that climbs. From these heights of "the good that climbs" would come down to the plain the material needed to embellish the little church and to promote the progress of the liturgy in the parish.

A piece of ground close to our school was selected as a stonecutters' yard. On Wednesday afternoon, a truck roared down the road bringing a stony harvest from the Soamiakatra quarry. Idlers crowd-

ed outside the yard making guesses as to how the men in the truck would go about unloading one extra large block. Apparently, the truck of ancient make was not equipped with a tipping apparatus. From my classroom I soon heard loud cries of "Ooooooh up! Ooooooh up!" as the men tugged and strained and sweated. For once, my students seemed more interested in waiting for the dismissal bell than in learning their lessons. When it rang at long last, they trooped out to watch the proceedings. For over thirty minutes the men had been trying with the help of makeshift rollers to move the last block down. They did finally manage and all the onlookers cheered lustily.

As I was making my way from the convent to the school, the next morning, I noticed five rather shabbily dressed men puttering among the stone blocks, gauging their weight, examining them as if for flaws. They called out a cheery "Good morn-

How the main altar of Saint Thérèse Church was set up. 1 - Yard where the



ing" as I went past. Were these the stonecutters? To me they lacked the professional look I somehow associated with the noble art of the cathedral builders of yore... I decided that they were probably just some curious parishioners. But, at noon, when I went back home for dinner, I saw that the five were indeed genuine stonecutters under whose expert handling of hammer and chisel the shapeless blocks were already being transformed.

The proper shaping of the blocks took close to a fortnight. It was a new and enriching experience for me to watch the five men at work. First thing in the morning, they heated their blunted chisels, shaping them anew on improvised anvils. I learned to love the rhythmic swing of the tools biting into the stones to beautify them and to make them worthy of being used as furnishings in the house of God. At noon, the youngest stonecutter in the group cooked the rice over a twig fire in the yard,

then served his companions before taking his own meal. Towards four in the afternoon the group washed up and left for the inn.

"Ooooooh! up!" Again the raucous chorus rose on the day when the great carved blocks stood ready to be put in place inside the parish church. The oval base of the altar measured six feet wide, over one foot thick, and two feet high. This base was to support a slab about eight feet by three. People again crowded around the yard dispensing advice, exchanging comments. Some elders shook their heads. An impossible task! Undaunted, the stonecutters aided by the Pastor and some young men kept moving the monuments, for monuments they were. Not theirs to give up until their task was completed! As I stood watching activities from the sidelines, I remembered sequences from the film "Ben Hur" illustrating the hard labour which Hebrews were compelled to perform in Egypt...

stonecutters worked. 2 - Transportation of the oval stone table. 3 - Arrival at the church.





Before opening of classes at Antsirabe School, Sr. Agathe Durand meets Malagasy teachers for friendly talk.

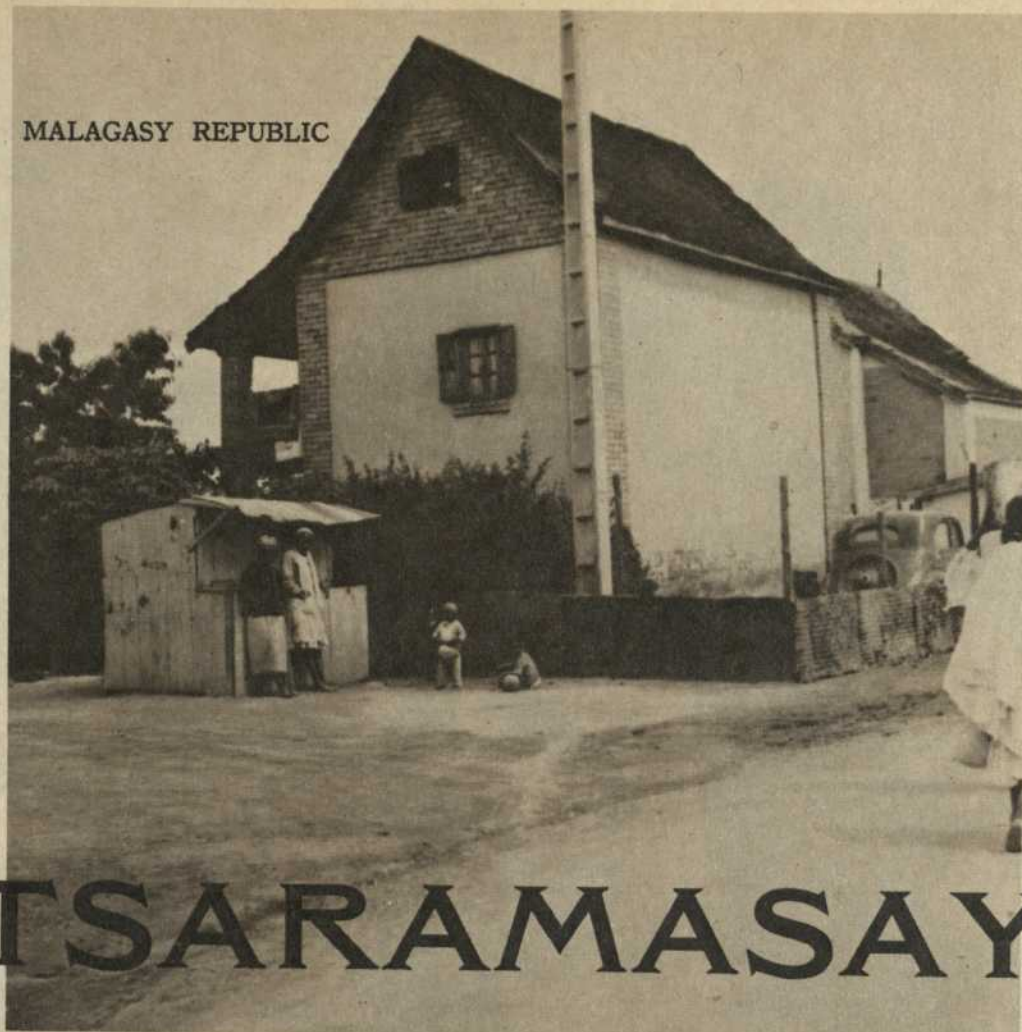
The heaviest slab was placed over fifteen small logs, then the men hauled it forward with stout ropes. At every stop, the logs had to be again set in place. It took all of four hours to cover a distance of about fifty feet and to put up the altar.

How far we are here from derricks, mechanical cranes, powerful levers! And yet, humble, conjugated human efforts have helped introduce the

Christian community of Saint Thérèse of Mahazoarivo into the liturgical renewal. Daily a devout congregation now repeats: *Hanatona ny otehin Yaveh* (I will go up the altar of the Lord). A "nation of priests" touches the summit of Soamiakatra.

Sister Agathe Durand, M.I.C.

MALAGASY REPUBLIC



TSARAMASAY

Aspect

Our new Malagasy educational centre is situated in the plain of Tananarivo, at a short distance from the city of the same name. Thus we can enjoy the quiet and the fresh air of the countryside and at the same time escape from crowded conditions in the capital.

The whole compound is shaped like a huge U, so located as to turn its back to the Majunga highway. A row of buildings set on the edge of this road acts as a damper on the roar of the traffic. In front of our residence, in a lush and productive valley, the rice fields ripple and undulate in the morning breeze. On one side runs a narrow unpaved street, while on the other flows a long open

culvert. Close to the road stands the school whose buildings tower above neighbouring houses. The parochial hall which at present does duty as a church, lies on the right hand side. The open space between these buildings is used as playground. Such is the nucleus of the parish *Fa Masin i Jeso* of Tsaramasay.

How it began

It was in September 1962 that His Excellency Most Reverend Jerome Rokotomalala, Archbishop of Tananarivo, first manifested to Mother Marie Vianney, then on official visitation, the desire to entrust the direction of Tsaramasay parish school to our society. The proposition was accepted then and there.

Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart in the midst of joyful student population at Fo Masin'i Jeso School.





The old wooden bridge.

The school stands right beside the road.



On August 15, 1963, Archbishop Rokotomalala inaugurated Sacred Heart Parish in the presence of numerous faithful gathered for the occasion. Early in September, the school, although as yet only partially built, opened its doors to over 300 children. Reverend Jean Van Speeken assumed the responsibility of both school and parish.

Upon our arrival, June 16, 1964, we were favourably impressed by the beautiful spirit permeating the young community and by the keen interest borne to educational matters. Towards the close of July, 600 students, boys and girls, were already enrolled for the next school year. Much to our regret, we were forced to refuse an additional 200 because a few of the 14 classes had to be used as lodgings for the teachers, pending the building of their own quarters. From the start, bonds of close unity existed among pastor, parishioners, and missionary Sisters. Indeed, this is I think, the fundamental element in the dynamic success of the Tsaramasay mission.

Fo Masin i Jeso and its parishioners

Situated in the district of Tsaramasay, Fo Masin i Jeso is made up of several wards: Andronomahery in the north; Antsalovana in the south; Andraharo in the west; Antaniavo in the east. Parish and convent are located in Antaniavo.

The people of this region who have had but little contact with modern ways have preserved the simplicity of ancient Malagasy customs. Houses cluster around a common courtyard in such a manner as to develop the family spirit. Even when transplanted outside their milieu, Malagasy children maintain their disposition to share candy, dresses, hats, books, pencils... Their bigheartedness is truly remarkable. Always, they are ready to give even until it hurts, for they have been trained in generosity from their earliest years. On feast-days, for example, at New Year's or on national festivals they give presents instead of receiving them.

Another characteristic Malagasy custom is the "turning over" of the dead which links the living with the departed. This festival which may last several days is always an occasion for much rejoicing. The people dance, sing, and eat gathered around the bones of a dead relative taken out of the family tomb. Afterwards, these remains are respectfully carried back to the cemetery. Although a deeply religious people, the Malagasy retain certain tendencies

to superstition. According to old pagan religious teachings, rewards or punishments in the life after death are measured in the terms of honour paid to the departed by the living. It would be extreme punishment for a departed soul to have no honour paid to it at all by the living. While the old paganism is still professed by more than half the population, the traditional high regard for the family can serve as an opening wedge for the teaching of Christianity.

Catholics in Tsaramasay number 5,000, but out of this number only 2,000 may be considered as "practising". In more cases than one, ignorance breeds indifferentism. Our role as missionaries is to prove loving interest and willing collaboration.

Among the people of Tsaramasay, nearly all of whom belong to the labouring classes, very few can understand or speak French. The Malagasy consider that it is the duty of foreigners living in their midst to learn their particular dialect. That is why we missionaries attach such great importance to the study of Malagasy, for without this knowledge we can hope to do but little good. As soon as the people discover that the missionary Sisters are keenly interested in studying their language, they become friendly.

In discussions or arguments, the Malagasy never lose their poise. Opponents are treated with unfailing courtesy. However, they are capable of harbouring deep-seated resentment which sooner or later may imperceptibly lead them to seek some small revenge.

Apostolate

A very high percentage of the Malagasy national population is made up of young people; in the city of Tananarivo, thirty-seven per cent of the population is under ten years of age. Support of good schools is, therefore, of great importance for the country since upon the education of a large segment of the people depends the future security and progress of the nation.

Our missionary activities here consist in providing for the Christian education of youth attending the *Fo Masin i Jeso* School. Eucharistic movements are in great favour. The preparation of children for their first Communion or for Confirmation appears to be a good means for fostering fervent religious practice within the home. At times it even facilitates the first step in the regularization of marriages.



Sr. Thérèse Gendron chats with friends at Tsaramasay market.

We spend our Sunday afternoons visiting neighbouring families. Now that people have got used to this, they never fail to send their children to fetch us. Everywhere we go we are given a warm-hearted welcome. These visits allow us to get better acquainted with the local mentality. Thanks to more intimate contacts, several families are gradually emerging from their spiritual lethargy.

In September 1965 was inaugurated the Parents' Association of Free Schools better known as A.P.E.L. At assemblies, the students' parents are made acquainted with the functioning of the school as well as with problems and projects under discussion. Each of these meetings broadens our own horizons and helps us identify ourselves more completely with the Malagasy mentality.

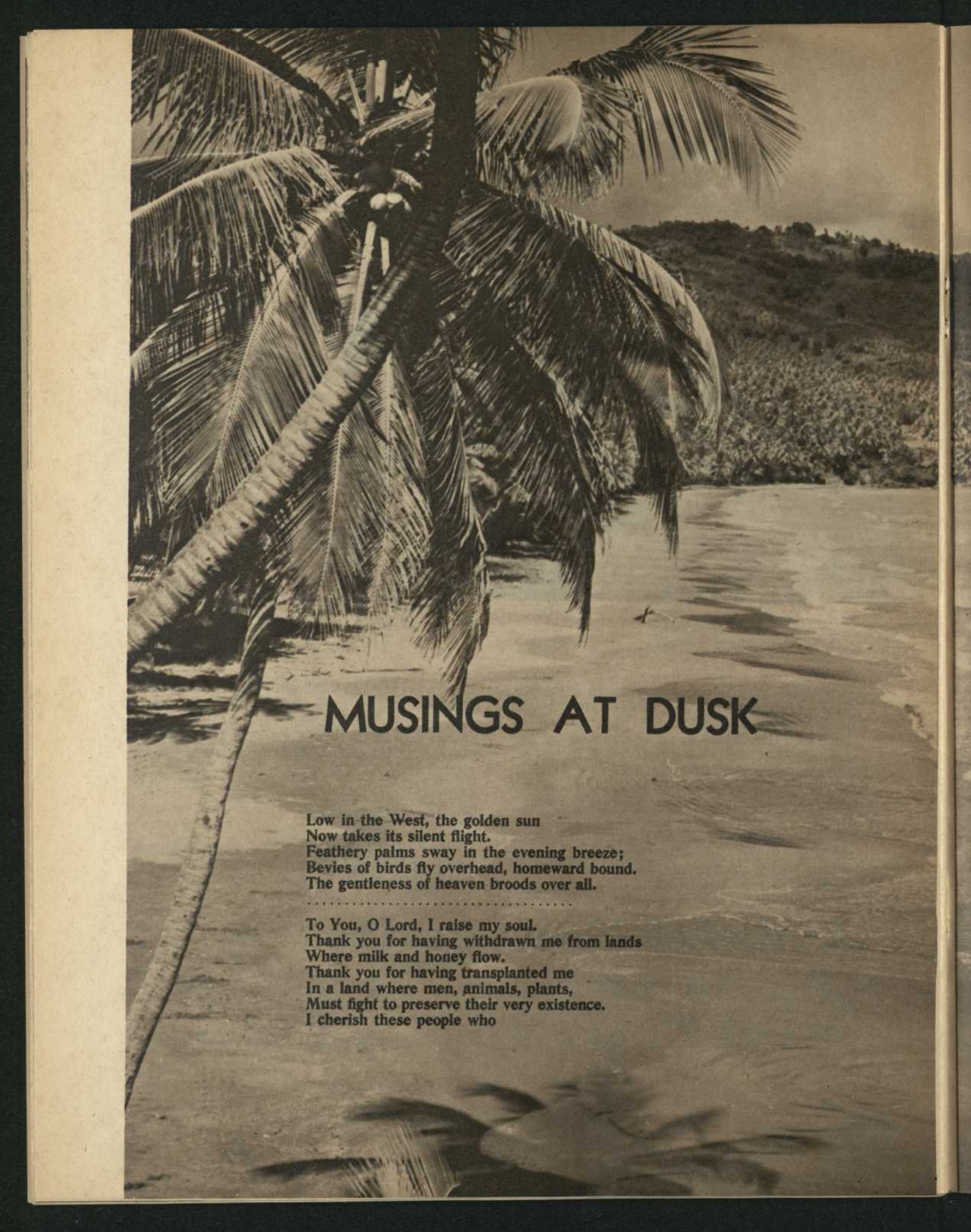
On the parochial level, a well co-ordinated committee assumes various responsibilities, among which the organization of festivals. Catholic Action groups comprise: the *Zanik' i Masin Maria* whose members see to the cleaning and decoration of the

church, organize Catholic relief services, hire catechists for the catechumenate; the Young Malagasy Catholics or T.K.M. who lend assistance more particularly to the newly wed; the Golden Cross whose members devise adequate measures against alcoholism.

Personal impressions

Ever since my coming to the Great Isle three years ago I have constantly grown in affectionate esteem for its urbane, sympathetic population. The better I come to know them, the more deeply I love them and find myself at home in their midst. Docile and studious, the 600 children enrolled at the school are my pride and consolation. For me indeed "the measuring lines have fallen on pleasant sites!" I should like to share my happiness with all those who are in quest of an ideal. Come to Madagascar! The fields are whitening unto harvest.

Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, M.I.C.

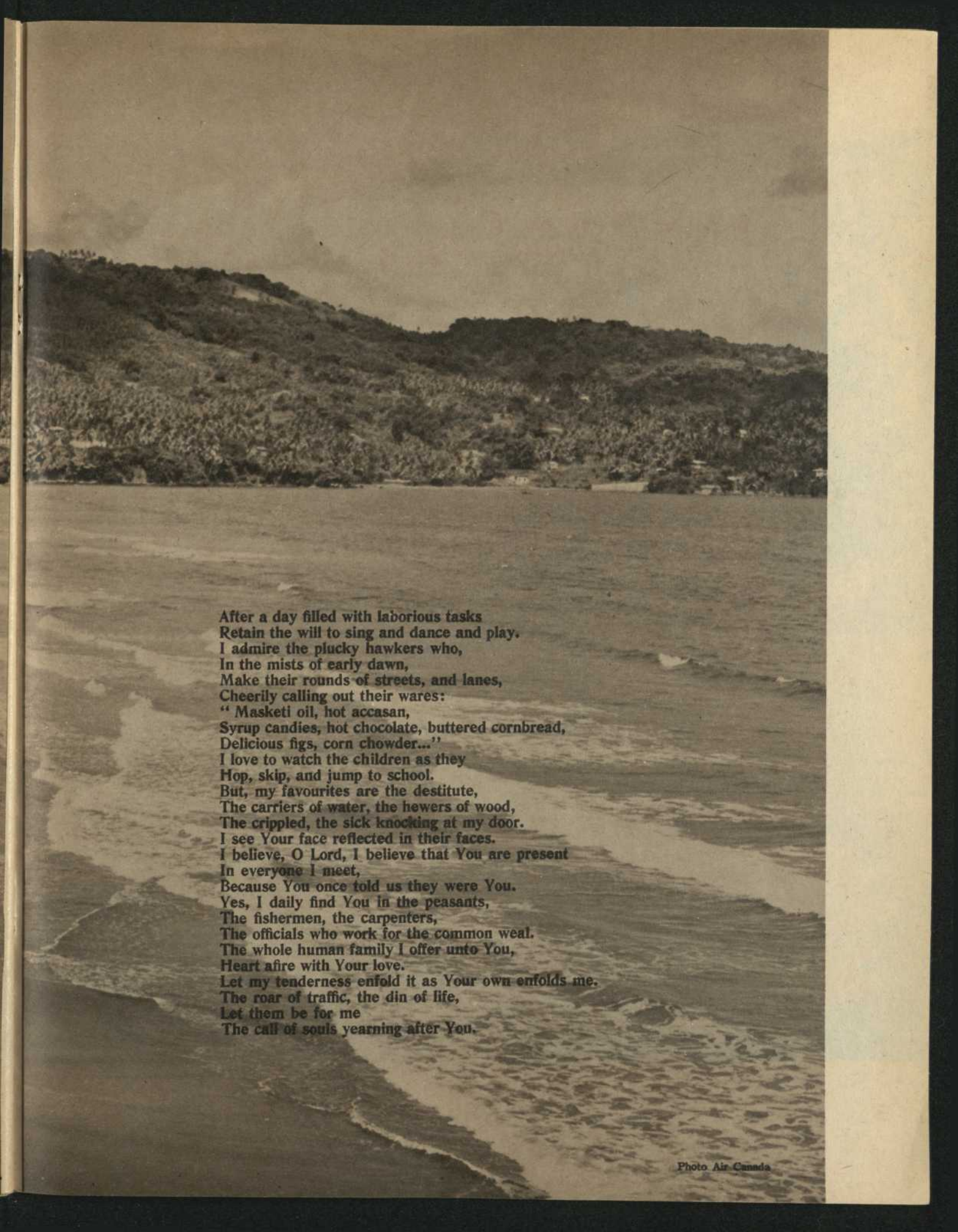


MUSINGS AT DUSK

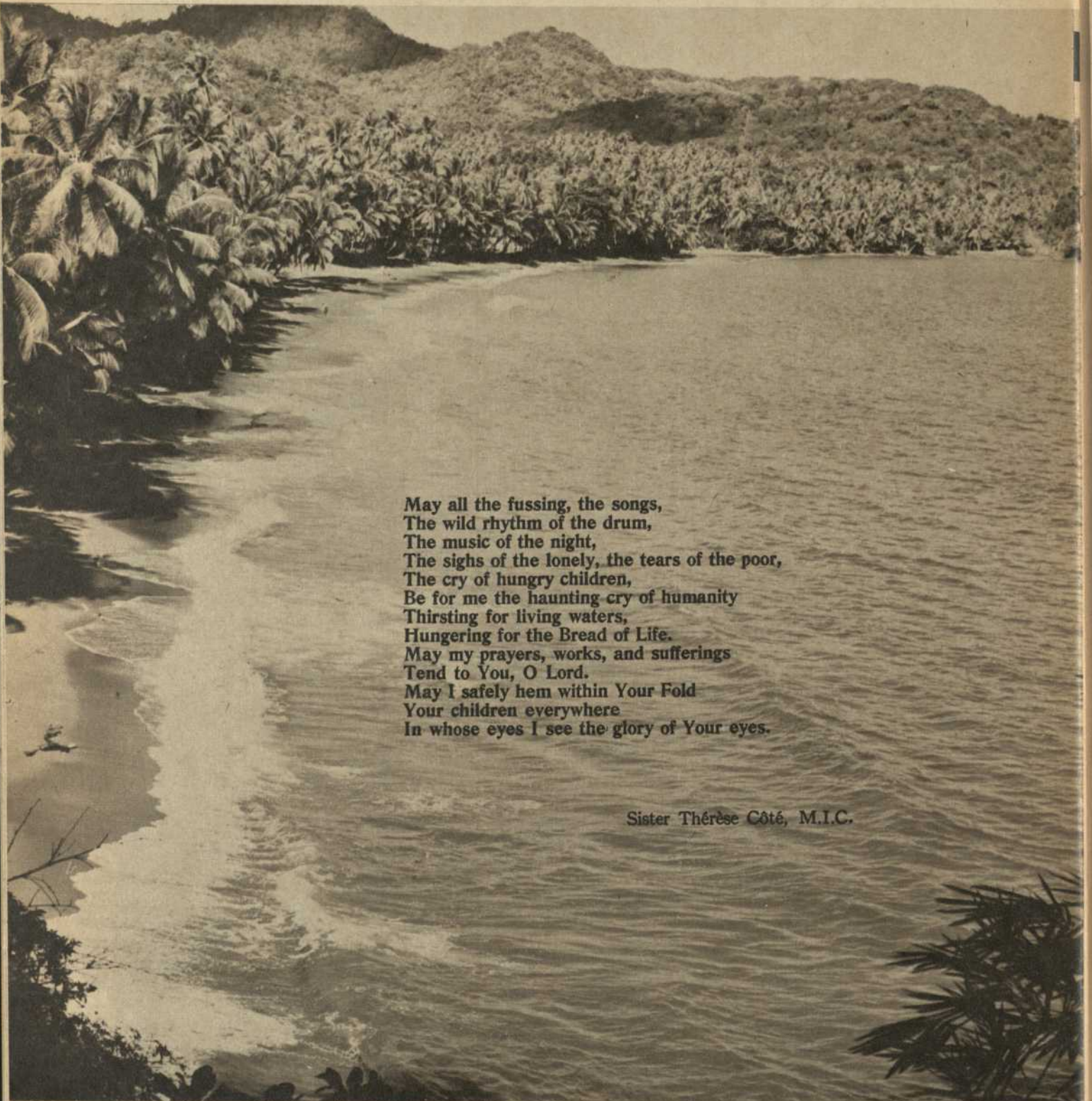
Low in the West, the golden sun
Now takes its silent flight.
Feathery palms sway in the evening breeze;
Bevies of birds fly overhead, homeward bound.
The gentleness of heaven broods over all.

.....

To You, O Lord, I raise my soul.
Thank you for having withdrawn me from lands
Where milk and honey flow.
Thank you for having transplanted me
In a land where men, animals, plants,
Must fight to preserve their very existence.
I cherish these people who



After a day filled with laborious tasks
Retain the will to sing and dance and play.
I admire the plucky hawkers who,
In the mists of early dawn,
Make their rounds of streets, and lanes,
Cheerily calling out their wares:
"Masketi oil, hot accasan,
Syrup candies, hot chocolate, buttered cornbread,
Delicious figs, corn chowder..."
I love to watch the children as they
Hop, skip, and jump to school.
But, my favourites are the destitute,
The carriers of water, the hewers of wood,
The crippled, the sick knocking at my door.
I see Your face reflected in their faces.
I believe, O Lord, I believe that You are present
In everyone I meet,
Because You once told us they were You.
Yes, I daily find You in the peasants,
The fishermen, the carpenters,
The officials who work for the common weal.
The whole human family I offer unto You,
Heart afire with Your love.
Let my tenderness enfold it as Your own enfolds me.
The roar of traffic, the din of life,
Let them be for me
The call of souls yearning after You.

A black and white photograph of a tropical beach. In the foreground, the calm water of a bay or lagoon meets a sandy shore. To the left, a dense line of palm trees grows along the beach. In the background, a range of mountains or hills is visible under a clear sky. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

May all the fussing, the songs,
The wild rhythm of the drum,
The music of the night,
The sighs of the lonely, the tears of the poor,
The cry of hungry children,
Be for me the haunting cry of humanity
Thirsting for living waters,
Hungering for the Bread of Life.
May my prayers, works, and sufferings
Tend to You, O Lord.
May I safely hem within Your Fold
Your children everywhere
In whose eyes I see the glory of Your eyes.

Sister Thérèse Côté, M.I.C.

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

CANADA

MOTHERHOUSE, 2900 St. Catherine Road,
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26
PROVINCIAL HOUSE, 5550 Louis Colin Street, Montreal 26
NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Laval City
OUTREMONT, 314 St. Catherine Road, Montreal 8
CHINESE HOSPITAL, 355 Faillon St., East, Montreal 10
NOMININGUE, Labelle County, P. Q.
RIMOUSKI, P. Q., 85 St. Germain Street
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,
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GRANBY, P. Q., 235 Dufferin Street
GRANBY, P. Q., 50 St. Joseph Street
CHICOUTIMI, P. Q., 766 Cenacle Street
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SAINT JOHNS, P. Q., 430 Champlain Street
OTTAWA, 30, Goulburn Avenue
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Taiwan, Republic of China
TAIPEI, 363, An Tung Chieh, Taiwan, Republic of China
SUAO, 36 Chung Cheng Rd., Suao Ilan Hsien,
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ANTSIRABE, St. Thérèse's Mahazoarivo Parish
TANANARIVO, Tsaramasay
MAHABO, via Morondava

PERU

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CATAVI, postal address: Oruro, casilla 434

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MATI, Davao Province
DAVAO City, Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall, Florentino Torres St.
PADADA, Davao Province
BAGUIO City, 73, Pacdal, Box 83

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, Orphanage, Cité No. 2, C. P. 1085 Haiti
PORT AU PRINCE, Novitiate, Cité No. 2, C. P. 1085 Haiti
CROIX DES BOUQUETS, C. P. 1291 Haiti
DESCHAPELLES, Albert Schweitzer Hospital,
Boite postale 2213, B, Port au Prince, Haiti
LA BOULE, C. P. 1085, Haiti
HINCHE, Haiti

COLON, apartado 21, Province of Matanzas, Cuba

CENTRAL AFRICA

KATETE, St. Teresa's Parish, Champira P.O., Malawi
MZAMBAZI, St. John's Parish, Eutini P.O., Malawi
RUMPI, St. Patrick's Parish, Rumpi P.O., Malawi
KARONGA, St. Mary's Parish, Karonga P.O., Malawi
KASEYE, St. Michael's Parish, Chitipa P.O. Box 100, Malawi
NKATA BAY, Nkata Bay P.O. Box 9, Malawi
MZUZU, Mzuzu P.O. Box 24, Malawi
MZIMBA, St. Paul's Parish, Mzimba P.O., Malawi
FORT JAMESON, P.O. Box 107, Zambia
KANYANGA, Lundazi P.O., Zambia
NYIMBA, Sacred Heart Hospital, Nyimba P.O., Zambia
CIKUNGU, Kazimuli P.O., Zambia

On a school trip to Kyoto, Wakamatsu students visit Heian temple.

