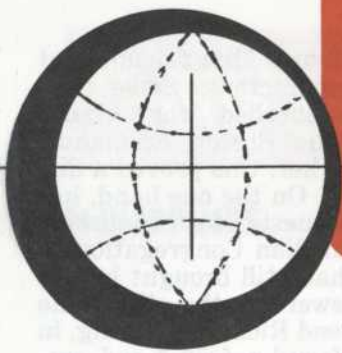




MIC

MISSION NEWS

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An African view of Evangelization

On the Evangelization of Africa by African Churches

It is the whole Christian community which evangelizes, not just the priest. Laymen must be involved in evangelism, especially through the life of the community.

Joint ecumenical evangelism is a real "must". If we are serious, we can't afford to neglect coming together in our areas and finding ways of common evangelism. Our competitive spirit should be only the good spirit of brothers competing in a common task. Thinking about "my Church" is destructive to the mission...

We theologians often feel that our different theories are obstacles to joint mission. But the people see that questions like transubstantiation and the "memorial" aspect of the Eucharist are overcome by actual meeting.

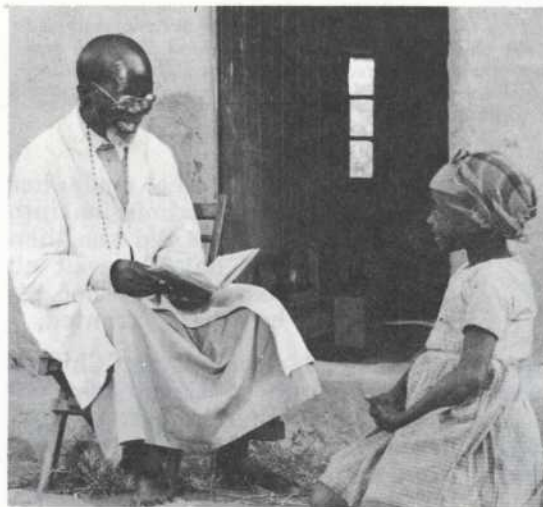
Our Christian community

We are interested today in finding what the natural 'community' at the local level is. The Christian community must be such that it is not too big to prevent people from meeting face to face, and not too small to be self-sufficient. We must find 'ministers' for the different aspects of ordinary church life among the local people.

The parishes set up in the towns are not real working units, just administrative centres. The real groups are built up slowly and we are trying to find our way.

AFRICAN bishops were among the Roman Catholic bishops from all over the world who took part in the Synod held in Rome last October. The theme was the "Evangelization of the Modern World".

Bishop Patrick Kalilombe from Malawi was one of those who had the task of representing the views of Christians in the five eastern African countries — Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia — which co-ordinate their bishops' conferences in AMECEA. These are a few of Bishop Kalilombe's comments on some key topics discussed at the Synod.



Ninety-four-year old Soko teaches catechism to the younger generation. He is one of the "ministers" for different aspects of ordinary church life mentioned by Bishop Kalilombe.

Photo Credit Pawek

In Lilongwe, Malawi's new capital, people are grouped in areas according to their standard of living, they meet because they work in Foreign Affairs, or at the golf club. We have to start from what exists. But in the Church we must celebrate the equality of all Christians, and through that celebration we must open people up to one another who would otherwise tend to grow apart.

condensed from "Africa Acts"

**With prayerful
thankfulness
for your precious
collaboration,
we wish you all
a Happy New Year.
May the spirit
of Christ,
His peace,
and His joy
remain with you
throughout 1976.**

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
JANUARY 18-25, 1976

BECOME LIKE HIM!

This year's theme is a challenge to hope. It is based on the conviction that Jesus Christ does make a difference in the world and that He will overcome. Every one of us is reminded by the call, to become like Him, that we have within the Church all the necessary elements to project a living and dynamic Christ, and we are thereby motivated to work towards the realization of the great potential which exists in His Church.



Original copy of the mysterious photograph.

The story of a famous photograph

by Huguette Turcotte, M.I.C.

The image of Christ clearly outlined in the above photograph has been reproduced thousands of times in countries all over the world. There is a story behind it which few people seem to know, even those who have it widely printed and distributed. In the following article, the author tells how the original copy came to be in the hands of a Canadian Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception.

A CANADIAN MISSIONARY IN CHINA

About sixty years ago, Sister Gratia Blanchet, M.I.C., was assigned as a teacher at Holy Spirit School in the mission of Canton, China, recently opened by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Montreal. It was here that she met Ho Shut Fan, then a thirteen-year-old student, who soon manifested strong interest in the Catholic religion. After three years of catechetical instruction, the girl was baptized by Bishop Fourquet taking the Christian name of Catherine Lucia. Eventually, she confided to her friend and teacher, Sister Gratia, her desire to enter our recently founded religious Congregation.

Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit, (Delia Tetreault), our foundress, had once before admitted a Chinese member but the experience having proved a failure, she was reluctant to try again, unless God's will in this matter became more evident. Fortunately, Lucia was not easily discouraged. She felt so sure of Christ's call that, immediately after her graduation

from high school, she made her formal request for admission into our Novitiate. Little did she then guess she would have to wait all of eighteen years, before her request would be finally granted.

Instead of admitting Chinese members into a Canadian Congregation, Mother Foundress wondered if it would not be wiser to promote local Congregations having their own set of rules, preserving their own customs. As events showed, the Motherhouse authorities were inclined to adopt the latter solution since in 1930 they agreed to collaborate in the formation of two diocesan religious Congregations in China.

Meantime, firm in her purpose of becoming a Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception, Lucia pursued her studies at the university level. After her graduation, she accepted to teach at Holy Spirit School, while awaiting a favourable answer. She and Sister Gratia never lost hope.

In 1938, our school was forced to close its doors because of the Japanese invasion. Lucia then left her homeland for the United States

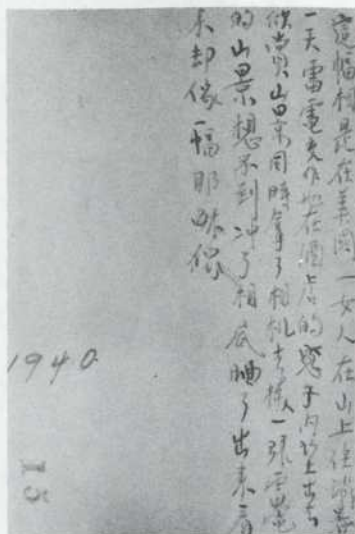
where she found kind friends and generous benefactors. Some time later, she enrolled for higher studies at the Boston Emmanuel College. For her, this proved a difficult period. On the one hand, her repeated requests for admission into the Canadian Congregation of her choice had still brought her no clearcut answer; on the other, The Most Reverend Richard Cushing, in whom she found a friend and protector, suggested that she enter an American Sisterhood ready to receive her. The temptation was subtle and Lucia began to wonder whether she was not chasing a will-o-the-wisp. Deep down in her heart, however, she remained convinced that sooner or later her dream would come true.

It was at this time of her life (1940) that the incident of the photograph occurred. She had gone on an outing with a group of college students, and all had put up at a local hotel for the night. In the early morning hours, a violent thunder storm broke out. One of her companions, who slept in the same room, decided on the spur of the moment to take a photograph of a neighbouring wooded hill, in



Sister Gratia Blanchet relates to the author the true story of the above picture of Christ.

the flare of a lightning flash. Mildly amused, Lucia watched her antics. When the photograph was later developed, the amateur photographer could not at first make anything out of the puzzle of white and black spots. She was about to tear up the photo when she was suddenly amazed to find the figure of Christ clearly outlined in black against the white background. She showed it to Lucia who was deeply moved. It seemed to her as if Christ Himself were telling her, "I'm always with you. Do not fear. Keep on hoping." She wrote to Sister Gratia, relating the event and sending her a copy of the "miracle photograph" as she called it. On the reverse side she noted in Chinese characters the par-



Note on the facts related above written by Sister Lucia in 1940.

particulars of the event with the date, 1940.

This proved to be a turning point in her life. Once again she wrote the Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, requesting her admission. On May 8, 1941, she at last received a favourable answer. The Superior, however, asked her to complete her studies in social science and philosophy before entering the Pont Viau Novitiate, on May 8, 1942. Lucia Ho was to be our first Chinese Sister.

In January 1947, she returned to Canton as a full-fledged Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception. But her happiness was shortlived for Communist armies soon overran her homeland. Once again, Holy Spirit School was forced to close, this time definitively. The only Chinese among Canadian Sisters, Sister Lucia assumed the perilous task of trying to safeguard the rights of the Church and of religious institutions against the encroachments of the regime. Finally, in 1951, the Canadian Sisters were expelled from Canton. Sister Lucia did all in her power to soften the blow for the missionaries. The new government consistently refused her, as a Chinese citizen, the authorization of joining the members of her Congregation in Hong Kong or elsewhere.

We know that this beloved Sister is still living in Canton but, until now, it has been impossible for us to have any direct contact with her. All we can do is pray

that she may have the grace to continue as a faithful witness of Christ among her compatriots.

EPILOGUE

Upon her definitive return to Montreal in 1973, Sister Gratia Blanchet was surprised to find the photograph mentioned above, reproduced in various magazines, pictures, books, etc. In her opinion, most of those representations were poor. Annoyed at finding its authorship vaguely ascribed to an unknown Chinese photographer, she asked me to rectify this error, and

to relate the facts as she knew them, at first hand. When we met, I was delighted to be shown the original photograph which was much more clearly outlined than any of the copies I had seen. As I write the last lines of this event in our community history, I hope and pray that the figure of Christ, revealed in the apparently meaningless blotches of an amateur photograph, may continue to draw numerous searchers for the Truth to Him who is the Light of the world.

M.I.C. Archives, Montreal, Canada

San Bruno, California

Presence in our Midst

by Nancy Vy So

With the arrival of Sisters Gabrielle Ouimet, Véronique Therrien, and Laura, the five of us, including Sister Louise Roy and myself, officially started the ball rolling with our first community meeting last September 9. We discussed objectives and shared ideas and plans of community involvement in our local parish activities. Priorities were determined according to each of our present commitments. In concordance with the main objectives of our house of formation we chose as motto, "Listening, Accepting, Loving, in the Spirit". We pray to "listen to the Spirit" in order to receive His light, and His truth. Being now in religious life we pray to "accept one another in the Spirit", as Sisters in Christ with our limitations, and our varied cultural and personal differences. Most important of all, we pray as we listen and accept, to be enabled to "love in the Spirit" as Jesus loves.

Together we drew a tentative schedule providing for a night of Gospel sharing, a morning for spirituality sessions centering on the charism of our Mother Foundress, and two theology classes weekly at Russel College, for the postulants. Besides, Sister Véronique gives us practical sewing and cooking lessons once a week. Though we had at first agreed to commit ourselves to the parish adult choir, we had to resign

after two sessions. The hours of practice were too taxing for our present activities.

As Sister Veronique does the cooking from Monday to Thursday, we all agreed that the rest of us would take turns for the weekend meals. The second week that we tried this, Sister Laura attempted to serve a super hot-dog lunch, starting with a bowl of soup which kept us puzzled for over twenty-four hours, before we started laughing over the whole matter. In her usual serious and precise manner, Sister had gone around the table with a pan and a ladle, serving each with a ladleful of what looked to us plain boiling water. However, to make sure we were seeing right we hopefully dipped into our soup bowls and were finally convinced that boiling water does taste like boiling water! What a revelation! Upon seeing our puzzled expression, Sister jumped up and passed the chicken cubes around somehow so as to transform the boiling water soup into chicken broth! However, it was only the next day that the whole thing struck us as hilarious. we had been so taken up with "listening and accepting in the Spirit" that we were not quite sure whether this was a joke or something to be accepted as a part of one's formation. Although it took us almost twenty-four hours to find out, I am glad we decided it was the former so we could tease one another about it in all friendliness and gaiety.

Council Celebration in America

(Philadelphia, March 8-16, 1975)

Philadelphia is a large, prosperous American city. As everywhere in this nation of immigrants, the Churches clearly mirror the racial, ethnic, and economic segmentation of the American people. Many are closed in on themselves, their buildings double-locked for fear of being robbed. At the heart of the city lies the ghetto — mile after mile of dilapidated houses and trash-filled streets. Few outsiders willingly enter the ghetto. Few of the black Americans and other minority groups, imprisoned there, have ever been to another part of the city.

Theirs is a situation humanly without solution. What then is there to celebrate here that brought together people from 15 countries including Europe, Canada, Indonesia, and Africa? Simply the existence in the ghetto of a small local church, open to all. A church one can enter at any time. "Neutral territory" for rival gangs; an oasis of welcome in a world of fear; an openness wide enough to include even a small group of white Americans and Europeans, living in the ghetto. In the course of three years of patient waiting, barriers of incomprehension and suspicion fell one after another, and simple, unexpected lines of communication grew. As this relationship deepened, it widened to encompass the universal dimensions of the people of God. The ghetto opened to the world.

OPENING OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL IN AMERICA

by Claire Garceau, M.I.C.

The initial opening of the Council took place in the North Philadelphia ghetto, where the black community of Temple United Presbyterian Church welcomed us. This unforgettable welcome, at first made up of timidity, kindness, and generosity, turned out to be full of enthusiasm, trust, and thanksgiving to the Lord. Our hope was that, at last, the ghetto would come to be "just a word in the dictionary", as the pianist of the church choir so aptly said in a spontaneous prayer during the service.

The first meeting was attended by about 60 young people and a few adults, from France, Germany, Swe-



Sister Claire with a group of Cuban friends, in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

den, Switzerland, Indonesia, Tchad, Italy, Canada, and the East Coast of the U.S.A. We were welcomed in some of the neighbourhood families. From Friday night till Sunday afternoon, we listened to the Word of God, sang, and prayed in English, French, Swedish, German, and Spanish. Two priests, one American and one African from Tchad, concelebrated Mass in English and French as the latter did not know English.

On Wednesday, March 12, it was our turn in the Centro Latinoamericano, situated in Elizabeth, N.J., to receive six delegates of the Council who wished to know something about the Latin American reality, its aspirations, its hopes, and its involvement. Real came from Montreal, Sue from Chicago, Peter and William from Boston, Eliane from Switzerland, and David from Saint Louis. All enjoyed praying and sharing the Word of God with us.

Finally, on Friday 14, against rain, wind, and hail, Alina, Luz Maria, Brunilda, and I left for Long Island for the final step. The main topic of these three days was the Beatitudes. We reflected, meditated, prayed, and shared more especially on the following: "Happy are the poor in spirit", "Happy those who mourn", "Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right". Many testimonials were given of how to translate these in to daily life. For instance, a young university student undertook the responsibility of the kitchen service during the three days we were together. On her university campus she works as a volunteer in the kitchen, in her spare time, so as

to be able to contact more students and to share with them something of her hope, her faith, and her happiness. A young man from New York, tall, strong, and handsome, has taken upon himself to visit and defend the aged and the lonely in this, our busy functional society. Another involved himself with the movement of the United Farmworkers of Jorge Chavez for the boycott of grapes, lettuce, and California wines. During this week-end, I was amazed at the sight of so many young people, boys and girls, fully convinced that Christ is THE reality of life and that it is necessary to meet Him daily in silent prayer. On Sunday, there was half an hour of meditation in silence in the makeshift chapel.

This was just the opening of the Council. It has to continue wherever we happen to be, looking forward to a new world, through "action and contemplation," where man will no longer be the victim of man, thanks to the Risen Christ who came to bring joy and light upon earth.

Although the initiative of the Youth Council was due to young Christian people who, in the name of their faith in the Risen Christ, decided to listen to others, very many non-Christian young people have joined. The council addresses itself more especially but not exclusively to the young between 18 and 30 years old. Young are those who carry hope. That is why, in spite of my 50 years, I can take my place among the latter for, in Philadelphia, as well as in Elizabeth and in Long Island, I saw "a new sky and a new earth" being born.

After this official opening, everyone was to go back home and try to LIVE what he had meditated and prayed during those days. In Canada, the opening took place at the end of May 1975, in Lachute, Quebec. As we of New Jersey were unable to attend, Maricelia, one of our Latin American group, suggested that we meet for an hour of prayer at the same time as the young Canadian people would get together. What was supposed to be an hour of prayer turned out to be a four-hour session. Alina, Niurka, Maricelia were present as well as Carlos, Mario, and Pepin. We read very slowly and shared the Letter of the People of God and that of Brother Roger, "Living beyond every hope", and we finished with a long prayer where everyone expressed his ideals and hopes, but also his limits, weaknesses, and poverty.

Bits out of mission life

PHILIPPINES

A Social Action Project *by Edita Telan, M.I.C.*

A year ago the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, known as the CBCP, conceived a nationwide Social Action Project for Lent each year, starting in 1975. This well-planned project was received with interest and enthusiasm by the different sectors of the country. Just what is the program about? Known as ALAY KAPWA, it aims at stimulating the renewal of Christian life in the Philippines, and presents both an opportunity and a challenge to each Filipino. **Alay** is the Filipino term for offering or sacrifice, while **Kapwa** means fellowmen, neighbour. In his circular letter to the people of the Archdiocese of Manila, Archbishop Jaime L. Sin writes: "It is a campaign to make our individual Lenten season more meaningful by shifting the emphasis from ourselves to our neighbours. Will you, therefore, lend a thought, a helping hand, and a few coins to your suffering neighbour? If he is oppressed, will you help him secure justice? If he is hungry, will you feed him?"

Basically, Project ALAY KAPWA is a program of EVANGELIZATION for HUMAN DEVELOPMENT undertaken more intensively during the period of Lent. It has a two-fold objective: intensive preaching of the Gospel to awaken a genuine spirit of renewal in Christ with tangible results such as reconciliation with our neighbour, especially the DEPRIVED and the OPPRESSED; a program for action in favour of neighbour and fellowmen in need — as demanded by the Gospel. This means asking people to share their three T's with their fellowmen: TIME, TALENT, and/or TREASURE. It is both an Educational Program and a Fund Campaign.

To implement this program, each parish is left to its creativity, geared to its objective and meeting the needs of the parish. Last February, in Mary the Queen Parish, Greenhills, where our MIC

Provincial House is located, the parishioners with their parish priest, Fr. Juan Andechaga, S.J., and Sister Digna Magtibay, M.I.C., an experienced pastoral worker, decided to launch an ALAY KAPWA project Human Development for Househelpers. In the parish, most of the parishioners are engaged in business, and can well afford to hire househelpers. Some 220 househelpers have been receiving religious instruction extended by Sister Digna together with some women volunteers who have generously committed themselves to the project. Sessions are held in the parish hall in the afternoon and in the evening every Monday. The main activities are: (1) An explanation of the Mass; (2) singing; and (3) group discussion. In one of the sessions, Sister Digna spoke about love. This being an interesting topic, it provoked a lively discussion. To the question, "What is love?" some answers were: joy, sacrifice, service, mystery, a many-splendoured thing, an ocean of emotion surrounded by expenses, etc. One wonders how these poor girls could imagine such definitions of LOVE. So as not to let them remain on the natural level, Sister Digna urged them to delve deeper into the Christian dimension saying, "Let us fall in love with one another, in God. How should this show in our everyday life? Self-discipline and service with a SMILE and a JOYFUL HEART could be the answer. Our lives should be a continual YES to God. After all, saying "Yes" to Him is the essence of our Christian life. "YES, ALWAYS WITH JOY".

Many more househelpers are expected to share the GOOD NEWS. There are 700 families who participate in the Eucharistic celebration on Sundays, in Mary the Queen Church. To encourage home owners to send their helpers to these religious instruction classes, questionnaires have been widely distributed. Besides, a leaflet entitled **A CALL TO SERVICE** is disseminated to challenge the parishioners to commit themselves more to Our Lord in serving the "least of his brothers and sisters".

Sister Digna Magtibay is a zealous pastoral worker.



VANCOUVER, B.C.

One hundred years old

"It's just a lot of hard work".

Mount St. Joseph's Hospital had a festive air last June 19. Everyone in the halls, visitors included, seemed to know that Mrs. Lydia Mitchell, an Extended Care patient, was celebrating her 100th birthday.

Extended Care volunteers, under the direction of Mrs. Rosemary Webber, had arranged a big party for the occasion. Mrs. Mitchell's two daughters were there, as were a large group of grandchildren and other relatives and friends. And, far beyond her family circle, the event prompted good wishes and congratulations: there were telegrams from the Queen, the Prime Minister, the Governor General, the Premier of B.C.



Nurse Carmen Mui in 1900 costume with Extended Care patient. Photo BCC

Mrs. Lydia Mitchell
walks into the room
to the strains
of "Happy Birthday"
on the day she turned a hundred.
Photo BCC



Asked about her view of it all, Mrs. Mitchell quipped: "It's nothing special — it's just a lot of hard work." She walked by herself into the room where all her guests were assembled, lively and alert, perfectly in control of the situation, amid the click and whirr of cameras.

All other patients from Extended Care were there. Many of the volunteers had donned long dresses reminiscent of another era — one hundred years ago. A nursing uniform from the turn of the century, on loan from St. Paul's Hospital, was worn by nurse Carmen Mui.

There are at present 56 patients in the Extended Care Unit. A very active volunteer program

functions at Mount St. Joseph, but more volunteers are needed. These volunteers care about the patients rather than for them: they read to them, write letters, talk, and, above all, listen. Patients can get very depressed without the attention and affection of volunteers.

"It's not so much the service performed," says Mrs. Webber. "It's the outside world coming in, letting them know that they're not forgotten, that they're still a part of things."

Volunteers and patients often go on outings to the circus, on picnics in Stanley Park, out to dinner or lunch, especially to places providing music and singing.

They also help patients learn simple crafts, like knitting, or stuf-

ing felt toys. A group of ladies comes in to play mahjong with the Chinese patients. Another attraction is bingo. Entertainers often visit the patients. Volunteers are encouraged to give two hours a week to Extended Care patients, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon or from 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Construction of a new wing will more than double the size of the Extended Care Unit, and will provide this general hospital with a Psychiatric Unit, along with expanded Acute Care Service.

Glancing at the work in progress, Mrs. Webber notes: "We have 56 Extended Care patients now, and by next May we hope to have 150. Our Volunteer program must expand with the hospital!"

Our newsletter MIC Mission News keeps you tuned to missionary doings around the world. Nothing could awaken missionary interest more effectively than your winning new members to the cause. The newsletter will be a link between you and the Immaculate Conception Missionary Association (ICMA). Our special way of thanking you: two Masses offered each week for your intentions.

ICMA membership fee, one year, \$2.00
two years, \$3.00

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