



Photo: Swiss-Foto, Lima

Primitive Pucallpa houses bathed in sunset glory.

Taiwan

Taize

Peru

Philippines

Haiti

THE PRECURSOR

Missionary Information Magazine

March-April, 1973, Ville de Laval — Vol. XXX — No. 8



PERU — Missionaries endeavour to organize courses in fundamental education for illiterates such as this peasant woman living on the fringe of society, in order to have her do her share in local development.

Photo: Correo, Lima

The Precursor

No 8 — March-April 1973 — Vol. XXX

Second Class Mail Registration No. 0358
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LIMA, PERU

SOCIAL SERVICE PROBATION

**Sister Agnès Bouchard, M.I.C.
writes to her companions in Canada**

Focused on man considered in all his dimensions as well as on the society in which he lives, Social Service is far-reaching and complex. It utilizes social and psychological sciences in its work of individual and communal transformation.

The curriculum is at once theoretical and practical. It comprises sociology, psychology, methodology of social sciences, social work and its technique, as well as statistics, administration, and research.

Professional practice periods are also included. Indeed, they play a very important part in the immediate formation of social workers. Such periods are carefully organized so as to meet the requirements of each student. Under the direction of a qualified teacher and of the social worker in charge of the practical centre, the students learn to apply their theoretical and methodological knowledge.

Moreover, professional practice aims at helping individuals, groups, families, and communities so as to enable them to solve their problems in an efficacious manner. In developing countries, practical application of what the students have learned, takes on another dimension: they aim at awakening interest, educating,

training, integrating the individual, the group, or the community in the strategy of social changes or initiating them if the society in which they live remains static.

Such have been my professional obligations during the three years of practice included in my four-year-course in social service. I would like to share my experiences with you all. The following paragraphs will give you an idea of what I have been doing and why.

— 1969 —

With a companion I was assigned to the parish of *Cristo, Luz des Mundo* (Christ, Light of the World), situated at about one hour's drive from Lima. The inhabitants number 40,000.

You have probably often heard about the Latin American *barriada* or slums. *Cristo Luz des Mundo* spreads over an area of five kilometres. It blankets one half of a sandy mountain whose surface is drab and arid.

Our first contact with stark reality was something of a shock. The situation seemed so hopeless that we wondered what could be done to assist these people. We started scouting the neighbourhood and investigating the outside and inside functioning of the Social Service Centre. Files, reports, index cards, programmes, and activities were examined. Then we got in touch with the Centre's personnel in order to collaborate and to achieve desired results.

We next explored the community. Visits were made to various institutions, to municipal headquarters, etc. so as to find means of cooperating in existing programmes of development or of initiating new ones. Confusion was thus avoided and we worked in a more effective manner.

We then met with divers groups and individuals to discuss existing needs and problems. These problems once discovered, we were expected to find ways of solving them satisfactorily. Therefore, we had to study them attentively and to endeavour to enlist assistance and cooperation. It was highly important to make sure that we understood what the people really wanted so as to assist them accordingly. There was no question here of imposing our own point of view.

Functioning social centres are usually not interested in having students collaborate in plans already elaborated. They prefer having them organize new systems. Social Service puts a premium on creativity. To a certain extent, the Centres benefit by student probations. New knowledge and new methods spark dynamism among the people.

It would be too long and too tedious to enumerate the works accomplished during our first year in social service. The University required us to work at least ten hours a week. We really put in double that time, taken up as we were by the urgency of the tasks waiting to be tackled.

During sociological surveys made in the sectors assigned to me, I discovered the existence of over twenty associations having similar aims and activities. On this



In 1971, I worked in Paccha. Photograph taken with a group of campesinas.

Photo: Correo, LIMA





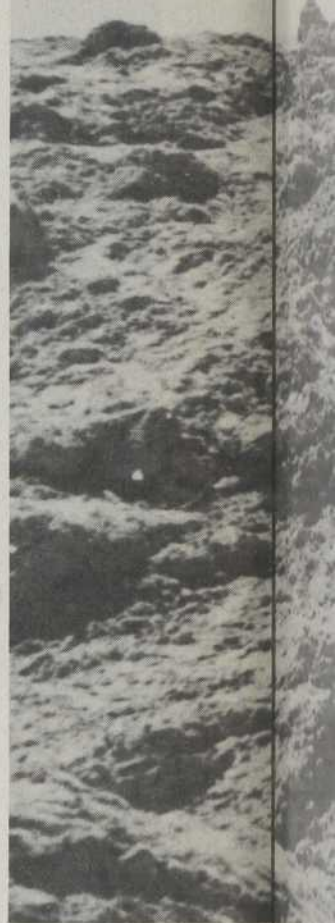




In the Andes.



Ancash in the wake of
the 1970 earthquake



Photos: Correo, LIMA.

number, a few existed in name only. Contacts were made with these associations and I tried to awaken members to the problems they were supposed to solve. Several associations agreed to merge; others were rejuvenated.

Research on the level of all beneficiaries of the national assistance programme enabled us to present the director of this institution with a report favouring more adequate training facilities for the destitute of this region.

Next came office work. We were expected to put into practice the methods of orientation, administration, and information we had learned. This was done in agreement with various sectors of the Centre as, for instance, in the case of family promotion.

The parish authorities also accepted the collaboration of several students in civil engineering, in housing projects, the laying of water mains, etc. Even if many among these volunteer collaborators did not see eye to eye with us with regard to man and development, we

in the
the 1971

wake of
earthquake.



found it to our advantage to work with them in the sphere of communal organization.

I found that the dual supervision of the Social Science Director and that of the University was highly beneficial. In social practice, a foreigner is bound to miss many a point and to make unfortunate mistakes. It is difficult, not to say impossible, for us to understand the people's reactions and their behaviour patterns. The control mentioned above facilitated our task of authentic integration into native community.

— 1970 —

During this second year, theory was oriented towards group social service. In developing countries, how can we organize cells which will ensure better interaction? How can we help in the social and personal development of the individual? Such cells should be a leaven of progress in the communal milieu. All the students endeavoured to put into practice the knowledge acquired to reach this goal.

The University, in coordination with the Department of the Health Ministry's Social Service, sent six students to work in an old section of Lima called *Los Barrios Altos* (Highlands).

Passersby had no inkling of what was going on at the far end of Ancash Street, in No. 1429. A partly hidden door opened onto three extremely poor sectors: *La Huerta Perdida* (Lost Garden); *Primavera* (Spring); *Amazona* (Amazon). When our acquaintances heard we had been assigned to work among the poor people in these slum areas, they sketched a furtive Sign of the Cross. None of them would have ventured on the premises after dark or even in broad daylight for that matter.

Both the University and the Ministry had warned us they could not assure protection unless we left the place before 6:00 p.m. Eventually several kind friends volunteered to act as our protectors. Once in a while, we had to stay beyond the stipulated hour when our work for the day was not quite done. We were none the worse for this breach of discipline.

My specific field of activity was the *Primavera*. Believe me, it had nothing of the freshness and beauty its name implied except for some of the lovable people I met here.

The *Primavera* covers an area of about one square acre where over 2,000 people eke out a meagre livelihood. No real houses exist, only hovels. At the entrance of the sector are two public lavatories, and two water taps which supply water needed for all household purposes. Just try to imagine the time wasted waiting for one's turn. Is it surprising that quarrels are very much in the news?

We started our work in this place by observing, getting in touch, trying to grasp the people's problems, their aspirations, their needs. Young people had been left to their own devices. Adults were in need of better preparation in order to handle their difficulties as family groups. Government institutions had to be cajoled into extending much needed help.

With Hilda, my companion, I discussed the situation. She agreed to tackle the mothers of families while I turned to the young. Juvenile clubs of many sorts were organized: sports, art, spirituality. Interest was aroused and interaction between members of the group was easily adopted. Individual capacities were developed, social and communal functions were improved. On the whole, our aims were achieved. This year of applied social science enabled us to understand the administrative workings of the country's social system, more especially that of the various Ministries.

We were supposed to work fifteen hours a week. Faced with so many complex situations, we usually worked twenty hours or more not counting time spent on buses, practical reports to be handed in, group meetings, etc. All in all, it proved to be a very busy year, and we were practically exhausted when the holidays came around.

In 1971, the scholastic year was spent in a more

relaxed atmosphere, the first semester consisting in study sessions only. During the second semester, practice was paramount. For my part, I spent three months in Carhuaz where I had already worked after the 1970 earthquake. No specific tasks were assigned. All we had to do was research work and adaptation to realities around us. Our class of forty-seven scattered to the four corners of Peru.

I started by making researches in rural areas where local teams were already at work. There were three farming groups of about three hundred families each, living two miles from the town of Carhuaz. Although it was a rather short walk to and from work, I found the altitude trying. But the grandiose panorama surrounding me on all sides easily made me overlook my fatigue.

The farmers around here are a patient, industrious lot, eager to apply the new farming procedures taught them by professionals sent by government agencies. I found that centres had been established for the training of local leaders. Great progress has been made. A few years ago, the farming populations in remote areas were completely cut off from the social life of the Peruvian people. Fundamental education has done much to improve this situation.

Here I was allowed to collaborate in certain government-sponsored rehabilitation projects. Such an experience in the company of professional teams, proved most rewarding to me as a rookie.

We were supposed to work thirty-three hours a week. On this total, a few periods had to be spent in research on divers projects. Such research is essential to progress as far as professional methods and techniques are concerned. Planification of social services and development of social welfare policies should be based on research. The latter forms part of the social service worker's formation.

These four months in Carhuaz were among the most profitable of the whole course. They were a direct preparation to my future apostolate among farming people. The supervisor blessed all my initiatives.

In the Sierra and in the provinces, our probation was a boon to people who have none of the amenities of life at their disposal. This sociological venture enabled us to discover and utilize to the full the human potentialities encountered among the farming population.

Looking back over the three years just elapsed, I thank God for the joys that came my way as well as for the troubles and cares. I have come away enriched in many aspects of life. It was thanks to my deep faith in the dignity and value of each human being and in the right each has to develop his potentialities that I was able to persevere in my undertaking. This is the faith that will keep me strong and eager to serve the Church and my Congregation for many years to come as a missionary and as a social worker.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SAPANG PALAY

Based on the ideas of
"THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONS"

A report on the social services extended by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception to the people in the Sapang Palay Project, Bulacan.

PHILIPPINES



DEFINITION OF THE FIELD PRACTICE:

In the interest of activating the capabilities of the residents of Sapang Palay to assist themselves, the process of social action used aims at the development of their sense of responsibility towards themselves, their dependents, and the whole community. This goal will be reached through their personal initiative together with the spirit of cooperation in realizing projects that are necessary and of common interest.

A. Types of People Served:

The client community is composed of four groups of settlers:

- I) tenant farmers: original settlers residing in the project before the acquisition of the land of PHHC;
- II) volunteers: groups of people who settled down here sometime in 1957 and 1959. They are composed of squatters and families, and of enlisted men who, on their own volition, migrated to Sapang Palay;
- III) flood victims: families whose squatter homes were destroyed by the typhoon on May 28, 1960. They came from Quezon City, San Juan, Caloocan and other places;
- IV) squatters exiled from Manila: families affected by the mass eviction conducted under the city Mayor's program of clearing the city of squatters.

Despite the divergence of background, all groups of settlers have a common basis on which they can cooperate and common problems of which they have become aware, and are willing to take the initial steps towards a solution.

Although they are people of different values, customs, and levels of literacy, they have become aware that they have to organize themselves so that stagnation will be avoided and progress attained. They are basically of the low income level. The security of jobs for unskilled laborers has driven quite

a number of men back to Manila; the rest, realizing their plight, are now trying to organize their own people and invite the National Manpower and Youth Council to teach them methods of skilled labor. As time goes on, the search for sufficient skills and education has become a vital need so that the different agencies working in the area are hard up in responding to their needs.

B. Type of Services:

In order to be fully effective, efforts ought not to remain scattered or isolated, much less in competition for reasons of power or prestige: the present situation calls for concerted planning. A planned programme is of course better and more effective than occasional aid left to individual goodwill. More important, a concerted plan has advantages that reach beyond the field of economic growth and social progress, for in addition it gives significance and value to the work undertaken. While shaping the world it sets a higher value on man (Par. 50, *Populorum Progressio*).

1—The Leadership Training Programs for Adults and Youth:

"It can be affirmed that economic growth depends in the very first place upon social progress: thus basic education is the primary object of any plan of development" (Par. 35 P.P.).

This program is geared towards educating potential and actual leaders to a better understanding of themselves, their community, and their role in the community. With the cooperation of the government, technical agencies and civic organizations, periodic seminars are being held. Typical subjects taught are the following: Barrio set-up and government, problems and needs of the community, qualities of good leaders, self-awareness, national goals and interests, spirit of service.

2—Health Services

From 1966 to 1969, the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception undertook the management of the Health Center in the absence of the staff of the Rural Health Unit. This was supported by the people thanks to their block organization, their membership fees, and fund raising activities. Donations both in kind, cash, and services for the maintenance of the people were solicited.

By the middle of 1968, realizing that the people were now capable of running the Center by themselves, the Sisters turned the project over to them.

3—Religious Instruction in the Public Schools:

Six full-time catechists are teaching in four Elementary Public Schools with a total of 3,251 pupils. These teachers have taken basic and advanced courses in catechetics in Manila. The Sister-in-charge makes all the arrangements with the school authorities, supervises and helps in preparing children for confessions, communion, and confirmation.

4—Household and Religious Surveys:

Through this system they become acquainted with the conditions of life, and the problems and desires of the people for community upliftment. In this way too, they learn of cases for mission work like baptisms, marriage validations, etc.

5—Community Organizations:

A Sister acts as adviser of a neighbourhood council which is composed of several Block Organizations. In coordination with the Department of Social Welfare, the Sisters are able to hold monthly meetings with the officers and members of various groups in which all aspects of community life are thoroughly discussed, and the means of solving them are proposed. This is essentially an educational process. The members thus learn to analyse their own problems, and to set about solving them

through their own efforts, without relying so much on outside help.

6—The United Leaders Organization:

The ULO is an offshoot of the Leadership Seminar for the Block Leaders. The projects being handled by this organization concern not only particular communities but the whole of Sapang Palay. The Manpower Inc. is answerable to the ULO as a sponsoring agency. A Sister acts as adviser of this union of block leaders.

7—Economic Advancement:

A Communal Garden project has been launched for the initiation and improvement of backyard gardens. This is not only a profitable way of whiling away the time but gives people an opportunity of supplementing their daily diet and of gaining some extra money. One of the Sisters has started a seed bank, and has solicited help from the Ras-kob Foundation to help in her Socio-Economic Projects. A seminar for Plant Production is also being planned.

8—The Sapang Palay Vocational and Educational Center:

The Sisters pour most of their time into this project. Here mothers and girls are given the opportunity of using their time to gain extra money and start their own business in cottage industries. As of now the Center is operating with more than seventy sewing machines; a whole section is devoted to cottage industries. The Sisters take care of starting them off on the program of maintenance and marketing of products. The program is called to greater expansion.

What is most important to note in the development of the services being offered by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception is that it has gone hand in hand with the development of the community and the needs inherent in the progress of a client community. First, there has been the basic question of survival and health; second, the need for community development; third, the community's projection into the future and the need for education and stability. We think

that such a program answers the needs of the community in its search for humanism. Furthermore, it is our hope that this work has been imbued with the spirit which Pope Paul stresses in his encyclical:

"What must be aimed at is complete humanism. And what is that if not the fully-rounded development of the whole man and of all men? A humanism closed in on itself, and not open to the values of the spirit and to God who is their source, could only achieve apparent success. True, man organizes the world apart from God, but 'without God man can organize it in the end only to man's detriment. An isolated humanism is an inhuman humanism.' There is no true humanism but that which is open to the Absolute and is conscious of a vocation which gives human life its true meaning. Far from being the ultimate measure of all things, man can only realize himself by reaching beyond himself. As Pascal has said so well: 'Man infinitely surpasses man'." (No 42, P.P.).

The Missionaries of Sapang Palay





The young may be introduced to pastoral activities in various provisional and unexpected ways. During the course of my studies I made the somewhat daring project of forming a team of young people who would prepare for the Council of Youth by a short stay at the Taize priory, in France.

I worked on this project together with the students of five *Cegep* in the Eastern Townships. Animators of pastoral in these colleges gave me unlimited encouragement. From October 1971 to March 1972, all our free time was spent in seeking information and trying to increase our financial resources with a view to the projected trip to Taize.

Material organization and concrete planning allowed us to create a friendly atmosphere. All worked with patience and tenacity of purpose. We were also helped in a spiritual manner by the prayer of contemplative nuns.

Our aim was not merely the trip to France. We were chiefly interested in preparing adequately for the future Council of Youth, and hoped to benefit by eventual international relations. I was convinced that despite divergent aspirations, youth usually enjoys running risks.

COUNCIL OF YOUTH *FRIENDLY ENCOUNTER*

TAIZE

My activities were accepted as part of my experience as a student of the Sherbrooke *Cegep*. Someone has said that thanks to mass media we live in a global village where distinctions between countries and races are daily diminishing. We have finally come to the knowledge that all peoples are interdependent, that human relations should foster creativity and involvement even in a student milieu.

We chose the Taize priory as a suitable place where we might launch our human and religious project. A modest French village, Taize has its own particular history.

The Taize Community

This community was founded by Roger Schutz in 1940. His first associates were mostly Jewish refugees. Ousted from the village by the Gestapo, he returned two years later accompanied by three Brothers. In 1949, these first members of the community made the perpetual promise of celibacy, community of goods, and obedience. At present there are seventy Brothers. One in their ardent desire for genuine ecumenism, they come from divers religious persuasions. Wherever they happen to be, the Brothers assemble three times daily for prayer in common.

Brother Roger, prior of the Ecumenical Community, told the 16,000 young people gathered at Taize from 80 different countries that the Youth Council would open in 1974.

The aim of this recent foundation is to work at the reconciliation of separated Christians. Members also promote human development. They have several fraternities already at work among the destitute of the southern hemisphere more particularly. All the Brothers work for their living.

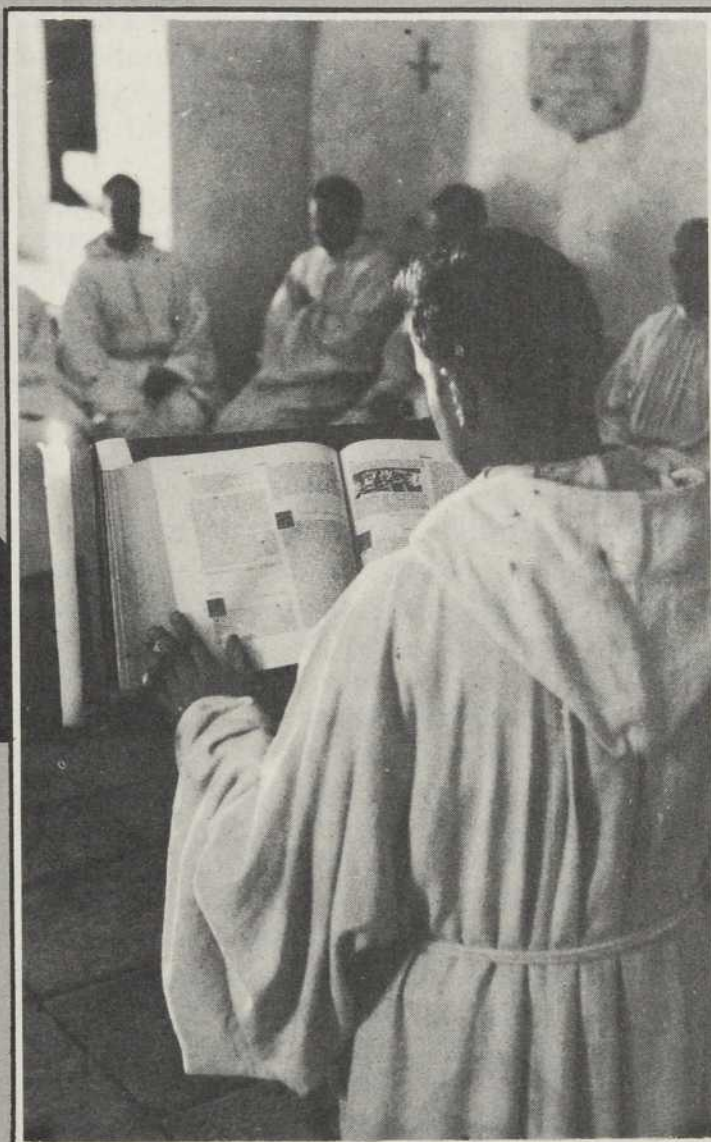
Taize has no touristic appeal

Tourists are not interested in Taize. And yet to this small village of thirty homesteads and only ninety inhabitants, sixteen thousand young people from eighty countries flocked at Easter 1972. Finding lodgings and food for so many was no easy job. We had to put up with the lack of basic necessities, but we spent there several unforgettably happy days in common research and fruitful dialogue on all the aspects of faith.

We had gone to Taize in order to discover the "other", to cooperate, to share. What did it matter if we often had to go cold and hungry?

Paschal news

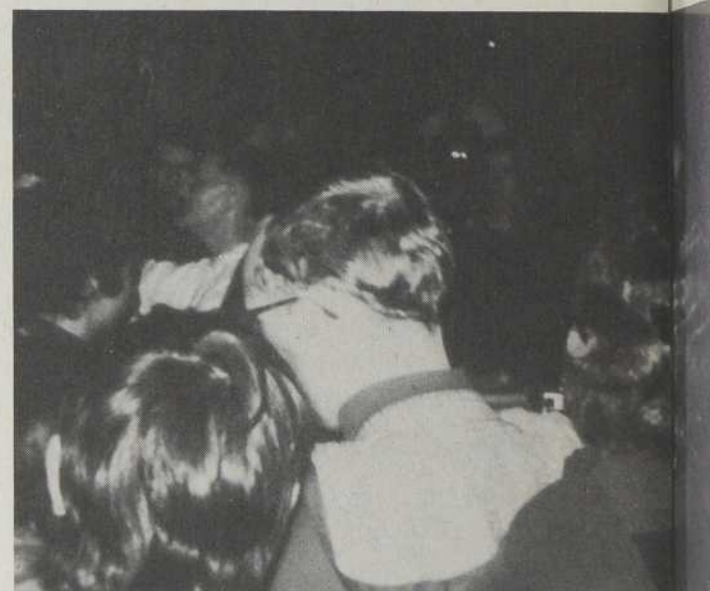
Young people from all over the world are going to Taize to meet Brother Roger, to talk things over with him. On Easter 1970, Brother's message was as follows: "The risen Christ wants to renew joy in man. He wants to prepare a new springtime of the Church. This





Church of the Reconciliation.

Sister Adrienne Guay spent a memorable Easter at Taize. Below: a few photographs of the event.



Brother Roger, prior of the Taize community.

Church must not be so much a powerful institution, as one always ready to share, a visible bond of solidarity among men. Christ will give us the imagination and courage we need to open the way to reconciliation. He is going to prepare us to give our life so that man be no longer victim of man".

The 1974 Council of Youth wants to translate this message into practice. It will be a great encounter, a friendly meeting between peoples of various countries, a renewal in the spirit of brotherhood.

In order to prepare efficaciously for this great event, it would be well to ponder the theme of this second year of preparation: "The risen Christ is preparing us to give our life so that exploitation of man by man be banished from our midst." As far as language is concerned, I think it is important to probe the deeper significance of terms such as: "source of life", "Eucharist", "resurrection", "Christ", "God", "Church", etc. These are central concepts of our Christian faith which we cannot clearly define. Nonetheless, we should never take them for granted. Young people are better prepared than they were a few years ago to delve into the treasures of the interior life. Their willingness to participate in justice through political involvement is complementary to their willingness to participate in interior adventure.

At Taize, we felt the pulsing life of the Church thanks to the intensity and force of common prayer. Morning, noon, and night we assembled to pray. What does prayer really mean to the young today? For us, prayer signified, above all, closeness to one another and union with Christ Jesus. There was no routine, no monotony but constant renewal. In our prayer, we "lived" the sufferings of the Church, we sang the glory

of God, we helped one another. We must experience the quality of common prayer in order to feel that we are all brothers; the children of a common Father. For us prayer was not a chore but a joy which we wanted to share.

Once or twice a week all the young people present at Taize gathered inside the church around Brother Roger. To the questions they had put beforehand he answered in a few chosen words, leaving the final solution to their own reflections. His aim is to teach men to appreciate life's simple values, to kindle the flame of genuine love in the world of today, to rebuild a Church of sharing all to the glory of the risen Christ.

One of the young students present at these meetings exclaimed, "What a man that Brother Roger is!"

In one of his talks to the young, Brother emphasized the need to turn a smiling face to the world. A serene smiling countenance impresses us more than words. This is easily accounted for. God meant human faces to reflect his own and his face is friendship. Nothing is more beautiful than a face rendered transparent by a life of struggles and victories over self.

"I enjoy looking upon people's faces, whether they are sad or luminous. My life is spent trying to understand other people's joys or sufferings. Sharing in their pain or in their happiness is of supreme importance to me."

Brother Roger knows that youth bears a heavy burden of responsibility. Throughout the world in rich or in poor countries, in the East or in the West, one finds young people keenly desirous of authenticity. They expect to find it in parents, teachers, and pastors. Above all, they want to be true to themselves. Modern youth hungers after justice. It yearns to be understood. Much



Arrival of the Canadian group.



is being said about dialogue on the level of the family, the Church, the school. The difficulty lies in really understanding the young. Brother Roger's idea of holding a Council of Youth is indeed a brilliant idea. Thanks to it, he gives us all a lesson in comprehension and in trust. Our young generations are in a state of crisis, at a moment which reflects the crisis of society itself. We must not fail in helping them attain their ideal. Brother Roger interprets the situation as follows: "Whether we like it or not, a new civilization and a new type of man are developing. The turning point of contemporary history brings us face to face with facts which are radically different from those typical of the civilizations in which we grew up."

Taize, a meeting place where distress, uncertainties, opinions, fears, may be freely expressed, where dialogue is made easy, where comprehension and commitment exist.

Lunch on the terrace.



In the hills of Burgundy, the peaceful village of Taize.

What unbelievers teach us

In the course of friendly exchanges at Taize I was surprised at a pro-Communist's knowledge of the Gospel. Another participant whose creed was existentialism gave us the following description of Christianity: Christ, Person and Life, committed to action in favour of others.

An interior adventure

At Taize we learned not so much to discuss life as to live up to an interior adventure. We learned to seek plenitude by first creating unity within ourselves; we grasped the value of simple things; we made up our mind to rekindle on earth the fire of true love.

Three times a day at Taize God is praised by liturgical prayer. Brother Roger believes that this is the way to achieve unity in faith. Mother Foundress also prayed for unity. She left her daughters a rich spiritual legacy — the spirit of thanksgiving in the name of all men.

Genuine liberation

While in Taize I examined myself on the problem of genuine personal liberation. What about it? Am I really and truly liberated? Christ brought liberation to all men. Have I done my share in liberating others as far as in me lies? I am firmly resolved to collaborate in achieving unity in my own life and in that of others. Taize to me is really a "sign of the times."

Adrienne Guay, M.I.C.

"In each soul, God loves and partly saves the whole world which that soul sums up in an incommunicable and particular way. But this summing-up, this welding, are not given to us ready-made and complete with the first awakening of consciousness. It is we who, through our own activity, must industriously assemble the widely scattered elements. The labour of seaweed as it concentrates in its tissues the substances scattered, the infinitesimal quantities, throughout the vast layers of the ocean; the industry of bees as they make honey from the juices broadcast in so many flowers — these are but pale images of the ceaseless working-over that all the forces of the universe undergo in us in order to reach the level of spirit" (Teilhard de Chardin: *Le Milieu Divin* p. 60).

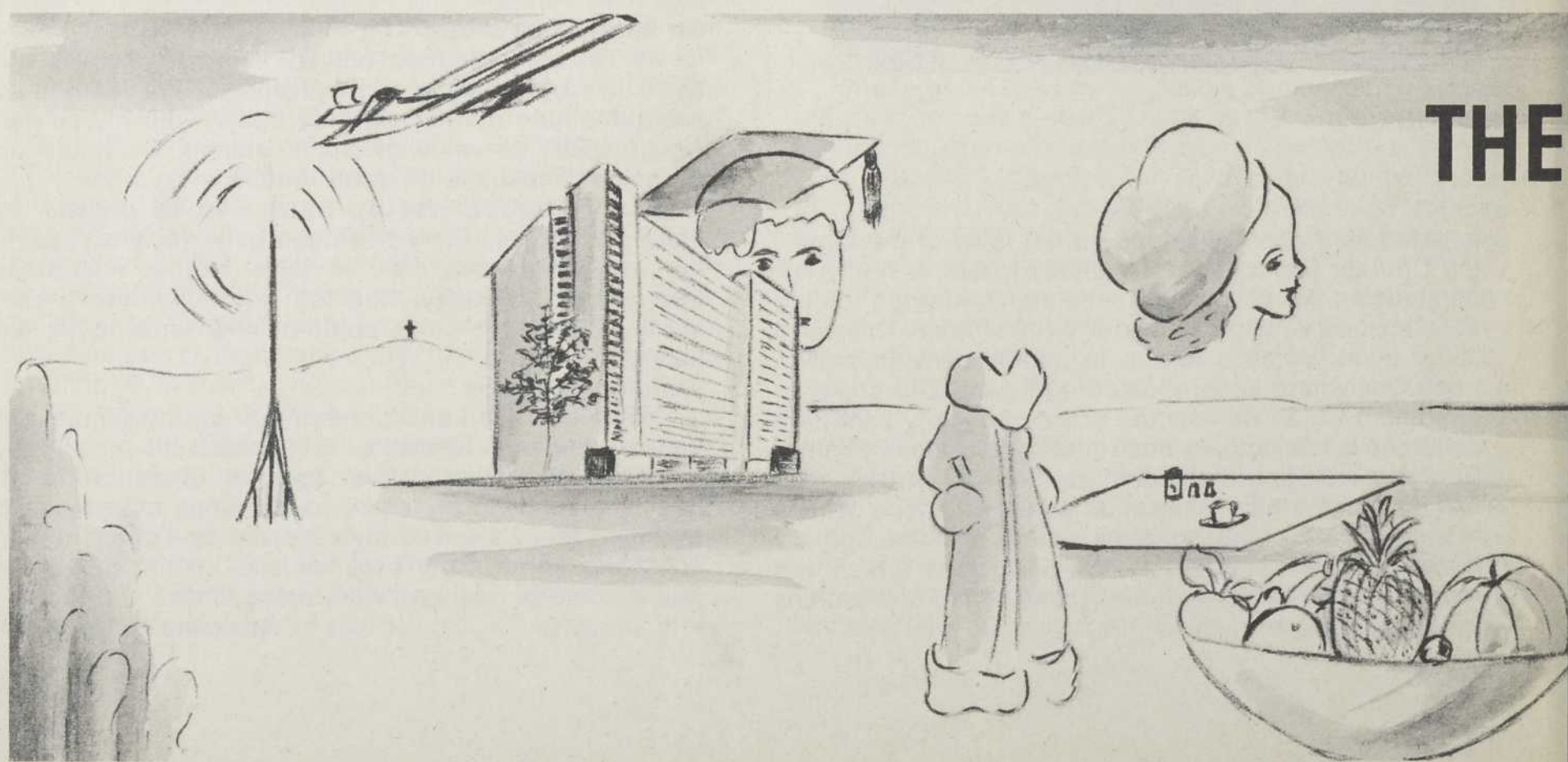
In this passage Teilhard de Chardin revealed his soul afire with love for God's universe. His brilliant mind plumbed the depths of creation, his penetrating gaze searched the souls of all men, his brothers, however distant. Lost in the desert of Ordos, where it was impossible for him to celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice, he offered up as a mystical oblation the efforts of the numberless multitudes of living beings. . .

Do we ever stop to think of all those to whose laborious efforts we are indebted for preparing our meals, for instance? At one meal, the produce of several continents are spread out before us: bread, rice, tea, coffee, salt. . . The same applies to the clothes we wear. Commerce and labour contribute to our welfare. Men of all lands endeavour to provide us with the best of everything, often at the sweat of their brow.

From northern climes come precious furs; from Argentine and Australia warm woollens; from the Orient fabulous silks; from tropical lands cool cotton. There is something for all tastes. Apparently inert substances daily undergo transformations for the pleasures, the

needs, and the luxuries of modern man. Daring space-men who have walked the moon's surface, now reach out to the stars. There seems to be no limits to the creative genius of man.

Such genuine efforts have no definitive value by themselves. Whether or not our earthly organizations prosper is of slight importance for eternity. Is everything we do, then, lost forever? Can we never hope to recuperate in the Great Beyond something of our human tasks? Love alone is important. It should overflow our entire life, not be like something put on. Whether we want it or not: "Through every cleft, the world we perceive floods us with its riches — food for the body, nourishment for the eyes, harmony of sounds and fullness of the heart, unknown phenomena and new truths, all these treasures, all these stimuli, all these calls, coming to us from the four corners of the world, cross our consciousness at every moment. What is their role within us? What will their effect be, even if we welcome them passively or indistinctly, like bad workmen? They will merge into the most intimate life of our soul and either develop it or poison it. We only have to look at ourselves for one moment to realize this, and either feel delight or anxiety. If even the most humble and most material of our foods is capable of deeply influencing our most spiritual faculties, what can be said of the infinitely more penetrating energies conveyed to us by the music of tones, of words, of ideas? We have not, in us, a body which takes in nourishment independently of our soul. Everything that the body has admitted and has begun to transform must be transfigured by the soul in its turn. The soul does this, no doubt, in its own way and with its own dignity. But it cannot escape from this universal contact nor from that unremitting labour. And that is how the characteristic power of understanding and loving,



which will form its immaterial individuality, is gradually perfected in it for its own good and at its own risk. We hardly know in what proportions and under what guise our natural faculties will pass over into the final act of the vision of God. But it can hardly be doubted that, with God's help, it is here below that we give ourselves the eyes and the heart which a final transfiguration will make the organs of a power of adoration, and a capacity for beatification, particular to each individual man and woman among us" (M.D., p. 59).

Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus had clearly grasped this phenomenon of interdependence we daily encounter in our dealings with others. In this spirit, she kept on walking for a harassed missionary in spite of her own exhaustion. We also can do as she did. Our efforts may then enable someone to hold firm in the face of apparently unsurmountable difficulties, to hope against all hope. Even our joys, thankfully accepted, may help to sustain the world. So many unknown brothers yearn for encouragement in their quest for Beauty. They desperately need the mysterious cohesion which links the humblest elements of the human family. Perhaps because of the very fact that we are loyal, fair, open-hearted, someone else will feel happier. The flame burning bright in our hearts may dispel the darkness in other hearts about to despair. Instead of repining because roses have thorns, should we not rather rejoice that roses exist? To love means to suffer, but resurrection springs from this very suffering.

This, then, is our mission in life — to help others as we would wish others to help us, to be cooperators with God in his creation.

In the love of others alone will man find his own liberation. He will achieve fulfillment only in as much as he shares in the common endeavour.

"Grant, O God, that the light of your countenance

may shine for me in the life of that 'other'. Grant that I may see you, even and above all, in the souls of my brothers" (M.D., p. 145).

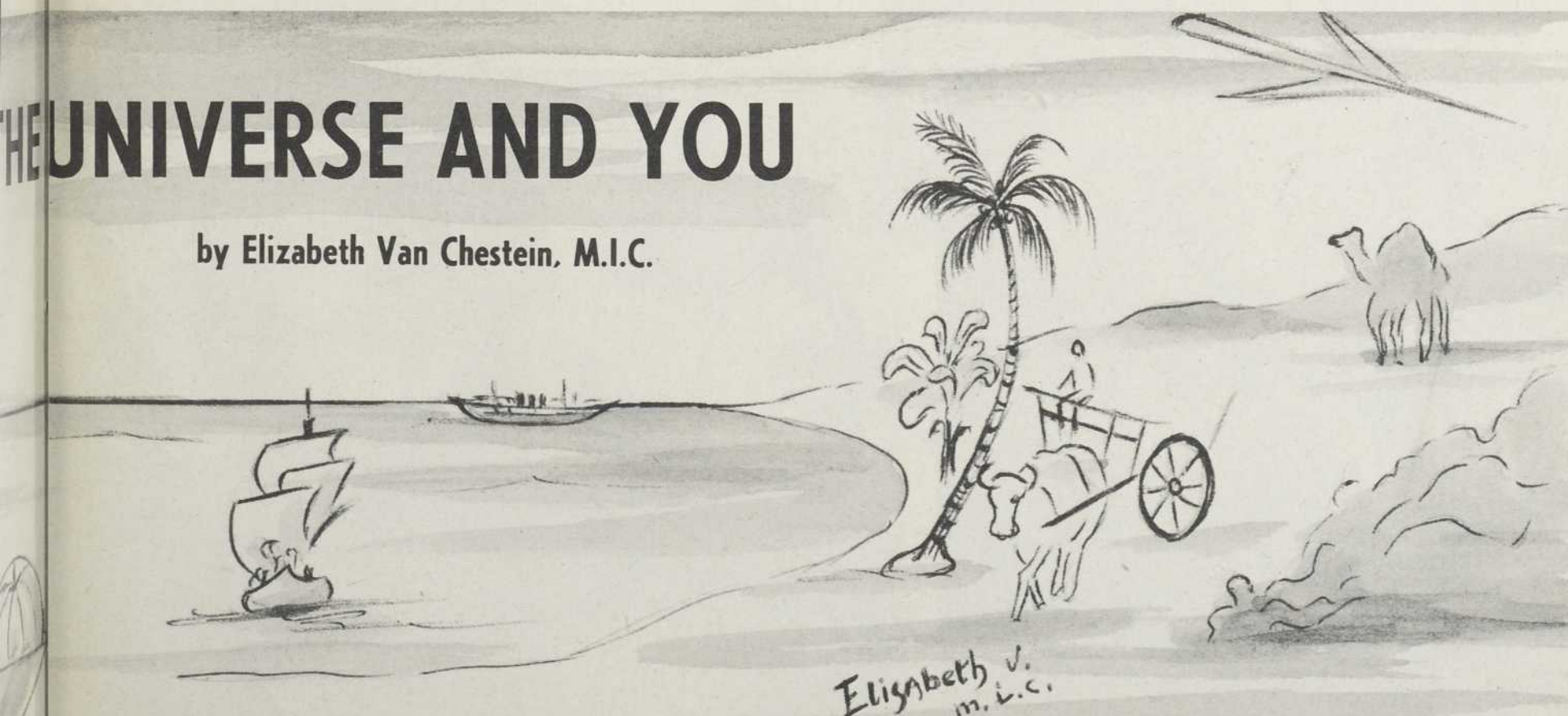
Christ unites us one to another. Whatever my words cannot convey, he will convey better than I ever could hope to. Whatever I ardently desire for the "other" but am powerless to give, he will give if it is beneficial. When men do not hear my voice because it is too weak or when they stop their ears because they do not want to listen, I can ask Christ Jesus to speak in my name. He will someday cause them to understand.

"The more I examine myself, the more I discover this psychological truth; that no one lifts his little finger to do the smallest task unless moved, however obscurely, by the conviction that he is contributing infinitesimally (at least indirectly) to the building of something definitive — that is to say, to your work, my God. This may well sound strange or exaggerated to those who act without thoroughly scrutinizing themselves. And yet it is a fundamental law of their action. It requires no less than the pull of what men call the Absolute, no less than you yourself, to set in motion the frail liberty which you have given us. And that being so, everything which diminishes my explicit faith in the heavenly value of the results of my endeavour, diminishes irremediably my power to act" (M.D., p. 55).

Such a doctrine is very inspiring for modern man in his quest for the Absolute. "*He makes his own soul* throughout all the earthly days: and at the same time he collaborates in another work, in another *opus*, which infinitely transcends, while at the same time it narrowly determines, the perspectives of his individual achievement: THE COMPLETING OF THE WORLD" (M.D., p. 48).

THE UNIVERSE AND YOU

by Elizabeth Van Chestein, M.I.C.



PHOTO/REPORT

Our apostolate in Haiti chiefly consists in pastoral activities and in works meant to promote development at all levels. Our aim is to raise the spiritual, intellectual, and material standards of the people. All are desirous of benefiting by education and of attaining a more acceptable way of life.

Chantal has a population of about twenty-five thousand (five thousand live in the town proper). The parochial organism, Catholic Community Development, is daily progressing. Fathers Marcel Péloquin and Joseph Vaillancourt, O.M.I., both in charge of the parish, seven Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, and a number of committed lay people, form a group which tries to extend a beneficial influence over the entire countryside.

Several movements such as the Legion of Mary, "Kiro" (a Scout movement adapted to Haiti), and "Christians Today" exercise a remarkable attraction over the young Haitian generations who are now better equipped to assume their responsibilities. Other organizations such as National Action, Alphabetization, Preventive Medicine, and Agriculture also contribute to development and to the promotion of women.

Three times a week, Sisters Emilienne Cantin, Eustelle Samson, and I give evening courses on dress-making, home economics, hygiene, and preparation to marriage. The parish hall and our schoolrooms are placed at the disposal of volunteer teachers who conduct evening classes for about one hundred and fifty.

Experiments in community gardens have also been launched. New agricultural methods ensure production of more vegetables.

1 — Gardening is a great feature in the Home Economics Professional Centre curriculum. At the opening of the school year, the various plots are choked with weeds. The students start by weeding and hoeing. Groups of students take turns tending the plots which produce all year round, thanks to the warm climate of Haiti. These hours spent in productive manual tasks are a good occasion to convince our young people that all labour is honourable in its way.

2 — Lessons in sewing include fashioning. The students learn to make basic patterns which they can then modify as need arises. They appreciate these courses which they can readily put to practical use at home.

3 — Sewing machines are rarely idle. Our young girls enjoy making various articles of clothing. During the two years of their course, they learn enough to enable them to teach others. After graduation, they become monitors or teachers in remote home economics centres. They can also help at our own Chantal centre. The Haitians are proud of the capacities they have developed.

4 — A competent and devoted Haitian teacher, Miss Jeannine Jeune, teaches the first year course at the centre. She will eventually be called upon to assume the entire responsibility.



DEVELOPMENT IN HAITI

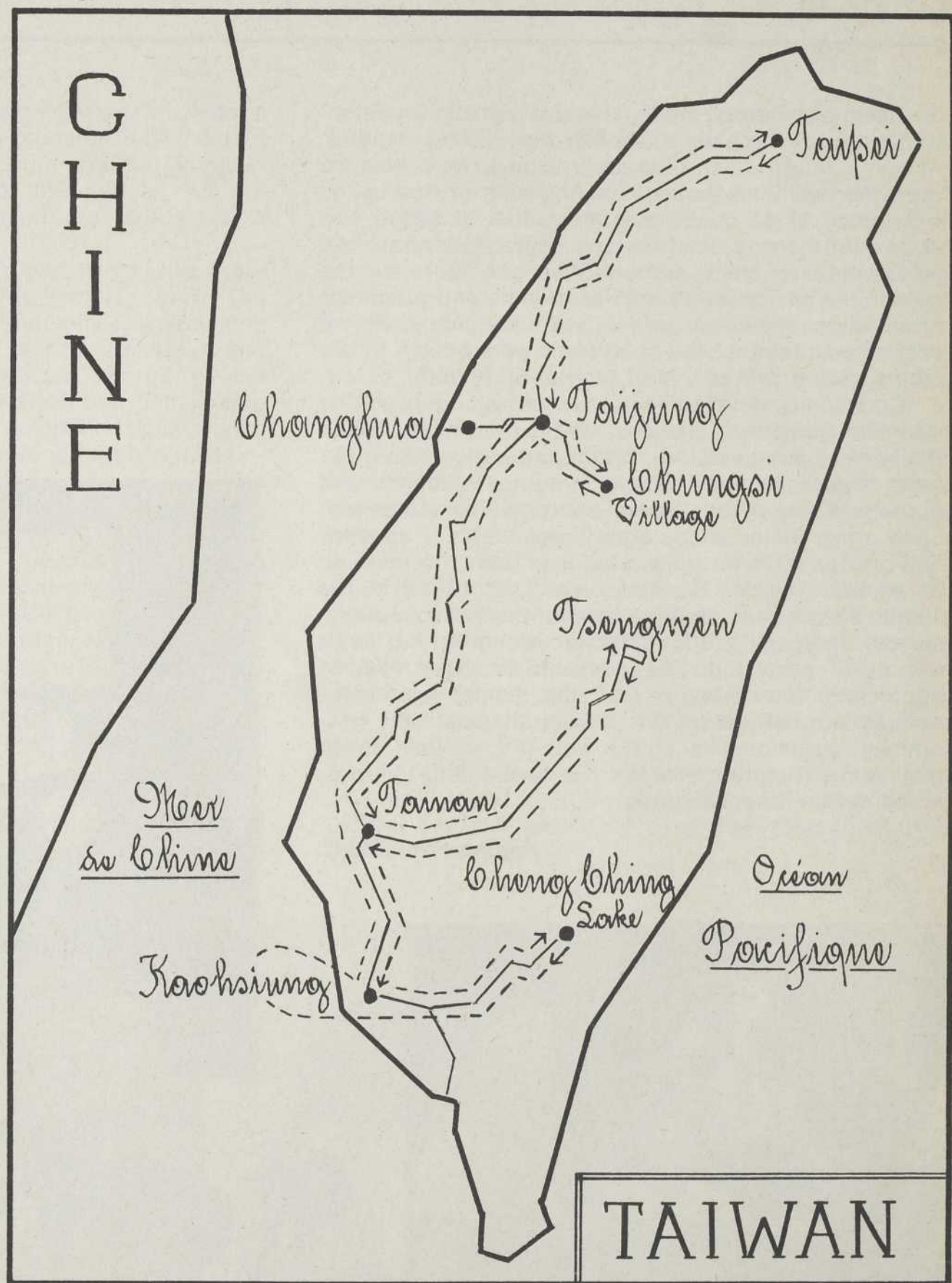
5 — One afternoon a week, students work in the kitchen baking pies, cakes, biscuits, and making candies. At home, little Haitian girls early learn to help Mamma cook the family meals usually consisting of rice boiled with peas, of an occasional meat dish of salted cod or smoked herring. Pastries and confectionery are not made at home since dessert does not figure on the Haitian menu. The same applies to jams and preserves of all kinds. These are sold in specialty shops. Do we ever stop to think of the poor when we sit down to our tables loaded with plenty of food of all kinds?

Community development reaches out to even the remotest mountain villages. Every morning, Sister Emilienne Cantin sets out, bright and early. Riding her mule, she visits each village in turn. Catechists and grade teachers at the Chantal centre welcome her with open arms. Sister encourages these youthful apostles and praises them for the work done. Then she rides on to another village. The heat and long hours in the saddle do not dampen the ardour of this seasoned missionary. In years, she is no longer young but her heart will never grow old. The peasants in these regions appreciate the schools and the home economics centres she has set up. As all schools must take government examinations at the end of the year, these mountain people are pleased and proud with this promotion of their social status.

Hélène Héту, M.I.C.



TAIPEI — KAOHSIUNG



His Excellency Governor Hsieh Tung Ming recently invited Archbishop Lokuang of Taipei, Mgr. Colasuonno, chargé d'affaires in Taiwan, and a group of thirty-seven Catholics — priests, religious, and a few seculars — to visit the Provincial Government Headquarters. These are situated in Chungsin Village together with other reconstruction projects launched in the province of Taiwan.

I was personally invited to take part in the tour. Besides, I was a guest at a tea party offered to the group, in the Taipei government offices, on the eve of the four-day trip. At this first meeting, we were given an outline of the itinerary and of the aim of the excursion, as well as other useful information. Rendezvous for the next day was assigned at the guest waiting room, in the Taipei railway station.

Early the following morning, we assembled at the station where special badges were distributed and tickets handed out for the 8:00 a.m. train. A whole compartment was placed at our disposal. The first leg of our trip between Taipei and Taijung lasted nearly four hours.

Upon our arrival at Taijung, we were met by a delegation headed by His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Hsieh. After a few moments, special air-conditioned vehicles took us directly to the Provincial Government Headquarters. At the entrance, an imposing billboard in Chinese and English welcomed the missionaries of the Catholic Church to the Taiwan Provincial Government Headquarters. Similar billboards greeted us everywhere we went inside the offices. In the great reception hall, the Governor in person extended a friendly welcome. Archbishop Lokuang answered in the name of the group.

We were next introduced to Taiwan's economy. It proved very interesting to study large mobile panels illustrating the Island's economic progress. We were especially impressed with the precisely detailed statistics and the rapid progress realized. The following are a few excerpts which may be of interest to our readers.

Geography

Taiwan is about 240 miles in length and about 90 miles at the greatest width. Its area, including the Penghu Islands (Pescadores) and other Islets, is 35,981 square kilometres. A chain of mountains bisects the Island. Of these peaks, 62 rise above 3,000 metres; the highest soars 3,997 metres. The climate is semi-tropical, with plenty of rainfall and sunshine.

With the exception of mountain regions, a total land area of 871,000 hectares (slightly less than one-fourth of the total area) is under cultivation. More than half of the land area lies in mountain regions. This explains why intensive cultivation is essential and is widely practised. Development of intercropping and crop rotation as well as use of advanced techniques and of fertilizers have boosted farm output. In some places, up to four crops a year are harvested. The Island grows one-quarter of the world's supply of mushrooms. It is the world's largest pineapple producer. Sugar is still the biggest cash crop although industrial products have displaced it at the top of the export list in recent years.

At the close of 1946, the population numbered 6,090,860. In 1971, it had risen to 14,994,833 (1,839,641 live in Taipei). With Taiwan only slightly larger than Vancouver Island, the population is one of the highest in the world.

Education

Back in 1944, there was 1 university, plus 4 colleges with a roster of 2,174 students. By 1971, there were 5 universities, 11 independent colleges, and 62 other educational establishments totalling 151,000 students. At present, 20% of the population is made up of students — 1 person out of 3.7. About half the population are aged 19 or under.

After this encounter with the province, we were led to the dining room for lunch. An official representative of the government presided each table. Interesting subjects were launched while food was served.

For my part, I sat at a table presided by Mr. Ku, an employee of the Jyau Yu Bu. He had been taught English by Sister Marie Gérin, M.I.C. It was a treat for him, he said, to meet a Sister from An Tung Street. He solicitously inquired after his former language teacher whom he held in admiration.

After lunch, we were invited to visit four exhibits, all dealing with an accelerated programme of industrialization, and of modernization of agriculture. A programme of political, social, and educational reconstruction was also elaborated.

In the late afternoon hours, we set out for a tour of an experimental farm, at Jang Hwa, called the Bank Mt Dairy Project. The latter project is a new daring enterprise in Taiwan. Until now, it had been practically impossible to raise milk cows in the Island because of the tropical heat. The Bank Mt Dairy Project is of recent origin. Cattle imported from Australia have been transferred to mountain heights where cooler air seems more favourable. On the other hand, the problem of fodder remains. The animals cannot be put out to pasture and must usually be fed inside the stables. This region is the kingdom of the pineapple. Surrounding hillsides are blanketed with these plants. Their juicy leaves are used as fodder after being chopped up by special machinery.

Visiting the dairy was a pleasant event. Everything here is spotless and ultra modern. Milk goes through a special sterilization process which allows it to be kept in hermetically sealed containers for three months without benefit of refrigeration. Glasses of milk flavoured with chocolate, orange, strawberry, etc., were passed around. We found the drink delicious.

Second day

The day was ushered in by celebration of the Holy Eucharist in the hotel dining hall.

Breakfast over, we set out for Tainan in order to visit an institution dedicated to the rehabilitation of young delinquents. We received a warm welcome from the personnel.

Established in 1956, this school helps young delinquents, boys as well as girls, regain their dignity as human beings. It also prepares them to re-enter society as honest and useful citizens. Means to this end are courses on civics, personal discipline, the Scout movement, recreational activities, religious courses given by Presbyterian ministers, and manual tasks. The school also dispenses professional training. Formation is carried on within the institution itself or in cooperation with outside establishments. A system of Guidance for Life is operated for those who leave after purging their sentences.

From Tainan we left for Tsengwen, the site of a huge reservoir in the process of being set up. We were provided with yellow plastic bonnets before being allowed to enter the construction site. This reservoir will have a capacity of 599,000,000 cu. m. It spreads over an area of 17 square kilometres. The dam rises 130 m. above the foundations. We rode by jeep over the subterranean plan of the generator, an installation of 50,000 kw. This construction which will cost \$152,175,000.00 (U.S.), will supply irrigation, hydraulic power, water reserves, and control of inundations. The project launched in October 1967 will be completed by the close of 1973.

It was now time to return to Kaohsiung. We reached the military camp about 6:00 p.m. Veterans stood guard at the entrance. Here we enjoyed movies, had supper, visited the camp and its numerous utility rooms and dormitories. Aged or crippled soldiers, unable to earn a livelihood, are cared for in this camp. At present, they number 2,460. A personnel of 113 ministers to their needs. Age average is 63. The camp is situated in pleasant surroundings and is kept in the pink of order.

Headquarters of the Taiwan Provincial Government at Taijung.



A group of missionaries in front of a school building not yet completed.



Third day

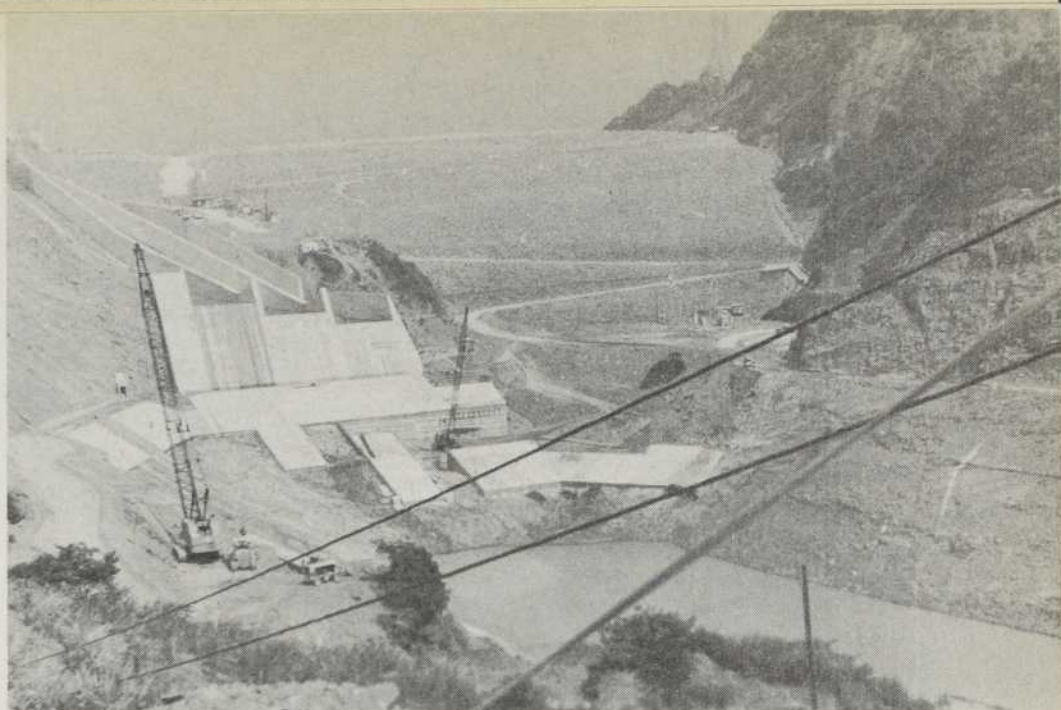
The morning Mass was offered on the hotel's fifteenth floor. Departure was early for there were many stops on our agenda. We first visited a kindergarten, then left for a tour of Taiwan's most important petroleum refinery — the Chinese Petroleum Corporation. Organized in 1946, its initial aim was to provide fuel for motorized vehicles. Later, in coordination with national economic policy, it began to furnish fuel for other pressing needs. In 1970, it produced 63 per cent of Taiwan's global petroleum consumption. Entrusted by the government with the development of industrial petrochemistry, its yearly output is about 50,000 tons of ethylene. Another plan, the Naphta Pyrolysis, to be completed in 1973, will amount to 200,000 tons per year.

Thanks to the utilization of certain processes, Taiwan expects to produce an important amount of vinyl-chloride. Another of the company's projects is the installation of a pipeline for natural gas. It will cross the Island from north to south, and will increase the number of distributing stations from two hundred to five hundred.

We were shown dissolved-control slides which explained the importance of the enterprise. Officials offered us a glass of water extracted from petroleum. It tasted like ordinary water but was yellowish in colour and heavier.

From this place, we rode by car to another rehabilitation centre for boys and girls over twelve years of age.

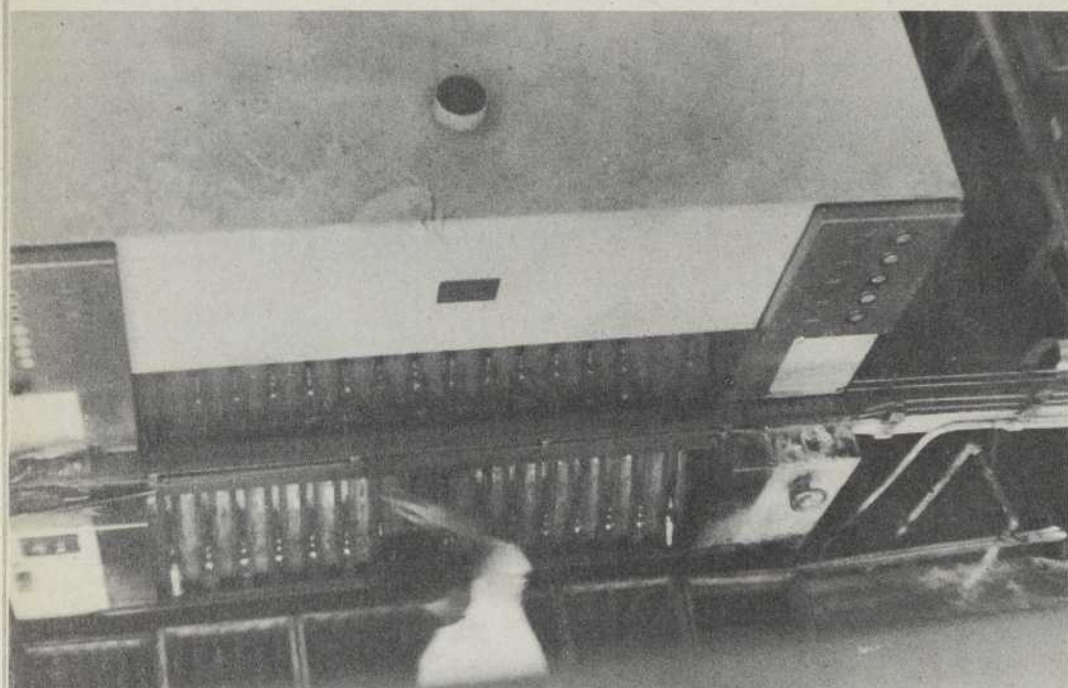
The climax of our trip, at least for most of us, was a sail along the Kaohsiung harbour. Is there a missionary to the Orient who has not dreamt of sailing the



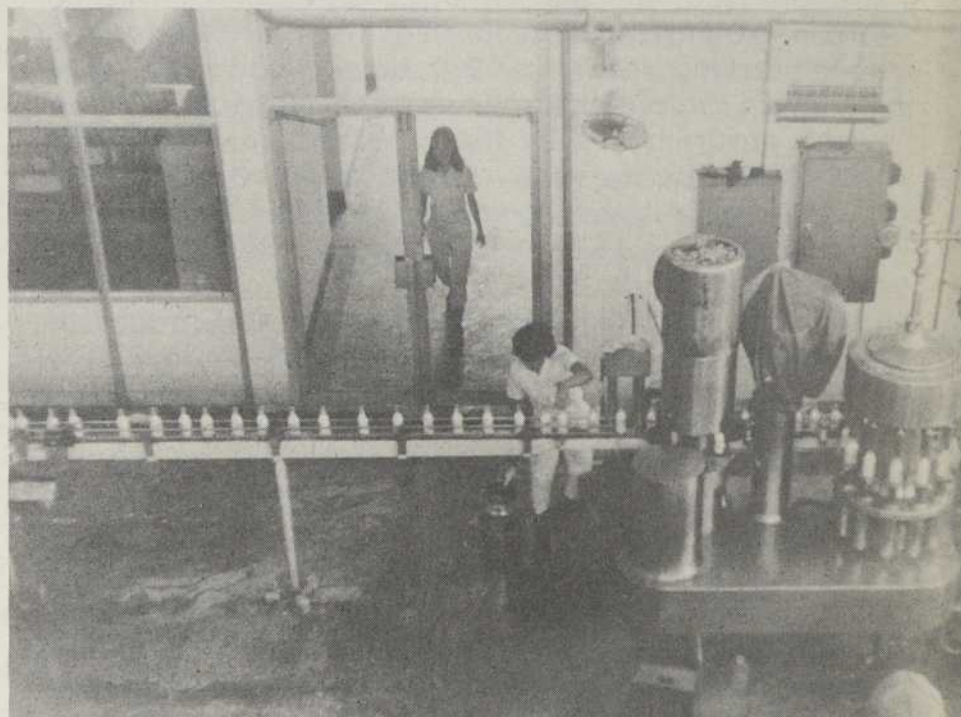
The Tsengwen reservoir.

The entire group. Centre: Mgr. Lwo Kuang, archbishop of Taipei.





Snapshots of the model dairy farm "Bank Mt. Dairy Project" of Jang Hwa.



China Sea? During over an hour we were given interesting explanations about protective devices put up to ward off the violence of typhoons, so common in these waters. Huge cylindrical caissons have been erected all along the coast. They will protect the harbour and its environs against too heavy damages wreaked by frequent storms.

On the way back, we visited two large factories of transistors, radio equipment, etc. Numerous employees were busy assembling parts 60 per cent of which are imported from Japan and 10 per cent from U.S.A. Less than 30 per cent are made in Taiwan. Arrangements are being made to have all these parts manufactured on the spot. This would greatly increase national profits.

Next on our agenda was a tour of important metal works. From galleries built around the interior of each sector, we could watch without danger to ourselves and distraction to the workers, the various activities of the plant. The chief products are rails, metal rods of all shapes and lengths, beams, nails, barbed wire, metal wiring, etc. I watched, fascinated, while the red hot wires were slipped into moulds, then automatically assembled into bundles.

This kind of work must be very exacting. The heat is intense and the noisy machinery is kept working twenty-four hours on end. Three shifts work in relays. Being rather poor in metals, Taiwan buys scrap iron from other countries. It now exports metal objects to ten countries, the United States included.

Our last stop was for Lake Cheng Ching girded by a road seven kilometres long. There are seven important beauty spots along the way, among which the "Bridge of the Seven Corners", a well-kept golf-course, a large pool next door to the "Grand Hotel". . .

We admired an aquarium with hundreds of species of fishes testifying to the glory of God's creation. Everywhere we turned vistas of unparalleled beauty unfolded before our gaze.

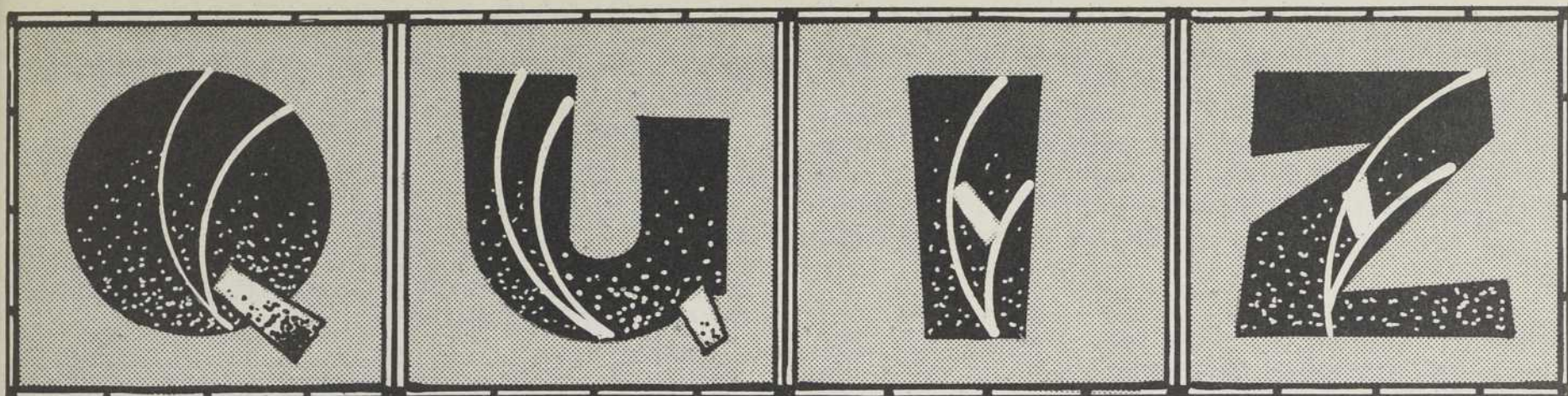
In this enchanting scenery, our four-day excursion came to an end. We had travelled by train, bus, jeep, and boat. At each one of our stops, a speech of welcome had greeted us, followed by slides and movies explaining the place visited and its most interesting points.

Themes were presented on agriculture, social service, industries, education, and scenic wonders. Elaborate preparations had been made by all the officials in charge.

We boarded the Kaohsiung-Taipei bound train towards three in the afternoon and reached the capital at half past nine.

In a meeting convoked at the chancery on the following day, a spirit of cooperation was consolidated between the State and the Catholic Church. This last meeting strengthened the bonds of friendship and mutual understanding forged during this unforgettable week.

Jeannette Légaré, M.I.C.



WHO WAS CHARLES DE FOUCAULD?

Charles de Foucauld's life was one of high adventure, love, intrigue, danger, and heroism in the apostolate. His particular vocation was to bring the Good News to the world's most neglected peoples — the Saharian tribes. "I want my life to shout the Gospel," he declared. It did. The labour was long and apparently fruitless. But, his faith never faltered. "Jesus is Master of the Impossible," he was fond of saying. He died that others might live and awaken to the Light that illuminates every man coming into the world.

1

Charles de Foucauld was born in:
 Berlin, July 15, 1838
 Strassburg, September 15, 1858
 Paris, May 13, 1834
 Lisieux, August 15, 1851

2

Charles' parents died:
 at a relatively early age
 in middle age
 in extreme old age

3

He became deeply attached to:
 an uncle
 a cousin
 an aunt
 a friend

4

Charles was graduated from the Saumur cavalry school when he was:
 nineteen
 twenty
 eighteen
 twenty-one



5

When he was twenty-three, he made up his mind to become an explorer in:

Algeria
Morocco
Lybia
Egypt

6

The turning point in his life was:
another voyage of discovery
an official appointment
a meeting with Abbé Huvelin
a romantic episode

7

Abbé Huvelin's reception was:
cold
reserved
friendly

8

Three years after his conversion Charles became:
a merchant
a handyman
a doctor
a Trappist

9

After four years of austere Cistecian life, Charles was not yet satisfied. He wanted to become:
a priest
an anchorite
a Carthusian

10

In Nazareth, then in Jerusalem, he worked as a:
handyman
writer
merchant

11

The Abbess of the Poor Clares in Jerusalem urged him to become:
a teacher
a Franciscan
a priest

12

He was finally ordained to the priesthood on . . .
in . . .
on October 7, 1899, Palestine
on June 9, 1901, France
on December 22, 1900, Africa

13

Brother Charles wanted to work as a missionary in:
Africa
Palestine
Syria

14

After Beni Abbès, Brother Charles founded another desert hermitage at:
Tidikelt
El Goléa
Tamanrasset

15

Brother Charles did a considerable work of translation in Tamashek on:
the works of French novelists
the Old Testament
the Four Gospels

16

After several futile attempts to recruit members for the community of Little Brothers he dreamt of establishing, he:
kept on trying
gave up all hope
became skeptical

17

His testimony as "universal brother" was:
political
social
spiritual and charitable

18

Until the end of his life he dreamt:
of winning all desert tribes to Christ
of military conquests
of annexing new territories

19

He was haunted by the thought that:
he would eventually have companions
he would die a martyr
he would become a cripple

20

The spiritual families who claim Brother Charles as founder are:
The Little Brothers and Sisters of Jesus
The Brothers of Saint John of God
The Little Sisters of the Poor.

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ

1

Charles de Foucauld was born in STRASSBURG, September 15, 1858. The de Foucauld belonged to an old aristocratic family. Some of Charles' forebears joined Louis IX — later to become Saint Louis — in the sixth Crusade. An ancestor of his accompanied Joan of Arc to Rheims. Two of his uncles, who were priests, were slain in hatred of the faith during the French Revolution, September 2, 1792.

2

Charles' parents both died WHILE STILL RELATIVELY YOUNG (1841). From his father, he inherited a large fortune and the title of Viscount de Foucauld. The boy viscount and his little sister Marie were adopted by their maternal grandfather, Colonel de Morlet. Like most doting grandfathers, the Colonel spoiled the children, particularly Charles whose tantrums he considered a sign of character.

3

He became deeply attached to HIS COUSIN MARY married to Viscount Olivier de Bondy in 1874. Wise beyond her years and firmly tender, Mary had been like a second mother to the orphaned boy. Her influence had kept him true to the faith. After she left for her new home, however, Charles was cast adrift on a sea of insecurity and anguish. With his grandfather's death in 1878, he went from bad to worse.

4

Charles graduated from the Saumur cavalry school when he was TWENTY-ONE, No. 87 in a class of eighty-eight. Ever an enemy to convention and discipline, he spent his time in riotous living. He was ordered to Algeria with his regiment in 1880. Rebuked for flagrant misconduct, he refused to admit his wrongs and was placed by the Minister of War on inactive service by reason of insubordination. He returned to France in the Spring of 1881 and took up again a life of pleasure. Not

for long, however. War had broken out in Africa and his regiment was in the fray. He then realized that for him the army was more than the boring routine of discipline to be thwarted if possible and fought against always. He went to the War Ministry and offered to enlist as a private. Restored to his rank, he returned to Algiers after only seventy-five days on inactive service.

5

The immediate cause of conflict over, Charles made up his mind to become an EXPLORER IN MOROCCO. His journey lasted over a year. He travelled nearly two thousand miles on foot and on mule-back, logged the latitude of forty localities, outlined the social structure of the various tribes, and mapped roads. His books *Reconnaissance au Maroc* and *Itinéraires au Maroc* won him wide acclaim in France where he returned in 1886.

6

The turning point in his life was a MEETING WITH ABBE HUVELIN, a saintly priest of great learning and high academic attainments. For years, now, Charles had been haunted by doubts regarding the existence of God. Around this time he began visiting churches. Although he termed himself an unbeliever, he prayed, "My God, if you exist make yourself known to me." Upon the advice of his cousin Mary, whose influence was of the best, he finally agreed to consult Abbé Huvelin.

A Little Brother absorbed in prayer at the Taman-rasset Hermitage.



Abbé Huvelin's reception was FRIENDLY BUT UN-COMPROMISING. He glanced at the proud distinguished officer bending over the confessional grille to speak to him, and he instinctively knew that this was a man called to the heights of sanctity. "Monsieur l'Abbé," Charles said, "I am an unbeliever. I have come to be enlightened." "Kneel!" ordered the Abbé, usually the gentlest of men. "Confess your sins and you will believe." At first nettled, the smart young officer replied, "But I did not come for that. . . ." "On your knees," Abbé Huvelin kept on. "Confess and faith will come." Charles knelt obediently. A new Foucauld had been born.

After three years of profound reflection during which he made four retreats in different orders, Charles became A TRAPPIST. He thus explained his decision, "From the moment I believed there was a God, I knew that I could not help living for him alone." He chose to enter the Monastery of Our Lady of the Snows because of its poverty. Later, he asked to be transferred to that of Akbès in Syria, poorer still. The pilgrim of the Absolute was on his way but he had not yet reached the goal.

Charles now felt an imperious call to be AN AN-CHORITE. He wanted to go to Palestine in order to follow more closely in Christ Jesus' footsteps. His director and his religious superiors hesitated before allowing him to leave the monastery. Abbé Huvelin wanted him to continue his theological



Situated on an arid plateau, the fraternity of Beni-Abbès.

studies, for he was determined that Charles should achieve priesthood. Finally, all objections gave way before the latter's determination. Released from his simple vows as a Trappist, he left for Palestine in 1897. He now called himself Brother Charles of Jesus.

In Nazareth, Charles de Foucauld scion of an aristocratic and wealthy family, became the HANDYMAN of a monastery of Poor Clares. He refused to accept any wages, asking only for a quiet corner where he could pray and meditate undisturbed. From morning until night he worked hard, running errands, hoeing in the garden, doing odd jobs. Part of the nights he spent in prayer. He never spoke except when charity forced him to do so. This was the good life he had been dreaming to lead — a life of total abnegation. He longed to share it with others and to found a community, but Abbé Huvelin steadily refused to sanction his becoming a founder. The rule he had drawn up was so austere that the Abbé judged it would be beyond human endurance.

The Abbess urged the monastery's singular handyman to become A PRIEST. Out of humility, he protested. "To be a priest, I would have to show myself. I am made for the hidden life." But Mother Abbess did not give up easily. Finally, Charles said to her, "Write to my spiritual director about it. I can't very well do so myself since for years I have been saying 'no' when he suggested the same thing. I can become a priest only if it is God's will." The Abbess wrote Abbé Huvelin who took his time in answering. Meantime, Charles began to think he could indeed do more for the salvation of souls if he became a priest.

In June 1900, Brother Charles of Jesus had made up his mind to the point of no return. A few months later he was back in Paris after an absence of ten years. He was now forty-two years old. In order to prepare worthily for the great step he was about to take, he spent a year at the monastery of Our Lady of the Snows. On JUNE 9, 1901, he was ordained as a secular priest in Viviers, FRANCE. Another period of his life opened — the period of his apostolate among the Moslems. His real career was about to begin.

The new priest wanted to work as a missionary in AFRICA; there were enough priests in France. There were also plenty in Palestine. "My aim," he wrote, "is to sanctify infidel peoples by carrying

among them Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament, just as Mary sanctified John the Baptist by carrying Jesus to his home. . .” He settled down at Beni-Abbès, a small outpost on the edge of the desert, four hundred miles south of the Mediterranean coast. There he built his first hermitage. It consisted of a hut built of palm trunks with a tent of heavy canvas suspended from the ceiling as a roof. The first Mass ever said in this desolate spot was offered by the hermit on December 1, 1901. He was the only priest within three hundred miles.

14

Brother Charles founded his second hermitage at TAMANRASSET in the Hoggar Highlands. The region was peopled by Tuaregs, a small ethnic group of about one hundred thousand, all of Berber origin. They were Moslems although far from orthodox members of this creed. He did not intend to preach to them. His method was example, not precept. He would teach them Christianity by living humbly and in poverty, in imitation of Christ. This was all that he considered possible for the moment. Wanting to do more would compromise the whole future.

15

Brother Charles did a considerable work of translation on the FOUR GOSPELS in Tamashek, a monumental job done at night by the flickering light of a candle or of an oil lamp. Tamashek was the language of the Tuaregs. He wrote to his cousin Mary, “Until now there has not been a single book in this language. It is a great comfort to me that their first book should be the Gospels.” Moreover, he edited a French-Tamashek and Tamashek-French dictionary, and an anthology of Tuareg verse and proverbs.

16

To the very end, he KEPT ON TRYING to recruit companions who would share his apostolate as a hermit-missionary. In many of his letters he mentioned this hope and he even went back to France to recruit members. One of the Trappists who had known him well wrote, “His life is so austere that any neophyte would succumb from it in a very short time.” So, in 1903 he was still the only priest within three hundred miles. In his diary he wrote, “I am still without postulant, without novice. . . Unless the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it remains alone, but if it die it brings forth much fruit.”

17

His testimony was at once SPIRITUAL AND CHARITABLE. He never ceased to pray for all

men, “O Lord, grant that all human beings may go to heaven.” He had not left the world to evade all responsibility for the welfare of others. “I am the universal brother,” he was often heard to say. He wrote to his cousin Mary de Bondy, “From 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., I am busy tending the sick, the destitute, the soldiers, the slaves. . .” For him, Christ Jesus was the only riches and he wanted all men to share in these riches. In every human being he saw a soul to be saved, redeemed by the Precious Blood. His three chief means of apostolate were — silent presence, the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, universal prayer.

18

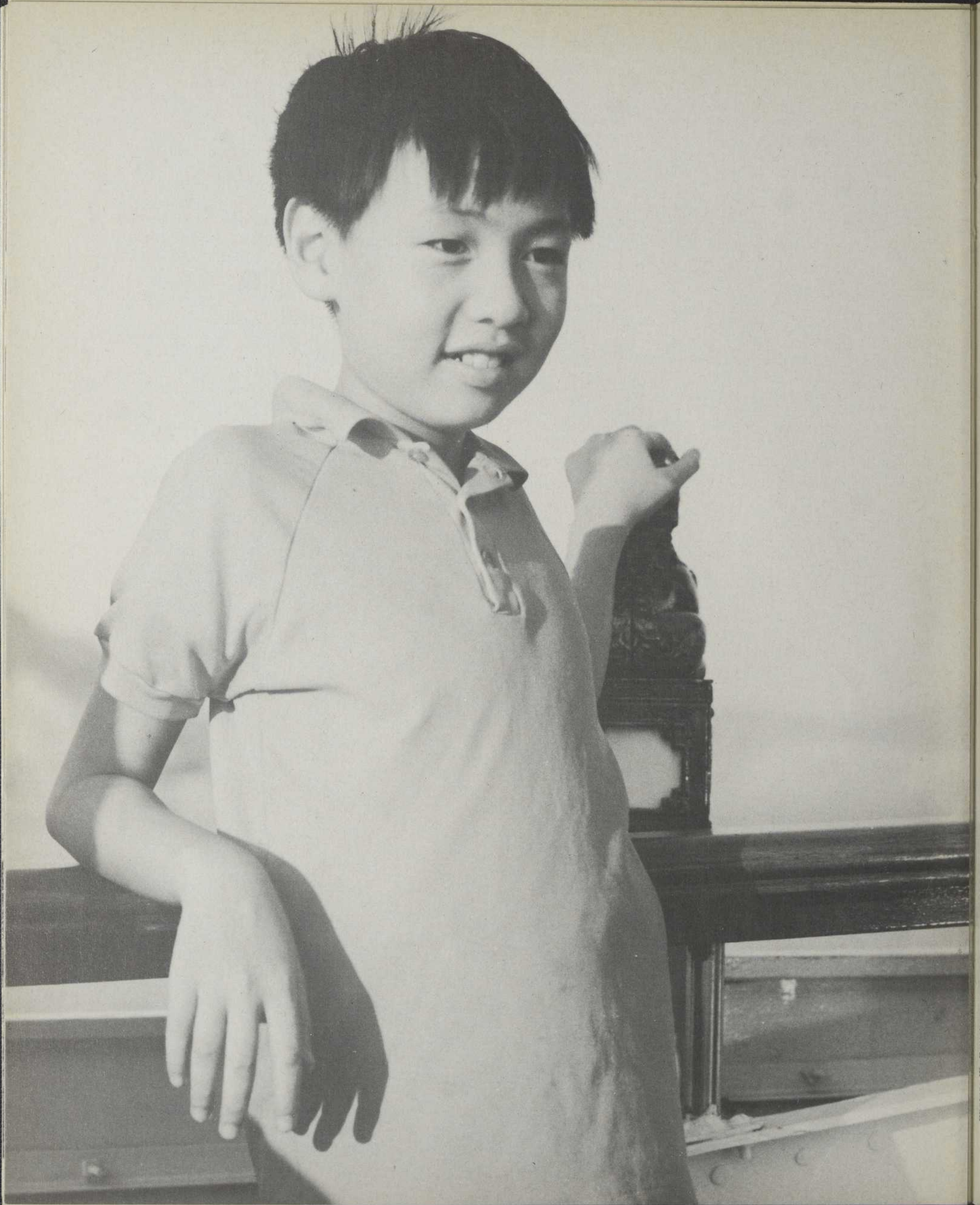
Until the end of his life, he dreamt OF WINNING ALL THE DESERT TRIBES TO CHRIST. He wrote to Msgr. Guérin, “You want to know whether I would be ready to leave Beni-Abbès to spread the Gospel. I am ready to go to the ends of the earth and to live until Doomsday in order to spread the Good News.” He knew that the desert would bloom one day, but that it needed the Blood of Christ and his own to bear rich harvests.

19

He was haunted by the thought that he would one day be called upon to give the supreme proof of love — TO DIE A MARTYR. In a notebook found in his hermitage after his death were written the following lines, “Live as if you should die a martyr today. . .” On the morning before his death, December 1, 1916, he again wrote, “Our annihilation is the most powerful means we have of being united to Christ and of procuring the salvation of souls.” On December 2, 1916, he was killed at the door of his hermitage of Tamanrasset. A traitor had given him up to a band of armed Senusis, enemies of the Tuaregs. He had given Christ the supreme token of his love. He had watered the desert with his blood.

20

The LITTLE SISTERS OF JESUS came into being on August 28, 1933. On September 8 of the same year, the nucleus of the LITTLE BROTHERS OF JESUS was formed. Since 1945, the latter have formed workers’ fraternities in the shanty towns of North Africa, among the miners of Peru, the metal workers of Damascus. They now have fraternities in a score of other countries, but novices remain true to the desert. They spend the first months of their formation in Africa. For their part, the Little Sisters have spread throughout the world. They live a life of prayer and of strict poverty, nursing the sick, helping the poor and oppressed. Both Congregations place all their trust for a fruitful apostolate in Jesus, the “Master of the Impossible”.





Photos: W. Pawek.

**Chinese youth.
Hong Kong**

1973

ANCIENT ARAPAHO PRAYER

O my Father, Holy Spirit,
 Keeper of the Sacred Pipe,
 O Morning Star and all things of creation. . .
 I mention these good things:
 the light of dawn,
 the good wind,
 the soil,
 and the animals.

Listen . . .
 All you creatures under the ground,
 All you creatures above the ground
 and in the waters.

May this People
 be long in life,
 and increase.

May our boys and girls,
 our children of all ages,
 May our grown men and women,
 and all our elders,
 May they increase,
 and be strengthened.

O Father Creator,
 We ask this blessing
 upon our food.
 And we ask for all your peoples
 the growth of loving hearts
 and the happy life

of peace and harmony.

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Branch Post Office: Laval des Rapides
Ville de Laval
P.Q., Canada Tel.: 663-6210

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

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

NIHIL OBSTAT:

December 12, 1972

Rev. Jean-Charles Valin

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