



WANTED: *New Prophets*

Jeannine Forcier, M.I.C.

- AGE:** 18 to 50 years.
- QUALIFICATIONS:** Good health, spirit of Faith, sound judgment, courage, straightforwardness, broadmindedness, capacity to love others regardless of color, race, or creed.
- DURATION:** Lifetime commitment after trial period.
- SALARY:** NONE guaranteed but room and board available.
- DESTINATION:** One of 14 countries in the world according to needs.



Jeannine Forcier born in Chicopee, Mass., U.S.A., entered our missionary Congregation in 1951. She was assigned to our missions in Zambia and Malawi in 1957 and laboured there as a teacher for nearly ten years.

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you came to birth I consecrated you; I have appointed you as prophet to the nations (Jr 1: 1-5).

The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh has been given to me for Yahweh has anointed me. He has sent me to bring Good News to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison... to comfort all those who mourn... For I, Yahweh, love justice, I hate robbery and all that is wrong (Is 61: 1-3-8).

AT A POINT in the lives of all the prophets of old, each received an irresistible divine call. Each was chosen to be God's envoy, sent to proclaim God's demands and to be signs of His divine will. Not only were they to preach the word of God and denounce the evils of the day but to live in such a way that their whole lives were to become a lesson, a symbol for those to whom they were sent.

Some prophets rose at once to answer the call of the Lord and prepared themselves in all haste for their

mission. Others like Jonah decided to run away from Yahweh for they feared this vocation... but to be fair to Jonah, I must admit he came back to the Lord.

What about today? Does God still need prophets to spread the Good News of His love for mankind? Are there still any prophets around? I think there are but their names have changed from Jeremiah to Jean Vanier, from Isaiah to Helder Camara, from Amos to Dorothy Day, from Jonah to Teresa of Calcutta. Yes, they are still in our midst, but in insufficient numbers.

What kind of life do contemporary prophets live? What are they called to denounce? Those are \$64 questions which, due to inflation, have become \$150 ones.

Twentieth century prophets are prophets in their "being" and in their "doing" because of their consecration to God and because of the mission to which they are dedicated. They listen to God in an attitude of continuous prayer and confront their life with

the word of God. This consequently requires a commitment. Therefore, they live the Gospel radicalism of the Beatitudes, loving all people as brothers and sisters; sparing and sharing their material goods and their time; spreading peace, joy, and hope wherever they go and working hard to liberate the poor, the oppressed, and exploited minority groups.

Their voices cry out against social injustice, racial prejudice, and oppression of the poor and weak. They denounce consumerism, refusing to make profit and enjoyment the driving motives of human existence. They do not make of the work — salary — profit an absolute but look upon work as a service and let the needs of men determine the quality of their work. They proclaim that this world is a huge village in the hands of an all-loving God, where all are called upon to live as brothers and sisters in love and solidarity. The prophets of today are also sent to all the nations and countries to carry forth this Good News.

Isn't this an exciting career? Are you sure God is not calling you to be a Prophet? Why not check with your local priest or religious community? You may be in for the surprise of your life!

Thank God for Yourself

God cares for each of us as if he alone existed
and for all of us as if we were but one.

Saint Augustin

When Thanksgiving comes around you start counting your blessings. Do you ever think of adding one to the usual list — *you*? Why not be thankful for yourself?

This is not an invitation to be self-centered. There exists a probability that you do not appreciate yourself as fully as you should. Many people tend to exaggerate their bad points and minimize their good ones. Healthy self-confidence is thus weakened until they become powerless to cope with the tensions of daily living. Low self-esteem can be a sort of disease sapping your strength and determination. To avoid its ravages, try being grateful that you are you, a person unique in God's sight.

Why not be thankful, whoever and wherever you are? True, you may at times be irritable or selfish or unkind. But think of all the occasions when you do go out of your way to help another, when you give up some treat so that others may benefit by it... When in your every day life, you cook, clean, make beds, care for children, all these good deeds are other-person oriented. So be thankful for yourself as a contributor for other people's happiness.

Remember that nobody else in the whole human race is exactly like you. Thank God for the wonderful gifts of sight, speech, hearing, taste, and smell. Be just as grateful for the gestures, the tone of voice, the smile, the many characteristics that make you what you are.

Be thankful for your age. If you are still in the springtime of youth, give thanks for energy and vitality. If you have reached the midsummer of life, thank God for being at the peak of your productivity, willing and strong enough to carry heavy burdens. If you have reached the sunset years, thank him for the precious lessons of patient wisdom learned, give others the benefit of your experience, watch the passing parade, march with it as long as you can keep time with the music.

Dear Lord, I know that in spite of all my faults, I am a unique and beloved child of yours. Thank you for having made me exactly the way I am. Thank you for enabling me to make others happy, to lead them to you who are the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

MARY COMMANDS LEGIONS

No one in heaven except God Himself has more power than Mary who is Queen of angels and of saints. She commands legions before whom demons flee. She is Daughter of the Father, Mother of the Son, Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

Her role is unique in that she is the Second Eve — our new Mother — the one who was predestined to crush the serpent's head and thus nullify Satan's seduction of the woman, the mother of the human race, in Eden. The role that began for Mary at the foot of the Cross — when it must have seemed to the Deceiver that he again had triumphed — is a role that will still grow greater and greater as time comes towards a close.

Mother of Christ, powerful mother of all Christians, MARY CAN WORK TRIUMPH FROM SEEMING DISASTER, VICTORY FROM THE JAWS OF DEFEAT. Thus the calm Christian, who has done all he can towards a problem, leaves the final solution to Mary.

Sometimes we have to be careful in the telling. But one such story concerns a "deal" in government, wherein a conscientious Catholic civil servant found himself in a dilemma. A powerful state contractor offered a deal to the local government that, while seemingly honest, to this man was frightening.

Unable to voice fears and charges he could not prove, he went home, prayed the rosary, asking Mary to make it from there BECAUSE THERE WAS NOTHING HE COULD DO. On the following Monday afternoon, without any apparent explanation, the deal was inexplicably called off.

"LEAVES"



Meet my little friends — a group of young Malawian boys and girls full of life and mischief. Every day, I watch them at play. Why at play? Because they cannot afford to go to school, much as they would like to. Many are orphans or belong to families too poor to afford paying fees.

As a rule, our young Malawians are bright and eager to learn. They do not ask for much. The most important thing for them is to become

JAPAN

Golden Jubilee of M.I.C. Japanese Mission

by Madeline Maillet, M.I.C.

Fifty years ago, on a mellow September day, a group of Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception were gathered around Mother Foundress eagerly listening to timely advice on the mission to which they were being assigned — Canton, China. Their departure was to take place in a few days. But when that day came around, it happened that one of the group found her "marching orders" had been changed. What had happened? A new mission field was being opened to our Society, and Sister Agnes Lavallée was the one chosen to preside over the foundation.

A few days previously, just as the Canton-bound missionaries were about to leave, Father Calixte Gélinas, O.F.M., had called at the Mother House to expose the situation of the mission of Naze, on the Island of Amami Oshima, in southern Japan, lately entrusted to his Order. He made such an eloquent

Little Friends of Mine

by Denise Demeules, M.I.C.



Sister Denise with a few of her little friends at play.



men or women their country can rely on. They are the joy and hope of their young nation, justly proud of its ten years of independence and its remarkable achievements at all levels. Reflecting upon the problems of the country I have learned to love, I have come to the conclusion that sound education of its youth could solve them all.

One of my little friends, Kamuno, is a lucky boy. He used to be always

up to some new mischief around our garden, probably to call our attention to his plight. Thanks to a kind Canadian friend, Mr. Gérard Dubé, a teacher in Joliette, he has been going to school since October 1975. His friend and benefactor can rightly be proud of him for he has a very good report.

A number of other Malawian boys and girls have thus benefited by the generosity of friends overseas and

have successfully gone through primary and secondary school, and have attended University where fees are not required. They have become competent leaders in their country's service.

The sum of \$10.00 would enable one of my little friends to attend Grade I. Perhaps some of our associates might like to do their share in helping ensure brighter tomorrows for Malawi...

If any among you wanted to promote the missionary project, please contact Denise Demeules, M.I.C., at present on home leave at 54 Desnoyers Street, Pont Viau, P.Q. She will be returning to Malawi during the course of the year. Her address over there — P.O. Box 47, Mzimba, Malawi, C.A.

plea on the poverty of this new mission, that Mother found it impossible to resist. There were then few secondary schools for girls on the Island. The Fathers had been asked to build one, on grounds donated by the municipality. Father Maurice, a former French marine officer become Franciscan, had supervised the erection of a handsome stone building. Father Calixte wanted Sisters to assume the direction. To his great joy, Mother promised that three would leave before the end of the year for the Island of Oshima.

Sisters Agnes Lavallée, Florentine Dansereau, and Lucienne Gagnon arrived in Naze on December 8, 1926. After a few days of rest in a small Japanese house, they took up residence on the second floor of a dormitory for students, close to the new school. Everything was strange to them in a strange new land. But they cheerfully set to work, in spite of the heat, to learn the difficult language. Amami Oshima was a lovely island with a warm climate, but the population was poor and non-Christian for the most part. Like all Japanese, however, they had a great respect for education. The school was soon filled to capacity.

Another group of three missionaries arrived in the autumn of 1927. For several years all went well for Sisters and students. Among the latter, some

requested religious instruction and were baptized. But trouble was brewing. The island was a strategic point in the Pacific, and, as early as 1930, the military clique was planning war against China. Missionaries were looked upon as spies for foreign powers. Pressure was put upon the Christians to ask for their expulsion. Finally, in December 1934, the Apostolic Delegate asked all the missionaries to leave the mission in order to avoid further harassment of the Christians. Along with the rest, the M.I.C. Sisters regretfully left their first mission in Japan.

They were not destined to return to their first field of endeavour. Instead, they were asked to staff two newly opened missions in north-western Japan, that of Koriyama in 1930, and that of Aizu-Wakamatsu in 1934. They had hardly settled down to their new tasks, when World War II broke out. Interned for several years, they found themselves powerless to exercise any kind of apostolate except that of prayer. Finally, in 1943, they were all forcibly repatriated. Three years later, they were recalled by the religious authorities. When they arrived, they found their Koriyama house badly dilapidated, but they bravely undertook to set things right again. They shared with the people the deprivations resulting from the war years, while starting all over again their apostolic work.

In Aizu-Wakamatsu they now conduct a large school which takes the children in kindergarten and leads them up through Middle and High School. About 1,000 students attend this school where they can acquire the basics of the Catholic faith. Parents who entrust their children to us, do so with the understanding that the latter will receive daily religious instruction. In Koriyama, our Sisters also conduct a similar school including kindergarten to Middle School inclusively. Besides, they run on the outskirts of the city, a modern home for children who lack parental care.

Our Tokyo house was opened in 1949, primarily as a formation centre for aspirants. It now houses provincial headquarters, a hostel for young ladies from outside the Capital who follow university courses in Tokyo, and a flourishing kindergarten. There are 16 Japanese Sisters at work in our different houses. This is merely a bird's eye view of what has been accomplished by our Missionary Sisters in Japan during the past 50 years. Nothing has been said of their teaching in Sophia University and the good influence wielded over students, their visits to the ailing in hospitals and homes... God has seen their efforts and blessed them. We join with them in saying a fervent "Magnificat" for all the graces received and the good achieved in spite of obstacles of all kinds.

KASEYE, MALAWI

The Lucky Triplets

as told by Louise Lefebvre, M.I.C.

Some among you are already acquainted with our story. For those who are not, here is our life sketch, so far.

We were born at the Kaseye Mission Maternity House, in November 1974, the sixth, seventh, and eighth in a family of five children. The three of us, two girls and one boy, were the talk of the whole area. Many said, "They won't live. Impossible for three babies to survive..." Of course we knew nothing about all this gossip, being only a few hours old. We were called Louisa, Patrick, and Veta.

The news of our arrival travelled fast, and we made friends even in far-away places. These friends provided us with *tambala* (pennies) to buy milk, soap, clothing, etc. As our home is in a distant village, we were kept at the hospital for about six months. Sister Yveta wanted to make sure we would live and grow strong.

After we came home, our father walked twice every month to the mission clinic to fetch powdered milk. We are now eighteen months old. Our father has built a brand new mud hut, especially for us three. Our mother is very proud of us and the whole family is happy.

We thank you all, our good friends from America, for helping us grow strong and fat.



Sister Iveta with Louise, Patrick, and Veta.



Sister Louise fondles one of the babies at the Centre. Photo credit: Pawek

AFRICAN CAKE OF LIFE

Recipe and method:

Half a cup of FRIENDSHIP,

Add a cup of THOUGHTFULNESS.

Cream together with a pinch of TENDERNESS.

Beat very lightly in a bowl of LOYALTY

With a cup of FAITH, one of HOPE, one of CHARITY.

Be sure to add a spoonful of GAIETY that sings,

And also ABILITY to laugh at little things.

Moisten with the tears of heartfelt SYMPATHY,

Bake in a GOOD NATURED pan and serve repeatedly.

Joyce Zaloumis, Lusaka
in "THE SUN"

MZAMBAZI, MALAWI

The Unlucky Trio

by Gertrude Paré, M.I.C.

In 1971, two girls and one boy were born to Nya Nyilenda, wife of Aldeo Soko, at our Mzambazi Maternity Centre. The three were in fine shape and we had great hopes for their normal growth. To make sure, we kept mother and babies at our Nutrition Centre for two months.

Then, as Nya's village was only six miles from our Centre we asked her to take the children home, assuring her she would always be welcome any time she needed help. Thanks to the generosity of friends overseas, we promised to provide suitable food and clothing for the trio as long as need be.

In spite of these promises, however, the mother asked to stay at the Centre for another six months. As we had so little space, it was impossible to grant her request.

During the next five weeks, Nya regularly brought the triplets to the clinic to be weighed and checked. The trio was in perfect health and growing fast. Then tragedy struck the Soko family. During the sixth week after the triplets' birth, the father fell seriously ill with cerebral malaria, and had to be hospitalized. For several days, his life even hung in the balance. Then, he rallied and a month later was discharged. Meantime, we were saddened and astonished to hear that the three babies had died one after the other, on the eve of the father's homecoming.

How explain the infants' unexpected death? Perhaps we should have kept them longer at the Centre... But, then, they would eventually have had to be sent back home. In remote villages, superstitious people used to consider a triple birth the sign of infidelity on the part of the mother. Such misdemeanour is sure to call down the wrath of the family's revered ancestors. If a member falls sick during the first year of the triplets' life, they have to be sacrificed to the spirits in order to atone for the mother's "sin". Could this be the explanation of the children's death?

Today, a welcome evolution is taking place, even in such remote villages, thanks to practical courses on pre-natal and post-natal hygiene and mobile clinics making the rounds.

Bits out of mission life

TAIWAN, FORMOSA

LAST MISSIONARY JOYS IN TAIWAN

by Odile Malbœuf, M.I.C.

Dear Mother,

Before I leave my beloved mission field, I want to share with you my last apostolic joys in Taiwan. For over a year, one of my former pupils, Amy Pai, had followed courses on religion given by Father Stanislas Lui, S.J., our devoted pastor. She was almost ready to be baptized when a fatal disease forced her instructor to cancel his courses. He died on June 1, 1975, at the age of 74. Poor Amy was brokenhearted. She had become deeply attached to this priest whom she considered a spiritual father.

After his death, I gave her a few catechism lessons, then passed her on to our catechist to complete her preparation. She was finally baptized in our convent chapel, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and I was privileged to be her godmother. One day, Amy told me she would pay the stipends for a Mass to be offered every month, in order to obtain protection for a younger brother of hers enrolled in the army. She confided, "You know, Sister, I talk to the Lord as I would to a very dear friend... Some time ago I struck a bargain with Him. I told Him that if He kept my brother safe from harm, I would refrain going to the movies during five consecutive years. It is not always easy to stick to my promise... Sometimes I do give in to the pressing invitations of friends. To make up, do you know what I do afterwards? I drop the price of the ticket into an alms box." Amy is far from being well off. She works hard for a living, as a housemaid, in a Protestant minister's family. As all the members of her own family are Buddhists and disapproved of her Baptism, she cannot rely on them for help of any kind.

Let me tell you about another deepfelt joy. While I was stationed in Hong Kong, I came to appreciate a student called Chivey Ng who attended our Tak Sun School. He was an outstanding Scout leader, devoting all his free time to fostering the movement among the young.

After his graduation from High School, he enrolled as a student at Taiwan University sited in a large city of southern Taiwan. All his holidays were spent working hard so as to earn enough to supplement the government scholarships he had obtained. It is impossible for his family living in mainland China to help him defray his expenses.

When he visited me last year, I was happy to know he had faithfully followed my advice to learn more about the Catholic faith. He explained that he was now under instruction and hoped to be baptized soon. At the end of December, he wrote to inform me that he had been baptized at Christmas. It was the most splendid gift I had even received.

Dear Mother, I rely on your prayers to keep him strong in the faith of his baptism. May George — this is his Christian name — be ever an ardent Scout who gives until it hurts for Christ, his divine Leader. I am sure the Lord will hear with special tenderness the plea of my 89-year-old mother. We will soon meet again and I will have the time and the joy of telling you about the countless blessings God has bestowed upon me during the 44 years I spent in the Chinese Mission field.

Your loving daughter,

Odile, M.I.C.



Amy Pai, my dear godchild.

The following is a letter written by George Chivey, telling me of his baptism. I think you will enjoy reading it as much as I did.

Dear Sister,

Thanks a lot for your warm blessings, good wishes, and especially your prayers which have helped me to gain faith.

As I told you in a previous letter, I was baptized on the Christmas Eve of the Holy Year, and I received Confirmation and Holy Communion, as well, immediately afterwards. It was a great event for me. Nearly all the Catholics in the University were present in the small chapel to hear Mass and witness my baptism. Their prayers and friendly greetings were encouraging. The feeling I experienced at that moment is beyond description.

Yesterday, I went to the seashore alone in search of silence and privacy, to recall my previous life and to have some words with God. Then I spent a couple of hours in the chapel to pray for my family, for you, for my friends, and for all those who have helped me. I see a new life and new prospects waiting ahead. I know I will accomplish these because in my heart are courage, faith, and peace which are everlasting.

Thanks again for these would not have come true if you had not encouraged me. Hoping to see you soon.

With love,

George Chivey



George Chivey Ng, outstanding Scout leader.

LIMA-PERU

During the last few months, I have been kept busy preparing for First Communion 60 boys from the Mariano Melgar Elementary School. It is no easy task to hold the attention of these lively youngsters, especially

as the doctrinal course can be given only after school hours. But finally, all have been sufficiently prepared for the Great Day. Lately, I have also been entrusted with the spiritual formation of Pablo, an eleven-year-old retarded boy, who greatly desires to make his First Communion. The young girls we have as helpers around the house are taught catechism for the first time. They mostly come to the city from mountain villages in order to earn some money. The greater number have had little or no schooling. In order to remedy their situation, we have put them in the way of attending evening classes. One of them called Romualda had not been baptized although she was seventeen. Orphaned at an early age, she had left her remote village and drifted into Lima where she eventually found work as maid in a teacher's house. Her employer never bothered about her well-being but made her work as hard as she could. When Romualda came to our convent, the first thing we did was to enroll her in evening classes where she could at least learn to read and write. Meantime, a Sister carefully taught her the rudiments of Christian doctrine. Soon she expressed the wish to be baptized. A young couple who work in pastoral animation on the diocesan level took her under their wing as godparents. Romualda prepared herself for the great event with remarkable fervour. She was baptized at our place in the presence of her classmates from the evening classes. Everyone was surprised and deeply touched when, before the ceremony, she rose to ask her companions' forgiveness for any annoyance she might have caused them. After her baptism, she again rose to tell the assistance how proud and happy she felt at being a daughter of God. Her happiness has doubled since she learned that her godparents wanted her to live with them as their own child. She has now all but forgotten her unfortunate past. Her story is that of many a young girl from the mountains, lost in the great city.

Therese Savaria, M.I.C.

COCHABAMBA, BOLIVIA

In January, I started in earnest to study Castilian, the Spanish dialect on which Spanish-American varieties of the language spoken in Bolivia are based. This study is essential in order to penetrate Bolivian psychology. There are still many things I do not understand about the people because I do not know them well enough. Although Bolivia is the smallest country in South America, communications are not easy because of the mountains surrounding it on all sides. It has been said that the physical determines the human. As the people enjoy scant communication with one another, they are withdrawn and taciturn, and rarely express what they think. The political climate in recent years has intensified this tendency. Many persons have "disappeared" because they had talked too much. Under the conditions who would be surprised to hear someone say "yes" when he really means "no"?

The school year opened on January 15, at least for school directors and secretaries. This is the crucial period set for registration. The problem is not that the city lacks schools, but that there is a sad lack of control on the part of the School Board. Students want to enter the school of their choice. Those who live in the suburbs, with a good school at hand, will not attend it because they would lose face unless they went to one in the city proper. Another problem is that the schools under the Board are as a rule poorly run. Directors and teachers seem to consider teaching a hobby. As a result, well conducted schools are overcrowded while the others are practically empty. So as to remedy this situation we have organized weekly sessions to quicken the teachers' awareness of their responsibility as teachers and as Christians. Only six have responded to the invitation so far, but it is a beginning.

Solange Garneau, M.I.C.

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. How about asking your friends to join our missionary association ICMA? Use coupon below.

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