



Living the Good News

If we look among our collaborators and the friends with whom we associate, we realize how deeply the world is looking for "Good News"; we realize that everyone is seeking dignity, identity, meaning in life; we realize that everyone in his own way seeks justice, peace, and unselfish love.

At the same time, we receive daily evidence of how much bad news there is around us, bad news eating at the hearts of people everywhere. We, too, know that we share in creating and communicating some of that bad news. Yet, each of us can say that we have "Good News" the Good News that takes up and completes every bit of good news we can share with others. Essentially it is the Good News in Person — Jesus Christ — the love of God made manifest among us, in the calling of each one to enter and share the unity of love and brotherhood.

The Church is the sign, the walking, living, pilgrim sign of this "Good News". This is the Mission of the Church and of us, who are the Church — to be the sign of the community of men with God and with each other. By an ever greater awareness of our witness, our mission, let us live the "Good News."

Father Michael O'Kane, S.F.M.
Director, National Missionary Council

Thanking God for Negatives

Thanksgiving is the day of the year when, with most people, we thank God for our positive blessings. Why not scrutinize the negatives in our lives in order to discover in them hidden blessings?

We forget to thank God for pain which warns us; we are ill and in need of treatment.

We forget to thank him for the pangs of hunger which make us appreciate the plight of the famished, and our own unworthiness at being so plentifully provided for.

We forget to thank him for the energy crisis which reminds us

that self-discipline is a necessary element in the growth towards human maturity.

We forget to thank him for failures and weaknesses in others that make it possible for us to lend them a helping hand.

We forget to thank him for work, for study, for the things we are forced to do for our own good.

Most of the time, these negatives contribute to our faith and to the development of holiness more than anything else. We should thank God for sending them, and for making us realize that they are blessings in disguise, stepping stones to heaven.

A prayer for faith

*A few years ago
some men were saying
that You were dead.
Some still claim they can't be sure
or can't be bothered.
Some are torn and wracked with
Some of us who believe [doubt.
aren't a very good proof
of Your compassion for humanity.
Let us show it more so that Your
may be sung [praises
on every continent and far-off island.
Amen.*

From Christopher Prayers For Today

ICAM Choristers sing for the President



The Choristers of the I.C. Academy of Manila.



Sister Elvira, M.I.C., receives plaque of merit for ICAM from the First Lady, Mrs. Imelda Marcos. Dean Lucrecia Kasilag, President of the P.I. Society for Music Education, looks on.

Thirty-nine choristers from the Immaculate Conception Academy of Manila were lately afforded many exciting experiences. They captured the third prize during the National Music Competition for the Young Artists Foundation of the Philippines held

at the Cultural Center. This was in connection with the observance of the National Music Week held last November 26 to December 2, 1973. Sister Elvira Sibayan, M.I.C., ICAM's music co-ordinator for both the elementary and high school departments, conducted the choir composed of pupils between eight and thirteen years old.

After the competition, all the winners numbering about 500 formed a big choir conducted by Mr. Yap. They sang the Hallelujah Chorus and some native songs at the Awarding Ceremony, January 20, 1974. Highlighting this program was the awarding of the plaques of merit to the representatives of the winning groups by the First Lady.

Again to encourage the young artists, arrangements were made for a visit to the President and the First Lady. Despite his hectic schedule, the President spent half an hour with his young visitors who rendered a few songs. Refreshments were then served. After the party at the State Palace, the choristers were whisked to the Cultural Center for filming. This was not, however, the end of their activities. A week later, the 500, wearing their native costumes, were sent to the airport to welcome the Australian Prime Minister and his wife, and two weeks later the Spanish Crown Prince Juan Carlos de Bourbon and his charming wife Princess Sophia of Greece. The choir also participated in the concerts held separately in honour of the state visitors.

The lucky youngsters had not dreamed that their fidelity to the singing exercises would give them such thrilling experiences.

Edita Telan, M.I.C.

Don Helder Camara

by Gisèle Villemure, M.I.C.

On February 10, 1974, Don Helder Camara, Archbishop of Olinda and Recife, was awarded a popular peace prize, parallel to the Nobel peace prize, at Oslo (Norway). The former prize was created especially for this great modern apostle for peace, by Norwegian Christian Associations.

Ordained to the priesthood in 1931, Don Helder first discovered the depths of human distress in Brazil's favelas or slum areas. He lost his heart to the favelados, the discarded of society who live in unspeakable squalor, and he decided to spend his life endeavouring to awaken his country to their plight.

Utterly fearless and committed, Don Helder constantly works at finding remedies for the evil of exploitation and under-development through active non-violent means. In his search for a better world, ruled by justice, he goes so far as to endanger his very life.

The funds awarded him through the popular peace prize will be used in his non-violent struggle for the exploited and the oppressed. In Brazil, the archbishop has launched several organizations for development, such as Operation-Hope, and Justice and Peace. Advocate of the Third World, he is the "voice of the voiceless".

Is Archbishop Helder to be considered an apostle, a mystic, a revolutionary? He defies classification. He burns with that fire which Christ came to cast upon earth. "I have a special love for the poor," he is often heard to say. "Stark poverty is at once revolting and degrading. To strike at the roots of this evil one must fight against under-development."

From what source does the Archbishop draw his strength and courage? "All through the day," he explains, "I scarcely have a minute I can call my own. But, towards three in the morning, I rise and try to remake my personal unity. I stand before Christ as an ambassador of human distress. With him I go over the various incidents of the day. No need for words... I know he understands. I keep my window open on the world..."

His "window" on the world is his love translated into action through his mission as bishop. He is not interested in politics. He is the defender of the poor, of those who yearn after justice. "His is the great voice of the Third World," remarks Francis Taylor. "Nobody can ignore his aim. He is a genuine prophet. We have only to meet him to feel ashamed of our own apathy."

MALAWI, AFRICA



A Malawian mother is the heart of the family.

Mothers in Malawi

Mother's Day in Malawi is celebrated, not in May, but on October 17. A mother's status commands deep respect on the part of the community as she is the heart of the family. Her role is very important. She has in her hands the happiness of the father and of the children. She cooks for her family, cleans the house, does the washing, works in the garden, fetches firewood, etc. Here as elsewhere "Woman's work is never done".

The role of the mother in the Malawian context is, so to say, a priestly one. In olden days she had the duty of offering family sacrifices, e.g., some of the first fruits to the spirits of the dead. Nowadays, the mother is the conscience which directs the family.

When a mother dies, the community feels that the child has lost the most important person in its life. That is why a close relative of the deceased adopts the child as a substitute mother.

Any man or child who dares to offend a mother sins not only against her but against society in general. This is because the qualities which are required in community building — selflessness, endurance, compassion, kindness, generosity — are personified in her.

To be a mother means to love and to be loved by family members. A child expects love and sympathy from a mother when it is hurt; it feels safe and happy under her care. But, if a mother neglects her duties, the children grow insecure and unhappy.

In modern days, mothers are not only housewives. They are also busy in different other fields. Some are efficient teachers, nurses, office-workers. In the past, most people in Malawi considered that a mother's place was in the home. All she had to do was to take care of her husband and children. She did not seek to take part in any social work. Nowadays, people realize that mothers can do both.

Condensed from Moyo Wathu, Malawi

TAIWAN

Mr. Hsu
is 93 years old.
He is the father
of good friends
of ours.



Respect for the Aged

Every year, in this country, the ninth of the ninth moon of the old lunar calendar is the day designated to celebrate **Respect to the Aged**. On this occasion, those who are over 70 are presented with gifts, while centenarians are favoured with a personal visit from the local Mayor who thereby shows his consideration for them, a custom that has been observed by his predecessors. Respect for the aged is a time-honoured Chinese tradition.

A famous poet of China once remarked that in ancient times very few people lived to be seventy. More recently, a well-known Chinese statesman observed, "Life begins at 70." This seems to represent a new philosophy of life, doesn't it? I think he means that a person of 70 can still look forward to a very useful life. This is certainly true for many. If I may state my own experience, at the age of 66 I am teaching twenty-six periods of English and four periods of doctrine a week. How happy I am to be active at this age! Thank God, my case is not an exception.

Odile Malboeuf, M.I.C.

JAPAN



In Japan,
"Respect for
the Aged Day"
is a national
holiday.

After World War II, the average life span in Japan was 45 years. It has since risen to 70 for men and 75 for women; but the most remarkable fact is the large number of Japanese centenarians. The 1973 statistics, emanating from the Ministry of Health and Welfare, state that there are 518 centenarians living in Japan and 13 living abroad — five in Los Angeles, seven in Hawaii, one in San Francisco — which gives a total of 531, surely a record number. The two who topped the list were 110 years old: Mrs. Mito Umeda of Kumamoto Prefecture, born March 27, 1863 and Mrs. Niwa Kawamito of Shiga Prefecture, born August 5, 1863.

There exists a very laudable custom in Japan, that of honouring the aged by a special feast celebrated September 15. Called "Respect for the Aged Day", it is a national holiday. On this occasion, the government makes it a duty to cite the Japanese who have attained rare longevity. They appear on television, newspapers carry articles about them, and

the Prime Minister himself presents them with letters of congratulation and gifts.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government is now planning to start a new project for the welfare of the aged. This project aims at providing more comfort for lonely old people, and at lessening the danger of accidents. Free telephone service will be granted the aged. Moreover, welfare workers will visit them to bring them joy and comfort and also to help them in their needs.

Rita Blais, M.I.C.

MADAGASCAR

The Malagasy show deep respect to the aged. Before taking a decision, the young consult not only their parents but also their grandparents if the latter are still living. Mayors of cities or villages and heads of departments likewise consult the aged and listen respectfully to their advice. As seniors, are they not supposed to possess greater wisdom? On every festive occasion, children and grandchildren gather to pay them honour. It is inadmissible to visit the old without offering small gifts as a token of affection and appreciation. This respect for the aged is part of the immemorial cult of the ancestors which still flourishes in the Island.

AFRICA



Old people
in Africa
are treated
with marked respect.

Old people are privileged members of the clan. They are treated with marked respect, even though they can no longer do their share of work in the community.

To the Africans, the aged are surrounded by an aura of mystery. They are the link between the living and those who have already departed, especially the great ancestors who sired the first members of the family and who keep it alive. Through them, force and wisdom flow into the younger generations.

Another reason for the respect shown the aged is that they are nearing the end of their journey here below. Soon they will have joined the ancestors. They will then be in a position to speak in favour of the living, if the latter have showed them proper consideration.

Although it does happen, nowadays, that old people are neglected, such is not generally the case. A favourite child is usually assigned the duty of looking after them.

Old people here often yearn for the time when they will be reunited with those who have gone on before. They speak about death as "going to rest". Some are heard to complain, "So many have gone to rest. Why don't 'they' come for us? Did we hurt 'them' in any way that 'they' refuse to remember us?" They somehow feel rejected by the ancestors. When the old die, people say, **Wafika**, he or she has arrived or **Wakupumula**, he or she is at rest.

Thérèse Godbout, M.I.C.

Bits out of mission life

TAIWAN

In Taiwan, the annual observance of Teachers' Day, September 28, holds deep significance. On this inspiring occasion, educators also celebrate Confucius' birthday and pay a special tribute to teachers at the various levels.

Confucius has always been recognized as China's most eminent teacher. This sage has given China an ethical system and a philosophy that has served it well for over 2,000 years. September 28 will this year mark his 2524th birthday. Although he never organized a special school, we are told that he did teach no less than 3,000 students, some of whom attained eminent positions.

Confucius never made a claim to immortality nor did he suggest the establishment of a religion proper. However, Confucianism in many of its aspects may be compared with Christianity rather than with the philosophies of the West. A great love for humanity is basic to the Confucian system.

Although present day teachers are not trying to achieve the fame of Confucius, they are earnestly fulfilling a mission no less important. This mission is not limited to imparting mere book knowledge. Education goes deeper than that. Its highest objective is the training of the mind and of the heart of our young people.

Odile Malbœuf, M.I.C.

MALAGASY REPUBLIC

Sisters Noella and Alice lately had their first ride in a bullock cart. The roads were in such bad shape that even our tough little jeep could not get through. So off went our tyro missionaries, elated at the prospect of a brand new experience. For our part we could not help having our misgivings... They returned later than expected, tired and mud-spattered. Sister Noella ruefully remarked, "Well, it certainly was a new experience. I thought we'd never get there in time... and every bone in my body seems to ache. At each puddle the oxen trailed their long tails in the muddy water, then used them as sprinklers on us. Just look at my uniform!" Then both laughed cheerfully as they made for the laundry room.

M. Antoinette Bolduc, M.I.C.

IRUPANA, BOLIVIA

Illiteracy still plagues many parts of Bolivia. At present, half a million Bolivian youngsters do not go to school. Why? Chiefly because their parents are so poor that their children must help them with the farm chores. In remote country places, the lucky ones may benefit by a few years of primary education. The pupils are taught in Spanish although only the Ayamara language is spoken at home. Moreover, some of them have to walk for one or even two hours before they can reach school. Every week, Sister Délia Philippe teaches the ABC's to about thirty illiterate women between the ages of twenty and thirty-five. She writes, "Teaching adults is not easy. One needs a lot of patience. These persons are keenly mindful of their own dignity. They need to feel that they are loved and respected. Above all, they are afraid of failure. One must be careful to save face. The mothers bring their babies along. When the little ones nap, all goes smoothly. But when they wake and grow restless, the attention of the mothers wanders and the teacher's voice is often drowned by their cries."

Gisèle Picard, M.I.C.

HONG KONG

Some time ago, we received an invitation to attend a touching ceremony at the Mother House of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Sister Imelda Lam, formerly dear Pei Ah of our Canton orphanage, made her perpetual vows. All those who knew her then admired her innate delicacy and kindness to all around her. The years have added to her amiability. It was a deep felt joy for the MIC's of Hong Kong to join in her MAGNIFICAT on the memorable day of her final commitment.

Louise Bussièrès, M.I.C.

PONT VIAU, CANADA

Golden jubilee bells rang in Pont Viau last May. Sister Alida Talbot, M.I.C., a former missionary to Japan, then to Africa, and Sister Marie Louise Gosselin, M.I.C., formerly assigned first to Manchuria then to Japan and finally to Taiwan, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their religious profession. At the same time, the Pont Viau M.I.C.

Community marked the Golden Jubilee of the foundation of the house. The first modest three-storey building was erected in 1924, and the Novitiate moved from the Outremont Mother-House to the premises. As the number of aspirants to the missionary life increased, two other wings were eventually added.

Both Golden Jubilees were highlighted by an inspiring Eucharistic celebration. Later, a group of junior Sisters from the scholasticate and novitiate presented an interesting programme of songs and folklore. About three hundred guests — relatives, friends, M.I.C. Sisters — honoured us with their presence and sang with us the song of thanksgiving so dear to Mother Foundress, MAGNIFICAT ANIMA MEA DOMINUM.

Marie Paule Blanchet, M.I.C.

DAVAO, P.I.

From February 4 to March 3 took place in Davao City, the Mindanao Agro-Industrial Fair. The BCD Lay Women Association attended the Fair as representatives of Davao Oriental. The handicraft products of the prison's inmates were displayed and sold. It was an exceptional opportunity to make our apostolate known. Proceeds were used to paint the prison cells, provide curtains, tables, and benches, making the place a little less gloomy. The inmates were happy over these improvements they had help accomplish.

Recently we have organized a miniband for their benefit. Every Sunday we now have musical entertainment after our religious activities. Three years of experience working among these unfortunates have taught me how much they appreciate kindness, attention, and guidance. I hope to have them accepted by society, after their release, as honest and loyal citizens.

Marie-Berthe Beaumont, M.I.C.

Words from the Heart

Phone conversation

"Hello! This is Sister Igarashi. Thanks for the medicine you sent. How much is it?"

"It's all right, Sister."

"But we really must pay. We can't impose on you."

"But, Sister," came the reply from the heart, "Do the members of a family pay for their medicine? You do so much for our children that we consider you one of ours."

Such words are worth more than dollars or yen.

Janet Delisle, M.I.C.



Where the Women go to Market

In Haiti, it is the women who go to market. Indeed, it seems to be their major duty. Every few days when bananas, beans, pineapples, sisal, coffee, or other products are being harvested, they fill huge shallow baskets. With their headborne loads they set out on foot. The markets where they get the best price may be five to ten miles away. To these sturdy farm wives, ten miles on foot seems no more taxing than a quarter-mile stroll would to women in other lands. Marching to market is a happy occasion. They frequently sing as they swing along. The hours spent in the town squares where they squat beside their wares and bargain for the highest prices are filled with merriment. Market day is a holiday where food and gossip are bartered, making business a pleasure.

Why do Haitian men shun the market? Many Haitians today do not know why. However, there is a reason. Among their African ancestors, the women went to market because it was dangerous for the men to do so. The latter risked being kidnapped by chiefs of rival tribes. In the early days of the Haitian Republic, the men were in danger of being seized and forced into the army. So the women went to market because it was safer. Nowadays, it is merely a custom.

JAPAN

Moon Viewing Festival

by Rita Blais, M.I.C.

The Moon Viewing Festival called *O Tsukimi* in Japanese originated in China, over one thou-

sand years ago. It was introduced into Japan some hundred years later.

For centuries, the festival was celebrated on August 15, but since the solar calendar was adopted by the Japanese, the date varies from year to year. It now coincides with the mid-autumn full moon, the most beautiful of the year.

This festival has an extraordinary appeal for the poetic temperament of the Japanese. On the evening of the mid-autumn full moon, women and children wear their loveliest kimono and the whole family sits on the veranda. A tray of rice dumplings, vegetables, persimmons, chestnuts, and other delicacies has been prepared, flanked by a vase of *susuki*, a feathery autumn plant swaying in the breeze.

In its simplicity the scene is inspiring, and on this occasion many compose short poems such as the following:

*Tonight's moon,
Unthinkable
That there is only one! (Ryota)*
*The child sobs,
"Give it to me!
The bright full moon". (Issa)*

Neighbours visit one another and partake of delicacies served with wine. The merrymaking goes on until late into the night. People discuss art and culture. They delight in the chirping of insects, and in the atmosphere of peace that pervades the surroundings. Then all walk home repeating lines of favourite poems about the moon.

*After the moon-viewing,
My shadow walking home
Along with me. (Sodo)*

OUTREMONT, MONTREAL

Send off for our Missionaries

At the Motherhouse, during the Easter Eucharistic celebration,

Mother General gave out the names of our companions sent to local Churches in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. On this occasion, Mother Madeleine Loranger, Superior General, recalled the words of our Foundress, urging us to devote our lives to the missions in a spirit of thanksgiving: "God has given us everything, even his own Son. What better way of making returns — in as much as weak creatures can in this world — than to give Him children, elect, who will extol his kindness for ever and ever!"

Here are the names of the newly assigned missionaries:

Assigned to Haiti

Etienne Guérette, M.I.C.
Laval, Que.
Lise Doucet, M.I.C.
Shawinigan, Que.

Assigned to Bolivia

Solange Garneau, M.I.C.
Roberval, Que.
Armande Caron, M.I.C.
Lotbinière, Que.
Louise Phaneuf, M.I.C.
Granby, Que.

Assigned to Taiwan

Célia Chua, M.I.C.
Pasay City, P.I.
Marceline Gilbert
Wilcox, Sask.
Monette Ouellette, M.I.C.
Drummond, N.B.

Assigned to Japan

Thérèse Chabot, M.I.C.
St. Hyacinthe, Que.
Louisa Nicole, M.I.C.
Ste Anne-de-Beaupré, Que.
Alice Mills, M.I.C.
Edmundston, N.B.

Assigned to Africa

Emerenciana Madria, M.I.C.
Buluan, Cotabato, P.I.
Mireille Bourdeau, M.I.C.
Lancaster, Ont.
Cécile Savard-Lalancette, M.I.C.
Roberval, Que.

Assigned to Madagascar

Fernande St-Pierre-Demeules, M.I.C.
Val Brilliant, Que.

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