



MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION — BOX 157, LAYAL BRANCH P.O., LAYAL, QUEBEC H7N 4Z4

Challenge of Love

by Pauline Roy, M.I.C.

"Hello! A party tomorrow night?... Delightful... Nice of you to invite me... Sure, I'll be there to wish you a happy birthday... So long."

"Hello! Yes, this is Pauline... So thoughtful of you to think of me... Sorry, but I can't make it... Am really up to my ears in work... Too bad... Some other time perhaps. Bye."

Day in, day out, phone calls criss-cross the world, transmitting friendly messages or urgent requests. Calls come and go from vessels in distress, from captains of the air, from satellites, from space men.

But, among thousands of calls, there is one which is different from all others. It runs not along electrical wires but along the heartstrings of man. If we want to be sincere with ourselves, we must admit that we have all, at one time or another, heard such a call to higher living. Whence came such a message? From God who never wearies calling to the best in the soul of man. He never compels, but gently challenges.

It sometimes happens that his call changes the course of a human life. Claire was a registered nurse, happy and successful in her life of service to the sick. One day, she heard the Lord's call. She left everything to follow it, and today she is a missionary nun in distant Papua. Guy's father was a famous lawyer. His son decided to follow in his footsteps. After two years of brilliant studies, he suddenly gave up his intended career, and entered a missionary Order with missions in Africa. He had accepted the challenge of love.

Why? Because there are still young people who answer the Lord's call with joy and enthusiasm. Generosity is the hallmark of youth. That is why many want to risk their all in the service of God and mankind.

Perhaps some among you will object that dedicated life has no more meaning in a world where so many give up? How about interviewing those who do not give up? There are many more than you think. Will you accept Christ's challenge of love? "Come follow me..."

Will
they accept
the challenge?



Prayer for Vocations

Father, send into the fields the workers who will achieve the harvest of tomorrow and prove their love in determined hours.

Help us to hear your Son.

He says to our generation too:
Come follow me.

Amen.

He did what was right

by Madeline Maillet, M.I.C.

The Gospel provides a thumbnail sketch of St. Joseph — "he was a man who always did what was right" (Mt 1:19). Is not this the greatest praise a man could hope to receive? Joseph was never to see Jesus work a public miracle or to suffer, die, and rise triumphant from the grave. But, to him alone was revealed the mystery of Christ's birth. This mystery he watched over as a treasure beyond compare.

After receiving his stupendous mission, Joseph went on with his work as before. No neighbour

ever guessed his greatness. He lived prayerfully and obscurely by faith. Jesus and Mary could count on him, a hard-working carpenter.

In the fulfillment of his mission, he was not spared the trials of life. He suffered the pain and humiliation of not being able to provide lodgings for his young wife in a critical moment. How well he understands those who can "find no room" in the lodgings of this world! He learned by bitter experience the distress of having to flee from his homeland into a foreign, hostile country. His heart surely goes out to all the millions of displaced persons of our times. Day after day, he earned his family's living at the sweat of his brow. The problems of workers cannot be indifferent to him. When Jesus was "lost" for three days, he shared with our Lady the sharp anguish of this loss. How could he fail to sympathize with parents sorrowing over the strayings of their adolescent children?

Yes, we may count on Joseph as Jesus and Mary did of yore in Nazareth. He is ever ready to share our human anxieties because he has gone through them. His obedience, honesty, and hard work remain an inspiration to millions of Catholics of all times.

To this "man who always did what was right" the Church renders all justice proclaiming him to be her universal patron. Well we know that true grandeur is that which is spiritual. Joseph never preached a sermon, wrote a book or gave lectures. But he was elected by God to be the husband of the "woman above all women blest", the foster father of Christ Jesus, Saviour of mankind.

ZAMBIA, AFRICA

Lay Apostolate Movements

by Evelyn O'Neill, M.I.C.



A merry group of Zambia Christian students.

My work consists in organizing various movements intended to deepen Christian faith and to promote development. Several such movements function on a national level. Among the most important are the Z.Y.C.S., Zambia Young Christian Students, the Catholic Women's League, the Zambia Christian Workers, the Scouts and Guides, etc.

Several months ago Remy, president of the Z.Y.C.S., wrote saying he was planning a visit to members of the movement in the eastern province. He arrived in Chipata some time later and received a hearty welcome. Remy is a law student at the University of Lusaka. He is a tall handsome Bemba of 23, an ardent Catholic. A member of the movement for four years, he was recently appointed national president.

It was my privilege to introduce Remy to the students of Saint Monica's Secondary School.

I attended the meeting as diocesan organizer. Remy spoke in an easy and persuasive manner about the students' responsibility and genuine commitment as Christians. He added, "The aim of the movement is to bring Christ to the students and the students to Christ." He then developed the theme in such an inspiring manner that I was deeply impressed. The students applauded with pride and joy. He was one of their own, a leader in the Church. They appreciated the fact that he was not afraid to show that he was a Catholic, although he was enrolled in a university where the majority of students belong to other denominations or are non-Christians.

During the entire week after his arrival, he visited many groups of students encouraging them in their efforts. Everywhere, I could see mirrored in the faces of these boys and girls the pride of having met this modern apostle of their own race. He is just the kind of young person who can do much for friends and fellow students. All admire him for his strong character and sincere dedication. Remy was educated in the northern province where the Catholic population is dense. His deeply religious education was transmitted to him by his own parents.

PLEDGE OF THE Z.Y.C.S.

I thank my leaders and friends for accepting me in the Z.Y.C.S. I pledge to be loyal to them and to take an active part in all their projects. Lord Jesus, I offer myself to you. Give me strength and joy in your service. Amen.

BOLIVIA

My Hospital

Dr. Suzanne Labelle, M.I.C.

My hospital, like a ship for a mariner, is a person to me. "She" was born only a few years ago and is still in her developing phase, in a developing country.

Even with her X-Ray Department and Pharmacy already functioning, even with her Operating Room, Delivery Room and Laboratory recently and quite decently equipped, she does not and will never pretend to stand comparison with your hospitals. However, she feels no envy at all, because she possesses that superiority over yours of existing to help the poorest. For them she accomplishes

small marvels, of which she is the first to be astonished.

She feels embarrassed when electricity fails, all of a sudden, during a Caesarean section right at the moment when the suction machine is most urgently needed. Nevertheless, the baby is born, full of life, and the mother is well, thanks be to God!

A 65 year-old man is brought to her in state of shock, suffering from acute peritonitis. The morning after emergency appendectomy, he is sitting up, smiling. He is discharged a few days later, having recovered, without the slightest complication. My hospital could proudly quote, on her pediment, an old French practitioner's saying: *Je le pansai, Dieu le guérit* — I dressed the wound, God healed it.

The Llallagua Hospital does all she is able to for her people. But sometimes, she has to wire

an S.O.S. which echoes in hearts of good will. That is what happened for Gilda, a teenager stricken with poliomyelitis when she was only three years old. She has not walked since. Now she is getting ready to leave Bolivia for a one-year stay in a rehabilitation hospital in the United States. She will be received free of charge there, and her trip will be paid by Canadian friends of the hospital. Would somebody like to give a new right hand to a young mother of 27? Dynamite, freely used by the miners of the area, has killed her husband and has left her crippled and alone to bring up her three children. The third one was born when she was already a widow and recuperating from the traumatic amputation of her right hand.

These are some of the worries of "my" hospital. She would like to see everybody healthy and happy. She helps, the best she can, and keeps confident that her friends will help her too.

TAIWAN

Mrs. Yen's Good Fortune

by Alice Buteau, M.I.C.

"God moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform." These words struck me with renewed force when I lately heard of the baptism of Mrs. Yen. We had first met in the city of Taipei, Taiwan, where our Sisters conduct a small language school. Being then in charge of the French course, it was my pleasure to teach her the elements of the language. She proved to be a diligent student.

One day, when I saw her to the door after her lesson, she drew my attention to a picture of the Sacred Heart she carried in her purse. Surprised, I asked, "Why should you have such a picture since you are not a Christian?" She replied, "A very dear friend gave it to me. I love Christ. He makes me feel so serene, so at peace with myself and the world." This was all that was said that day.

Several weeks elapsed. Mrs. Yen continued her study of French although progress was slow. Final-



After the ceremony of baptism — Mrs. Yen (second from left); Cardinal Yu P'in (centre); Mr. Yen (extreme right).

ly, in a burst of confidence, she exclaimed, "Sister, I really want you to give me other lessons much more important. Please teach me all about the Catholic religion." And so it happened that she became a catechumen. Much to my regret I had to discontinue these important lessons some time later, having meantime been recalled to Canada. A Chinese priest, Father

Stanislaus Liu, S.J., agreed to take over her doctrinal instruction.

The news that my dear friend had finally been baptized at the hands of Cardinal Yu P'in of Taipei brought me deepfelt joy. Her husband Doctor Yen, head of the Taipei Health Department, far from opposing her resolution rejoiced in her good fortune.

MISSION DOINGS IN HAITI

by Emilienne Cantin, M.I.C.

Two years ago, the pastor of Chantal asked me to organize education centres in six mission outposts. This was no easy task. Few teachers were willing to leave their hometown for remote rural areas. Finally, two devoted young girls and one man agreed to take up the work on an experimental basis.

The first school year was so successful that other rural areas soon clamoured for their own centres. But, what were we to do about funds? Father M. Péloquin, O.M.I. solved this problem by applying for financial assistance to the Holy Childhood. Thanks to the funds received from this quarter, a fourth centre was launched in 1971. Another was opened in 1972, partly financed by the organization **Adveniat**. In all these areas, the people themselves did their share by providing lumber for the buildings. Moreover, those who could, paid the yearly \$2.00 fee.

By June 1973, we had six popular education centres running smoothly. Of course, these schools could not be expected to follow the traditional curriculum. Programmes and classes were adapted to the needs of each particular group of fifty. Most of the children in these areas do not know French. They must be taught in Creole, the language of the rural people who can neither read nor write. At present, I am working with a pastoral team to provide our centres with badly needed textbooks in Creole. Until now, we have been using a few books edited by ONAAC. As of this year, our pupils number 260, between the ages of seven and fifteen.



Sister Emilienne rides muleback to a distant mission outpost.

My role as coordinator is to adapt programmes to local needs. Every week I make the rounds of the various centres to encourage teachers and pupils. Once every three months, the children are taken to Chantal to pass examinations. On such occasions, I am on hand to welcome the parents and to provide pupils with school equipment.

Travelling in Haïti is no fun. To reach our various centres, I must first ride by jeep to the foot of the mountain. Then on muleback, over corkscrew roads. I again ride for about sixty minutes or more before reaching destination. To give you some idea of the difficulties involved, in order to reach the Mathieu centre, for instance, I have to cross tributaries of the Morne River fifteen times. During the rainy season, this river goes on the rampage blocking every path. I once remained trapped for five days in the locality.

During my journeys I stay at the small mission posts. The farmers often bring gifts of milk, eggs, fruit, etc. I usually spend the week topside, returning to Chantal on weekends with the good people going to market.

On several occasions, when our pastor was absent, it was my privilege to organize Bible Services on Sundays and to distribute Holy Communion. Such gatherings also allowed me to meet more people

and to awaken them to our education programme. During 1972-73, I met over five hundred adults in the course of seven or eight meetings.

The fact that I was able to live with the people, on their own level, enabled me to know them better. How much I admire their deep spirit of faith! In spite of their poverty they are always cheerful and they appreciate the least little thing we do for them. But, sharing the life of the people is not the most important thing. What the Haitians expect from us is friendship, and more especially the Message of Christ faithfully conveyed. As the people gradually acquire education, they will doubtless abandon their superstitious practices. They are open and straightforward. Too bad that they should be exploited by many who abuse of their credulity. There is a great work of liberation to be done among them. My dearest wish is to see more Sisters assigned to our popular education programme. A Sister in each centre could be the link between the rural and urban populations. We must all work together if we truly want to be rated as members of the family of Christ.

Liturgy in Greenland

The Christians in Greenland can now participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice in their own Greenland Eskimo language. So far, only a few parts of the Mass had been translated. Father Finn Lynge, O.M.I., completed this historical liturgy in the vernacular, texts and music, with the help of a group of his compatriots.

There are only 48 Catholics in all Greenland. They live mostly in the coastal regions. Their island extends over 750,000 square miles, an area about the combined size of Great Britain, France, Benelux, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain and Portugal. The Catholic clergy is composed of only two Oblate Fathers.

Bits out of mission life

JAPAN

Double nuptial ceremony in Tokyo

October 6, 1973, was a day of unprecedented happiness for those who attended the religious ceremony held in our convent chapel. Yet, none more than the Takahashi family appreciated the beautiful and meaningful celebration which marked two important events for the family: the final commitment of Sister Theresia and the wedding rites for her brother and his bride. Parents and friends gathered in the chapel as the wedding march, accompanied by Sister Rita Plasse, opened the ceremony.

In his homily, Father Girard, O.P., gave an inspiring explanation of religious life, comparing it with the marriage bond. This proved very enlightening for the parents and friends, most of whom had never attended a ceremony of the kind.

The bride and groom having made their promise, Sister Theresia pronounced her final vows, and the Eucharistic celebration continued while the girls of our Student Hostel rendered the singing. After giving Holy Communion to Sister Theresia under the two species, Father presented ordinary wine (sake) to the bride and groom as is the custom when the wedding takes place in a Shintoist Temple.

The married couple and Sister Theresia then signed their respective commitment, while the girls sang the Ave Maria accompanied by the flute and the electone. The ceremony ended with a salvo of applause. The people present were deeply moved; even the bride and groom had tears in their eyes. "They are not Catholics", later wrote Sister Theresia "but I am sure they will never forget the promise they made before the Lord." A lady attending this kind of ceremony for the first time, said that she really felt the presence of God.

Mrs. Takahashi had brought from her home town in Hokkaido delicacies that she knew her daughter would appreciate, and she cooked them herself for the party. The newly wed left soon after for their honey-moon trip and the visitors, for their respective homes. Sister Theresia's parents stayed for the supper that the students had prepared and were so happy to serve.

"God has really given us a wonderful day" Sister Theresia remarked. "My mother specially appreciated it. She

wrote to the Sisters a few days later: "I will never forget the happy days I spent at the convent. I know what a convent is and what a Sister's life is like'."

GUATEMALA

Juan, an eleven-year old Indian boy, hardworking and eager to learn, attended classes in our Totonican school. There was only one thing I found amiss in his behaviour, he often came in late in the morning. One day I asked him, "Juanito, can't you manage to come in at eight o'clock like the other pupils?" He looked at me reproachfully. "Madre, if you had to walk as far as I do, you also would be late..." Tears shone in his brown eyes but he bore himself with dignity. Further questioning brought out his pathetic story.

Every morning, he rose with the sun as the saying goes around here. No one in his mountain village possesses a clock or a watch. After a sketchy meal of corn bread, he set out barefoot, trudging down stony mountain paths, for all of four hours — a distance of about twelve miles. No wonder he came in late. How sorry I felt to have scolded him although ever so gently! "Madrecita", he asked wistfully, "would you allow me to sleep in your tool shed? I could then be on time as I would not have to walk so far." "But the shed is cold," I countered, "You could not sleep there, could you?" He eagerly pressed his point, "Oh, yes, Madre, it's not so cold as in my parents' hut, you know."

His request went to my heart. I wrote some Canadian friends to help me pay his board in Totonican. A generous gift allowed me to rent a room for him with a good family at \$5.00 a month. Who knows? Juan may one day become a leader among his own people.

Pauline Pageau, M.I.C.

PERU

In a letter to her parents and friends, Thérèse Savaria, M.I.C., announced the good news that Champico was raised to the status of a regular parish last June 10. Until then, it was merely an outpost of Retalheu, and as such had no resident pastor. Sister also mentioned the great event of a Congress for religious held in Guatemala City, last November. Over 500 religious, men and women, participated.

Maria Teresa Trujillo, M.I.C., was elected member of a panel. In the same letter, Sister Thérèse informed her friends of a change in her address. Her new field of apostolate will be Lima, Peru.

MADAGASCAR

The complete text of the Latin Missal, published in Rome three years ago, has just been translated into the Malagasy language. It provides an inexhaustible fund of liturgical texts which can be adapted to various circumstances, in accordance with the country's tradition and cultural evolution. The translators have endeavoured to present this basic work in an authentic manner. Tananarivo's pure language has been used throughout the work. Its complement, the Malagasy missal for the faithful, has not yet been completed, but will probably be available by the end of the present year.

TAIWAN

In each diocese on the Island, the opening of the Holy Year was highlighted by splendid ceremonies. At Hsinchu, where a gathering of 2,500 persons had been expected, an enthusiastic 4,000 took part. The school's eastern gate had been assigned as meeting place. From this point, the procession advanced through the city streets toward the cathedral. Although the benches had been removed from inside the building, some of the participants had to stand outside. The solemn Mass was concelebrated and the faithful actively participated. Homilies were delivered in Mandarin, Hakka and Amoy. For our part, it was with deepfelt thanksgiving that we witnessed this public manifestation of faith in a city where twenty years ago, there was not a single Christian.

Florine Morin, M.I.C.

Koriyama, JAPAN

The oil crisis has not yet hit us hard. I do not think we will suffer as much as some people are bound to suffer. We are used to putting on weight in winter by wearing a lot of extra clothes. Some of us look like pandas! Our primary school pupils insisted on having no heat in their classes a few days a week in order to conserve fuel. I never found the English periods so long! It seemed that the time was double in classes of about 40 degrees. Nobody even suggested this to our boys and girls. They decided it on their own.

Janet Delisle, M.I.C.

LIMA

Students have ambitions

The following paragraphs were contributed by the students of our Maria de la Providencia C.N.P. Secondary School. They tell us what they fondly hope to be, once they are grown up.



My fondest hope is to enter the educational field as a teacher in order to help my parents. I also want to assist all those who suffer and are in need. Being a teacher, I will be able

to do so in a much better way. I want my country to advance on the road to progress and cease to be an under-developed area.

Dolores Esther Cedron Alva



My greatest ambition is to become a professional so as to help my country develop as it should. The only way to realize this ambition is to play the role I have chosen. I think the first step towards development is to help each person who comes my way as much as I can. How I wish to behave

in such a manner that my parents will be proud of me!

Lilia Acha



I want to participate in our society's modern changes and to be always mindful of justice. At present, I am in training as an industrial engineer. This will enable me to help the needy in my homeland. In a more personal manner, I want to promote faith in God. I want to make known his great love to those who do not know him.

Hydee Ruth Vicente Maguina

Sister
Monique Cloutier, M.I.C.,
who has been a missionary
in Japan for 23 years.

Immortal Bonds

by Monique Cloutier,
M.I.C.



It has become fashionable to question the immortality of man. People who exhibit great confidence and pride in the future achievements of science, suddenly become very humble when after-life is concerned. "Nobody knows for sure," is the elegant way to discard the problem.

Japan seems to be no exception to the rule which is hardly surprising since, on the whole, it has not received Christ's revelation. And yet, who can penetrate the mystery of man? The following "true story" shows that there may be a considerable gap between what man instinctively believes, deep down in his heart, and what he intellectually admits believing.

Four deaths in twenty-four hours! A real Shakespearian tragedy shook Aizu-Wakamatsu, a quiet little town nestled in the mountains of Northern

Japan. It all began with the death of the mother-in-law of a well-known doctor of the place. The aged lady had been sick for some time, but the end came rather suddenly. Her case requiring a quick burial, Doctor Sato called his only son working in Utsunomiya, a city about 200 miles away, asking him to come immediately for the funeral.

The young man decided to take her fiancée along. They were to be married in a month and so she was already considered a member of the Sato family. They left by car, late at night. The road was clear, so they sped along, anxious to arrive as early as possible. The young man tried to pass a slow-moving truck and collided with a car unexpectedly coming the other way. He and his bride-to-be were killed on the spot. Informed of the accident, Dr. Sato requested that the bodies be brought to Aizu-Wakamatsu.

It was decided that their funeral would be held jointly with that of the grandmother, scheduled for the afternoon. Before that, however, the wedding ceremony must be celebrated. Why should the two young people be frustrated of an eternity of love relations as husband and wife? So both were dressed in the expensive garments which had been prepared for the coming wedding. The girl looked beautiful in her white dress and veil. The ceremony

unfolded in strict order, linking for eternity the fiancés who seemed to be peacefully asleep in their coffins, while the guests — mostly doctors come for the old lady's funeral — looked on in impressive silence.

The funeral rites followed. According to tradition, the father of the deceased boy was called upon to burn incense on the coffin before it was sealed. Until then he had maintained a stoic attitude. He approached slowly, bent over the young face of his only boy who was to have taken on his profession and perpetuate his name, and bade him a last farewell. Then he suddenly collapsed, victim of a fatal heart attack.

When the news of the fourfold tragedy reached us, I was overwhelmed with feelings of deep compassion for the afflicted mother who, in one day, had lost four beloved ones, and with an acute sense of the fragility of human life and happiness. But dominating every emotion in my heart was awe and wonder at the realization that those very men who, in their professional world, affected unconcern regarding immortality, really did believe in the continuity of human love — and that to the extent of wedding two dead fiancés! After all, what is immortality if not our survival in the most immutable of all loves: God's love.

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