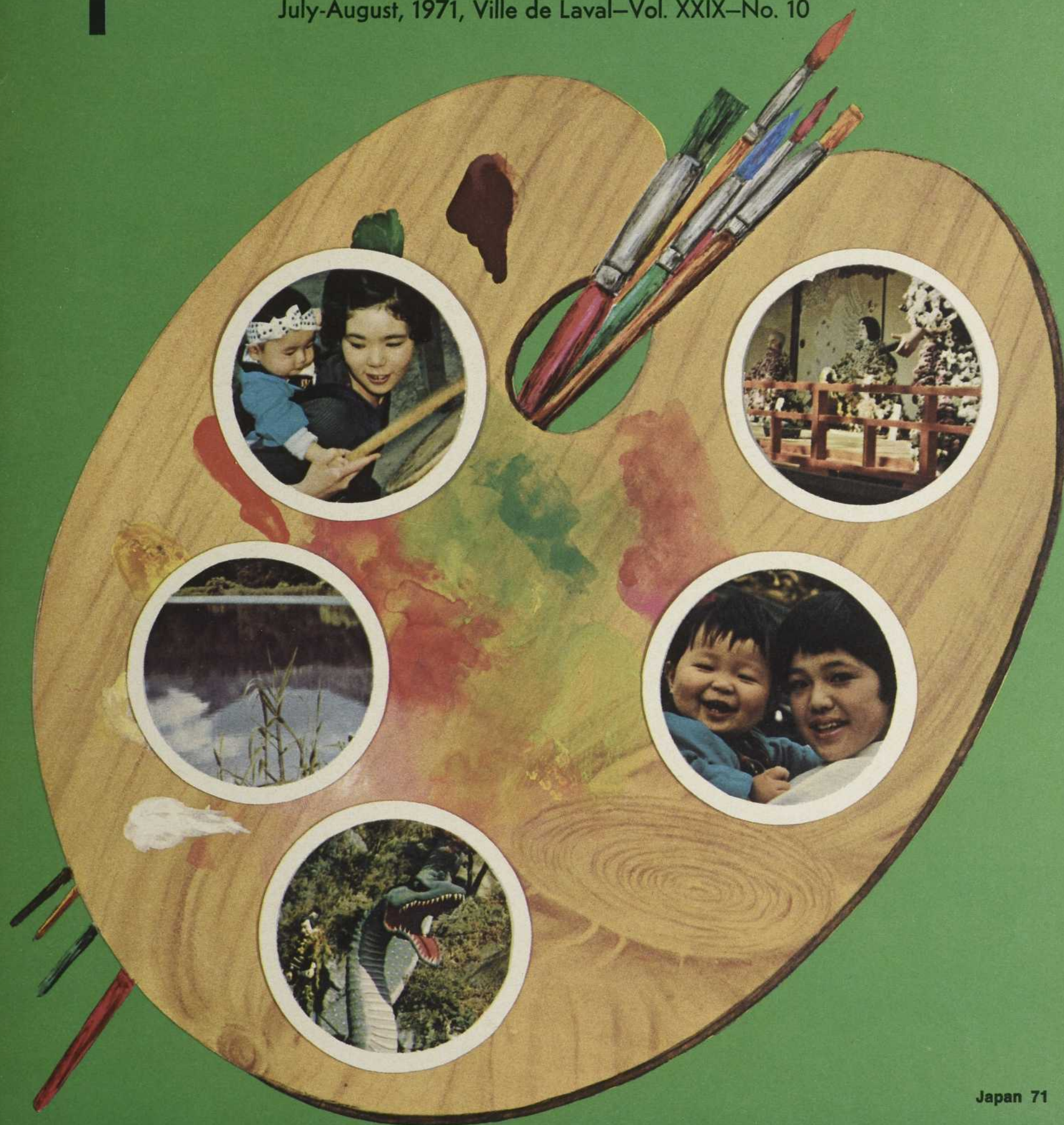




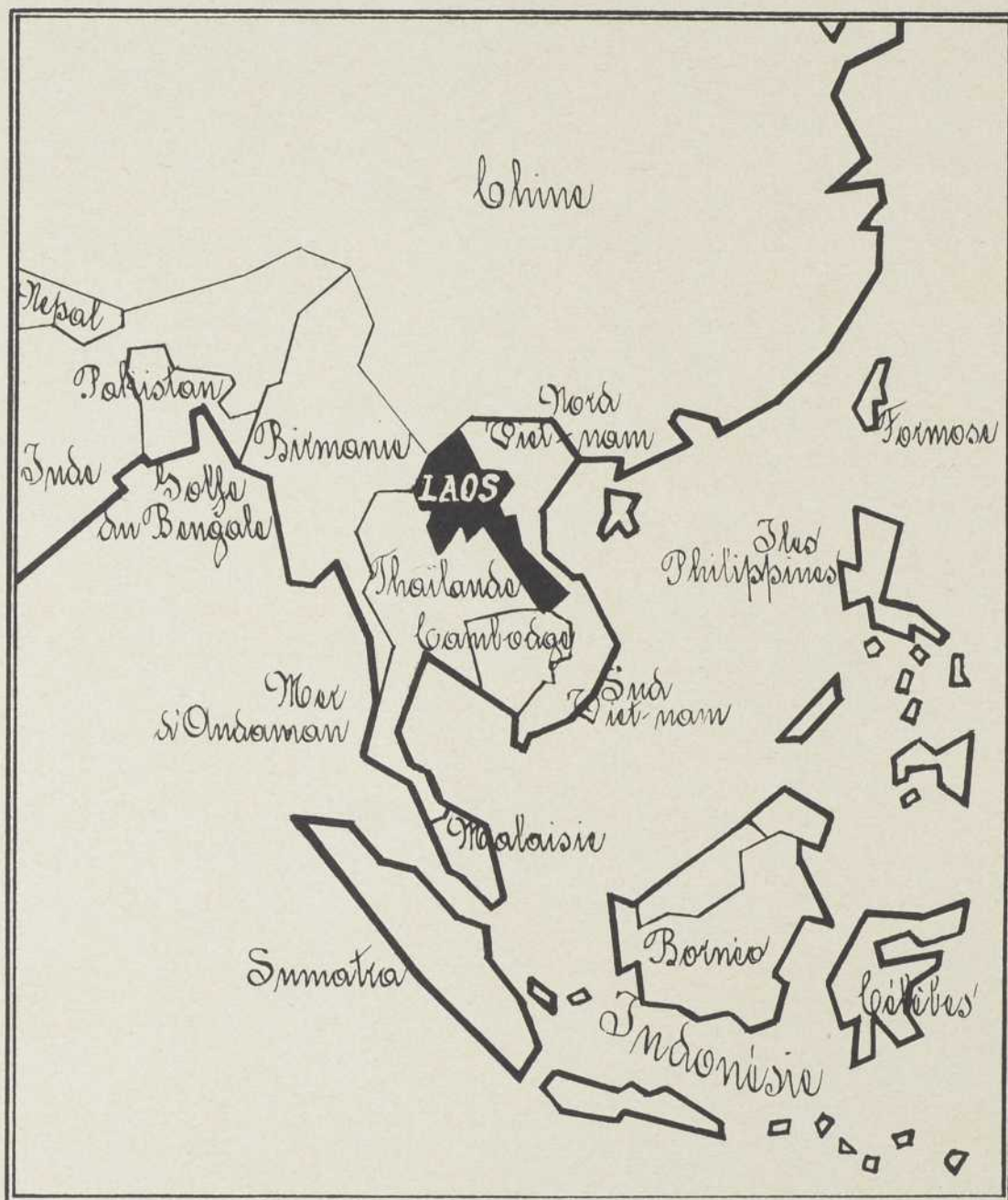
THE PRECURSOR

July-August, 1971, Ville de Laval—Vol. XXIX—No. 10



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WARTORN LAOS

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate have been at work in Laos since 1956. For several years, this peace-loving population of 2,890,000 inhabitants has been subjected to the horrors of warfare. Every month, battles occasion 1,100 casualties (dead, wounded, missing). Already, 200,000 refugees, forced to flee combat zones, are crowding into the Mekong valley. Of the Laotian budget, 62 per cent goes to national defence and the upkeep of police forces. Needless to say, in such circumstances, the life of the Church cannot but be deeply affected.

In the following paragraphs, a Canadian Oblate who has lived the war years with the Laotians relates the work of evangelization being carried on by members of her Institute.

N.D.L.R.

Today, I am inviting you to explore with me Laos, a little known country of southeast Asia. Wedged in between prosperous Thailand and wartorn Vietnam, Laos feels the undertow of these two nations. Its small population of about 3,000,000, belonging to various ethnic groups, is composed of farmers, soldiers, and functionaries. Like its neighbours, Laos lies under the monsoon regime: five to six months of rain, six to seven months of sunshine. Rice is the staple food, seasoned with salted fish (padek) and vegetables.

Laotians are for the most part Buddhists; the mountain folk are animists; only one per cent of the population is Catholic. Illiteracy is rampant. For several years, the country has been the prey of continuous warfare.

This brief outline will give you an idea of the kind of work performed by our Oblates who function everywhere as social assistants, nurses, catechists, teachers. They may be called upon to secure employment for a girl who is the sole support of her family; to find lodgings for an unwed mother; to obtain needed medicine from drugstores; to instruct catechumens; to teach sewing or typewriting . . . In their dispensary, they treat numerous patients. Besides, they also make home visits to the sick and incapacitated. A few teach regularly in the parochial school; others are secretaries to the bishop, to parochial committees, to catechetical centres. Group meetings with young people, courses preparatory to marriage, catechetical sessions take up much of their time.

All the Oblate houses have been transformed into hostels where live groups of from five to fifty young girls, especially those who come from the mountain

regions. The majority study at local elementary schools; others attend courses in domestic science; still others, few in number, attend secondary or professional schools. The Oblates help them out in their studies and give them religious instruction. Their ideal is to promote a rounded out education for all Laotian girls.

Since April, any free time the Oblates may have is spent assisting refugees. The latter come in by plane, or by boat, having first trudged hundreds of miles, through forest lands, carrying their meagre belongings strapped to their back. Of course they arrive completely exhausted and powerless to resist the onslaughts of disease. Parents have often lost track of their children; couples have been separated in the confusion of the flight. Local authorities do all in their power to ensure some degree of security to these poor people by providing medicine, food, and lodgings. The Oblates give a helping hand in trying to alleviate their sad fate.

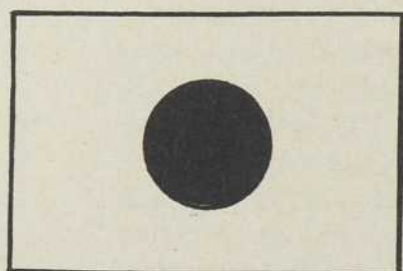
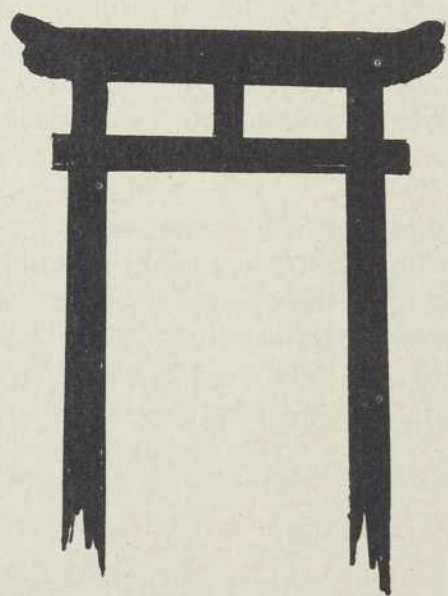
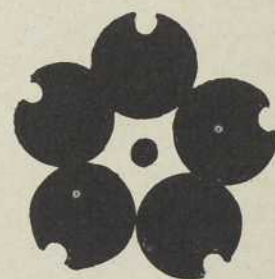
This is a brief report on the activities of the Oblates in Laos. Joy, fraternity, and a sense of fulfilment more than repay them for the insecurity in which they live, and for the privations they endure. They number as yet only twenty-three in this vast field of apostolate. The harvest is great but the labourers are few.

Georgette Ménard
100, rue des Oblats Est
Rouyn, Qué.



日本

JAPON
付



How about making a tour of Japan, Land of the Rising Sun? I will feel honoured to act as your guide for a rapid trip through the land where I have been living for the past years.

Michelle Paquette, M.I.C.

Geography and climate

A bird's eye view of Japan creates the impression of large crumpled sheets of paper drifting upon the ocean. The archipelago stretches in an arc, 1,500 miles long from north to south, off the eastern coast of the Asian continent. It covers an area of 142,726 square miles, of which only about 20 per cent is suitable for cultivation.

Japan consists of four main islands—Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu—in addition to over one thousand smaller islands. Mountains are everywhere, accounting for about 80 per cent of Japan's total land area. There are 192 volcanoes, of which 58 are active.

The climate is generally mild. Summer, warm and humid, begins after a rainy season which lasts for about four weeks (May). Except in the north, winter is usually pleasant with many sunny days. Spring and autumn are the most enjoyable seasons of the year with balmy days and warm sunshine.

Mentality

Western mentality forged by Cartesian philosophy asserts itself through convictions. Eastern, more particularly Japanese mentality, is crystallized in intuition. It may be resumed in that indefinable term—*kimochi*. Foreigners translate it as feelings, impressions, but such words are powerless to convey its depth and intensity.

Deeply influenced by the sharp contrasts of the land they live in as well as by its history, the Japanese are at once highly emotional and highly pragmatic. They combine a baffling blend of respect for authority, tradition, and law, with a tendency to ignore the facts in certain areas. Mini skirts, and *kimono*, stone lanterns and neon lights, cherry blossoms and smoking chimneys thrive side by side.

Yuji Aida, professor at the Institute for Research in Cultural Sciences, and specialist in Western history writes; "Western rationalism is unable to grasp the thoughts that spark our actions, the *essence* of these thoughts, the apparent contradictions and quaintness of our ways and customs . . . Rationalism is a philosophy of differentiation and of classification which

defines absolutes and lays down boundaries. Such a method, thanks to which each thing receives its identity and its independence, may prove useful to the acquisition of knowledge. However this may be, we Japanese do not feel the necessity of logic . . . The foundation of Japanese consciousness is continuity, the extreme harmony existing between man and nature, life and death, etc. It rests upon the interrelation of beings. Therefore the coexistence in Westerners of authentic Christianity linked to rationalism baffles us even more than the mystery of thought baffles Westerners."

On the social and economic level, Japan eschews the role of leadership among Asian countries. Westerners may translate the term *influence* as signifying "positively giving something to others"; the Japanese understand it as "abstention". Japan considers *non-intervention* as a precious quality composed of humility and of respect for others. Discretion is a form of politeness.

Courtesy, kindness, resourceful initiative, fierce energy are the most remarkable traits of the Japanese. Order is favoured for its contribution to social harmony. Behind the Japanese well-ordered facade, however, exists another quality—emotionalism—which apparently contradicts strong adherence to self-control and order. But, their concern for the welfare of the social group makes them wary of manifesting emotion in public.

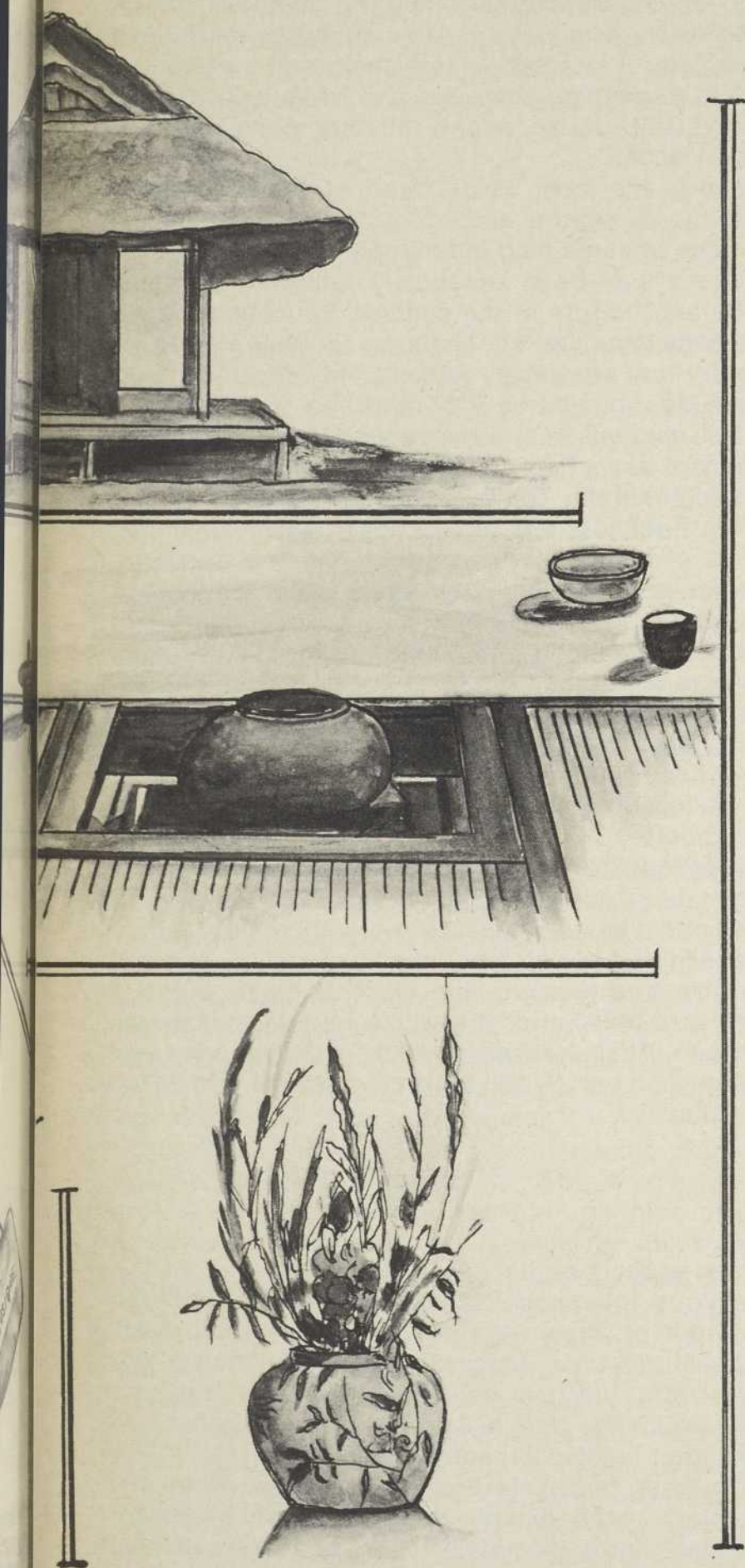
Loyalty towards the group to which one belongs remains the highest criterion of moral values. Nothing is done without *sodan*, consultation of all members of the group. In Japan, decisions never seem to be actually taken by anybody. They seep upward from a consensus worked out layer by layer through a pyramid of authority.

FAMILIAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

Customs

The customs and traditions which have the most tenacious hold on the Japanese as a whole are those which relate to birth, marriage, death. Although modern young people balk at old-fashioned *mi-ai* or arranged marriage, they usually end by accepting it. Experience has proved that this procedure, handled by relatives with delicacy and tact, leads to sound unions of prudence, seriousness, and nearly always genuine affection. The couple has only a secondary importance in the Japanese family. Grandparents assume the principal role. Women enjoy the same legal rights as men. The impression foreigners gain of the inferior status of woman merely comes from the absence of courtesy





shown by men towards women, and the excessive attention paid by women toward men. Even as children, Japanese boys are given precedence over girls.

The custom of giving gifts is an art in Japan. Almost any occasion may serve as pretext to exchange presents: birth, marriage, illness, graduation, a first meeting with someone . . . A gift is called for when even the slightest service is rendered. Unwilling to remain indebted to anyone, the Japanese immediately offer something equivalent to the gift received.

Life in the country mostly follows the old traditional pattern. In the city, the standard of living is higher but notable disparity exists between the upper and the lower classes. Large urban centres face crucial problems resulting from a mass exodus of country people to the cities. Commercial streets are modern, but sidewalks are non-existent and traffic jams terrific. The streets are still lined by drab unpainted houses, all alike and rather small. But, these are gradually being replaced by modern concrete apartments.

Traditional houses are built of wood. Inside, they are divided by sliding panels which can open up to make large rooms for entertaining or else can be closed to offer privacy. The floor consists of *tatami* (strawmats), six feet long and three feet wide. All the essential features of a room are determined by the arrangement and number of mats. There is no furniture except for a low polished table in the centre of the room with flat cushions placed around it. Whether the house belongs to a poor family or a rich one, the same principles apply. The quality alone changes. There is never any clutter in a Japanese house.

As modern fashion takes over, Western furniture is used more and more. Larger houses are in demand. Housing is one of modern Japan's most urgent problems.

Clothing

Tokyo numbers among the world's capitals of haute couture. *Wabi* (propriety) and *sabi* (tasteful simplicity) govern the styles of clothing. Although the mini and the maxi have been introduced here as elsewhere, the majority continue to observe the laws of aesthetics according to seasons, age, and social rank. As a rule, the Japanese avoid excentricity as well as impropriety. The kimono is worn at home in the evening or on certain particular occasions. Housewives can still be seen wearing an apron, their head covered with a cotton towel, doing their shopping at town markets.

In the northern areas, working women wear the *monpei* a kind of baggy trousers. Clothes in Japan are of paramount significance. People of various social strata, employment, age, can be distinguished at a glance by the clothes they wear. For instance, all male students wear a black uniform with gilt buttons. This outfit has remained unchanged for several decades.

Culture and Education

Japanese customs and traditions are rooted in an ancient culture marked by clever adaptations of foreign elements. For many years past, Japan has demonstrated its unsurpassable talent in adapting foreign cultures to its own needs. After absorbing them with avid curiosity it has *assimilated* them and transformed them into something personal and unique. Instead of adapting itself, Japan adapts all that comes its way to its own ends.

Japan is the most westernized of eastern nations. Eastern by its culture and topography, it retains evident traces of something indefinably unique.

Illiteracy has been practically unknown in Japan since before the turn of the century. Education is compulsory and free for all children for the nine years of primary and secondary school. In 1968, universities and colleges numbered 377 with an enrollment of 1,270,189 students. Of these educational institutions, 76 per cent are private schools receiving no subsidy from the state. In Tokyo alone 61 per cent of the city's high schools are private institutions.

Seats of higher learning are all too few compared to the dense population. Last year, while 194,800 students sat for university entrance examinations, only 31,795 passed (Japan Times, March 24, 1970). Examinations are so difficult that they constitute a nightmare for the student. Ambitious parents want to have their offspring enrolled at the best universities. In preparation for this, however, they must first have them enrolled at the best kindergartens, primary, and secondary schools. Children are thus subjected to the tension of tough examinations from their earliest years. Someone has remarked that the Japanese system of education is a system of tests and competition. Failure often spells tragedy for the unlucky students. The government is beginning to find out this mistake and is working at a revision of the whole educational system now in use. Private schools which dispense education to a great number of children may also be subsidized as they deserve.

Religious aspects of life

Religious tolerance which has become a characteristic trait of Japan contributes to its development. Christianity has been welcomed just as Buddhism was, centuries ago, but it is considered more or less as a system of science and technology. This is one of the reasons that keeps Japanese from becoming Christians. Another reason is that the Japanese spirit has been deeply imbued with Buddhism and Shintoism; their ethical and mysterious aspect and total absence of dogma holds strong appeal. The Japanese feel irritated when religious feelings are compressed into the straitjacket of scholastic formulas. Their spirituality is not captured in ways of thinking, but in ways of feeling. A recent poll reveals that 65 per cent have no

personal religion. Nevertheless, 72 per cent consider religion as needful in order to lead an honest and happy life. So-called new religions are flourishing. Many of these new creeds borrow unashamedly from Christianity. On the positive side, the Japanese find Christianity respectable, pure, humanistic and fair; on the negative side they consider it as out of touch with reality, uncongenial to the Japanese taste, intolerant, hypocritical.

THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IN JAPAN

Our Sisters arrived in Japan back in 1926. Their first mission post was Naze, a small island in southern Japan. Two years later, they opened a house in the city of Kagoshima. These two mission posts had to be abandoned during the difficult period prior to World War II.

At present, we have three houses in Japan—one in Tokyo, one in Koriyama, and one in Aizu Wakamatsu. The first post to be opened in the north-western part of Honshu, was Koriyama in the Fukushima prefecture. Initial activities consisted in conducting a kindergarten and giving private lessons in English and music. After the war, a dispensary was opened which was closed as soon as Japanese hospitals were re-organized.

In this commercial city, the Sisters now conduct a kindergarten attended by 200 tots, a primary school with a roster of about 400 pupils, and a secondary school for girls only. At a short distance from the city proper, two Sisters run a hostel for children of broken homes and orphans. Besides, the Koriyama Sisters give private courses in catechetics, English, and music. They have also organized the Girl Guide movement in their school and orphanage.

Aizu Wakamatsu is a lovely little city, nestling in a valley girdled by mountains. Missionary activities here were initiated in 1933 with the opening of a kindergarten. After the war, a dispensary ministered to the sick poor. It was closed as soon as local facilities had been restored to normal. Education is our main apostolic activity at present. Our Xaverio Gakuen (St. Francis Xavier School) comprises a kindergarten attended by 270 children, seven classes in the primary courses, six classes in the secondary, and nine classes in the high. A group of fifty teachers guide these students in ways of knowledge. Religious instruction is dispensed to all children of the primary and secondary section. Few are baptized, but we sow the good seed broadcast. Every year, about 300 pupils who had never heard about Christianity are duly instructed with the full assent of their families, non-Christian for the most part.

Seen for the first time by Canadian visitors, the

campus of our Wakamatsu school looks like a real village. It is made up of several large two-storey buildings: the convent, the kindergarten, the primary school and a small hostel for students, the secondary school, the high school, the auditorium, the music department, and the gymnasium. Governmental regulations render all these buildings obligatory. These exigencies coupled with the salaries of teachers tax our meagre resources to the utmost. The country may be rich—we missionaries are not.

Inside and outside the school campus, various activities offer a good deal of variety: hostel for students from remote districts; glee clubs; lessons in English, painting, music; commercial course; participation in the region's team apostolate; meetings with parents or with members of other schools . . . Always and everywhere, our main ambition is to carry the "good news" to as many people as possible.

Twelve Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception—eight Canadian and four Japanese—are at work in Aizu Wakamatsu. Two Sisters conduct a kindergarten and share in parochial activities in Kitagata, an outpost of our mission.

Our Sisters arrived in Tokyo after the war, in 1949 to be exact. In 1953, our Japanese novitiate was canonically erected. The scholasticate or formation centre for our young Japanese professed Sisters is also located in this convent. Our newly arrived missionaries find it an ideal place to learn Japanese, language schools being situated at no great distance. Here again will retire, in their old age, our region's senior missionary Sisters. A kindergarten attended by 300 youngsters is attached to the house as well as a dormitory for university girl students. Moreover, the Sisters share in parochial team apostolate and dispense lessons in the doctrine, and in English. At present, the Tokyo personnel numbers six Canadian and six Japanese Sisters.

CONCLUSION

This is only the briefest of outlines of the fascinating country where I am at present privileged to live. Notwithstanding its discreet reticence, Japan will surely be called upon to play an important role in Asia. If the twentieth century is in the way of becoming Japan's century, then is it not of the utmost importance to implant therein a sound Christian spirit, to intensify apostolic activities, to delegate numerous missionaries? As Christians, you are all responsible for winning it to Christ Jesus. You can do so through prayer and through your support of its missionaries. And if the Lord of the harvest should call you by name to share in this apostolate, do not turn a deaf ear to his summons. The harvest is great, the labourers are few.

SUCRE SNAPSHOTS



The city
of
Sucre,
Bolivia.

Bolivian city of Sucre. Founded in 1529, Sucre has been called the "City of White Houses". It is located at an altitude of 9,331 feet, between the Rio Grande and the Rio Pilcomayo. Its first Indian name was Charcas. Later it was renamed Sucre in honour of the brave marshal who led Bolivar's army. It is a gay white city built in the Andalusian style.



Quechua Indians
living in
Sucre
wear
the heavy leather
headgear
of the conquistadors.
Sad reminiscence
of their
slavery . . .

Over the mountains and far away

"South America", wrote a missionary friend of mine, "is a continent you will enjoy discovering on your own, a continent you will find different from the homeland." I left for this continent-to-be-discovered on June 27, 1970. It was the most favourable season for travelling, I was told.

The powerful jet carried me, as on a magic carpet, over the mountains and far away. Leaving behind the fogs of Lima, I emerged in the luminosity of the Andes. Above, the sky was of unflecked azure. Once in a while I caught a glimpse of the coastal desert undulating far below like a ribbon of ochreous grey. The earth skimmed past in wide stretches of sand blown into wave patterns of crescent-shaped dunes by the relentless force of the winds. In the distance, rose majestic peaks which seemed to pierce the clouds. I remembered Mermoz's remark to a co-pilot, "Never have I seen panoramas more worthy to be flown over."

One of the world's most imposing mountain systems, the Andes extend from Alaska to Patagonia like giant ramparts thrown up by the gods. Three great mountain chains (cordilleras) run lengthwise across the land from north-west to south-east. The western chain and the central one which is the continental watershed, run parallel to one another reaching out as far as Chile. Its loftiest peak, Mount Acongagua, is estimated at 23,800 feet, but there are at least ten others over 20,000 feet in height. Among these mountains are ranges of extinct and semi-extinct volcanoes.

The origin of the name Andes is not clearly known. Some authorities claim that it is derived from the term *anta*, an old Indian word meaning copper, a name appropriate enough to a land so rich in this mineral. The Incas valued copper above gold for its greater utility.

There was a stop of about half an hour at La Paz, the world's highest airport. The city was founded in 1548 as a halfway house for caravans of llamas carrying silver from Potosi to the coast. From these heights, one embraces at a glance the immense *puna*, a high narrow plateau striated by gorges and ravines, crossed in its central and northern regions by wide fertile valleys. Rarefied atmosphere, wide variations in temperature, scanty vegetation combine to form one of the world's most inhospitable regions. Yet, over the centuries, Indian inhabitants have adapted themselves to its harsh climate. To the east of this area rises the *cordillera real*; to the west undulate the foothills of the Peruvian *cordillera*.

Airborne interview

On the last leg of my journey, it was my good fortune to have as travelling companion Bishop Andres Bernardo Schieroff, auxiliary of La Paz, on his way to Poconas to attend a *cursillo*. I grasped the opportunity of gleaning some information regarding the movement and its organization of team apostolate in Bolivia.

— Excellency, I would like you to tell me about the *cursillo* movement.

— A *cursillo* is really a three-day course on religious matters. It is especially centered on genuine encounter with Christ Jesus.

— What results are expected from this practice?

— The chief aim of this *cursillo* is to coordinate the forces of active personnel in joint pastoral action throughout Bolivia. Several of our most competent catechists have retired. We must reorganize the team from scratch.

— What subject will be treated during the courses?

— First, a lecture will be delivered by Ignacio Zalles, rector of San Jose Seminary. The subject presented will be an evaluation of the liturgy from the doctrinal and liturgical aspects. A course on Bolivian cultural anthropology and on Bolivian culture in general will be next on the programme. These courses will be conducted by Professor Mario Montana. For his part, Nestor Sainz Ossio will present a sketch of our national economy as it stands today. On the spiritual level, Juan Gorski, M.M., will outline a method for teaching the Old and New Testament in Andean pueblos. Padre Domingo Llande will discourse on the "hand of God" concept in the Ayamara religious pattern.

— Will you merely attend these courses without participating?

— My participation will consist in giving an expose titled "Compromise and Witnessing in the Evangelical Mission of the Church."

— May I ask your opinion on the future of the apostolate in Latin America?

— Latin America must organize its own forms of apostolate using local agents, structures, and methods. Moreover, it must promote an authentic biblical, liturgical, and catechetical renovation, such a renovation as which will nourish theological and pastoral reflection. The Church in Latin America is entering into a new period of its ecclesiastical life, a period characterized by a profound spiritual renewal, a generous pastoral charity, an authentic social sensitivity.

— Is the problem of secularization as acute in Bolivia as elsewhere?

— Like many another country, Bolivia is caught in the vortex of a secularization process never before experienced. If the Church is to the part of this movement, she will have to undergo mutations which will bring about important changes in old traditions, structures, and ways of thinking. Such an evolution may well entail terrible tensions and crises.

A few days after this interview, I met a group of participants in this Poconas *cursillo*. The National Institute of Apostolate is situated at a short distance from Sucre, on a bleak arid hillside which offers an ideal spot for meditation and reflection. All the participants admitted they had drawn great benefit from the meeting.

The City of White Houses

Just as I was getting ready to alight at Sucre and wondering where I could go from the airport, I espied

two Good Shepherd Sisters waving a friendly welcome. One of the two, a Canadian, has lived in Bolivia for about forty years. It did my heart good to meet friends and a compatriot so far from home.

Like Cochabamba, Sucre is located in what geographers describe as *el valle*, a plateau stretching between the Rio Grande and the Rio Pilcomayo. It is situated at an altitude of 9,331 feet, 318 miles by road southeast of La Paz.

In front of the airport I boarded a taxi of ancient vintage. During the short ride to the city I admired the beauties of the countryside. Indians went about their business, wearing traditional garb, walking barefoot in the dusty road. Llamas with haughty heads were climbing up a hillside. I was told that these animals are never led. On the contrary, they precede their owner, stopping or starting, turning to left or right as they please. An Indian lad trotted along behind the herd.

During my stay in Sucre, I visited every nook and corner of the *Ciudad de Casa Blancas*, City of the White houses. A Bolivian Sister who spoke English acted as my guide. Thanks to her obligingness I learned all I wanted to know about the lovely city, its inhabitants, its customs, and its historic traditions.

All the Quechua women I met wore colourful many-skirted dresses that billowed out as they walked. I would have liked to take a few snapshots, but as soon as the click of my camera was heard, everybody vanished from sight.

Until one has visited the slums surrounding the cities, one can have no idea of the stark misery in which the poor live out their lives. I felt a kind of nausea when I first penetrated into lanes and alleys. There is no choice but to get used to the squalor or to leave at once. I chose the former and spent many an interesting hour, mingling with the poor for whom this area is home.

Founded in 1529, Sucre was long known as the City of Four Names—Charcas, La Plata, Chuquisaca, Sucre. Capital of the province of Chuquisaca (the Golden Bridge) it bore at first the name of the Indian tribe known as Charcas. A lieutenant of Francisco Pizarro, Pedro Anzures, having fought and defeated the Indians gave the city the name of La Plata (Silver City). After the silver mines found in the district had finally been exploited to the full, the city was again called Charcas. It reverted to Sucre in honour of Antonio Jose de Sucre the brave general who led the armies of the Great Liberator Simon Bolivar during the war of independence. It became the seat of a bishopric in 1551, and an archiepiscopal see in 1608.

In 1609, the town became the first to revolt against Spanish government in South America. Designated since its earliest days as Bolivia's legal capital, Sucre now contributes little to the nation except a great historical tradition. Although La Paz is the official capital, the Supreme Court of Bolivia still sits in the City of White houses.

It is a lovely old city built in the Andalusian type of architecture. Churches, convents, and regal resi-



Front entrance of the cathedral, Sucre.

Saint Francis church, Sucre.

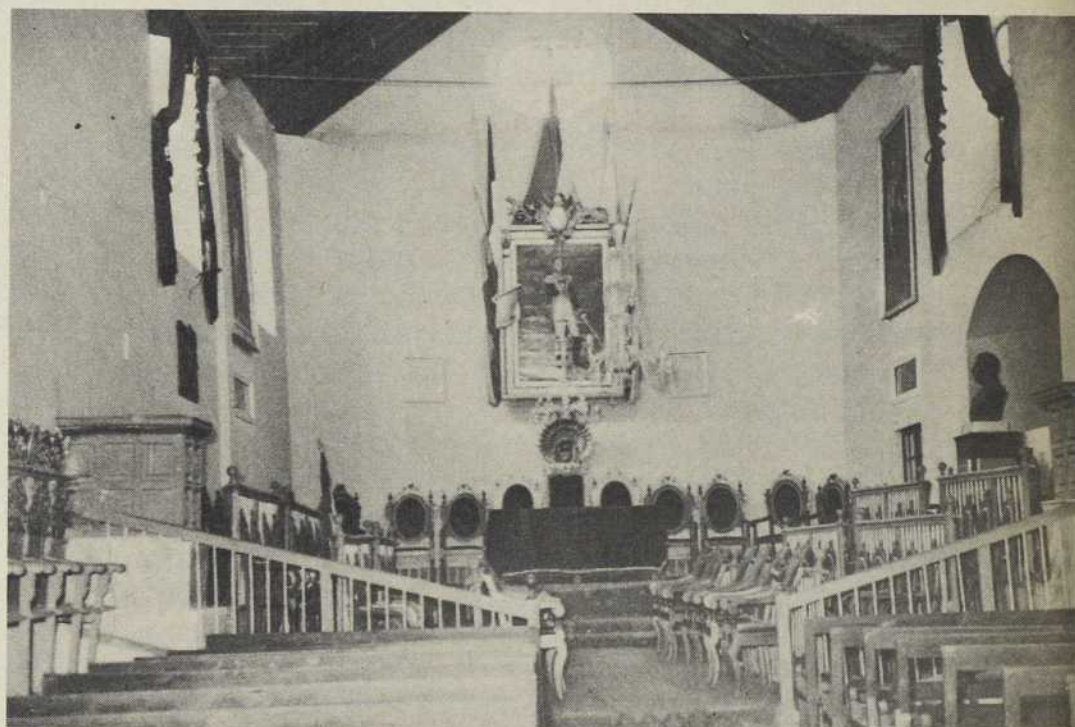




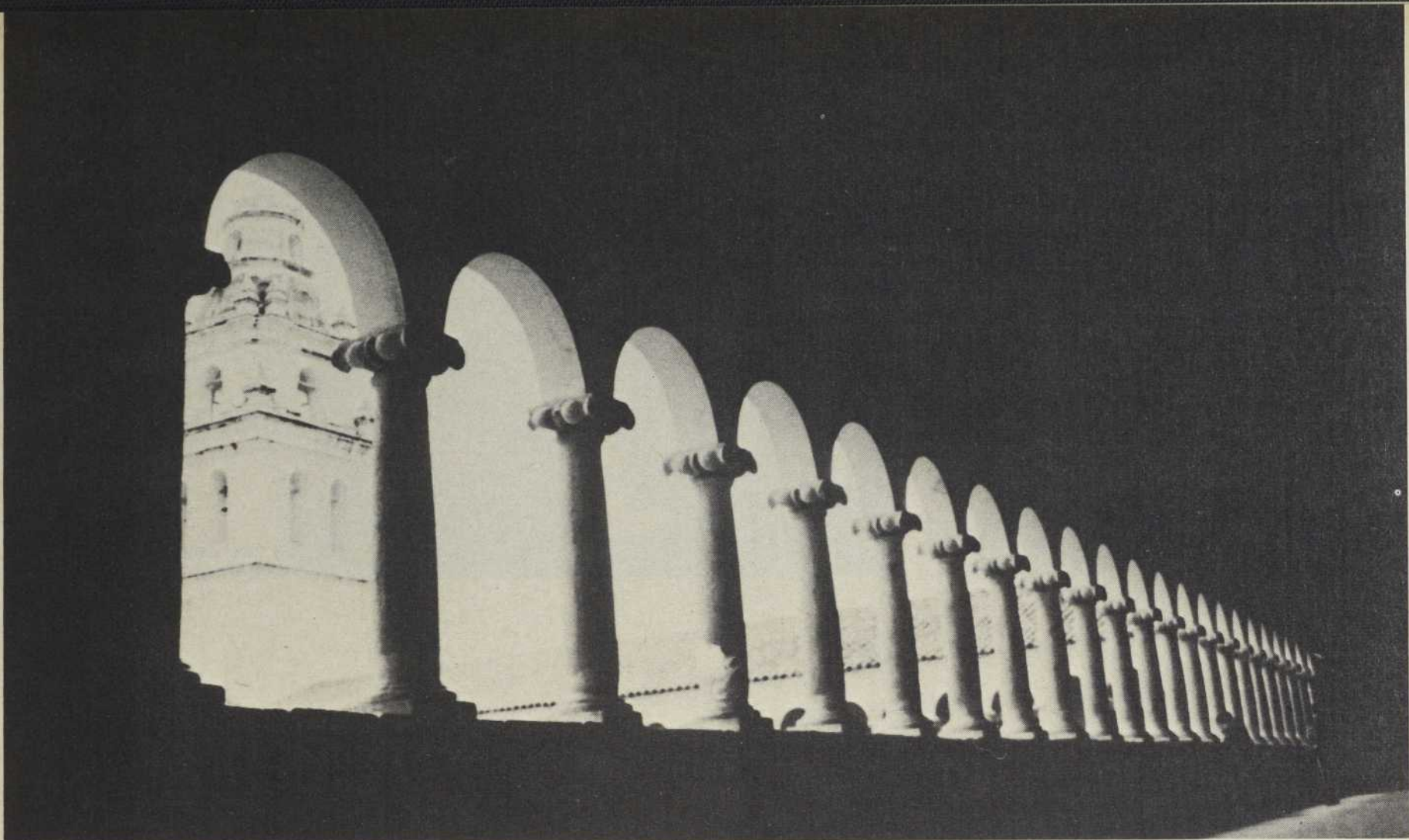
Monument
dedicated to
Marshal Sucre
in "25 de Mayo"
Park,
Sucre.



"House of
Liberty".



Hall
where was signed
the Independence Act,
May 25, 1809.



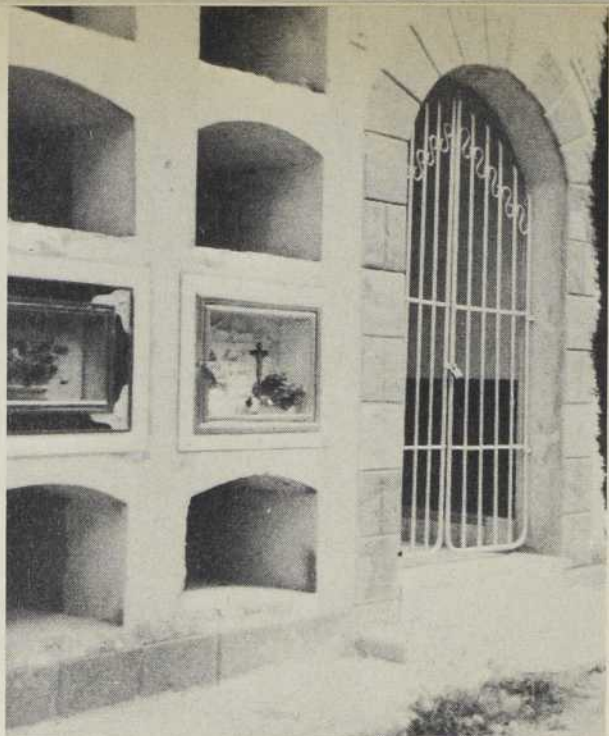
The patio,
Saint Francis Xavier
University,
and the tower
of Saint Michael's temple,
Sucre.



University students
on the
Paris
Plaza.



"The Eiffel
Tower",
Paris,
Plaza.



In the cemetery,
at Sucre.

dences testify to the wealth of its magistrates. Perhaps because it was for a long time isolated from the rest of the country, Sucre has retained a greater number of Spanish customs and traditions than any other town in Bolivia.

TRADITIONAL SITES

The House of Liberty

During my stay in Sucre, I was a guest at the San Albert Convent, 302 Escuela Maria Eufrasia, Casilla 118, an ancient convent built in Spanish style, with patio and interior courtyard. I left this hospitable dwelling early every morning to visit the town's traditional sites.

At the *Casa de la Libertad* (House of Liberty), I learned about the 1809 events which led to Bolivia's independence. It was here that the leaders of the revolution met to sign the Act of Independence and to give Upper Peru its new name—Bolivia. During the first years of the republican government, the *Casa de la Libertad* was used as legislative seat.

In 1621, the Jesuits established a college in this town. A few years later, they inaugurated the Royal and Pontifical University of Saint Francis Xavier. This establishment preserves, within its hoary walls, trophies and documents which relate to the beginnings of Bolivian history.

The Royal University of Saint Francis Xavier

Many generations have succeeded one another within these noble halls built along a purely Spanish style of architecture. The oldest seat of higher learning in Latin America, this university has been the cradle of Independence on the continent. It continues to rank among the most important Bolivian educational institutions.

Plaza 25 de Mayo

Plaza 25 de Mayo is a lovely spot surrounded by flowering gardens and shady trees. It enshrines the country's most cherished national memories in its *Casa de la Libertad*, its Government House, its Consistorial Palace, and its magnificent cathedral.

On Sundays especially, the Plaza is a favourite meeting place for the youth of Sucre. I was amused to see young men sedately keeping to their side, while young girls demurely walked on the opposite side. This was my best opportunity for good snapshots. At long last I secured a group of smiling faces such as I wanted.

Bolivar Park is another favourite haunt of the young. There, students like to meet to discuss programmes, study, and perhaps meditate upon the whys and wherefores of life. This park stands at the core of the City of White Houses.

The cemetery

There is a popular saying that goes, "It is good to sleep one's last sleep in the Sucre cemetery . . ." Broad avenues lined with tall trees shadow headstones and mausoleums. All is quiet and restful.

I visited the cemetery on a sunny afternoon. A young woman was arranging bouquets of flowers in memory of some departed one on one of the more elaborate tombs.

On this same day, a Sunday, I visited the Paris Plaza with its miniature Eiffel tower and its Saint John of God Hospital. Next on my agenda was the museum where ancient and modern art harmoniously blend.

The following day, I set out for the market place. Here vendors do not cry out their wares spread out on large shawls, but squat in stolid silence while



Sucre
snapshots,
Bolivia.



buyers make their choice. In certain areas of the city, crowds of Indians crouch along sidewalks selling objects of all kinds.

Large trucks filled with Indians constantly roar past on the streets, this being the cheapest means of communication. Packed like sardines, they ride in silence in the wind and dust of the roads. Their journeys are not smooth and easy, but long practice has made them patient and impervious to dangers. If you think you are good at driving, just try the Bolivian routes in company with a Bolivian driver. You will learn the thrill of riding up and down hills, of whirling along hairpin bends, of backing at an inch from a chasm.

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

Sucre is remarkable for its striking architectural ensemble. The church of San Domingo built in 1550 is the oldest church in the area. Traces of Spanish influence are everywhere present. La Merced built sometime during the eighteenth century presents the pleasant contrast of tall white walls and gleaming silver altars. Begun in 1548, the cathedral is a fine structure with its solid silver altars, its wrought candlesticks, its magnificent treasury which stands comparison with that of the Merced in Cuzco.

Standing against the cathedral is a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Built in 1600, it is a perfect little gem. As I went up to the shrine where the statue is exposed, I was struck by the motherliness reflected in the face of our Lady. The eyes seem to read through you and to follow you wherever you go.

In spite of all these splendid monuments, the White City knows the extremes of poverty. This region where gold and silver once flowed like a river, this city, the glory of Bolivia, is daily growing poorer. It is a univer-

sity town with no practical means of earning a livelihood. There are no commercial enterprises, no interest in agricultural pursuits, no economic resources to lean back upon.

Campesinos, farmers of the Chuquisaca region, are leaving their farms in increasing numbers for urban centres where they only add to the already heavy problems of housing and unemployment.

DEPARTURE

According to a French author, a voyage is a rectification of the idea one had conceived of a certain country. I think this is a particularly apt saying.

The days I spent in Sucre have effectively made me discover a new world. I have met people who have kept their love of plain living, and who possess extraordinary endurance in the face of trials. As often as they can, they pass from the drab monotony of a colourless existence, to the gaiety of colourful festivals. On such occasions, even the poorest dress in extravagant clothes. They dance and sing and drink. Flutes or drums accompany these revels in which a nostalgic note always predominates. Do they vaguely remember that they are descendants of a great civilization of the past? At any rate they are a lovable people who have retained traditions of discipline, toil, and courage, as well as of skill and patience in various handicrafts.

Gabrielle Ouimet, m.i.c.

PHOTO/REPORT

Pope Paul's itinerary:

Nov. 26, 1970: *Departure from Rome.*

Nov. 27, 1970: *Stay in Manila, Philippines.*

Nov. 29, 1970: *Stay in Pago Pago, Samoa Islands.*

Nov. 30, 1970: *Stay in Sydney, Australia.*

Dec. 3, 1970: *Arrival at and stay in Djakarta, Indonesia.*

Dec. 4, 1970: *Stopover at Hong Kong.*

Dec. 4, 1970: *Arrival at and stay in Colombo, Ceylon.*

Message to Asia: "By virtue of her essential catholicity, the Church cannot be alien to any country, people, or race."



MANILA, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Millions of faithful gave Pope Paul VI a rousing welcome as he arrived at Manila Airport. He spent three days in the capital.

After participating in the first session of the pan-Asiatic Bishops' Conference, the Pope addressed himself to the young, the workers, the sick, the poor, the rich. The fundamental reason for this long and arduous journey was, to quote the aged Pontiff himself, "to announce Jesus Christ". He officially proclaimed this aim before innumerable masses who had their eyes fixed upon him on this memorable occasion. He came, not in pursuit of temporal interests or in search of reputation and prestige, but as a missionary to all peoples.

POPE PAUL'S VISIT TO CHRISTIANS OF THE FAR EAST



Pope Paul VI is welcomed at Manila airport by the President of the Republic, Mr. Ferdinand Marcos.



In Rizal Park, Pope Paul celebrated Mass in the presence of 1,000,000 people, ordained 200 priests and administered First Communion to a group of 200 children. What a privilege for these youngsters! To the students of Santo Tomas University, the Pope said, "Your age is an age of criticism. . . It is also an age of generous self-giving".



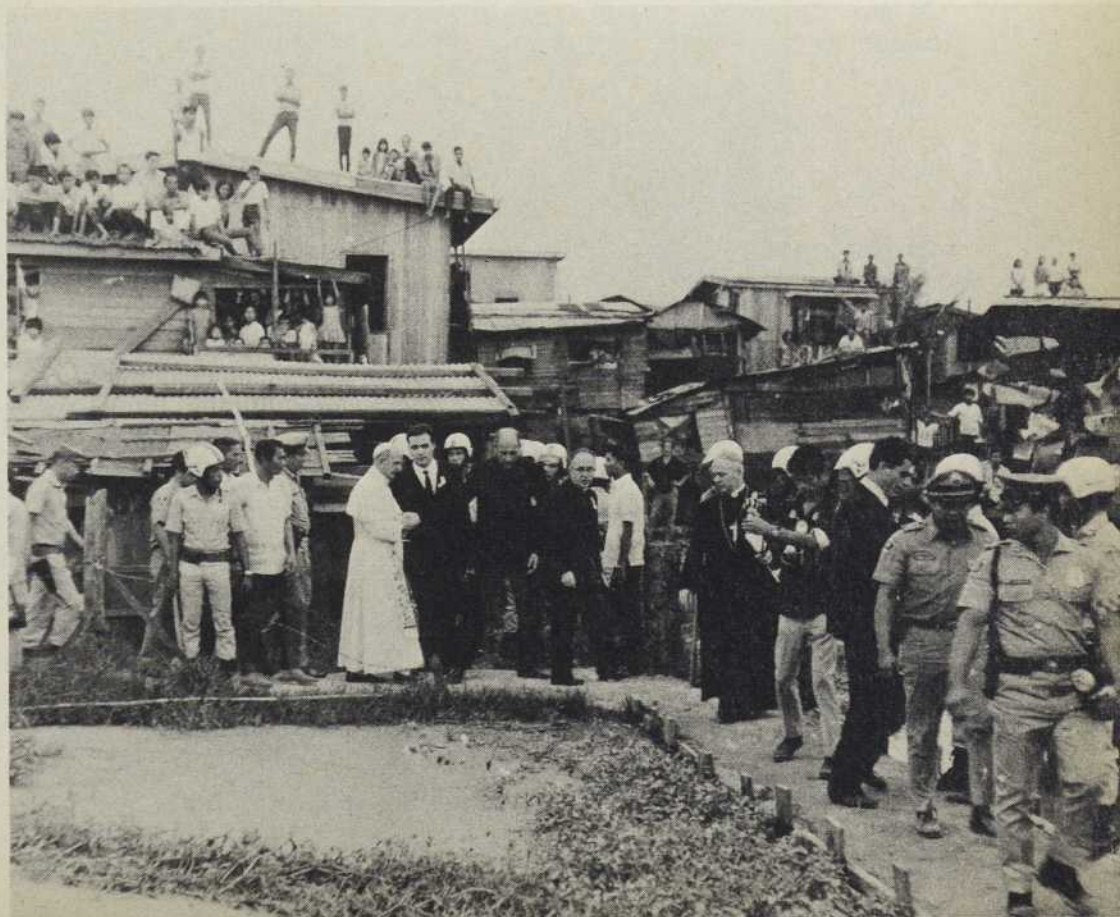


Three students wearing the traditional garb of their respective province—Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao—converse with the Holy Father.

President and Mrs. Marcos receive Holy Communion from the Pope's hand.

Pope Paul addresses workers and visits destitute families.

Before leaving the Philippines for Samoa, the Pope expresses his gratitude. "This brief stay in Manilla has been a great joy for us. We have lived through these days surrounded by the affection and the inexhaustible kindness of the Filipino people. . . . We shall never forget the country of the Philippines."





At the Offertory, these men in festive garb offer local produce to the Pope.

In the course of his brief visit to Pago Pago, in the heart of the Pacific Ocean, Pope Paul VI sent to the whole church the following important missionary message:

We, Paul VI

— With the Catholic community of the Island of Upolu gathered round its bishop, Pio Taofinu'u, and its clergy;

— Launch an appeal that would be a *call to the whole Church* scattered to the four corners of the earth, from this privileged land, lost in the immensity of the Pacific Ocean, but long since open to the Gospel message;

PAGO PAGO, SAMOA ISLANDS

— Responding to the anguished voices of *those eager for light* who beg us: "Come across and help us" (cf. Acts 16:9);

— Seized with pity for the *multitude hungry* for the bread of the Word and the Bread of the Eucharist but with no one to give them these;

— Filled with admiration before the riches which God has placed in men's hearts and the wonderful promises of a harvest for the Gospel;

— We repeat the call which, from distant times, God has addressed to generous hearts: "*Leave your country, your family and your father's house for the land I will show you*" (Genesis 12:1).

— *To you, bishops* of the Holy Catholic Church, who by virtue of the collegiality of the episcopate share the concern for the welfare of the whole Church (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 23), extend your apostolic ardour to the holy cause of spreading the Gospel throughout the world (cf. *Encyclical Fidei Donum*);

— *To you, priests*, whose faith aspires to communicate itself on wider fields, come and bring the fire of your zeal to those whose simplicity of life has safeguarded their sensitiveness to the values of the spirit;

— *To you, religious*, whose life is totally directed to imitation of the Lord, join the valiant generations of missionaries who for centuries have become, each in his turn, messengers of faith, peace, and progress (*Ad Gentes*, 8);

— *To you, young men and women*, whose heart, eager for truth, justice, and love, seeks noble causes to defend by disinterested effort, we say: Listen to the call to become heralds of the Good News of Salvation; come with the riches of your faith and your youthful enthusiasm, teach men that there is a God who loves them;

You, who are rich, give of your possessions which God has placed in your keeping that the apostle may live and that his pastoral undertakings may prosper;

You, who are poor, give your struggle and toil for your daily bread, that all may share that bread;

You who suffer, you who weep or are persecuted, give your suffering, that the Body of Christ may grow in justice and hope (cf. Colossians 1:24);

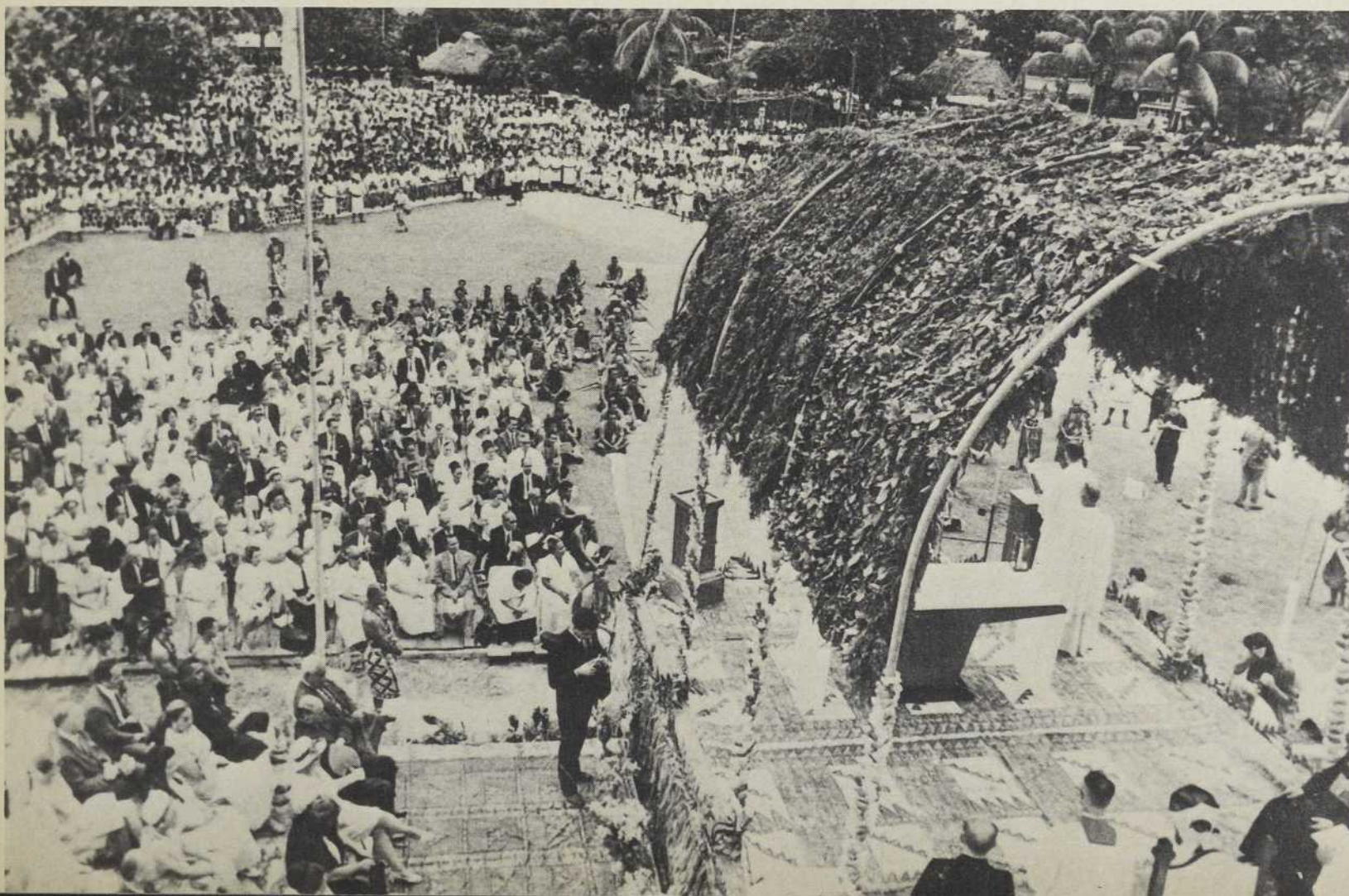
— *To the whole of Catholic Christendom* we say: "Widen the space of your tent, stretch out your hangings freely" (Is. 54:2); give the world, as it advances towards unity, the indispensable nourishment of harmony. For, while seeking the truth together brings men closer, only the meeting of hearts cements their unity. In the Spirit of Jesus Christ build up the immense Mystical Body which is the Church in process of being formed. *God has need of you* that about Christ the Saviour there should be raised and joined in harmony the hymn to the Creator, God who is Father of all (Eph. 4:6).

— Unknown brothers and sisters, listen to our voice. And the grace of the Lord be with you. Amen.

Members of the picturesque band and flag-bearers who accompanied Pope Paul during his visit to western Samoa.



Mass celebrated by the Holy Father at Apia. The altar stands on a platform erected in front of the cathedral. Overhead, a dais of intertwined palm fronds affords protection from the elements.



SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



On December 1 Paul VI boarded the launch which carried him from the Apostolic Delegation to St. Mary's Cathedral where he took part in the assembly of Oceania's hierarchy and met the Australian clergy.

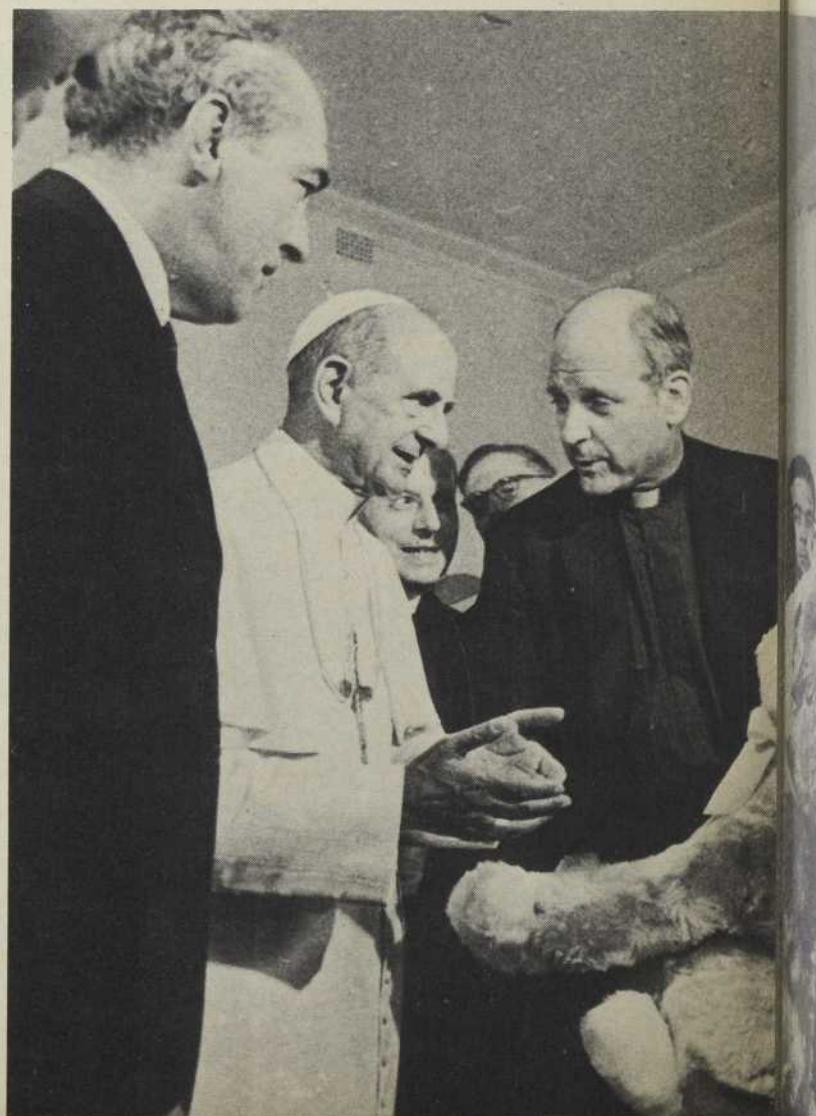


The Pope visits the world's most important annually cared for in standing on his bed

During this trip, Pope Paul VI conferred episcopal consecration on New Guinea's first autochthonous bishop, Mgr Louis Vangeke, a Missionary of the Sacred Heart. The new bishop here confers with the Holy Father.



Pope Paul VI looks on as toys are distributed in andra Hospital, Sydney.



DJAKARTA, INDONESIA

In the course of his journey to Asia, Pope Paul VI called at Djakarta, capital of Indonesia. During this visit, he offered Mass at the Stada Senajan for the intentions of the Indonesian people and gave audience to representatives of local regions.

A bonze pays his respects.



Royal Alexandra Hospital of Sydney one of the centres of pediatrics. Over 50,000 children are in its spacious wards. Unabashed, this little boy holds the Pope's hand.

his name to the poor children in the Royal Alex-





Pope Paul VI delivers a homily during his Mass celebrated at Djakarta. This appropriate symbol of an open hand decked the podium where stood civil and religious authorities.



At the Offertory, a procession of faithful of all ages and social conditions carry typical produce of the land to the altar.

COLOMBO, CEYLON

Late in the evening of December 4, the Holy Father spent a few hours in Colombo, capital of Ceylon.

Accompanied by Cardinal Cooray of Colombo, Paul VI rides in a jeep topped by a picturesque dais. On the way, he waves to the crowds who attended his Mass celebrated on the airport grounds.



HONG KONG

Paul VI stayed three hours at Hong Kong on December 3. These photographs were taken during the Mass offered at the city stadium.

Above the crowd, spilling all over the stadium, looms a picture of Christ the King surmounted by the Papal arms.



THE MONK AND THE MISSION

by André-Marie Gosselin, O.C.S.O.

To a certain number of Christians, the monk may appear as a sign of contradiction. He may at times, be accused of professing a closed spirituality, woefully oblivious of the universal dimensions of the evangelical agape.

The Precursor has interviewed Father André-Marie Gosselin, Trappist, on the following controversial subject—in what manner and to what extent is the contemplative monk called to participate in the mission of the People of God today?

— *Father André-Marie would you explain your ideas regarding the renewed concept of the mission?*

— The new theology of the mission is largely influenced by the concept of the Church-Sacrament or the Church-Mystery. As such, the assembly of the faithful, in communion with the Father, is a reality which is at once visible and invisible.

— *What exactly do you mean by the expressions "Visible and Invisible Church"?*

— The invisible Church corresponds to the mystery of salvation in its transcendental reality. "Anonymous Christians" are included therein. The visible Church corresponds to the mystery of salvation in so far as it is incarnated in this world, manifested in the history and life of man on his way to heaven. In this visible dimension, the Church is the sign, the sacrament of salvation in the midst of this world.

— *In your opinion what should be the participation of Christians in the mission's "invisible" dimension?*

— They should participate in this invisible dimension through missionary prayer as well as through vicarious suffering.

— *Are not all believers bound to participate in Christian apostolic action?*

— Indeed they are. Their active participation in the integral mission of the Church on the visible level of salvation is founded on the exigencies of their baptism and of their confirmation.

— *What theological significance is attached to the profession of the evangelical counsels?*

— This profession may be described as a personal liberation in view of going about the Lord's work. Such personal liberation implies the duty of working, in a wholehearted manner, at deepening the reign of Christ and at spreading it everywhere, to the extent of one's power and in conformity with one's personal vocation. This consecration is eloquently described in Chapter VI of *Lumen Gentium*. For my part, I consider the monk as a man who lives up to the Gospel's fundamental values. To the latter he adds those of the counsels regarding celibacy for the sake of the kingdom, effective poverty and obedience, separation from the world. Monastic life might be envisaged as a differential element of our way of life, situated in the ascetical prolongation of the three traditional evangelical counsels.

— *Is there a biblical text which might help elucidate the "missionary charism"?*

— The following key text might be cited: "... the Holy Spirit said, 'I must have Barnabas and Saul dedicated to the work to which I have called them'." The missionary vocation is a call to a dedicated life in the Spirit and in communion with the Church. Certain Christians accept this full-time involvement in the ministry of the mission. Even married Christians may be endowed with this charism.

— *Such an involvement certainly requires genuine witnessing. The mystery of salvation is not easy to live up to . . .*

— This mystery must be lived in all its plenitude. The invisible mission, the deepest dimension of the missionary ministry, consists in prayer and vicarious suffering. Moreover, the visible mission must also be fully lived. This mission is carried out through the kerygma, catechesis, aid to developing countries, etc.

— *On what is based the contemplative monk's fundamental missionary duty?*

— Mainly on his baptism and confirmation as for those who have not been endowed with full-time mission.

— *Has contemplative monastic tradition always remained open to particular or accidental "missions"?*

— Yes, as long as such openness did not alter the essential spiritual physiognomy of Institutes. The Cistercian order, for one, has set such an example from its inception. The charismatic involvement of Saint Bernard in the main events of his time, and the participation of Cistercians in the struggle against heresy prove this conclusively enough.

— *In what manner does the contemplative monk participate in the invisible mission of the Church?*

— I have mentioned it elsewhere, but I will repeat it here: through prayer and vicarious suffering. Every

(continued) p. 288



Symbole de la Sainte Russie.

I — STATE VERSUS RELIGION

The new religion and the outlawed Church

Before the October Revolution, Church and State were one in Russia. In the years that followed, the

and will fall under the penal and civil code.

The formation of a "living Church" placed under the so-called moral support of the government was used as a stratagem to abolish the Patriarchate. Seventy "reactionary" bishops became victims of their fidelity to Christ. Religious education was banned. Seminaries were liquidated, since the Church could no longer be suffered to hold property. Religion was gradually effaced from the minds of a vast multitude of Russian people. The council of the Orthodox Church was rendered helpless. Permission by contract was required in order to utilize furnishings or properties which were promptly liquidated if needed by the State. Religious ceremonies might be held only in places of worship and with authorization of the secular powers.

Justification of Party's manoeuvre and of communistic ethics

Why should this political party be so savagely opposed to religion? As a message of the Great Beyond, why should the latter be denied a specific place in the life of a nation? What lay behind the new regime's special project?

The aim of Marxist-Leninist ideology is to make man estranged, torn between two ideals, stripped of everything. A new type of man integrated in and fulfilled by socie-

regards religion as "the opium of the people, a perverse reality."

The happiness of the "new man," according to communist ethics, also possesses its criteria, the highest being the struggle for the promotion of communism. To this end, Lenin taught that everything was good which promoted communism and everything was bad which impeded its progress. In a word, everything which induces "misunderstanding between classes, even lies, treachery, impurity," was to be considered holy and sublime, another good reason for eliminating the religion which stresses "meekness and peace."

The Soviets' faith

Since religion is anti-scientific, the new ethics taught by communism preach faith in science. In URSS, the moral, religious, and political ideal of the State has been imposed as the religion of the people. "Lenin has proclaimed this once for all and whatever Lenin has said is to be accepted as gospel truth" (Henry Layset). Therefore, the Christians were robbed of their churches which have been turned into astronomical observatories, their rounded domes easily lending themselves to the observation of the stars and planets. Turned heavenward, the Soviets adore a scientific god. The "martyred Galileo" has usurped the place of Saint Olga and of Saint

Religion in RUSSIA

traditional religion was forced to retreat underground. The nation itself underwent a remarkable metamorphosis. What then became of the Church as a whole?

For the last fifty years, the Communist Party has enforced its rule on 170,000,000 Russians. A fundamental law enacted in 1921 declared:

Henceforth, all propaganda or agitation conducted by representatives of religion and Church will be considered as being outside the limits of religious freedom

ty, came into being, a man so absolutely human and resourceful that he no longer felt the need for God. Marx alleged that religion was responsible for the exploitation of the masses in favour of capitalism. According to him, religion encourages and justifies injustice in this world by preaching resignation and urging the hope in a celestial compensation which he affirms does not exist. Moreover, the Church opposes violence, main and indispensable weapon in the hands of communists. The Marxist conception

Nicolas. Other saints in the communist pantheon are "Saint Copernic" and "Saint Newton." In some Balkan regions, the churches are used as markets, storerooms, museums . . .

II — THE CHRISTIAN REACTION **Russians and the new "Party"**

The era of the Russian revolution and its ideals gave rise to various reactions. What, in particular, has been the Christian reaction? Of its new adepts, the Party requires zeal, enthusiasm, total commitment. For

many communists, the silence and indifference of Christians in the face of crying injustice has annihilated all respect for the Christian religion. Violence is the mainspring of their action, their only hope. Communists, therefore, are the sworn enemies of religion. They consider believers as mentally deficient persons, second-rate foreigners. Those who are known as practising Christians risk losing their jobs. This is why only old women and those who have nothing to lose can be seen attending religious services in church. Many prefer the anguish of ignoring the answers that science is powerless to give to numerous problems, rather than to have recourse to the people's "opium." On the other hand, some convinced communists like Douglas Hyde (once in charge of the "Daily Worker") having finally discovered the errors of the Party and its false accusations against religion, have severed their relationship with the communists.

Russian women strenuously object to the rejection of their family ikons. Grandmothers, more particularly, "are enemies of the regime, friends of God." They constitute a social danger according to the newsheet, "Women of the Soviet Union."

With the advent of the regime, the total absence of religious training and religious preaching took their toll. The post-Revolution generation became the most estranged generation that ever existed. They hated religion, ignored it, and were not even conscious of their antagonism.

The third generation holds a different stance in relation to religion. Many young communists are secretly married by a priest and have their children baptized. The Party has introduced a form of "revolutionary" marriage and baptism to combat such "deviations," but it has not been very successful.

In the province of Pakov, 260 employees of communes and of other communist groups left their work in order to attend religious celebrations. Some institutions agree to combat religion, others refuse.

"Among youth there is no unwillingness to know or pay attention to religion . . . With a fairly open mind, an average representative of the younger generation looks upon religion with mixed feelings of unbelief and interest" (Saint Anthony's Magazine, Jan./70, p. 31).

Resurrection after forty years of persecution

Having briefly gone over the communist ideal, its exigencies, the radical changes effected with regard to religion, as well as the general reactions of Christians, can it still be said that the Christian Church retains any vitality in the Russia of today?

Over forty years of relentless persecution have been powerless to destroy the Church. Thousands of fervent Christians remain, and conversions are made. The Party watches the revival with anxiety. What of the future? As soon as violent anti-religious campaigns die down, so-called atheists turn to Christ, while clergy and faithful find reasons for renewed fervour in the sufferings of thousands of martyrs. Evidently, man cannot do without God.

In the course of the years 1943-45, the Supreme Soviet regularized its relations with the Orthodox Church. A council was held in Moscow and a new patriarch elected. In spite of countless difficulties, the Church achieved a genuine revival. Under the rule of Khrushchev (1954-59) 20,000 churches were opened (against 40,000 existing prior to the Revolution); the clergy numbered 31,000 priests, and 61 monasteries were opened. Alarmed by this religious renaissance, the communists launched a new assault. Now thoroughly convinced that religion will not die a natural death, as a Party leader has been heard to comment, the finishing stroke is called for.

New governmental tactics have evolved rendering obligatory a rabid *anti-religious education* in schools, at all levels. The review "Science and Religion" was launched with this end in view but the response was anything but enthusiastic. Pressure is brought to

bear upon the masses which continue to show their reluctance to accept godless propaganda. "The regime even tries to utilize religion in order to promote its exterior policies."

Today's situation — communism or God?

Is it possible that in spite of all these difficulties there should be anything left of religion today in Russia? Has Christianity been rejected once for all in the era of the "new godless man" educated by radical communists?

It is extremely difficult to speak about believers or non-believers in Russia today, for Christians are forced to conceal their religious persuasion in order to survive. True faith cannot be evaluated by the number of churches and of religious assemblies. According to Jean Marabini suffering patiently endured, can be the wellspring of true faith more so than the formalistic rites of certain Churches. Sanctity in the Russian Orthodox Church is of a passive nature, its value being manifested through witnessing.

Contemporary Russian youth, deprived of a religious background, are frequently infected by anti-religious prejudices. They look upon religion as the result of ignorance. They are restless and tempestuous, wary of Party slogans, feverishly seeking after the truth. "They may not know what the truth is but they detect falsehood for what it is" (R. Noviny). On Dec. 15, 1965, two young priests made open protestation against infractions of Soviet legislation with regard to freedom of worship. The Church possesses a certain vitality since it is still persecuted.

All facts considered, faith in Russia remains a dynamic force even though the State maintains its combative attitude. Who will have the last word, the State or the Church? Let us not lose hope that some day an entente will be established which will allow for a peaceful co-existence.

Adrienne Guay, M.I.C.

LEGION OF MARY 1971

Eight-day Retreats: July 3-11

August 28-September 5

PLACE

These retreats are held at the Retreat House of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Nominingue, Que. Nominingue is situated in the beautiful Laurentian mountains, 150 miles northeast of Ottawa, 125 miles north of Montreal, about midway between Mont Laurier and Saint Jovite.

INVITATION

These retreats are open to all men, women, and girls who desire a holiday which offers an opportunity to find peace of mind and strength of soul.

PROGRAMME

Although these retreats are called "holiday retreats," the usual retreat programme is followed. However, there is a free three-hour period every afternoon allowing retreatants to enjoy Nominingue's recreational facilities. Every evening, a one-hour discussion on pertinent topics is held.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Nominingue's Retreat House is located at about one mile from Lake Nominingue where swimming may be enjoyed under ideal conditions. The air is bracing and refreshing which makes hiking, swimming, and even sleeping a delightful experience.

CLOTHES

We suggest sports clothes—skirts, blouses, sweaters, summer dresses, etc. Good walking shoes are important. Retreatants are requested to provide their own towels and face cloths.

ACCOMMODATION AND COST

Each retreatant has a comfortable private room. Meals are excellent. The cost exclusive of transportation will not exceed \$55.00.

RESERVATIONS

Reservation may be made through:

Ottawa: Miss Mary Brennan, 2102, Carling Avenue,
Tel. 722-8498

Toronto: Miss Lydia Remedios, 19, Southvale Drive,
421-7841

Montreal: Sister Alice, M.I.C., 58, rue Desnoyers,
Pont-Viau, 669-4133

On the occasion of the Legion of Mary's golden Jubilee, "The Precursor" extends heartfelt congratulations to the Founder and to the millions of Legionaries throughout the world. May their apostolic achievements fructify and may they have an ever increasing share in bringing the world to Christ through our Lady.

MADAGASCAR

FASHIONS CHANGE CUSTOMS ENDURE

Officials in charge of the National Council of Malagasy Women's Associations staged an original fashion show here last Tuesday. This manifestation proved particularly interesting since it recalled many a Malagasy style of the past.

Fashions in dress and coiffure, formerly current in the various provinces of Madagascar, were vividly represented under the dynamic direction of Mrs. Zaiveline Ramarosaona.

As a rule, modern Malagasy women adopt worldwide fashions as long as these are considered proper and becoming. In remote provinces, however,

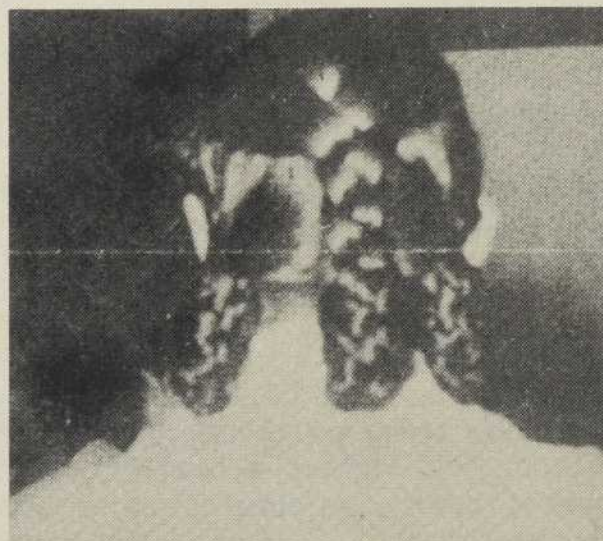
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ancient fashions prevail. The elegant *lamba*, for instance, continues to be worn on all occasions.

Enumerated below are several modes of coiffure and of fashionable dress which you may still admire if you visit the Island:

1 – *BANGO ANAKOVA*: a Betsileo coiffure. The hair is parted in the middle and on the sides, and arranged in fine braids coiled into round buns securely sewn into place. These buns must be perfectly round and flat. This used to be the exclusive headdress of young ladies of noble lineage.

2 – *VOLA TALLY*: numerous little braids set in symmetrical fashion characterize this Bara coiffure. A pearl necklace is usually wound around the head and

hangs down in front. Silver pieces complete the ornamentation.

This headdress was often used by the "Serivary", Bara dancing girls, who also wore a long silver necklace crossed over the breast.

3 – *KIROZAROZA*: this typically Merina coiffure consists of one heavy central braid and two side braids. This headdress is still used in the neighbourhood of Tananarivo.

4 – Above, a costume worn by the Sakalava, especially those living in the Morondava region. The sleeveless waist is usually made of blue material. A colourful *lamba Moany* is thrown around the shoulders. The *lamba Miditra* coiffure is a variant of the *randra madikina* fashionable in the capital.

5 – Opposite, the Betsimisaraka style of dress usually worn by young girls of the eastern coast districts. The hat is always wide-brimmed. As to the dress, it is made up of a pink waist and a brightly coloured skirt (*reritra ambaniana*) tied around the waist. The coiffure consists of five little braids coiled into a neat chignon on the nape of the neck.

6 – This plain and becoming costume is still worn in the Tananarivo suburbs. An embroidered *lamba* is worn over a skirt tightly gathered at the waist.

(Madagascar Courier)

4



5



6



Christian endowed with the missionary charism is also called to live in plenitude his communion to the Church's invisible mission.

— *How about the participation of the contemplative monk in the Church's visible mission?*

— The monk is the witness to the "one thing needful." His life, therefore, has rich, profound, and actual significance. Through his radical communion with God lived in silence and solitude, in the midst of a materialized world, he is called upon to be a living witness of the "one thing needful." His life represents the most profound dimension of an authentic Christian existence—contemplative relation to the Father, with Christ, in the Spirit. Monastic life is thus an efficacious sign of the realities to come. It reminds man that "the fashion of this world is soon to pass away."

— *How do contemplative monks practise the Christian works of mercy?*

— Our involvement in the service of our fellowman assumes various forms:

• Traditional hospitality in view of the local Church's edification. In a certain manner, the monastery becomes a training school in the service of the Lord.

• Missionary aid, thanks to certain "monastic missions." Allowing one or many monks to undertake a spiritual and, at times, charismatic ministry . . . A case in point—Saint Bernard in the XIIth century. Another form of "monastic mission" might consist in sending a team of monks to help in constructions to be used by the needy . . .

— *How does the monastic community contribute in manifesting before men something of the ideal of a Christian community such as outlined by the Lord?*

— By living in its fulness the evangelical life, in the midst of a community of charity. The union of brothers in the evangelical agape is the sign of Christ's coming through the realization of his commandment: "The mark by which all men will know you for my disciples will be the love you bear one another" (Jn 13:35).

— *In your opinion has monastic spirituality any chance of survival?*

— Certainly. It need only remain open to the exigencies of the Gospel in the times that we live in.

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

NIHIL OBSTAT,

April 14, 1971

Rev. Jean-Charles Valin

To communicate with the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

ASIA: *Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan*, Provincial House, 125 Waterloo Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

CANADA: General Administration, 121 Maplewood, Montreal 153

CENTRAL AFRICA: *Malawi and Zambia*, Regional House, P.O. Box 47, Mzimba, Malawi.

GUATEMALA: Colegio P. Betancourt, Totonicapan, Guatemala, C.A.

LATIN AMERICA: *Bolivia, Chile, Peru*, Regional House, Pedro Murillo 963, Depto "F", Pueblo Libre, Lima, Peru.

MADAGASCAR: Regional House, Tsaramasay, Tananarive.

PHILIPPINES: P.O. 3400, D-404, Manila.

UNITED STATES: 207 Pleasant Street, 01752 Marlboro, Mass.

WEST INDIES: *Haiti*, Regional House, Novitiate, Cité no 2, C.P. 1085, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
Cuba: Apartado 21, Colon (Matanzas), Cuba.

Postal address:

THE PRECURSOR

Box 157

Head Post Office

Ville de Laval

P.Q., Canada

