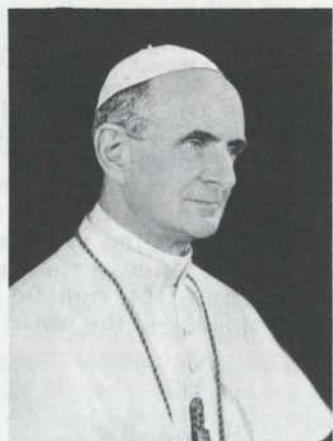




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Lay Witnesses Are Not Silent

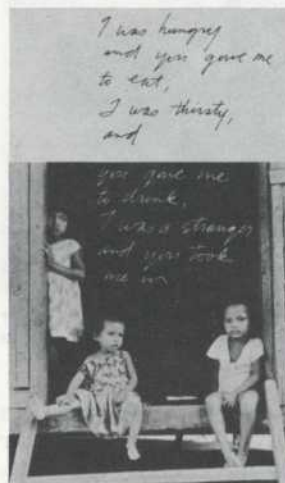


Contemporary man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, or if he listens to teachers it is because they are witnesses.

This personal witness is that of every baptized person, of every confirmed person, lay, religious, or priest. But the laity are called to live it in special ways, in the world, working according to their faith within the temporal affairs of their families, their city, the international world, to build with all men, a world more worthy of God.

It is by working with others that they often discover the real dimensions of the apostolate. They must never forget that they, too, are called upon to preach direct knowledge of Jesus Christ to their brothers. Their witness is not a silent witness.

Pope Paul VI



How will they sleep tonight?

A prayer for World Vision

When I turn off the 11 o'clock news
 I glance at my watch
 and yawn, and it's off to bed.
 Nothing wrong with that.
 But what of those babies,
 crying motherless,
 outside the Vietnamese village?
 The vacant stare
 of the Appalachian coal miner
 with only memories of a job?
 The men and women
 in the sweatshops of Hong Kong.
 The prison camps of Siberia.
 The resettlement areas
 of South Africa,
 The prisons of Brazil —
 They are all part of my family.
 How will they sleep tonight?
 Let me use
 what little voice and power I have
 to speak and act on their behalf.
 For we have but one world, Lord
 or none at all. Amen

(Christopher News Notes, No. 195)

ESPINAR, PERU

International Women's Year in Espinar

by Agnes Bouchard, M.I.C.



On Andean heights, women's work is never done. Mamma spins, with Baby pickaback, as she goes to market.

The liberation of women in the Peruvian Andes is still far from being achieved. In this area, women have never been considered the equal of men. They are expected to walk humbly a few paces behind their lord and master, carrying the heavier burdens. If the men ride on horseback, they trot along beside them. The husband sits on a chair, but the woman squats on the dirt floor.

Until a few years ago, it was not thought practical to send girls to school, as they were not supposed to be intelligent enough. A woman's role was to bear children,

keep house, work in the fields, weave, tend the family herds of goats or llamas... The women generally accepted their lot with resignation, patiently putting up with abuse, never daring to question the fairness of their situation.

However, when the military junta took over, many changes were introduced which favoured their liberation, at least to a certain extent. As missionary women, we have had our full share of the work. The first item on the agenda was to effect a change in the mentality. Men had to be made conscious that women are their equals, that they are persons in their own right with identical potentialities, to whom respect is due, and who should participate in all familial and social affairs.

We cannot as yet gauge any remarkable changes brought about in this field. In rural communities, 98 per cent of the women above 25 years of age are illiterate. Making the rounds of various regions as social worker, I have noticed that in the first year of primary school there are as many girls as boys; in the second year, there are ten girls to twenty boys; finally, in the third year, I found only two or three girls to twenty boys.

There is still plenty of work to do. We have recently introduced courses in personal, familial, and

social formation: leadership training; active cooperation on the level of local community affairs; handicraft workshops where local talents are cultivated, etc.

In my contacts with rural Andean women, I have discovered exceptional qualities of mind and heart. They possess incredible endurance and patience in the face of adversity. Gossips are few. Who has any time left to gossip? The Andean woman, living in the grandiose solitude of the mountains, singularly apt to meditate and to think long long thoughts.

As soon as our courses were advertised, a great number came to be registered. When I inquired what they wanted to learn more especially, they usually answered, "Everything!" With such noble motivation, I have no doubt whatever, that the Andean woman will soon come into the rightful heritage of womanhood the world over.



A typical woman of the Andes. She possesses incredible endurance and patience in the face of adversity.

MALAGASY REPUBLIC

MANANKAVALY

by Adrienne Guay, M.I.C.

We were lately invited to attend a ceremony in Manankavaly, a leper village, situated about thirty kilometres from Tananarivo. Mgr. Nicolas officiated at the eight o'clock Mass. The lepers filled the small chapel to capacity and loudly sang the various hymns in Malagasy accompanied by the roar of drums.

After Mass, there were several speeches by government rep-

resentatives. At present, the lepers in the Great Isle number about 50,000. Of these 20,000 have been so well rehabilitated that they can live normal lives; 2,000 are still under treatment in various special medical centres. There are 14 leprosaria, 12 leper villages, and 716 research centres where the disease may be diagnosed. Protestant missionaries were the first to care for Malagasy lepers as far back as 1885.

Manankavaly is a place where natural beauty runs rampant. Shady trees, carefully tilled fields, lovely flowers, give it a homey atmosphere. There are 600 inhabitants. A doctor and three mission-

ary Sister-nurses cater to their needs. The village has its own market, municipal office, dispensary, maternity centre. There is also a school for the children of lepers.

Built out of red clay, the houses are neat and comfortable. The women invited us to visit their homes comprising two good-sized rooms: a kitchen-living room and a bedroom. How proud these people are to be self sufficient!

The first World Day for lepers was held here, in Manankavaly, in 1954. Another "first" was the leper children's Christmas in 1958. Raoul Follereau visited the village on three different occasions.

MALAWI, AFRICA

Kanyanga Mobile Health Unit

by Paule Ida Coulombe, M.I.C.

In Malawi as well as in Zambia, governments are keenly interested in the organization of preventive clinics for children. The primary school conducted by our Sisters in Kanyanga having been taken over by the Ministry of Education, two of us Sisters were thus freed to assume other useful activities.

After a meeting with Chief Magodi of Egeciken, we offered our services which were accepted. A classroom was put at our disposal to set up a clinic. At first, forty children were registered being in need of urgent medical care. Over one hundred patients were treated at the mobile clinic. No sooner had the people of Munyukwa heard about this project than they requested a clinic of their own. Living thirteen miles from the mission, they offered us their church building to work in on the days we could visit their village.

These happenings prompted the Provincial Medical Officer to offer us his collaboration.

"I'll provide you free of charge with any medicine and vaccines you may need. I want to do my share. Send me your petrol bill every month and I'll take care of it." This friendly cooperation has greatly eased our financial burden.

In January 1971, we organized regular clinics every other week. Registrations increased up to 300 for Egeciken, and 500 for Munyukwa. Whole families came for treatment. The Chief sent people to round up absentees. He wanted every one of his subjects to benefit by regular medical attention.

Lack of personnel hindered us from doing more. But when the Chief of Limbalimba eloquently pleaded for assistance, we tried to organize a small clinic at the expense of that which functioned at the headquarters. This went on for some time, but with the rainy season the roads became impassable and we regretfully had to give up, at least for the time being.

At the outset, we used to travel by station wagon. Thanks to Father Neiland, W.F., who formerly worked in Kanyanga, we now have a perfectly equipped mobile clinic. In case of rain, we can care for patients inside. There is a sink, a table, a bed, and lockers where everything can be safely tucked away.

Since the preventive clinics have been functioning, cases of whooping cough and measles have gradually decreased. The mothers are very faithful in bringing us their newborn babies for post natal care.



Thanks to Father Neiland, W.F., we now have a perfectly equipped clinic.



Sister Paul Ida Coulombe (centre) and Gisèle Legris (left) with a midwife and baby.

Sisters' role in contemporary Philippines

By Digna Magtibay, M.I.C.

A life consecrated to God by the profession of the counsels, is of surpassing importance in our contemporary world. The Sister can be a sign of Hope if she is able to

discern the essential permanent values of religious life.

We are now in prayerful research for new forms of apostolate. Bearing in mind the rich heritage left us by our Foundress, we want to participate more fully in the life of the Church. Therefore, we must take into account contemporary human conditions as well as the needs of local Churches.

Allow me to cite a few concrete examples of reorientation from institutional community involvement to local Church involve-

ment. The following Sisters have accepted to lend a helping hand outside our own institutions, in the Archdiocese of Davao.

Meet Sister Marie Berthe Beaumont, at present living in Mati, Davao Oriental. Formerly, she was on duty all day at our Mati School. At present, she is giving much of her time to achieve the uplift of the prisoners in the local jail. Thanks to the cooperation of government officials, parish priest, and parishioners, the inmates are already being rehabili-

OUR MISSIONARIES WRITE

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA

Dear Friends,

What are M.I.C.'s doing in San Francisco Chinatown? How is our apostolate progressing here at St. Mary's? These and many other questions I am sure would be asked if you and I had a chance to sit down for a nice long chat. So here's a bit of news from the most beautiful city in the world.

At the school and the mission we are kept busy from 7:45 a.m. to well after 3:30 p.m. School opens at 9:30 a.m., and closes at 3:15 p.m., but I have to be ready for the early comers, the teachers, etc. After school hours, there are always parents to meet, or children to supervise while waiting for someone to pick them up.

This year we have 334 students from 1st to 8th grade. Only 22% are Christian. They are typical American children with strong Chinese backgrounds which means that we do not have the great discipline problems of other schools. Naturally, our students are not all angels, and now and then we have minor problems of various kinds, more or less humorous.

After 22 years of active duty spent in the Philippines where I made many precious and lasting friendships, you might think that I would be lonesome for the great and loving people I left behind. But the Lord has seen to that by placing me in such a position that I rarely have time to feel sorry for myself, although I do miss all my friends. I am principal, in charge of a group, do my cleaning, washing, ironing, sewing, share in the household chores, cook dinner once a week for the group, and do all my own office work because I have no secretary. By night I am ready for bed and quick sleep with no brain energy left for brooding.

Sister Mary Tan is a precious assistant. She is homeroom teacher of our 8th graders, and teaches them Math and Religion. Besides, she teaches Religion to the 6th and 7th graders. She is also coordinator of religion for the whole school, studies at the University of San Francisco in order to obtain her California teacher's Credential, and is in charge of C.C.D. at the Mission. Like all of us, she does her share of the household chores.

Sister Natividad Flores, our jewel from the Philippines, is doing an excellent job as homeroom teacher of the 5th grade. She has 44 students to whom she teaches everything except music and Chinese. A teacher's aide comes in once a week to help with corrections or with slow readers, but that still leaves Sister with plenty of work. The climate of San Francisco seems to agree with her. How could we explain otherwise why her clothes are slowly but surely getting too tight?

Sister Alice is our librarian and substitute teacher. She visits two elderly women of the parish once a week or oftener, is in charge of the convent and mission sacristy, always willing, always available, always spreading joy around her.

Sister Ida who thought that after 31 years in the Philippines she could go home to Canada and enjoy growing old gracefully, is now doing more work than she ever did. She helps out at the school collecting monthly tuition fees, taking care of supplies, sorting out paper as it is donated to us by different companies, thus saving us much money. All our mimeographing is done with paper used on one side.

Then we have two student Sisters living with us. Our group shares everything, work, prayer, leisure, apostolate.

Sister Louise helps Sister Mary out at C.C.D. classes every Sunday. Sister Maurie who is a student nurse is always out helping some poor, lonely patient each time her studies allow her to. Sister is preparing for work in Africa, and I am sure she will be an excellent nurse.

Last, but not the least on my list, is Sister Patricia Pelletier who is studying in Los Angeles and whom we see only during the summer months, because her delicate health can't stand any kind of cold weather. Sister Pat, or Tricia as we call her, remains united with us all in spirit, in our common dreams and goals, and we try to keep in touch via Uncle Sam's mail system and telephone. She is doing genuine apostolic work where she is presently living, and we pray that she may continue to do so for many more years.

Our Mission is in the heart of Chinatown. It is a center of social action, of group activities; it serves for St. Mary's Drum Corps and Drill Team headquarters and weekly Saturday morning rehearsals. In short, it is the **ONLY CATHOLIC CENTER** in Chinatown, and we can expect to be on duty at all hours since we live here at the Mission.

My health remains as good as it can be for a woman of my age and with all the years of hard work behind me. I thank God that I can still continue working for HIM and for these peoples — HIS CHILDREN who still do not know Him. With love to each one of you and also with deepest gratitude for all you have meant and still mean to me after so many years. Thank you for your love and your friendship. I couldn't get along without them!

Love,

Patricia Blanchet, M.I.C.

tated. After serving their term, they will be returned to the mainstream of society as useful citizens rather than as hardened recidivists. The lay Women Association, which Sister has organized, provides a programme for spiritual, physical, educational, and vocational training. For her part, Sister Luisa Tan is a full time parish worker and coordinator of catechetical apostolate in Padada, Davao del Sur. Sister Lorraine Laflamme gives assistance to the staff of Saint Francis Seminary,

Davao, by preparing a balanced diet for the boys in training in this institution. Sister Madeleine Alarie devotes herself to the Fatima Community Centre in collaboration with the parish priest. The Centre aims at improving the standard of living in the Barrio Piape, Davao. It provides medical assistance and vocational training, especially to school dropouts. Moreover, Sister continues to care for the children at the Child Jesus Home. Sister Hélène Fontaine makes home visits. She is also treasurer of the As-

sumption Parish Council, and sees to the local sacristy linen. Sisters Lolita Villagrancia, Antoinette Castonguay, Dina Ang, and myself teach catechism at Davao City High School. Our Cursillo and Retreat House is kept in full swing by Sister Thérèse Gloutnez.

All these Sisters are convinced that they have an important role to play in the building of local Christian communities. They have lost nothing of their distinctive character as missionaries of thanksgiving.

Bits out of mission life

TAIPEI, TAIWAN

A three-day liturgical seminar sponsored by the Taipei Major Women Superiors, was held here January 24-27, 1975. Sisters Lucy Hsu, M.I.C., executive secretary, Martha Lai, and myself attended as participants. The theme focused on the need of adapting the Roman liturgical rites to Chinese culture. Conferences, discussions, and group work helped clarify the issue.

A unique atmosphere was created by the fact that all participants were of Chinese parentage. We rediscovered with joy and pride that our people are deeply "ritual-rooted". Various circumstances must be taken into consideration while handling this problem. One important reflection remains: local religious have a great responsibility in building up a solid local Church.

What is the role of foreign missionary Sisters in this essential task? To work in collaboration with their Chinese Sisters, leaving the latter a broad scope of initiative. Our ideal as missionaries should be the one proposed by Saint Paul himself, "to be a Jew among the Jews, and a Roman among the Romans". Perhaps it is in this that our internationality can be proven. Only when we become attentive to the cry of the local Churches as parts of the Universal Church can we hope to bring a missionary dimension to the local Churches.

Celia Chua, M.I.C.

KATETE, MALAWI

FAREWELL TO SISTER JACQUELINE

They clothe the naked and tend the sick, physically and spiritually, and because of this many people come to them and this enables them to spread the word of God. In this respect, the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, here at Katete, are doing wonderful work for the people of this area. To mention only one example of their great work, there is the library set up by Sister Jacqueline and the other Sisters. Sister Jacqueline, with a motherly heart, always devoted to the Malawians, in co-operation with her other Sisters, set up this library in which teachers studying for their GCE

and JC examinations find the books necessary to help them in their studies. These books cover a wide range of subjects, such as Mathematics, English, Economics, History, Geography, Biology, Bible Knowledge, etc. The Sisters are always on the lookout for more books to augment the library and to help the students. At the same time, the Fathers assist by giving short lectures, using these books, in order to help those eager to study to improve themselves.

We are extremely grateful to the one who conceived the idea of starting this library and to all those who, in one way or another, have helped to stock it and keep it running. We are conscious that mere material aid is fleeting away but anything that contributes to an improvement in our education is lasting. That is why we are very grateful indeed to the work the MIC Sisters are doing in this respect. We should like these dear Sisters to know that we appreciate the assistance they are giving to help us better serve our country. May the Lord bless them and keep them and their wonderful work.

Sister Jacqueline Bastien left us a short time ago to take up a new appointment in the USA. She worked very hard among us and we should like her to know that we appreciate what she did. We ask the good God to bless her and her new apostolate.

Sr. Imelda Phiri, ROSARIAN SISTER

MADAGASCAR

In 1958, I was assigned to Morondava, our first mission in Madagascar, the "Happy Isle". My chief task was to spread the Good News among the young. After several years spent in this area, I found myself transferred to the new mission of Mahabo. Everything here had to be started from scratch.

I began by organizing a modest home economics centre for young girls. Parents were pleased with the idea, for they love their children very dearly, and are grateful for any attention paid to them. Besides lessons on simple home economics, I conducted some catechism classes. Soon the number of my pupils increased to such a degree that I had

to call on the senior students of the Feminine Formation Centre for help. Sister Josephine Rosoanjanahary, director of the Centre, gladly obliged.

In time, I started giving classes to young mothers from neighbouring bush villages. They trooped to the Centre several times a week. Courses on hygiene and child care were added to the schedule. It was good to see how well these women from various religious and ethnic groups got along together. Malagasy belonging to different tribes, Indians, Coloured, Catholics, Protestants, Seventh Day Adventists, Moslems, non-Christians all formed a closely knit family. The Centre finally expanded to include the wives of catechists in formation at the Mahabo Teachers' College.

When I first came to Madagascar, I thought I was bringing much to the Malagasy people. After sixteen years of personal contacts, I sometimes ask myself who has received more. Of course I gave all I had to give, but I learned along the way that each human being is unique before God. Our Father knows each by name and loves each with an eternal love. And each can enrich his human brothers and sisters.

Fernande Gouge, M.I.C.

KORIYAMA, JAPAN

Strikes are very much in world news. Even the children are interested. Our juniors in our Children's Home, Maria En, staged one a few days ago. One of the rooms having to be done over, I put away the statue of the Child Jesus to which the littlest ones are deeply attached. As it was not being returned quickly enough, to their taste, they decided on a "strike". I had just retired for the night when I heard the patter of little feet outside my room and excited voices being raised. What was going on? I cautiously opened the door, and there stood eight tiny pajama-clad figures claiming their "Child Jesus". Their room mother, hovering nearby, explained they had refused to say night prayers until their beloved statue was restored. She had tried to have them accept a substitute but they stuck to their idea. They knew what they wanted and were not going to give up. So, I was forced to carry back to their home room the statue of the Christ Child. The striking spirit certainly gets hold of them young!

Thérèse Laliberté, M.I.C.



Graduate of Marymount Secondary School now on police force.
Photo: Pawek

Malawi Women Rights and Duties

Women of Malawi are very industrious and, if they have rights, they also have duties to fulfill. They take care of the home and of the children. It is up to them to see that the girls get proper training. They toil from sunrise to sunset, and go to bed late at night.

It is the women's work to keep the yards always clean, to cook, wash the dishes, do the laundry for the whole family, sweep the house, hoe the garden, and perform several other chores.

Some tribes of the North — the Tonga, especially — expect that besides all the work mentioned above, the women should also till the ground and do the gardening. These women have a hard life, for after having worked outside all morning, they have to return in time to cook for the husband. After lunch they go back to the garden again, and return in time to cook dinner for the family.

Women are also supposed to take care of any child in the

neighbourhood. This is done in the hope that some day one's own child will receive similar help. This care consists in bathing the child, changing diapers, serving food... There is an African proverb which may be translated thus, "Your neighbour's child is also your child." It somewhat resembles the English saying, "One good turn deserves another."

When men and women undertake a journey, generally on foot,

the heaviest burdens are carried by the women, regardless of the distance. According to African tradition, men are superior to women and the latter owe them respect. If, for instance, there is only one chair in the house, the woman will always leave it to the man. This is practised throughout the Northern regions. However, a greater emphasis on this respect for men is current among the Tonga and the Chewa tribes.

Ecumenical Prayer Service in Mati

by Marie Berthe Beaumont, M.I.C.



The motto of the Prayer Service was, "Millions of stars, millions of men, but only one God."

An Ecumenical Prayer Service, lately held in Mati, was attended by representatives of different denominations: Catholics, Baptists, Moslems, Faith Tabernacle members, and U.C.C.P. The Ecumenical Prayer Service opened with a prayer to the Holy Spirit. Passages from the Bible were then read by priests or pastors representing their respective groups. The Moslem delegate read excerpts from the Koran which were translated into Visayan, the local dialect.

Members of the "Brother Cell Donors", of the Mati Peta, and of the Mati Baptist Choir rendered several spiritual songs in between readings. There followed a prayer for unity, each delegate holding a lighted candle. The Service ended with a prayer of thanksgiving.

It was the first time such an ecumenical event took place in Mati. The

Prayer Service was held in accordance with the desire expressed by Vatican II, to bring together all men, regardless of their religious beliefs, to live in peace, justice, and reconciliation. This can be achieved only if various denominations take time to meet for dialogue. Each must endeavour to listen with respect to the others while they express their religious point of view.

We sincerely hope to be able to organize other Ecumenical Prayer Services in the near future. For my part, I am convinced that these meetings held not only here in Mati but elsewhere, will help men of various beliefs to understand one another better, thus making the world a better place to live in. After all, Christ Jesus died on the Cross not for the redemption of a few but for all mankind.

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