

THE PRECURSOR

January — February 1969 Montreal — Vol. XXVIII — no 7



Mrs. Félicée, teacher, and her happy brood.

MISSIONARY INTENTION FOR JANUARY:

That the obstacles raised in mission lands by war and tensions be efficaciously overcome.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

MISSIONARY INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY:

That love of truth may prevail over difficulties which hinder an efficacious dialogue with non-Christians.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

THE PRECURSOR

No 7 — January — February 1969 — Vol. XXVIII

IN THIS ISSUE

DIRECTION

Sister Gisèle Villemure, M.I.C.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Sister Gabrielle Ouimet, M.I.C.
Sister M.-P. Charbonneau, M.I.C.

ENGLISH EDITION

Sister Madeline B. Maillet, M.I.C.
Sister Agnès Lavallée, M.I.C.

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

Sister Rita Ready, M.I.C.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

THE PRECURSOR

2900 St. Catherine Road
Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal 250
Canada

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

\$ 1.50 a year
\$ 2.50 2 years
\$ 5.00 4 years
\$ 30.00 for life

*In case of change of address,
please send both: the old and the
new.*

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.
October 3, 1968.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Called to Liberty | 242 <i>Sister M. Jeanne Ghislaine, N.D.S.</i> |
| Our Lady of Lourdes | 245 <i>Mr. Roger Brien</i> |
| Women of the Great Isle | 251 <i>Sister Agathe Durand, M.I.C.</i> |
| A Missionary Puzzle | 260 <i>Mr. Jean-Claude Langlois</i> |
| Malawian Poor Clares | 262 <i>Sister Gabrielle Ouimet, M.I.C.</i> |
| Los Negros' Sana | 269 <i>translated by
Sister Suzanne Longtin, M.I.C.</i> |
| Dial | 272 <i>The Redaction</i> |
| Lima Conciliar Mission | 274 <i>Sister Simone Sabourin, M.I.C.</i> |
| From North to South, from
East to West | 280 |

CALLED TO LIBERTY

(Gal 5: 13)

Liberty... Truth... Unity... These three conditions of Christian and human life are closely related. One may not be established unless the other two have first cleared a path for it. To be more precise, unity must be considered as a summit towards which all men are advancing, *made free by the Truth*. (John 8: 32-36).

However, ideas of liberty vary and it therefore behooves everyone to seek its Biblical basis. In the garden of Eden, God gave a commandment to Adam: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2: 16-17). To comply to this commandment, trusting in the absolute wisdom of the Lord, is to refuse to be deceived by the mirages of error; to shun evil. But Eve did allow herself to be led astray, and here we find the starting point of the disequilibrium which man can only avoid by relying on the grace of the Redeemer - the promise which has existed ever since the original fall.

Option of the Absolute of God will be most clearly expressed in the constant choice of mind: "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; ... I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply." (Deut. 30: 15-16). Gide rejects choice in order to delight in the multiplicity of possibles - to enjoy them to the full. But Gide, according to Mauriac, is a man who "unmade" himself; and it is precisely through choice that man "makes" himself, while at the same time participating in the continual creation of the world. Whence arises the extreme importance of education.

A child must be taught how to choose, and this requires education based on motivation, (formerly, one spoke of having an "ideal"). For great is the value of motivation, great is the value of choice, and infinite is the value of every human soul.

The criteria which govern motivation will constitute its weakness or its strength. If such criteria are sought outside the truth, misleading decisions and dramatic situations may well result. Only he who is led by the Truth walks in light (John 12: 46) and finds true liberty. Liberty cannot exist without freedom of choice and *liberation*. The miracle of Exodus and the mass departure of Israel from the land of servitude is, figuratively speaking, renewed for each man. "Man's dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within, not under blind internal impulse nor by mere external pressure. Man achieves such dignity when, emancipating himself from all captivity to passion, he pursues his goal in a spontaneous choice of what is good, and procures for himself through effective and skilful action, apt helps to that end. Since man's freedom has been damaged by sin, only by the aid of God's grace can he bring such relationship with God into full flower" (Cons. Gaudium et Spes, 17). It is then that the crossing of the desert and purification by interior silence are required of man - a silence which is first of all emptiness (cf. Greek: *sylaō* - to take away from, to pillage) - so that he may find a renewal of life. The man who is not afraid to accept "emptiness" through seemingly accidental circumstances, and pursues his quest for God, is not long in finding Him. "... I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: ... that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness... but the righteousness which is God by faith." (Phil. 3: 8-9).

Exodus is the liberation from slavery for the Great Vision of Sinai and the uniting of the People of God, advancing together behind the pillar of fire, in the same faith. There is but one pillar just as the enslaved people became the People of God, and found their identity in following the pillar and *because* they followed it, guided by light, toward the Promised Land. "... a cloud covered the tabernacle by day, and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents... according to the commandment of the Lord they journeyed." (Numbers 9: 16-22). The diverse tribes, each under its own standard, found unity in common obedience to Light, and the stranger's son is invited to partake of God's gift providing he also accepts to join the march across the

desert and contribute his portion of human wisdom and goodwill to help all achieve the ultimate goal. Moses said to Hobab, the Son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law: "... Leave us not, I pray thee forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes. And it shall be, if thou go with us, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee." (Numbers 10: 29-32).

God has been planning for this unity, already realized for the People of the Alliance, throughout the history of mankind. The passover of Jesus is the central point of this history, inasmuch as "he should die... that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 11: 52). In the midst of all the vicissitudes and shake-ups experienced by the Church in this ferment of unification, the Holy Spirit is at work inviting all men to dialogue, stimulating dynamic pioneers in ecumenism, instigating movements devoted to rapprochement of the Churches and breaking down once-recognized frontiers of religion. Conditions are changing everywhere and there is constant effort to promote the dignity of the human person. Sometimes such efforts take the form of rebellion and violence - and perhaps might be regarded as the expression of the struggle against the forces of oppression that some curses of the Psalms translate into terms which often shock us.

"Authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the divine image" (Const. Gaudium et Spes, 17). Even without being fully aware of this supernatural vocation, man seeks for freedom as his most valuable asset. He fights all forms of alienation of this right. Yet does not the task of helping individuals and groups to affirm and develop the dignity proper to them devolve first of all upon those who have received Biblical revelation? Misery, hunger, all forms of subjection, damage the sign of the image of God in man, which is true liberty. Those who believe could not find a more powerful expression of convergence and unity *than to work together* to ensure that all mankind may enjoy free and dignified life.

In the years to come, the scope of ecumenism must be enlarged so as to encompass the whole world: it was truly to save *the world* that "God gave his only begotten Son". (John 3: 16).

M. Jeanne-Ghislaine, N.D.S.
1444 Drummond
Montreal 107
Tel. 849-2235

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

ROGER BRIEN

I was in Lourdes, in 1954, when Cardinal Léger came as legate of Pope Pius XII to the centenary celebration of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. For my part, I believe that the era of Marian dogmas is over; not in its reality which will last forever (the dogmas defined by the Church being willed and inspired by God), but in this sense that the Church will not define any other dogma, the cycle being complete.

How happy I feel that among Protestant Churches the elite has come to understand better why Catholic and Orthodox Churches have fostered such great devotion towards the Mother of Unity.

At each of my visits to Right Reverend Théas, Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes, I have always been struck by his ecumenical spirit. He once remarked

that in this era of wonders, science as such is supporting the teachings of the Church rather than opposing them. In this scientific era, God expects *Love* from a Christian: that is the heart of the matter.

Notwithstanding the fact that regretful altercations exist among separated Christians, even among members of the same Church, there are saints on both sides. The Holy Spirit alone can bring unity, in God's own good time, through the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Church. All of us can pray to the Lord for a brotherly openness of heart. We can be true, sincere brothers to all humans our brothers. We can all learn to become meek and humble of heart in imitation of Christ, without emasculating the virility of our energy in struggle. God alone is absolute. But we can joyously give our total self in the Christian sharing.



**THERE STILL EXIST
ARDENT YOUNG PEOPLE
WHO GIVE ANEW TO HUMANITY**

**THE DESIRE TO LIVE
IN BEAUTY, IN EXALTED MERIT, IN HEROISM.**





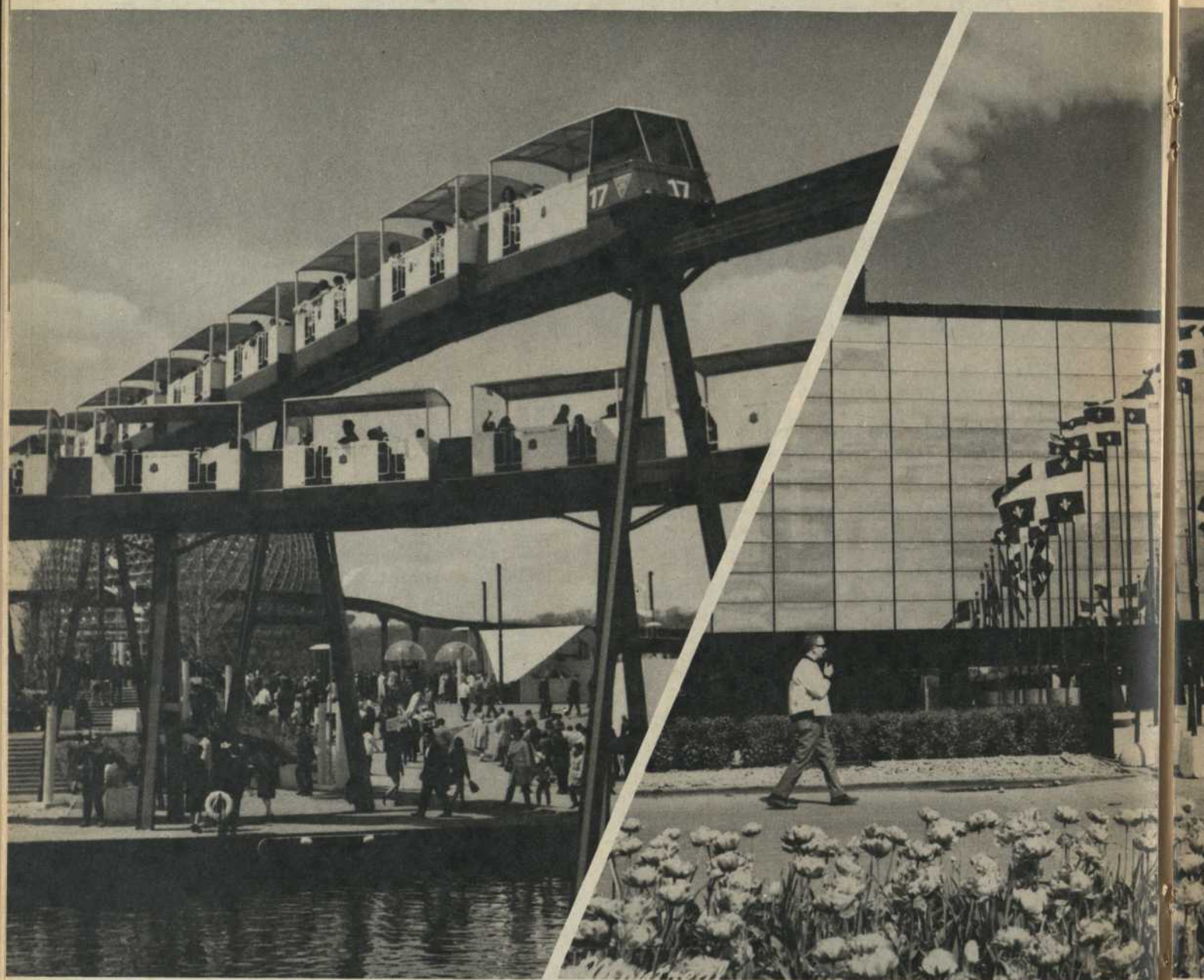
The great evils of our age are dissipation, the cult of the limelight... These idols soon crumble. How regrettable that everything should be commercialized! Today, everybody wants to be known as a poet. That every human being should be conscious of the beauty God has put in him is only normal. Everyone has the right to enjoy authentic poetry proceeding from the deepness of creation: from man and woman, God's creatures; from the divine plan of our Lord in the Redemption as well as in the Incarnation, testimony of His mercy in the forgiveness of our sins. It is a state of soul. It has rightly been written that the great Christian poets alone can give the right solution to the problems of humanity.

On the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, let us pray to her to help us acquire Bernadette's gracious simplicity and well-balanced judgment which astonished her contradictors. Let us try to find out why since the apparitions of La Salette our Lady has always shown herself to children. The firm

unity and love which the youth of our world so deeply needs is a sign of the times. Many among our young people feel lost. Who has fashioned the troubled society in which we live?

Lately, I happened to read an excellent article written by Nicole Germain, one of the best known women in our French-Canadian social circles. Among other things she remarked that she was not a prude and that she had no wish of seeing the world reverting to prudishness, but he warned our contemporary society against the danger of getting smothered in erotism. The evil is there. Gustave Thibon was right when he said: "We must choose between Mary and Eve. We must choose between woman's radiance in her freedom and equality to man, in her marvelous nature, in her entity worthy of respect, in her biological and moral realities or her slavery through all forms of materialism". There is no need of hearing sermons to become aware of the fact. Just glance at newspapers or listen to the radio.





THE AUDACITY OF THE CREATORS



OF EXPO shows that fraternal, enthusiastic collaboration and the will to humanize the world in its social and human relations, always create light.

Contrary to what, out of ignorance, some people pretend concerning devotion to Mary, Reverend Raoul Plus, S.J., remarked in his writings how true Marian devotion is virile and leads to virility. On Calvary, Mary stood at the foot of the Cross.

Lionel Groulx mentioned on several occasions that there still exist ardent young people who give anew to humanity the desire to live in beauty, in exalted merit, in heroism. Such youth does not destroy itself by drugs or dubious pleasures. It studies, cultivates itself, becomes deeper, keeps itself ever ready to bring a new aspect, a new human visage to a world in the throes of constant rebirth.

Once science has realized that without God all is to no avail, it will discard the old Faustian and Nietzschean, Freudian or Existentialistic myths, and live in harmony with human equilibrium. "The world is in desolation because no one reflects in his heart". Holy Scripture affirmed this a long time ago. Prophets have repeated the theme along the years. At all times men of genius have reiterated the same teachings.

Expo, *Man and his World*, has been a unique lesson for humanity. What glory for Canada, for Quebec, for Montreal, for our old Ville-Marie! Why, in this great country, whose history is one of the most beautiful and marvelous of the times as Lionel Groulx has pointed out, why should there exist masochism in our culture and arts? This runs counter to nature. The audacity of the creators of Expo shows that fraternal, enthusiastic collaboration and the will to humanize the world in its social and human relations, always create light. But *Man and his World* must not be fraternal only at Expo hours. This would prove false. At the end of his life, Saint-Exupéry was disappointed with life. Each human being has within him a "Little Prince", a treasure which God wants to contact so as to make it flourish.

We always talk about assassinated Mozarts! But, what about all those human beings who appeal in vain to our love and to our comprehension? We cannot hope to transform *Man and his World* into an angelic world... it is *human*. But we must learn anew to liberate ourselves from materialism, to recover "*The Source of Living Water*". "If you knew the gift of God!"

When the Blessed Virgin appeared at Lourdes, rationalism was in full swing. Enemies of the apparitions have long since gone their way. Historical truth remains. At Fatima, at Lourdes, we unceasingly rediscover the Gospel.

We are sinners, warped by the original fault. But how beautiful and inspiring is the human combat for truth! Why should we be sad, discouraged? A thought of Nietzsche has impressed and inspired my universal apostolate for thirty years. He affirmed that he would believe in Christianity if Christians showed that they had really been saved. What a blow to Christianity! Saint Paul used to say: "Gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may dwell in me ..." In no way was he a masochist like a great number of our schizophrenic modern writers. But never did hardships endured for Christ's triumph trouble his joy. Saint Teresa was fond of saying:

"Let nothing trouble you,
Let nothing alarm you.
When we have God,
God alone suffices."

What can be more precious than peace of heart? All is there! Let us ask the Virgin Mary, Mother of fair love, to obtain it for us. I always thought it wonderful that such an erudite as Alexis Carrel should have been converted at Lourdes after having doubted so long. Our Lady is never an obstacle in reaching Christ: her office is to give Him to all men.

We would have interior peace if we only knew how to love. Love as God wants it, goes beyond the charms of creatures to approach the splendour of souls. According to Elizabeth Leseur, "The soul which elevates itself elevates the world." Do we think of this as much as we should? Throughout our life, not a single act of love is lost. Each Christian can at any moment of the day, lift up the world as an offering to the Lord. This is why the Saints were such prayerful people. Wise and inspired, Teresa of Avila that well-balanced genius, knew how to pray. Prayer lends wings to our intellectual faculties. "Prayer and penance," such is the Blessed Virgin's teaching at Lourdes. By more liberal rules concerning mortification, the Church intends to train souls to be mature, free, able to choose by themselves the penances they think best. *All is love*. Christianity is a love affair, not a vain contest between intellectuals desirous of showing off. At the Cenacle, twelve ignorant men were transformed into dynamic apostles by the action of the Holy Spirit, through the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Saints were not in the wrong: they worked for the essential, the *Eternal*, that which will never pass away!



Photo: Stavy

WOMEN of the GREAT ISLE

by Sister Agathe Durand M.I.C.



"For those who are familiar with the Great Isle," remarked Archbishop Perozzi, Apostolic Delegate to Madagascar in 1966, "it is almost banal to mention that its principal charm lies not so much in its picturesque landscapes as in its human element."

I would like to introduce you today, dear readers and friends, to the various types of gracious Malagasy womanhood as it exists today. The subject is rather vast since there are eighteen tribes, each having peculiar characteristics.



Photo: Madagascar Information Service

Contrary to the old Malagasy saw, this woman carries only one water jug on her head...

One of the chief attractions of Madagascar is variety. Without completely overlooking this agreeable aspect which exceeds the scope of the present article, I will attempt to sketch just a few traits of the Malagasy woman designated under such poetic appellations as "celestial princess", "dainty furnishing", "wellspring of the nation"

Women in the Great Isle make up a little over half of the total population. Rural areas which cover about 80 per cent of the land are deeply indebted to the diligence of country housewives. An ancient saw describes them as "those who carry two jugs on their head", that is those who succeed in achieving the impossible. In urban centres, Malagasy women have gradually become integrated into public functions, participating in the national, social, economic, religious, and artistic life.

Familial aspect

For many centuries past, women in Madagascar were considered as socially inferior to men. This is vividly expressed by an old Imerina term, *fampakaran-bady*, implying that the elevation of woman is brought about by marriage.

Her principal role in life and her chief glory is to bear children. A proverb redolent of ancestral wisdom avers, "Children are the wealth of the nation." In the family circle the Malagasy mother is looked up to with respect and admiration. Since the evangelization of the Island, however, the privileges attached to motherhood have been restricted to the legitimate wife; concubines or unwed mothers no longer have any claim to particular consideration. Popular custom also decrees that women who are celibates, no matter what qualities or personal virtues they may possess, should always give way to married women who are mothers.

Marriage was formerly arranged by the two familial clans. Nowadays, it is left to the initiative of the young people, especially in cities where foreign culture has influenced local civilization, at least as a matter of form.

The advantageous juridical situation enjoyed by the married woman partly explains her important role in everyday life. As a rule, husband

and wife are considered equals. This fact is borne out, in certain regions, by a custom attending the cutting of the wedding cake. The bridegroom cuts a piece saying, "I am the one who cuts the cake", and the bride repeats the self-same words as she proceeds to cut her own piece.

Once married, the Malagasy woman desires nothing more than to bear children. No greater misfortune could befall her than to remain childless. Sterility is feared to such an extent that a young girl who has borne children while still unmarried thus giving proof of her fecundity is sure to make a good match. Such customs are so much part of Malagasy life that they survive even among Christians and among people who are supposed to have a thoroughly modern outlook.

The role of the father consists essentially in earning the family subsistence and in assuring relations with the outside. Inside the home, the woman is queen. She alone sees to the education of her children and to the careful maintenance of ancestral and religious customs; she alone acts as intermediary between the father and his children. Household expenses are under her control. In case of disagreement between the partners, she holds the right of *misintoka* which authorizes her to leave her husband. For his part, he cannot threaten her with divorce. He is bound, on the contrary, to make a sort of sentimental *amende honorable*, putting himself in the wrong. A delegation of parents, bearing presents, is sent to the fugitive, begging her to return. Only after his wife has several times

In Malagasy life, woman's chief role is to bear children.



Marriage formerly arranged by the two familial clans is today left to the initiative of future partners.

refused reconciliation is the husband finally permitted to seek a divorce. If the latter is granted the woman claims the younger children by right.

More particularly in industrialized areas, Malagasy women may now work outside the home. They can choose the sort of work they want to do without consulting their husbands and can also make free use of their wages. The new Code of Labour has edicted several regulations intended to protect their interests with regard to working conditions, salary, and medical care in case of pregnancy.



Although it is improbable that the system of matriarchy ever existed in the Great Isle, its women do enjoy, as guardians of tradition and educators, a moral authority which other women in newly developed countries may well envy.

Social role

In all lands and climes, woman's heart has gone out to the oppressed, the feeble, the unloved. Malagasy women, at least as far as their standard of living allows, consider it as one of their chief duties to relieve misfortune and to assist the destitute or the handicapped.

A few years ago, Mrs. E. Radoady explained the spirit animating the various feminine social groupings, their order of procedure, their aims, their efficaciousness. Among other things she noted: "Malagasy women naturally possess a highly developed social sense, further refined by over a century of Christian morality and of love of neighbour... Feminine social works whether conducted by the laity or by religious aim at the protection of mother and child, at the wholesome education of youth, at practical assistance of the aged and of all destitute persons.

"The dispensaries which may be found, more particularly in the poorer quarters of our large cities, are staffed by Malagasy women doctors, midwives, social assistants, and registered nurses. Madagascar possesses two important maternity and child-care centres. Malagasy Red Cross with its provincial and local feminine committees provides help in case of public disasters, and regularly distributes aid to needy families. Private educational activities are conducted by numerous religious teachers, social workers... Since the last twenty-five years, more especially, the development of feminine youth movements has fostered among young girls wholehearted participation in the social life of the Island. These movements promote physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth. Malagasy Girl Guides number over 1,500 members belonging to about 40 units. Each parish, whether Catholic or Protestant, has various feminine organizations which contribute to the life of the Church."

A remarkable number of Malagasy young girls pursue their studies abroad with a view to



Photo: Madagascar Information Service

embracing social careers. Literature, medicine, the sciences, dentistry, and pharmacy seem to be preferred subjects among these students.

Home Economics

The fact that Malagasy women engage in employment outside the home is of relatively recent occurrence. At present, women and girls in ever increasing numbers thus seek emancipation through work. Others take up less remunerative activities at home. Country women are especially at a disadvantage in this matter, their tasks being strenuous and their wages low.

Whenever they have the means to do so, Malagasy women open shops where they sell vegetables, fruits, fancy goods... On the market, women generally hold booths where may be bought handwoven cloth, dresses, souvenirs, etc. Many move from one market to another, seeking higher prices. As a rule, women are satisfied to ply



In rural areas women take part in all agricultural activities.



small trades. About ten years ago, however, three young girls, registered druggists, did a brisk trade in Tananarivo, much to the admiration of all.

In an essentially agricultural country it is not surprising to find women engaged in farming activities. The farmer's wife shares her hus-



band's laborious tasks. She helps transplant rice, takes part in the harvests, threshes grain. When those responsible for the government of the Malagasy Republic organized the development of agricultural economy, they called upon the co-operation of women more particularly, even going so far as creating a feminine section in the General Commission of Rural Animation and of Public Service.

All honour to the Malagasy farmerette! Her people are deeply thankful to her for the productive rice fields and the markets stocked with vegetables and fruits of all kinds.

Political function

Malagasy women with a bent for politics are usually successful in their ambitious projects. Although the Great Isle was once ruled by a succession of queens, until recently, women were barred from public affairs. In 1946, the right of vote was granted to women, but with cer-



Curing tobacco.

MALAGASY WOMEN ARE
SHREWD SHOPKEEPERS.

MANY HOLD
BOOTHS ON
COMMON MARKETS.





Photos: Madagascar Information Service



tain restrictions. Universal suffrage was established in 1956 and subsequently confirmed by the Constitution of the Malagasy Republic. Miss Gisèle Rabesahala was the first Malagasy woman to be elected as municipal councillor in Tananarivo. During the 1958 elections, a certain number of women participated in the electoral campaign. In the 1959 elections, 31 women were candidates. On this occasion, Mrs. Richard Andriamanjato was elected assistant to the Mayor of the capital. In recent elections, women campaigned with as much enthusiasm as men.

They also carry an active service in the numerous feminine associations which would surely benefit by federation in a single National Council, similar to those which exist in many parts of the world. Such is the opinion expressed by Mrs. Zaiveline Ramarosoana, member of the staff in the Ministry of Agriculture and of Rural Expansion, as well as in the Service Corps. She believes that this unification would strengthen the influence of Malagasy women in the socio-economic field.

Religious function

The introduction of Christian faith in the Great Isle met with a cordial welcome on the part of the population of the upper plateaux. Christianity was found to correspond to their most profound aspirations.

When, in 1835, Ranavalona I, the Bloody Queen, banned the religion of Christ, Malagasy women opposed stubborn resistance, undismayed by the prospect of martyrdom. This tragic period lasted from 1828 to 1861. The first Christian martyr in the Island was Rasalama who was speared to death at Ambohipotay in 1837. Historic records further mention the martyrdom of Razaby and of Flora Faminahy beheaded in 1840, and of four others hurled to death from the heights of Ampamarinana. Another woman, Victoire Rasoamanarivo, will soon, it is hoped, become the first inhabitant of the Island to be beatified.

Malagasy women today continue to manifest their dynamic and vigorous spirit of faith. Many have dedicated their lives to the service of the





Church. There are, at present, over 600 Malagasy Sisters belonging to various congregations and orders. They are the glory of the Church and the hope of their people, especially of the ailing and of the destitute.

Crafts

Malagasy women are particularly gifted in handicrafts. Without any specialized training, local seamstresses have acquired the knack of turning out well-fitting garments which satisfy their numerous customers. Others who have benefited by scholarships in Paris cater to the needs of an exacting but less numerous clientele. Malagasy women are also expert in embroidery, weaving, pottery, basket-making, and other handicrafts appreciated at home as well as abroad.

Conclusion

An attempt at defining subtle Malagasy womanhood would be like an attempt at defining the secret nature of a flower. The truest definition might be found in the expression, "Malagasy woman is the soul of *fiavanana*." This untranslatable term conveys ideas of obligingness and of friendship, of mutual trust and of forbearance, of graciousness and of sociability." For the Malagasy, "The soul of *fiavanana*" signifies the "soul of the nation". Such is the high regard in which womanhood, motherhood more particularly, is held in Madagascar that a common synonym of the word nation is *firenena*, a term derived from the root word *reny* which means "mother".



Sources:

Bulletin of the Malagasy Academy, 1961, 1964
Newspaper Lumière, May 30, 1965
Madagascar Review, 1953, No 15
Rythmes du Monde, 1966, Tome XIV, No 1-2



A MISSIONARY PUZZLE

THE HIDDEN WORD

by Mr. Jean-Claude Langlois

- ◆ *By assembling the non-encircled letters (horizontally only), you will find the hidden word, after you inserted all the words BUT ONE, written above the square. The letters which make up the hidden word are in chronological order.*
- ◆ *For greater facility, first insert the longest words.*
- ◆ *As soon as you discover a word, encircle the letters of this word in the square and cross the word out from the list above the square.*
- ◆ *The only words useful for the square are those matching in theme the hidden word.*
- ◆ *As soon as you have used up all the words BUT ONE from the list above the square, there will remain only the letters for the hidden word.*
- ◆ *Any word accompanied by the asterisk (★) is doubled in the square.*

YOU MAY DISCOVER THE HIDDEN WORD

*by encircling the letters of the words either
HORIZONTALLY, from left to right, or from right to left,
VERTICALLY, up—down, or down—up;
DIAGONALLY, from left to right, or from right to left.*

N.B. A given letter can be used for several words depending on their direction, except for the hidden word.

12 LETTERS REMAINING

MYSTERY WORD

MISSIOLOGY

When all the words will be used to encircle the letters below, except one, the remaining letters will form the mystery word.

A
action
aid
apostle
C
charism
christian
clan
clergy
climate

culture
custom
D
deed
E
expansion
G
God
Gospel

H
Hinduism
human
J
joy
L
language
lay

M
mankind
message
metis
mission
N
nations
O
operation

P
pagoda
people
precursor
R
race
region
religion
resources
review

T
testimony
territory
U
unity
universe
W
world
Z
zeal

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	N	O	I	S	N	A	P	X	E	G	A	S	S	E	M
2	O	P	E	R	A	T	I	O	N	G	Z	E	A	L	S
3	I	E	R	N	E	E	D	L	R	O	W	M	N	A	I
4	S	T	J	E	O	L	L	A	I	D	F	A	O	N	R
5	S	A	O	R	C	I	I	P	Y	A	L	N	I	G	A
6	I	M	Y	A	L	U	G	G	O	C	T	K	T	U	H
7	M	I	L	M	T	E	R	E	I	E	E	I	C	A	C
8	S	L	E	R	E	E	S	S	R	O	P	N	A	G	H
9	I	C	P	A	L	T	W	R	O	R	N	D	D	E	R
10	U	U	S	C	N	E	I	H	E	R	I	Y	O	L	I
11	D	L	O	E	I	T	U	S	T	V	Y	T	G	T	S
12	N	T	G	V	O	M	D	E	E	D	I	I	A	S	T
13	I	U	E	R	A	C	U	S	T	O	M	N	P	O	I
14	H	R	Y	N	O	M	I	T	S	E	T	U	U	P	A
15	R	E	S	O	U	R	C	E	S	N	O	I	T	A	N



Photo: Fides

The first group of Poor Clares to set foot in Africa arrived in 1932. Ten new foundations have since then been made in Alexandria, Algeria, Casablanca, Rabat (Morocco), Lunsar (Sierra Leone), Sangmelina (Cameroon), Bouar (Central African Republic), Bujumbura (Burundi), and Lilongwe (Malawi). At present, three more monasteries are under construction: one in Uganda, thanks to the initiative of the Poor Clares of Nancy, one in Madagascar initiated by the Poor Clares of Nice, and one in the Cameroons due to the efforts of the Sangmelina Monastery.

This remarkable awakening of monastic and contemplative life in Africa appears at first sight incredible, the African temperament being essentially turned to vital matters, to the transmission and continuation of life. But, how often does the Lord laugh at our poor psychological analyses! The flourishing contemplative monasteries lately founded in spite of inevitable difficulties, are proof enough that Africa also can boast of its contemplative religious and, God willing, of its mystics, its "men of God" and its "women of God".

MALAWIAN POOR CLARES

by Sister Gabrielle Ouimet, M.I.C., with kind permission of the Cercle Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Paris.

Phases in Catholic Evangelization of Malawi

Before going on to relate the foundation of the Poor Clares on Lilongwe, it will serve our purpose to give here a brief résumé of the evangelization of Malawi.

Five French White Fathers came to Mponda (on the Mozambique border) to the south of Malawi in 1891, when the territory officially became a British Protectorate. In 1897, Bishop Joseph Dupont, W.F., was assigned as vicar apostolic of Nyassa, an area including all of present-day Malawi plus northern and eastern Zambia. He enlisted the help of the Montfort Fathers who arrived in 1901 to evangelize the Nzama region in central Malawi. By 1904, five mission posts had been organized: Nzama and Nguludi under the direction of the Montfort Fathers; Mua, Likuni, and Kachebere with the White Fathers in charge. The central mission was, during several years, situated at Likuni.

Heir to the former vicariate apostolic of Nyassa which, in 1897, comprised all of Malawi and part of Zambia, the present-day diocese of Lilongwe numbers 93,000 Catholics and 50,000 catechumens. It has the good fortune of possessing a homogeneous population, the Acewa, who are said to belong to the mother-tribe of numerous Bantus. Moreover, Lilongwe enjoys the distinction of being the diocese of the future capital.

In the words of President Kamuzu Banda himself, its first pastor, Bishop Fady, is truly "God's ambassador" in Malawi. Thanks to his tactfulness and adaptability he has won the hearts of Africans.

Lilongwe publishes the country's most popular newspaper, "The African", a weekly which prints its news in English, Cinyanja, and Citumbuka. Bishop Fady encouraged the publishing of the first Catholic version of the Bible in the Bantu dialect. The Likuni presses have also contributed to the missionary effort by the printing of a catechism, a prayer book, a hymnal, and two editions of the New Testament in Cinyanja.



Poor Clares of Lilongwe take time to enjoy nature's wonder.

Photo: Fides

Their apostolate
unceasing supplica-
tion for all men.



Within their monastery,
the sisters perform familiar
chores like any other
African woman.



Photos: *Vie en Afrique*

The missionary presence must reflect the charity of Christ. Each station is equipped with a hospital, a dispensary, or a maternity clinic. Progress has also been rapid in the domain of education. Secondary schools and domestic science centres spread the benefits of education far and wide.

To conduct these various activities, the Bishop can rely on the collaboration of thirty-three lay apostles and of several specialized Congregations.

Lilongwe Monastery

The Lilongwe monastery owes its foundation to the initiative of the Poor Clares of Algeria. Upon the request of Bishop Fady, six French Poor Clares came to Likuni in 1959. In order to learn at first hand the language and customs of the region, they obtained the authorization of remaining without enclosure for one whole year. How deeply grateful to the bishop they were for his paternal and prudent guidance during the first phase of their foundation!

Eventually, the Sisters acquired a plot of land close to the episcopal residence in Lilongwe whereon to erect their new monastery. The low rambling buildings of red brick are surrounded by a wall with an opening for the public. In this well-prepared milieu, the Poor Clares began "living out their lives in a manner accommodated to the truly religious traditions of the people... bearing witness among non-Christians to the majesty and love of God, as well as to man's brotherhood in Christ" (*Ad Gentes*, 40).

Six years have since elapsed. In February 1967, two African Poor Clares of Mzuzu diocese, Malawi, made their solemn vows. One of the two, Sister Claire, took her final engagement as a cloistered religious, while her companion, Sister Anne, pronounced her temporary vows as a non-cloistered member of the community.

At present, nineteen Poor Clares live in the Lilongwe monastery: fourteen Africans and five Europeans. The African Sisters come from the various Malawian dioceses of Lilongwe, Mzuzu, Blantyre, Zomba, Dedza. A few are from Zambia.

This monastery is a fair example of the efforts launched by the Church in order to implant the contemplative life on the continent of Africa. It is as the seed and the hope that other monastic gardens

will soon flower in neighbouring dioceses, playing their important role in spreading the fragrance of the Gospel.

Malawian Poor Clares

Recently, in an interview with the Mother Abbess, a Franciscan Father ventured the opinion that the present-day Church probably needed autochthon active Sisters more than contemplative religious. The Abbess countered that, as far as the active life was concerned, there were already in the diocese seventy professed Sisters of active congregations in full activity. "Moreover", she added, "I do not think that contemplation is a luxury restricted to Christian lands. *Ad Gentes* affirms that the contemplative life belongs to the fulness of the Church's presence, and should therefore be everywhere established" (*Ad Gentes*, 18). Monastic institutions can be very useful in the work of evangelization, producing as they do a certain number of model indigenous Christians leading a life of perfection. Thereby, the Gospel is no longer an exotic production but a gospel lived by children of the soil. Mother Abbess went on to say that she did not aim at recruiting vocations in large numbers, but at implanting the monastic institution in a sound and lasting manner. This requires a severe testing of candidates to ensure solid vocations. Notwithstanding the severity of the screening, aspirants flock to the monastery in ever increasing numbers. Soon, many will have to be refused admittance because of a lack of space, unless funds are made available for an enlargement.

As was mentioned at the beginning of this essay, it seems that a people on intimate terms with nature, sensitive to its rhythmic patterns, steeped in action could feel but slight attraction for a cloistered life, apart from ordinary trends. Africans certainly possess particular tendencies to contemplation and prayer, but these innate aspirations are not accompanied by the desire to live a sedentary life inside a monastic enclosure. Prudent adaptations are called for, if these difficulties are to be overcome. Mother Veronica, Abbess of Lilongwe, explains that the first step in this direction is the practical organization of the Novitiate. In Africa, social and familial life and customs are not conducive to the development of regularity. During the period of transition, the postulants continue to perform their habitual chores. As far as possible, the ordinary rhythm of their lives is taken into account and harmonized with a few fundamental requirements of religious life, such as participation in the morning Mass.

Little by little, the aspirants are introduced to the typical activities of a monastery: weaving, sewing, embroidery, baking of altar breads...

With regard to their moral formation, the chief goal is the practice of fraternal charity. The postulants learn that a religious community is a family whose members love and help one another. As regards the postulants who come from non-Christian villages, they are to be formed in ways of Christian modesty. Generally speaking, we find many girls who readily comply to these rules. Certain western prejudices are not justifiable. Besides being trained in fraternal charity, the aspirants learn the value of sincerity. They have to be liberated from jealousy, individuality, insecurity, and various superstitious practices. Moreover, they have to learn the significance of evangelical poverty, the value of solitude, of balance, of piety, and of silence.

The first means to this end is the study of the Gospel. Mother Marie Veronique says that young Africans easily communicate with the evangelical text for they are, thanks to the traditions of their country, already familiar with parables and proverbs. Gradually, the postulants come to appreciate Holy Scripture and to acquire an ecclesial and liturgical formation.

With regard to liturgy, the Abbess mentions certain adaptations of the Collettine Constitutions which have been made with ecclesiastical approbation. For instance, the Constitutions require that the Office be recited, but here it is sung in Cinyanja, and accompanied by the drum and the xylophone. The Sisters "dance" the psalms as well as certain parts of the Mass, such as the Gloria. We must, however, keep in mind that these adaptations are at present used on a trial basis. Everything remains sober and simple, the aim behind these changes being to help Africans pray in a spontaneous manner the prayer of the Church.

Monastic life in Lilongwe

According to Mother Véronique, African women do not, as a rule, raise any fundamental objection as regards enclosure. To those who question their choice of the contemplative life in preference to the active with a view to the development of the Church, the Poor Clares reply, "God knows what He is doing. He Himself called us to the cloister. He will send others to provide for the needs of the Church."

In this connection, the declarations of some African Poor Clares are significant. Sister Josepha and Sister Claire wrote this testimony: "Why did we enter the cloister? Why do we live apart from the world? Surely not because we are indifferent to the problems of our people, to their joys, their trials, their sorrows. No. We live in the cloister so as to pray and to be attentive to the things of God. We are contemplatives. What does this mean? For me, to contemplate means to look at God, not with my bodily eyes, but with the eyes of my soul. I figure it is something like what happens between friends who love each other dearly. Whether they talk, remain silent, or work, their happiness is the same as they are together. There is a language which the heart understands, even during silence. God is a friend to us. Contemplative life is the development of our instinctive need of His presence. It helps us satisfy our hunger for Him."

Here we might ask ourselves if, faced with a continent which remains to be converted, cloistered religious are justified in restricting themselves to contemplation, when so many souls are in need of missionaries?

An answer to this question may be found in the review *Rythmes du Monde*, Tome X, No 3-4, 1962. "The world is converted not so much by the preaching of missionaries as by the presence of the Church... It is not through the activities of a few of her specialized members in the apostolate that she will spread the reign of Christ in new nations, but by coming herself with all her new elements. Therefore, she will be fully missionary only insofar as she is fully contemplative. If contemplatives were absent from mission lands, there would be something missing. The face of the Church would be, so to say, hidden by a veil which they alone could lift... Without contemplative life, something would be remiss in the beauty of the Church. This is the reason why monastic implantation in mission territories must take place as soon as possible, without waiting for the young Churches to have attained their full maturity."

The role of the Poor Clares in Lilongwe is then, first of all, to manifest the contemplative aspect of the mystery of Christ and of the Church. Their duty is to enable African Christians to lead the contemplative life in their own land. "Their existence entirely dedicated to the Lord, apparently inefficacious, even useless though it may seem, proclaims that God is great enough to require that certain of His creatures be solely employed in praising Him."

Night and day, the Poor Clares praise the Lord. Is it not their special task to thank, praise and adore the Blessed Trinity for its immense love? They pay unceasing homage to the Father to the Son and to the Holy Spirit...

Liturgy is the central axis of the life of a Poor Clare. As adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is perpetual, so is the thanksgiving of the Mass, taken up again during the Office.

The Lilongwe monastery is also a sanctuary of silence, peacefulness, recollection, and work. In solitude and silence God speaks to the soul. This is indeed a high place of return to God, in trial and in faith. Even if silence is above all interior, solitude is its bulwark. The role of the Poor Clares is to shout the Gospel in silence by their very lives. Prayer is the core of silence which listens to the Word, pondered over in Sacred Scripture, sung in the monastic Office, adored and received in the Eucharist.

Perfectae Caritatis affirms in its No 13 that "poverty voluntarily embraced in imitation of Christ provides a witness which is highly esteemed, especially today. The religious painstakingly cultivate such poverty, and give it new expressions if need be. By it a man shares in the poverty of Christ, who became poor for our sake when before He had been rich, that we might be enriched by His poverty.

Religious poverty requires more than limiting the use of possessions to the consent of superiors; members of a community ought to be poor in both fact and spirit, and have their treasures in heaven."

Like Saint Francis, the Poor Clares proclaim everywhere the royalty of poverty. This prerogative poverty holds because it is the supereminent virtue of Christ the King and of Mary, Queen of Heaven, the permanent and fundamental state of Christ throughout His life. Because poverty is a royal virtue, the Poor Clares strip themselves of everything in order to possess Jesus alone.

Their chief penance consists in this poverty which compels them to work industriously so as to provide for their bare subsistence.

With a view to safeguarding interior silence, each Sister has her own tiny room. The food of the Sisters is the ordinary *sima*, (corn mush) to which vegetables, and fruits are added. The appointments of their spotless little chapel are in compliance with the demands of royal poverty.

For the Poor Clares of Lilongwe as well as for their Sisters everywhere, poverty implies constant application in referring all they do to God, "Grand Almoner of Heaven". Wherever reigns total poverty, there also reigns joyous abandonment to divine Providence.

Realizations and hopes of Lilongwe Poor Clares

The Lilongwe foundation is characterized by its efforts to achieve a genuine adaptation to Africans. One of Mother Veronica's favourite sayings is, "Let us do as the Africans do." She is convinced that this is the core of the problem with regard to the monastic life of the Poor Clares on the African continent. However this may be, an African monk once pointed out that one must not risk getting entangled in complicated theories and methods of adaptation. According to him only one thing really matters — charity — and this method is taught by the Holy Spirit Himself.

Eventually, the Poor Clare Monastery will become rooted in Lilongwe, and will thus continue the mystery of the Incarnation. On the Poor Clares devolves the honour and the responsibility to make heard the voice of the Spirit calling to solitude. Thus they will "spread throughout the whole world the good news of Christ by the integrity of their faith, their love for God and neighbour, their devotion to the Cross, and their hope of future glory. Thus will their witness be seen to all, and our Father in heaven will be glorified. Thus, too, with the prayerful aid of the most loving Virgin Mary, God's Mother, 'whose life is a rule of life for all' religious communities will experience a daily growth in numbers, and will yield a richer harvest of fruits that bring salvation."

'LOS NEGROS' SANA

Bolivia has at present three hospitals for the care of leprous patients: Monteagudo (Sucre), El Loreto (Beni), and Los Negros (Santa Cruz). The latter is situated at 175 kilometres from the city of Santa Cruz.

Agricultural community

Los Negros constitutes a genuine agricultural colony. According to their bent and to physical condition, the patients are allowed to farm assigned plots in order to earn their own living, as far as possible. The Minister of Health has given permits for their produce to be sold on the public markets, taking upon itself to ensure that there is no danger of contamination. Several organizations collaborate in providing seeds and garden tools.

A peaceful little river glides past the establishment and lands adding charm to the pleasant grounds planted with shady trees and flowering shrubs. The patients endeavour to organize their life in a normal way. Civic and religious festivities highlight the year; nobody's birthday is allowed to go by unnoticed.

Catholic priests as well as pastors from other denominations regularly call at the sanatorium.



excerpt from an article by Henry Dorado Vasquez published in Spanish, in Presencia, February 11, 1968. Translated by Sister Suzanne Longtin, M.I.C.

BOLIVIA

Grave danger

In the course of a visit made to the hospital, a reporter of *Presencia* noticed the dilapidated state of wards and common rooms: floor boards had rotted because of excessive humidity; walls were cracked in several places. The lives of both patients and officials in charge were being threatened by this state of affairs.

Questioned about their most pressing needs, the patients admitted that the food left much to be desired. For their part, Dra. Nora Siles Lopez, who conducts the establishment, declared that she very much desired to ameliorate the hospital fare but that she was powerless to do so, the lack of funds imposing drastic restrictions.

Indeed, the meagre monthly subventions provided by the Public Health Service — 2,500 Bolivian pesos (\$208.00), are far from covering the cost of medicine, food, administrative expenses, and other necessary items. Further complications arise from the fact that the above meagre subventions are seldom paid on time.

Condition of patients

After mentioning the cause of this fearsome disease, Doctor Nora Siles indicated the means used to fight against it and to ensure the rehabilitation of patients.

A survey conducted by the Ministry of Public Health revealed that there are about 3,000 lepers in Bolivia.

Sister Annette Bergeron, M.I.C. metes out sweets to leper children.



Madre Maria chats with a patient.

***Presencia's* reporter interviews an inmate.**





Bishop Luis Rodriguez Pardo addresses the patients; to the fore, gifts offered to the sick.

The Los Negros Sanatorium dispenses medication to 700 patients, men, women, and children. Many among them are treated at home; the period of contagion over, they may take up again normal occupations in the villages. They regularly call at the hospital for checkup to make sure that their case remains negative. Notwithstanding their improved condition, they are not as yet completely cured.

Patients whose tests are positive and who, therefore, present grave dangers of contagion are hospitalized so as to undergo systematic medication in compliance with the World Health Organization (ONS).

Hansen's disease

Upon request of *Presencia's* reporter, medical authorities at the leprosarium gave the following indications on leprosy:

- certain cases are not contagious especially in their early stages;
- in its evolution, leprosy may be compared with TB;
- clinical diagnostic and laboratory tests constitute the only means of ascertaining whether a person is suffering from leprosy;
- leprosy affects the nervous system; patients feel acute pain in articulations, then with the loss of sensitiveness the dead tissues drop off.

Deep anxiety

According to information furnished to *Presencia*, many lepers live in urban centres. In their dread of being considered as the "bane of society", they refuse to submit to medication and by concealing their ailing condition become a menace of contagion.

Leper children

At Los Negros, a group of about twenty children who suffer from Hansen's disease receive elementary schooling thanks to two nurses attached to the sanatorium.

They live with their leprous parents at the sanatorium. If the projects of the Ministry of Public Health come to be realized, however, these youngsters will be re-integrated into their respective villages without any fear of contamination for others.

Encouraging friends

For several years, the Bishop of Santa Cruz has been concerned regarding the future of Los Negros. A series of repairs, gifts of food and of educational equipment, are due to his paternal solicitude for the patients. In order to perfect this apostolate, Bishop Luis Rodriguez is making plans for a great crusade of human solidarity. He wants to rebuild the hospital and to provide it with modern equipment.

As the reporter from *Presencia* was about to leave, groups of patients, more particularly children, surrounded him to bid him goodbye. They begged him to come soon again for a visit. One of them remarked, "a visit from the outside is a real blessing for us all."

Bishop Luis Rodriguez is a frequent visitor at the San. The patients enjoy his visits which bring sunshine into their drab daily existence. They know his fatherly heart goes out to them in all their spiritual and temporal needs.



DIAL

739-3657

OR WRITE

2900 SAINT CATHERINE ROAD



THE PRECURSOR

BECKONS TO BROADER HORIZONS

Tell your friends to subscribe to our magazine THE PRECURSOR, and give them the chance of winning one or other of (5) exotic prizes from:

Asia — Africa — Latin America

Conditions:

- 1 chance for each two-year subscription
- 1 chance for a two-year renewal

Lots will be drawn May 1, 1969

THE PRECURSOR will soon become your favourite magazine. It will add to your knowledge of the field afar and its urgent needs.

SUBSCRIPTION

Name

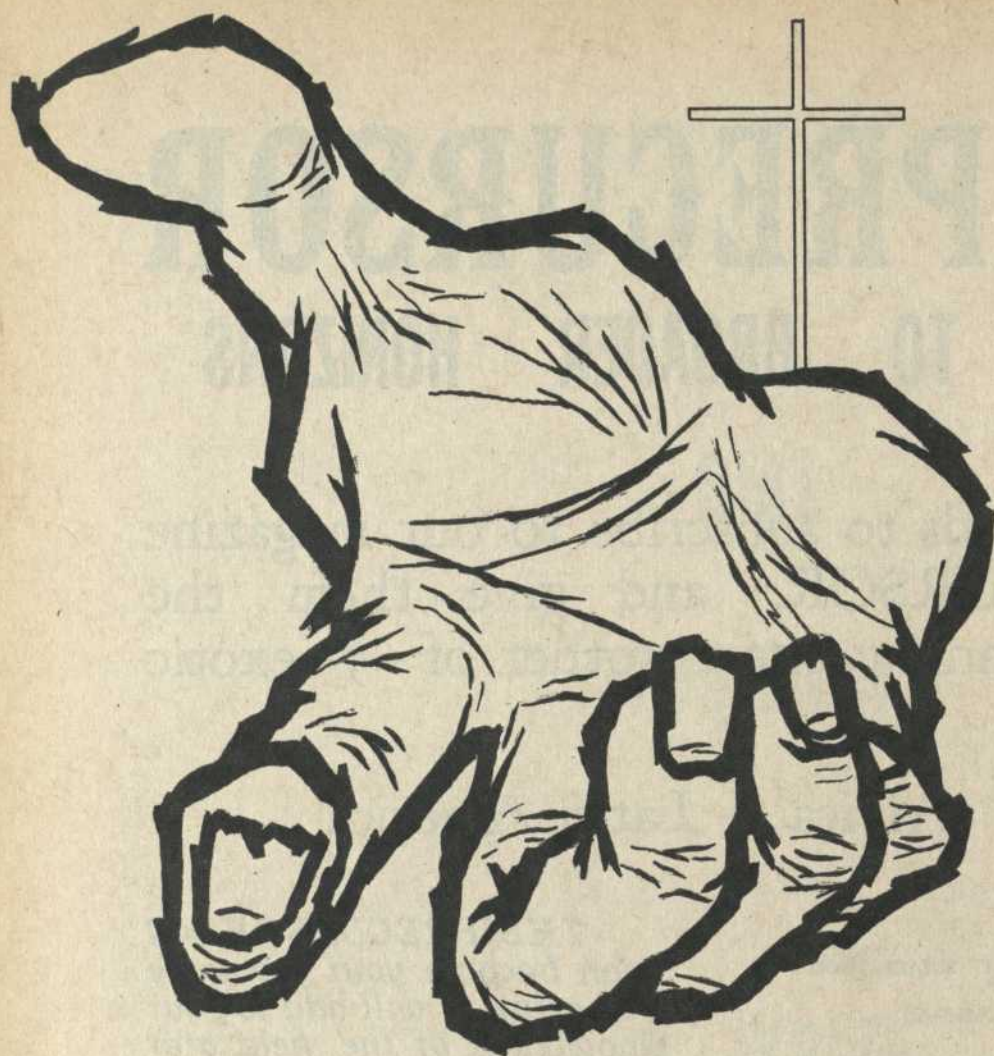
Address

contributed by

THE PRECURSOR

2900 Cote Saint Catherine Road, Montreal 250.

THE PRECURSOR relies on your friendly good office and says a hearty "THANK YOU".



PERU

Lima Conciliar Mission



The group discusses division of the parish into 10 zones.

Sister Véronique Bernatchez, M.I.C., and a teacher, on their way to Barriada del 28 de Julio.



Perspective

His Eminence Cardinal Juan Landazuri, archbishop of Lima and Primate of the Church in Peru, proclaimed the holding of a conciliar mission in Lima, one whole year ahead of its formal opening.

Immediately, contacts were made with the pastors of the various parishes, and responsible laymen paved the way for the mission's full success. The press, radio, and television, carried the good news from one diocese to the other.

Among the typical posters used everywhere, there was one published by the Provincial Council which caught popular fancy. The following commentary is quoted from an article by Father Manuel Duato, S.J.:

The torch, emblem of the mission.



Arrival in Lima of
priests in charge of
conciliar mission.



Photos: Cortesia La Prensa

His Eminence Cardinal
Juan Landazuri official-
ly opens the mission.



"Among many other devices used as advertisements — ballet, lectures, modern songs — a great red poster with white lettering is perhaps the most conspicuous. Representing a hand beckoning it inspires a whole series of reflections.

"This hand recalls the grip of Peter's hand upon our Lord's when, because of his lack of faith, he was about to sink into tumultuous waters.

"Again, it indicates the friendly gesture which yearns to unite all men in fraternal dialogue, even those who as yet remain outside the fold.

"It also puts people in mind of the hand outstretched to beg, the hand that gives, the healing hand, the hand that blesses, the hand of God over our lives.

"This hand reminds the faithful of the hand of the Church extended towards them. The Council comes to Lima to encourage reflection in common on Christian living.

"This hand pictured on the poster tells of boats steered over the waves, of planes guided through the pathless air. Above all it suggests the steady hand of the farmer on the plough, preparing the soil for the fruitful harvests of tomorrow.

"This hand multiplied throughout the diocese is raised in salute to you all, inviting you to share in a salute to the Lord and Master of all.

"If posters of the kind were to be strung end to end, they would cover over twenty kilometres. The important point in all this is that the hands of the people of Lima, notwithstanding age or classes are clasped in a sincere proclamation of human and of Christian brotherhood. This is indeed the chief aim of the conciliar mission of Lima.

"I hold out my own hand, the hand of a reporter, towards this hand — the hand of the conciliar mission — and at the same time towards all men, my brothers."

Why the conciliar mission?

In his preliminary directives, Cardinal Landazuri emphasized the term *conciliar* characterizing the mission of Lima. He recalled that

whereas the classical traditional mission was based on the theology and pastoral of the Council of Trent, the Lima mission was to draw inspiration from Vatican II. Its chief aim was to communicate to the faithful the message of the fundamental texts: Constitution of the Church, Liturgy, Divine Revelation, the Church in the Modern World, the Decree on the Laity... Such conciliar documents must become incarnated in today's people and institutions.

Census

It was no easy task to obtain the necessary, information regarding families and parishes. With the able assistance of groups of the laity of Normal School students, and of members of the University's Social Service, 117 sisters took a census of the archdiocese. Interviews touched upon questions regarding the economic, cultural, recreational, moral, and religious aspects.

Pre-mission

The pre-mission celebrations opened with the feast of Corpus Christi. His Eminence Cardinal Juan Landazuri inaugurated proceedings by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered at an outdoor altar on Place d'Armes.

Presently, there arrived chiefly from Spain two hundred missionaries who were to assist the local clergy. They received a cordial welcome from the Cardinal as well as from the President of the Republic, and from the provincial Mayor of Lima.

Days of study were then organized in order to coordinate activities. A triduum of prayers served as immediate preparation in all parishes. Special ceremonies were held at the church of the Nazarenes, (cloistered nuns) where the picture of the "Lord of Miracles" is kept.

Opening of mission

Immediate preparation over, the Cardinal proceeded with the official opening of the mission, at Place d'Armes, situated in front of the cathedral. Thousands of faithful were present at this inauguration.



An Indian housewife greets the mission priest.

In the afternoon of the same day the missionaries dispersed throughout the diocese in order to carry the mission message to its utmost limits. They remained in the various zones assigned to their zeal for a fortnight. For their part, the devoted pastors placed their premises at the disposal of the missionaries and arranged for meetings with various groups: professionals, labourers, students, children, prisoners, etc.

Contacts with family groups were also organized in certain quarters where teamwork proved to be the most efficacious way of reaching the greater number. The message was transmitted in simple terms. At times the activities of the team consisted merely in listening to the people, a propitious climate being thereby created in view of subsequent meetings.

Schedules were carefully adapted to circumstances. The fact that marked differences exist in Lima on the religious as well as on the social level was taken into account.

Mission in Azcona

The final stage of the Lima Centre took place at the Saint Paul Parish of Azcona in charge of a priest of the Quebec Foreign Mission Society.

Fourteen missionaries were assigned to lend assistance to the pastor of this heavily populated district.

A procession in honour of the image of the "Lord of Miracles", in great veneration here, opened the proceedings. This procession lasted all of four hours. Afterwards, the pastor and the fourteen missionaries held a concelebration inside the church packed to the doors.

The missionaries were then welcomed by the parishioners, and conducted to their respective posts. Azcona had been divided into ten sections in each of which the missionaries worked for a fortnight.

During their stay in the various sections, they took their meals with the people, wherever they were invited. Each of these invitations allowed for fruitful contacts.

We were privileged to assist the missionary assigned to Barriada 28, Julio. (The Barriada consists in groups of hovels where stark poverty reigns.) For about two weeks beforehand we had made the rounds of families preparing them for the official opening of the mission. In the evenings, Sister Veronique Bernatchez, M.I.C., with the assistance of members of the Legion of Mary,



Photos: Cortesia La Prensa

A group of workers calls at the Centre.

organized catechetical courses for adults, while Sister Françoise Philie, M.I.C., gave doctrinal lessons to the young and organized a choir.

Meetings were held in homes or at the parochial centre, a ramshackle building doing duty as school and social service centre. Four concelebrations were held inside its drab walls.

The number of people participating in the mission went on increasing to the end. Missionaries manifested paternal interest in the daily life of the poor, exhorting them to live up to their faith as true children of God and sons of the Church. On one of the last days, with the help of two teachers, we provided a substantial meal to which the assistants were all invited. Sister Françoise Philie, now regularly visits the Barriada.

A few weeks later, a young girl of 14, asked to be baptized. Until now her parents has always refused her permission to do so believing that they would have to pay a fee. As soon as Sister Françoise convinced them there was no question of money, they gave their assent much to the delight of the girl. Before the close of the mission, the pupils of Barriada 28 School made coloured drawings of the torch, chosen emblem of the mission, which they distributed in every home.

Close of the mission

A huge rally at the cathedral marked the close of the mission and the departure of the missionaries. Most Reverend Mario Cornejo, auxiliary bishop offered a solemn Mass of thanksgiving. All the collaborators in Lima's conciliar mission were invited to the presidential palace where Mr. F. Belaunde, leader of Peru, warmly thanked them for the good work accomplished.

Simone Sabourin M.I.C.



FROM NORTH



I WAS IN PRISON

Prisons the world over usually present a grim and forbidding exterior. That of Totonicapan is no exception to the rule. But, its high stone wall which cuts off the inmates from cheerful, bustling everyday life is powerless to keep me away from these unfortunate neighbours of ours who have become my friends.

Last year, Sister Jeannine Boily, M.I.C., with a group of students went to the prison, once a week, to teach the doctrine. When I found myself assigned to Guatemala, I sought and obtained permission to accompany this group and share in its errands of mercy. Ever since, I have been a frequent visitor.

Every evening, during the month of May, I join the inmates singing the praises of our Immaculate Queen. The Marian month, this year, was brought to a close within the prison walls by the presentation of a sketch and the playing of games, entertainment prepared by my students of the Betancourt Colegio. Useful prizes were offered, to the delight of our guests. The Eucharistic Celebration brought this happy day to an end.

The inmates, the guards, and the warden were deeply touched by this entertainment prepared especially for their benefit. I am now allowed daily visits during which I take the time to listen to each one's tale of woe. Thanks to generous

benefactors, I also distribute on these visits simple remedies, tobacco, books, sweets... Once in a while, I manage to scrounge a short movie to show at the prison. All in all, I try my best to assist in his apostolate the devoted Spanish Father who arrived here from Quetzaltenango a few months ago.

Every Saturday, I recite the Rosary with my friends in the prison chapel where hangs the figure of the Christ of Esquipola, a celebrated image dear to the people of Guatemala. Once the Rosary has been recited, preparation is made for the morrow's confession and Sunday Mass.

Since my arrival in Totonicapan, I have had the consolation of seeing 3 of my prison friends baptized; 34 have made their First Holy Communion; 13 marriages have been rectified; 15 inmates have returned to religious practice after 10, 15, or even 20 years of remissness. I feel more and more involved in the welfare of the prisoners, so much so that I no longer hesitate to approach the prison governor himself in order to discuss their problems and to improve their hard lot.

Love enables one to do such things!

*Juliette Desnoyers, M.I.C.
Colegio P. Belancourt
Totonicapan
GUATEMALA A. C.*

FROM NORTH



CHILE

FROM EAST

THOUSANDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CHILOE ARE SCANNING THE FUTURE

What are the dreams of the young in Chiloé regarding their future? What is being done as regards their intellectual training, their professional preparation? A group of professors and of students, attached to the Department of Psychology at the University of Chile, are at present conducting researches on this subject.

Professor Abel Toro voices his admiration for the dynamism and brainpower of the young men and women of Chiloé, that isle of enchantment off the Chilean coast, at the southern tip of the American continent. He notes with pride and satisfaction their love for their beloved Chile; however, he cannot but deplore the irresponsibility of those who abandon their native island for wider horizons.

For his part, Mr. Manuel Rojas stresses the insecurity of young islanders as regards their future which they seem at a loss to know how to go about planning in the territory of their own province. All suffer from a sense of isolation but, due to a lack of incentive, nobody does anything to remedy the situation.

Mr. Abel Toro states that the answers to a questionnaire sent to 1,000 young people (between 14 and 25) convey a general uneasiness. The fact is that Chiloé offers little or no facilities as far as education and employment are concerned.

Although the Island has primary and secondary schools, no higher educational establishments are available. True, there is one Teachers' College, but all cannot become teachers. No

industries exist which might offer employment to other talents. The few technicians trained in the region are at a loss to know where they might exercise their trades or professions. Only one solution remains: leave the island and seek employment elsewhere. About 70 percent of the young people emigrate to Argentina where printing offices offer remunerative work.

Professor Toro affirms that the intellectual level of the students is excellent, since they possess an extraordinary capacity for adaptation. They analyse their situation, want it improved — which goes to show that they are far from being apathetic.

Those who can afford to do so, pursue their studies in Santiago, Chile, where they are classed among the most brilliant students. Notwithstanding their great love for their beautiful island, these do not return, except perhaps to marry; then they leave definitely. Those who decide to remain in Chiloé have no choice other than farming.

Mr. Toro concludes that the results of the research he has launched with regard to the situation of young islanders, will be handed over to local authorities who will be responsible for making such arrangements as are urgently needed. Parents in Chiloé cannot help being anxious about what tomorrow holds in store for their children. The state itself should be concerned with this situation which really involves the future of the entire country.

*Armandine Gauthier, M.I.C.
Colegio Inmaculada Concepcion
Calle Errazuriz, Casilla 82
Ancud, CHILE*

TO WEST

FROM NORTH



*Elmore Roseberry, M.I.C.
SS. Miss. of Imm.-Conc.
Limbe
HAITI
Les Antilles*

TO SOUTH

RENEWAL

*I spread out my wings in the wind...
In the great mountain wind.
As unto another Tabor,
In You, Lord, in Your beauty,
In Your word of truth
My soul found its rest.*

*Silence and its profound mystery
Held me enthralled. I prayed
And said like Peter of yore,
"Lord, it is wonderful for us to be here."
In the great mountain wind...*

*Then, to the valley...
To my forsaken furrow,
To yesterday's garden, sere, uncouth,
There to find the same spade in the same spot.*

*But how altered the furrow!
Whence this glory? Hope
Has crowned with golden harvests
The hedges once so drab and dry.
How they shine in the sun!*

*I spread out my wings in the mountain wind
I prayed...
And lo, my life was changed.*

FROM NORTH



*Mamie Martel, M.I.C.
Provincial House
C.P. 3400
Manila
PHILIPPINES ISLANDS*



TO SOUTH

FROM EAST

The pattern

... of our Sundays differs but slightly as they swiftly glide past. If I describe one here for you, dear readers, you may easily guess what their 51 companions of the year are like.

Early in the morning, the sisters of Gagalangin meet in the chapel for their daily rendezvous with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Some time later, students and their parents, the *cur-sillistas*, the lame and the halt invade the premises. One aged blind man insists on sitting in the front row. His voluminous cane clatters to the floor two or three times during Mass without in the least diminishing his exuberant fervour. When Communion time arrives, his old wife literally pulls him along with her as she hobbles to the altar rail.

Grave baritone of men, treble piping tones of children chant in Tagalog, the national language, "Holy, holy Lord, God of Hosts."

After Mass, friendly conversations take place, then all return home in a contented mood, happy to have met and prayed together.

At 8:00 a.m., a group of sisters leave for a day of study conducted by the Assembly of the Manila Major Superiors. Eminent lecturers present them with a comprehensive view of modern problems and suggest means to be taken in order to solve at least the most urgent in a satisfactory manner.

Towards 9:00 a.m. a group of giggling school-girls knocks at my door. Together we set out for the parish church to attend the 9:30 Mass. On the way, one of the girls tugs at my sleeve to call my attention and, in a loud whisper, confides, "S'ter, we made a promise this morning at our Lady's grotto..."

"A promise?"

"Yes, S'ter... We promised not to talk and laugh during the sermon..."

I wonder what might have happened if such a promise had not been made...

During the afternoon, various groups of people gather at our school. In the patio, over one thousand fathers and mothers gather around our devoted chaplain, Reverend S. Pelayo, and Sister Guadalupe Sempio, school principal. Games are organized and played with vim and vigour by young and not so young. Numerous prizes reward lucky winners. The last trophy goes to the couple boasting of most children attending Immaculate Conception Academy. During the *merienda*, contacts are made between parents and teachers.

In another room, a group of neglected children are taught doctrine, language, and arithmetic. Their kind teacher is a lady who gladly spends her Sunday afternoons trying to improve their lot. Food and clothing are occasionally distributed among the poorest of these youthful guests.

For my part, I open my music room to a group of *Movera*, young boys and girls eager to learn singing. Active participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice demands frequent rehearsals of hymns and psalms.

During their evening recreation, the sisters enjoy singing and music in the common room. The *Rondalla*, an ensemble of string instruments (guitar family), accompanies Filipino folk songs. Whereas Sister Yolanda Oducado strums her guitar, Sister Felicidad Dacayanan plays the melody on the octavina and Sister Angelina Yap doubles one octave higher on a banduria. For her part, Sister Estrella Solibio fills in on the majestic bass, a good two inches taller than herself. I add a dash of western spark on the recorder while Sisters Guadalupe Sempio, Cécile Martel, and Lorraine Laflamme sing soprano and alto parts.

The pleasant evening is soon over. Time now to plan schedules of the coming week. We lay our instruments aside and thank the heavenly Father who blesses our joys as well as our works.

TO WEST

FROM NORTH

CYCLING THROUGH THE VILLAGES

Every afternoon, after class has been dismissed, I take out my bicycle and ride from one house to another, on a catechetical round. In fact, starting on Monday, it is my task to interpret the teachings dispensed by our pastor in his Sunday homily to the families of his huge sprawling parish.

In the lingering rays of the setting sun, the village of Mahabo reflects serenity and a certain quiet animation. Among colourful bougainvilleas, fat baobabs crowned with tufts of foliage, and evergreen mango trees, stand rectangular dwellings with their white mud-and-wattle walls and their tumbled thatched roofs. Under the trees, mangy dogs lie listlessly, tongues hanging out, parched with the merciless heat; hens cackle and scratch the dust of the courtyards, in quest of stray grains of rice; turkeys, geese, and guinea-fowl waddle about the premises.

On my way, I meet drivers of heavy ox carts drawn by zebus, farmers coming home from the fields, women with headborne loads. Groups of children playing in the fields pause in their games long enough to call out gleefully, "*Bonjour, mon père-madame!*"

My group of helpers awaits me at the home of Aunt Marie Joséphine. These good women, the majority of whom are illiterate, are filled with zeal for the spiritual advancement of their compatriots. They have taken to heart the words of Saint Paul, "If anyone does not provide for his own, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Our visits to the various homes are short but friendly. No pressure is ever brought to bear on anybody's convictions. We aim only at being witnesses of a Church which manifests its love and respect for every human being.

Let us call on Marie Anne. She is the model of a goodnatured housewife whose home is her world.

"Marie Anne, we have missed you at Sunday Mass these last few weeks..."

"I have to get up with the sun, I'm so busy."

"Why so busy?"

"Lots of work in the rice paddies..."

"Too much to attend Mass?"

"Well it's like this, Mother. I have to keep shooing away the *fitily*, cardinal birds, who steal our rice. There are so many of these red pests that they can easily eat up, in a very short time, a large field of rice seedlings. I throw stones at them and make lots of noise with old tin cans to keep them away."

"And once the harvest is over..."

"Oh, never fear. Once the rice is all harvested, I'll go to church and worship."

Neighbours call to us as we go by and invite us in. We try to transmit to all of them the Good News.

I must admit that for a while these visits seemed to bear but little fruit. Eventually, ten children were baptized, after instruction; and others were enrolled at the mission school. A few marriages were also regularized. Attendance at Sunday Mass slowly increased.

But much remains to be done. Witch doctors continue to ply their nefarious trade, amulets are still in favour, neglectful Christians keep on putting off attendance at catechetical courses... On the whole, however, the Message of the Gospel is being carried and the spirit of apostolate is burning bright in many Malagasy hearts.

I am more firmly convinced than ever that missionaries cannot rest content with teaching in their mission schools. They must go out to the people. Education plays a great role in the building up of the Church, but its action must unfold in contacts outside the walls of our educational establishments.

Thérèse Leblanc, M.I.C.
SS. Miss. de l'Imm.-Conc.
Mahabo
Via Morondava
MADACASGAR

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

CANADA

GENERALATE, 314 St. Catherine Road, Montreal 153
COTE-DES-NEIGES HOUSE, 2900 St. Catherine Road,
Montreal 250
NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Laval City
CHINESE HOSPITAL, 355 Faillon St., East, Montreal 327
NOMININGUE, Labelle County, P. Q.
RIMOUSKI, P. Q., 225 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,
3080 Prince Edward Street
TROIS RIVIERES, P. Q., 1325 de la Terriere Street
GRANBY, P. Q., 35 Dufferin Street
CHICOUTIMI, P. Q., 766 Cenacle Street
SAINT JOHNS, P. Q., 430 Champlain Street
OTTAWA, 30, Goulburn Avenue
PERTH, N. B., P. B. 259
CHINESE MISSION, 1062, Cheneville, Montreal 128

UNITED STATES

MARLBORO, Mass., 207 Pleasant Street

HONG KONG

TAK SUN SCHOOL,
103 Austin Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong
MOUNT GOOD HOPE SCHOOL,
Clear Water Bay Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong
NOVITIATE, 125 Waterloo Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong

TAIWAN

KUANHSI, 83 Cheng I Lu, Hsinshu Hsien,
Taiwan, Republic of China
SHIH KUANG TSE, Hsinchu Hsien,
Taiwan, Republic of China
TAIPEI, 363, An Tung Chieh, Taiwan, Republic of China
SUAO, 36 Chung Cheng Rd., Suao Ilan Hsien,
Taiwan, Republic of China
HSINCHU CITY, 49, Shui Yuan Street, Kuang Fu Li,
Taiwan, Republic of China
HSIEN, 52, Ta Tong Lu, Nan Ao Hsiang Ilan,
Taiwan, Republic of China,

JAPAN

KORIYAMA, 3-18 Toramaru, Koriyama shi, Fukushima ken
WAKAMATSU, 1-49, Nishi Sakae machi, Aizu Wakamatsu,
Fukushima ken
TOKYO, Fukazawa 8, chome 13, ban 16, go, Setagaya ku.

ITALY

ROMA 00152, via Giacinto Carini, 8

MADAGASCAR

MORONDAVA, Madagascar
AMBOHIBARY, Sambaina, Madagascar
ANTSIRABE, St. Thérèse's Mahazoarivo Parish
TANANARIVO, Tsaramasay
MAHABO, via Morondava

PERU

PUCALLPA.
LIMA, Escuela Maria de la Providencia
Napo 1124, Azcona (Brena)

GUATEMALA

TOTONICAPAN, Colegio P. Betancourt, Guatemala, A.C.

BOLIVIA

SANTA CRUZ de la Sierra, Cardinal Cushing Business College,
453 Calle Lemoine, Casilla 70
COCHABAMBA, Academia Comercia, Calle Oruro No. 3403,
Casilla 1667
LA PAZ, Academia Santa Rita, Casilla 2893, 895, Juan Granier
LA PAZ, Academia Santa Rita, (Irupana) casilla 2893,
895, Juan Granier
CATAVI, postal address: casilla 434, (Catavi) Oruro, Bolivia.

CHILE

ANCUD, 227, Calle Errazuriz, casilla 82, Ancud (Chiloe), Chile.

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

MANILA, Immaculate Conception Academy, General Luna St.,
Intramuros
MANILA, 2212 del Rosario St., Tondo
MANILLE, Provincial House, P.O. 3400.
LAS PINAS, St. Joseph's Academy, Rizal.
MATI, Davao Province
DAVAO City, Good Counsel, Florentine Torres St.
PADADA, Davao Province
BAGUIO City, 73, Paadal, 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
SOUTH 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, Our Lady of the Rosary School, C.P. 1291
CROIX-DES-BOUQUETS, Holy Childhood School, C.P. 1291
DESCHAPELLES, Albert Schweitzer Hospital,
Boite postale 2213, B, Port au Prince, Haiti
LA BOULE C. P. 1085, Haiti
HINCHE, Haiti

COLON, apartado 21, Colon (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
CHIPATA, P.O. Box 107, Chipata (Fort Jameson), Zambia.
KANYANGA, Lundazi P.O., Zambia
NYIMBA, Sacred Heart Hospital, Nyimba P.O., Zambia
CIKUNGU, Kazimuli P.O., Zambia



Azcona's young people like to discuss the conciliar mission with Sister Berthe Phaneuf.