The Pylon

Vol. XXVII, No. 2
Autumn 1965



"The smallest 'green thought in a green shade' would have seemed impossible amidst the elephant grass of six years ago"

(Holy Child Secondary School, Abakaliki)



The Twins are pre-occupied, not a little worried. So are we in *The Pylon* office

The Pylon needs

at least 500 New Subscribers

to offset

Italy's increased Postal Rates from August 1st, 1965.

If you really find *The Pylon*

'Superb' - 'Delightful' - 'Excellent'

'Different' - 'Difficult to put down'

so will your friends, your family, and strangers.

The Pylon makes friends in the most unexpected

THE PYLON

THAT CARRIES THE LIGHT TO AFRICA

A MAGAZINE OF MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA PUBLISHED WITH ECCLESIASTICAL APPROVAL IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS IN NIGERIA AND GHANA

Vol. XXVII, No. 2 **Autumn 1965**

CONTENTS

PAGE

EDITORIAL: THE PILGRIM CHURCH 2

PRINCESS MARINA BORGHESE, *R.I.P.* 3

INTRODUCING THE REVEREND JAMES MONTGOMERY 4
Mother Maria Caritas, S.H.C.J.

THE MISSIONS

KINGDOM OF LIGHT AND GRACE 8

THE BATTLE OF THE BEES 19
Mother Mary Assumpta, S.H.C.J.

BLOCK ON BLOCK 23

PREPARING TO SERVE THE NEW AFRICA 24

OUR BURSES AND ADDRESSES 26

APPALACHIA 27
Mother Mary Eleanor, S.H.C.J.

"IT'S THE MASS THAT MATTERS": VI. BL. AMBROSE BARLOW, O.S.B. 30
J.E. Bamber

A THINKING POOL. "I'M SORRY!" 34
Mother Mary Norbert, S.H.C.J.

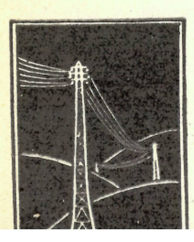
MISSION MOSAIC — IN MANHATTAN 36

THE SPARK 40
Electra

THE V.I.P.'s 42
Robert Leech

BOOKS RECEIVED 46
M.S., M.M.U., L.S.M.

THE LAUDAMUS CLUB 48



SUBSCRIPTION RATES

America, $2; Italy, 1000 lire; Germany, 7 DM; France, 7 NF; Sterling Area, 10 shillings.

All communications to be addressed to **Mother Mary Ursula, Via Boncompagni, Rome.** ***Cheques to be made payable to*** **THE PYLON.**

Those resident in Gt. Britain should subscribe to **The Pylon c/o Mother Mary Veronica, Convent of the Holy Child, St**



Autun, c. 1130

THE PILGRIM CHURCH

Editorial

And so we come to the fourth and final session of the Council. Though some of us will not get even as far as the Piazza of St. Peter's, this time we all have at hand a new and invaluable instrument for assessing the importance of what we hear about the doings within the Council; we have the Constitution *De Ecclesia* * which none of our ancestors had before us. Now, each of us can look through a small book and say: This is where *I* come, here among the People of God; and here is my own category in either Chapter III, or IV, or VI; Chapter V belongs to my life at this moment so that the end of Chapter VII may be mine forever.

One may make one's first approach to *De Ecclesia* from this somewhat egoistical angle. But the weight of spiritual logic in the reading of it should make the *first person singular* give way to the *first person plural*. "The mystery of the Church" at the beginning of the document and the mystery of the Blessed Virgin as the symbol of the Church at the end are both grounded in charity.

This issue of THE PYLON largely concerns the People of God committed here or there to charity, to a strong solidarity in Christ. And if to solidarity then to nothing less than a sensitive "hearing him" in those of Chapter III to whom he has delegated his care of the flock. The Old Covenant counted upon God as Shepherd. The New Covenant knows Christ as both Shepherd and Lamb. So, in our different degrees, we also are shown in the *Constitution on the Church* as sometimes ministering, sometimes being ministered to. These ministeries in an imperfect world and to a people on the march will not often be perfect in all respects.

Yet at times it has seemed lately as though the Pilgrim Church were travelling by train, so much to the fore is the railway carriage problem – the travellers who want all the windows wide open and the travellers who would like them hermetically sealed. Neither extreme is reasonable but, given some of the ice-cold regions of the world through which the pilgrimage is now passing, one can fully understand the anxiety about too many draughts which the Holy Father has recently expressed in his public audiences. For the weaker pilgrims may suffer disaster.

If "Christ loves the Church as his bride" and "in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" we can only go along in perfect loyalty with the Church, or – to use the less fashionable word – in perfect obedience, that personal and willed obedience which springs from the liberty of the children of God. At this stage, numerically few voices will be heard in the Council Chamber but our loyalty has there its appropriate place – beneath the bronze foot of St. Peter.

* See page 48 for editions of *De Ecclesia*.



Maria Bianca Cornelia Borghese

(*née* Connelly)

It is a sorrow to record the death, on May 3rd 1965, of Princess Marina Borghese, daughter of Frank Connelly, with whom the Society of the Holy Child Jesus has had many contacts during her long life.

We offer our sincere condolences to her husband, Prince Marcello Borghese, to Signora Graziella Fiocca and her family.

May eternal light shine upon her.

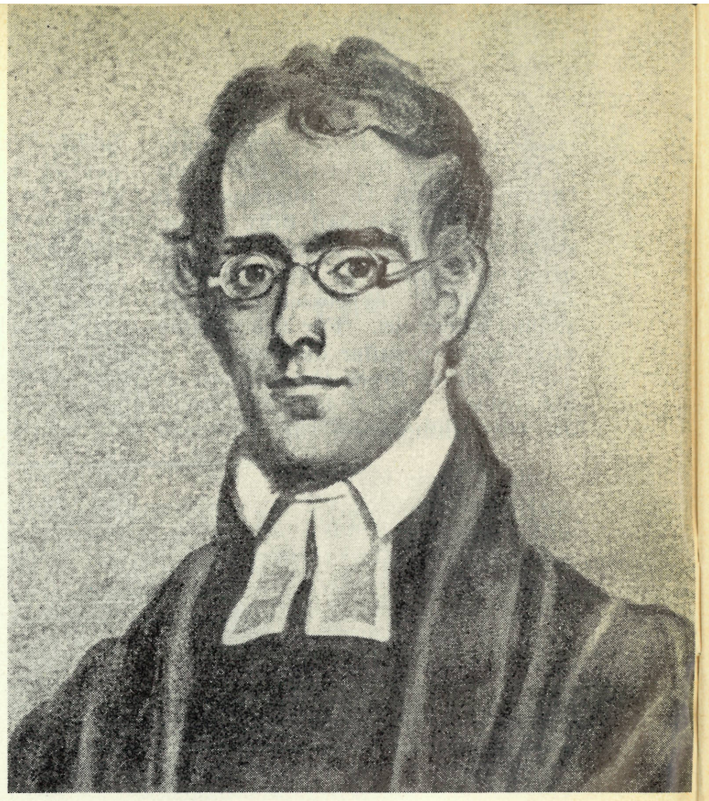
R. I. P.

An appreciation of this granddaughter of Mother Cornelia Connelly will appear in a subsequent issue of *The Pylon* when further material concerning her artist father, Frank, should be available.

INTRODUCING THE REVEREND JAMES MONTGOMERY

by

Mother Maria Caritas S.H.C.J



The Reverend James Montgomery, Rector of St Stephen's.

1823 was a decisive year for fourteen-year-old Cornelia Peacock; it was also decisive in a happier way for a relative with whom she would be associated, the Reverend James Montgomery. In May, Cornelia's widowed mother died and she began a new home life with her half-sister Isabella and the latter's husband, Austin Montgomery. In February of 1823 James Montgomery, Austin's brother, had witnessed the consecration of the "Gothic" Church built for the new Protestant Episcopal Parish of St. Stephen which he had formed the year before at the request of many of his friends, among them family connections. St. Stephen's represented the High Church movement in Philadelphia, Montgomery being a disciple of New York's Bishop Hobart who was in communication with High Churchmen at Oxford in the 1820's. Though only thirty-six when his Church was consecrated, James Montgomery brought to it a Princeton education, experience in the law profession, and in the Protestant Episcopal ministry of New Jersey and New York.

The new pastor commenced his *Register* in March of 1823, and although he recorded the baptisms of Cornelia's nieces and nephews from the first month and on through succeeding years, it was not until eight years later that he recorded the Baptism of "Peacock, Cornelia Augusta, Adult, 25 Feby 1831." This all-important entry is almost the only written record of the contacts which there is good reason to suppose existed between the Rector of St. Stephen's and his young relative and parishioner. Yet over thirty years later, when Cornelia's spiritual daughters went as missionaries to America, they visited James' wife, a widow since his saintly death in 1834. The Superior wrote to Cornelia:

> . . . she was delighted to see us, & hear all about you wanted us to go and take tea with her, asked us everything she could think of about you & seemed delighted to hear us speak of you, it was an equal treat for us to see her, she was the first and only lady we have seen except a friend who came in whilst we were there — she is really a charming and elegant woman . . .
>
> (From *Mother Mary Xavier Noble*, Aug. 17, 1862.)

Scant as is the written evidence of their direct contacts it seems imperative to study this fine-featured, ascetic minister who looms large in the background of Cornelia's impressionable teen-age years. Such studies are just beginning, but there are enough materials at hand in his sermons to give *Pylon* readers a brief hint of his portion of the rich canvas against which Cornelia's life was painted.

To his flock James Montgomery was, above all, a teacher of the Word—of the Holy Gospels. And the great message of the Word was the tidings of Redemption and the Christian call to union with Christ in His Redemptive act. The liturgy was the means *par excellence* through which the grace of the Word flowed to men; the apostolate—the spreading of the Gospel—was the great outpouring of the Word through the universal Christian vocation.

In "The Missionary Enterprise" preached in 1831 while Cornelia was his parishioner, the zealous pastor drew together these central themes of his faith and worship. Taking as his text: "And He said unto them, go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," (Mark 16:15) he described with all the eloquence of nineteenth century rhetoric the importance the Apostles placed on this last command of their Savior noting how they valued deeply their "lot as *children of God*, and *joint heirs with Christ* of an eternal inheritance *purchased with His precious blood!*"

He asks why Christ's command is not obeyed with equal fervor today?

> . . . *Because we have not the same sense of the value and importance* of the gospel as influenced the hearts and conduct of its primitive followers. Did we possess correct apprehensions of the personal importance of faith to every individual under heaven, did we recognize the gospel as the *power of God unto salvation of everyone that believeth*, . . . as unfolding to offending man the only door of access to his offended Maker . . . we would be solicitous to extend it to everyone within our sphere of exertions who might be a stranger to its consolations and its blessings . . .

It is at the climax of this appeal for the fulfillment of the Christian vocation that he reaches the core of his own teaching as revealed on his death-bed three years later:

> . . . Let our last appeal to you be drawn from the infinite price paid for that redemption, which is the sum and substance of the Gospel. If God spared not His only-begotten Son, but willingly gave Him up to die, the just for the unjust; if that Son humbled



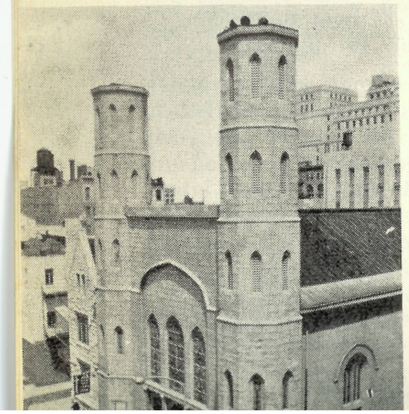
Drawing of St Stephen's by the famous architect, William Strickland, who designed this - his first "Gothic" church in Philadelphia - in 1822

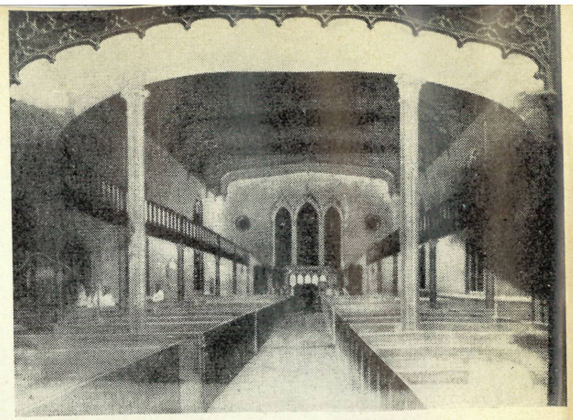
ST STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

10th Street above Chestnut

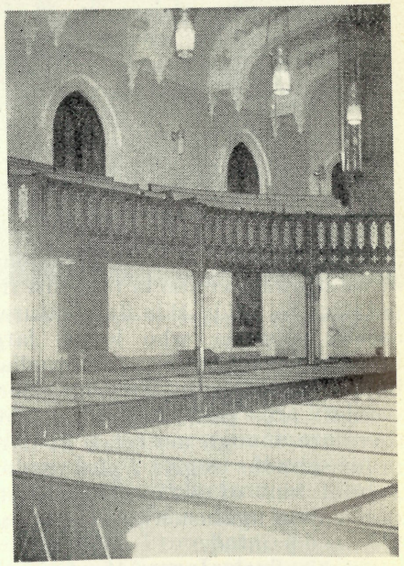
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

St Stephen's in 1965. The Parish House has replaced the graveyard of the 1820's. A most kind welcome is accorded to Cornelia-minded visitors.

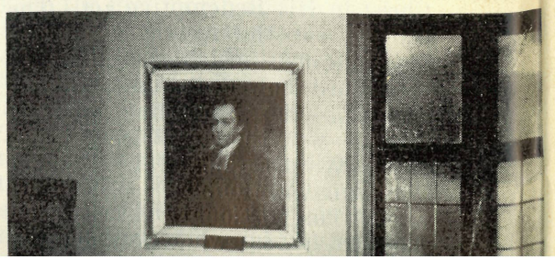




Interior of the church as Cornelia knew it and where she was baptized in 1831.



Above. The pews lined in red and the gallery are unchanged today. *Below.* The Rector's office with a portrait of the founder and first incumbent, the Rev. James Montgomery, D. D.



himself even to the death of the Cross for us miserable sinners; and on His way to it endured every indignity, and insult and suffering, . . . how transcendent must be the value of that Gospel which proclaims so mighty a deliverance . . .

His dying witness to his faith in that deliverance was not unworthy of a saint. Revealing a deep consciousness of his unworthiness, he displayed a yet greater confidence in his Redeeemer "who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). He had chosen this text for the last sermon he preached, "The Spiritual Crucifixion and the Spiritual Life," commencing with the words "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me."

There is, of course, here a striking parallel between the interior way through which God led Cornelia and the spiritual teachings of this minister of God. Striking, too, in the eventual development of Cornelia's spiritual teachings, is James Montgomery's teaching on the liturgy. In his sermons he advocates "the devout union of the minister and people in the prayers and praises of the sanctuary," noting that in primitive Christian times the "worshippers were not mute spectators and listeners." He rejoiced in the liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church:

> In the purity and scriptural simplicity of its doctrines, we recognize a strong claim upon our attachment. Speaking the very language of inspiration, and expressing the simple and essential verities of the gospel in a language at once forcible, appropriate, perspicuous and devoted; embodying those very forms of sound words, which even in apostolic times and by apostolic sanction regulated the faith and guided the devotions of primitive piety; animated and kindling with those very supplications and praises which glowed upon the lips and burst from the hearts of a Chrysostom, a Basil, a Tertullian, and an Ambrose; exhibiting, in short, a synopsis of the faith and devotion of the best and purest ages of the Church.

So pure and strong a pastor surely stands within the providential circle of Cornelia's life: but *to what extent* did he influence her? If his influence was in any way commensurate with the purity and strength if his doctrine, why did Cornelia delay her Baptism for so long? However, this question leads to another: Since her Baptism occurred just nine months before her marriage to the Reverend Pierce Connelly, was it Pierce's influence, even more than Montgomery's, which led her at last to the Sacrament of Redemption?

Acknowledgment is made of a grant from the *American Philosophical Society* for American Cultural History research through sources on Cornelia Connelly.

All are invited to pray with the CORNELIA CONNELLY GUILD. If you have any need — spiritual or temporal — notify the CORNELIA CONNELLY GUILD for round-the-clock prayer! For further information, contact Mother Mary Raymond, CORNELIA CONNELLY GUILD, Rosemont, Pa. 19010 U.S.A. or Mother Mary St. Andrew, CORNELIA CONNELLY GUILD, Convent of the Holy Child, Harrogate, Yorks., England.



KINGDOM OF LIGHT AND GRACE

Reverend Mother General Visits West Africa

The last six years since Reverend Mother General's first Visitation to Africa have seen swift changes in many fields and the emerging of new countries. They have been years that witnessed man's conquering of space, and vital new programs for man's helping of his fellow man, and — most significant of all for the hearts of men — they have witnessed Vatican Council II.

The Introduction to De Ecclesia *(officially promulgated on Nov. 21, 1964) trumpets this message:* " Christ is the Light of the Nations. *Because this is so, this sacred synod gathered together in the Holy Spirit eagerly desires, by proclaiming the gospel to every creature (cf. Mark 16:15) to bring the light of Christ to all men, a light brightly visible, on the countenance of the Church."*

And possibly nowhere is this light more brightly visible at the moment than in Africa, perhaps because of the very shadows that threaten.

Mother Mary Laurentia, as a young nun helped to establish the first Holy Child mission in Nigeria in 1930. The "light" was only a glow on the horizon at that time.

Shortly after she was elected Superior General of the Society, in 1958, she re-visited Africa after many years. The spread of Christ's kingdom in Nigeria and Ghana was a thrilling reality.

Now, on her second Visitation, the stirring effects of the " aggiornamento " on missionary life have manifestly deepened the light and advanced the kingdom.

The following is taken from an account of the first half of the tour written by Mother Mary Arthur who is Reverend Mother General's companion.



The jet carrying the Visitors from Rome landed matter-of-factly at the Lagos airport just as if this were not one of the most fantastic cities in Africa. It was late evening but a group of Holy Child missionaries, headed by the Mother Vicar, was on hand to give a heart-warming welcome. Behind them, beaming with joy at seeing their " Mother



Arrival at the Lagos airport **Rev. Mother General and M. M. Arthur are greeted by a group of Calabar Old Girls (Alumnae) and their husbands.**

Right: **(from left to right) Mrs. Monica (Bassey) Okon, M. M. Arthur, Mrs. Eliz. (Thomas) Itam, Mrs. Edet, Mr. Edet, Rev. Mother General, Mr. Okon, and Mrs. Alice (Edem) Marquis.** ***Above:*** **One of Rev. Mother's first Nigerian pupils, Mrs. Marguerite (Ar-**

Laurentia " again, was a contingent of Old Girls (Alumnae) from Calabar led by Marguerite (Archibong) Edet. More than a quarter of a century ago she was one of Reverend Mother General's first pupils. Later she became a teacher, then married Louis Edet, also from Calabar, who is now the Inspector General of Police. Their three daughters are " second generation " Holy Child girls — one finished this year at the school in Lagos — and their son is studying in England. Marguerite seems to typify all the hopes and prayers of those early years for she has become a powerhouse of Catholic Action and an outstanding Catholic wife and mother.

The drive through Lagos to the Holy Child compound revealed a cross section of African life: modern, mammoth federal buildings, million-dollar hotels, and a market place fascinatingly African in every detail. At midnight it was alive with blaring music, children's shouts and people milling about the wayside stands — all lit with guttered candles. One could almost sense the paganism still lurking in the dark corners.

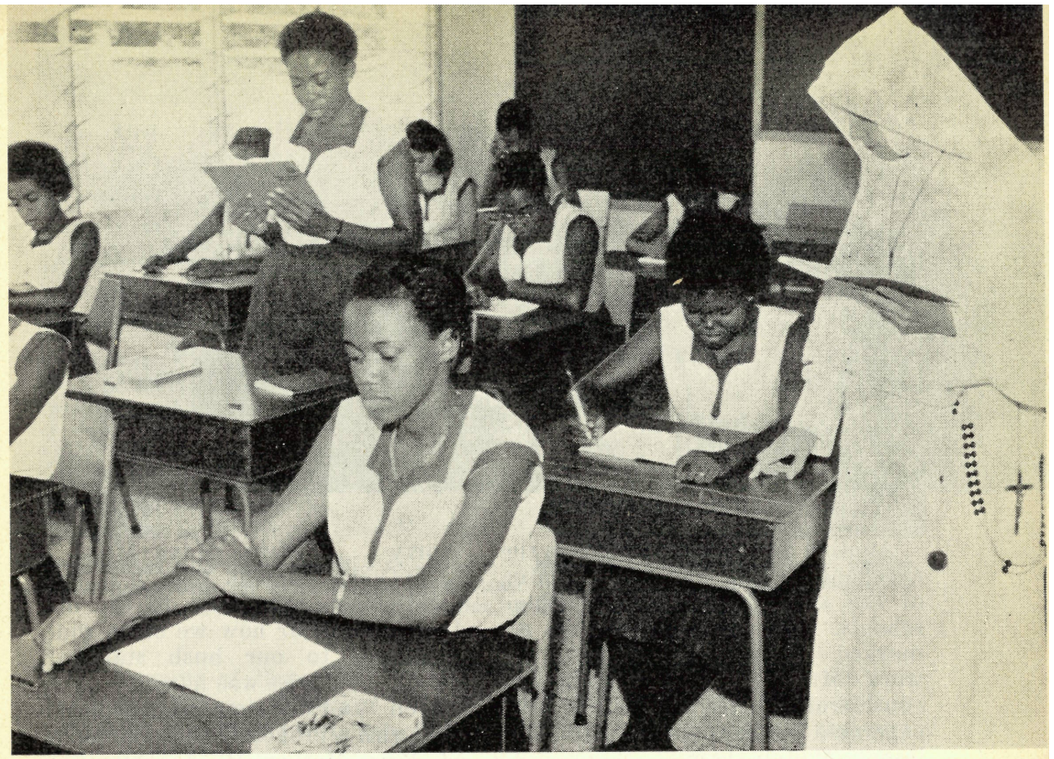
By contrast, the next morning in Chapel presented a scene of deep spiritual peace. The children in their immaculate uniforms gathered for Mass and their hymns of praise and love alternated with their reverent responses during the Mass in English. The scriptural words take on a deeper significance in a setting such as this: " *Thy Kingdom come . . .* " — — — " *We are the sheep of His pasture, the flock of His hand* " — — —

Two things strike one about this eager young Catholic Africa on the march: their intense hunger for learning and their equally intense desire to spread the Faith. This was evident on all sides as the Visitors made the rounds of the classrooms, met Old Girls now studying science in a local university and others in training for Government work and as nurses, secretaries, and other professional careers. Many of them are active in the Legion of Mary or in some other form of apostolic work. Several have brought members of their own families and friends into the Church — besides going out into the " highways and byways " to bear witness to Christ.

When the two Visitors from Rome called on Archbishop Luigi Bellotti, the Apostolic Delegate for Central West Africa, they found a new friend. He had arrived in Africa only recently but already he was conversant with its potentials and problems. As someone in the group remarked, " Archbishop Bellotti typifies the modern apostle who must be conspicuous for his devotion in promoting the progress of his people, material as well as spiritual. "

Near Lagos . . . **Yoruba children in dance costumes**





Shakespeare in the tropics **M. M. Thomasine with class IV in the Holy Child School, Lagos.**

Later, visits were paid to Archbishop Leo Taylor, S.M.A. of Lagos and to Bishop John Aggey. These were friends of long standing. Their gratitude to the Holy Child missionaries for their contribution in the development — " spiritually, intellectually, and socially " — of the young West African women, has been expressed in their constant and generous assistance.

Panoramic View

Ghana, with its seven million people, has customs and a culture somewhat different from Nigeria. But all the Africans along this coast are noted for their friendliness and hospitality. They like nothing better than to overwhelm a visitor with heir " dashes " (presents) which range all the way from a live goat to turkey eggs, and bananas in bunches. Even children give " dashes ". At Takoradi one day a small child ran up to Reverend Mother General and shyly presented her with an enormous orange cut in such a way that one could drink the juice through a straw. In the tropical heat nothing is more refreshing.

The Holy Child Training College, set high on a hill with a panoramic view of Takoradi Harbor, prepares African girls for the apostolate of teaching. How well this task is achieved by four nuns and an international lay staff was shown in a few aspects of the school in action. At one time it was in the very finished presentation of " As You Like It," dramatized against a live Arden forest by characters strikingly realistic in their magnificent costumes.



With some future teachers in the training college, Takoradi.

Another time it was evident in the excellence of the practice teaching of the students in nearby village schools. One of the supervisors remarked sagely, "Of course, the work of imparting knowledge is considerably aided out here by the eagerness of the young pupils to learn! Watch them."

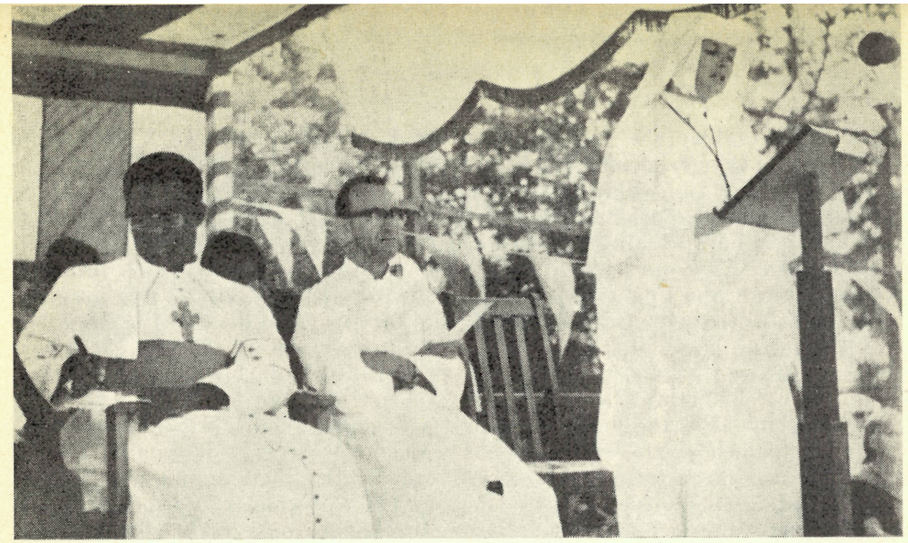
They were worth watching with the intensity of their expressions, with their alert questions and answers. Apathy has no place in the classroom. Even the children know that their country needs the educated if its newly acquired independence is to rest on a firm basis.

Like a 'Scriptural City'

Cape Coast is not far from Takoradi as the crow flies but as the road winds it is a distance of some fifty miles. The lush Ghanaian countryside is interspersed with villages of red-earth-and-mud houses framed by tall tropical trees. Occasionally, the road sweeps along the Atlantic past small fishing villages where huge nets lie drying in the sun. As the Visitors sped along to the next S.H.C.J. mission, lorries darted in and out of the traffic, their precarious positions often belying — and sometimes confirming — the slogans painted on them: "Why Worry" . . . "Lord Have Mercy" . . . "God's Time Is Best" . . .

"Do you remember in the old days in Calabar how we often rode in lorries to our bush stations? One of the lorries was named 'Trust in God' and one time it let us down *hard* with a broken axle!" reminisced Rev. Mother M. Joachim, the Superior in Cape Coast. She too was one of the pioneer Holy Child missionaries.

At last, the Holy Child compound, set high like "the scriptural city on the mountain," came in view. Pupils and staff members lined the drive up the steep incline singing their greetings. This is the largest boarding school in the Society: 369 girls are being given a secondary school education in preparation for meeting the needs of Twentieth Century Christianity. At the same time the program retains and cultivates an appreciation of all that is finest in African culture and traditions. This is true in all the mission schools. Tribal dances, with their ancient symbolism and executed to the intricate rhythm of drums, are part and parcel of the life in each compound. In Cape Coast, the Ashanti stools, chiefs' umbrellas and old Gold Coast weapons were an integral part of the dances put on by the girls for the



'And prizes have been awarded to — — —' **M. M. Marcella reads out the names of the lucky ones on Prize Day in Cape Coast. Archbishop Amissah, accompanied by Father Van der Weijden, is the guest of honour.**

entertainment of Reverend Mother General and her companion.

One morning the two Visitors were guests of Archbishop John K. Amissah. He is one of the most notable figures in the Church in W. Africa, a tower of strength to his people and an ardent defender of the Faith. The Archbishop drove his guests to the major and minor seminaries, many miles apart, but both staffed by the zealous S.M.A. Fathers. That same afternoon he administered Confirmation to over fifty young Africans, most of whom were wearing their colorful Ghanaian costumes. The recitation of the Apostles' Creed was singularly impressive as each of them rose to give public testimony to his belief . . . "I believe in God, the Father Almighty . . . and in Jesus Christ, His only Son . . . I believe in the Holy Catholic Church . . . the Communion of Saints . . . ."

Saltpond is not many miles from Cape Coast and it was the site of a joyous reunion. The Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus, the African Sisterhood stemming from Mother Cornelia Connelly's Society and now autonomous, have a flourishing school there and Mother St. John, the Superior, worked with Mother M. Laurentia long ago in Nigeria. Mother St. John was one of the



Picture-taking is an absorbing business for the school matron's small daughter.

first Handmaids; she has been a pillar of the Congregation ever since. They have not only many primary schools but also a secondary school and a teachers' training college.

The next day on "The Hill" back of the Cape Coast compound, Reverend Mother General saw for the first time the home of the new little Society of the Infant Jesus. Novices and postulants greeted her with filial warmth, for this Congregation too is being formed in the spirit of the Holy Child. Archbishop Amissah, its founder, looks forward to the day when its members will undertake educational and social service apostolates in the Archdiocese.

"Final days" have a way of stealing upon one. This one in Cape Coast was made memorable by the visit of Archbishop Bellotti, newly arrived in Ghana, and Archbishop Amissah. "We've come to express again our appreciation of the double mission of your nuns here," they told Reverend Mother General . . . *Double mission* — for a missionary must not only be an apostle but a maker of apostles and in Ghana this work has a distinct sense of urgency.

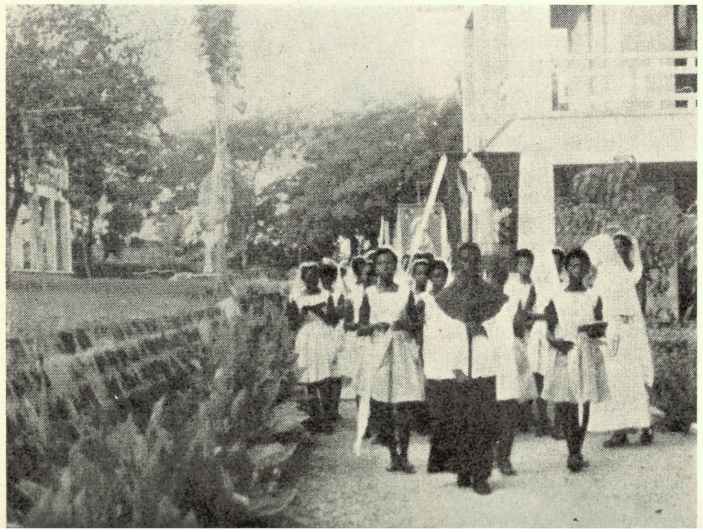
Off to the Eastern Region

A flight back to Lagos, followed by another air trip of five hundred miles to Eastern Nigeria, and the Visitors were in Enugu. This is the capital of the Eastern Region, picturesque, progressive, and with air-conditioned supermarkets! Most of Nigeria is made up of small farms, independently owned and this section is an especially productive farming area. On the way to Ogoja, numerous men and women carrying great bundles of produce for the market, dotted the black tarred road. It was evening when the car turned up the tree-lined driveway of the most northern of the Holy Child missions. But the spire of the Cathedral could still be seen in the distance giving mute testimony to the frontiers of mission Africa that have already been reached.

In no small measure is this due to Bishop Thomas McGettrick. For thirty years he has been laboring to extend the boundaries of Christianity in Nigeria. And it was evident that, like the good shepherd, he "knows his sheep by name" especially the little ones! When he took the Visitors to the rural school in Obudu, the children clustered around him begging for a game. "Only after you sing a nice song for Reverend Mother General," said the Bishop. A network of these rural schools exists in this area, staffed by Nigerian teachers trained by the Holy Child Sisters, and supervised by Mother Mary Hubert.

Before leaving Obudu, a visit was paid to the hospital of the Medical Missionaries of Mary. They escorted the group through the wards where the patients smiled the welcome that they could not always utter. Under the Bishop's inspiration and encouragement a number of aspirants are being trained by the Medical Missionaries to form the nucleus of an African Sisterhood for this province.

Perhaps no sight in Nigeria is more deeply moving than the leper village. This is a project particularly close to the Bishop's heart and it stands not far from his Cathedral. Hundreds of lepers are given devoted care here by the M.M.M.'s; many of these poor sufferers can be rehabilitated. For those able to work,



The Corpus Christi Procession in the Holy Child compound, Cape Coast.



Bishops of Eastern Nigeria on the steps of St. Peter's . . . **They are among those great shepherds, the missionary bishops, who have made the world mission-conscious during Vatican Council II. (From left to right) Bishop Whelan, Owerri; Bishop McGettrick, Ogoja; Bishop Okoye, Port Harcourt; Bishop Nwedo, Umuahia; Archbishop Heerey, Onitsha; Bishop Anyogu, Enugu; Bishop Moynagh, Calabar.**

several avenues of employment are available: weaving, tailoring, shoemaking, mending — and nowhere is the dignity of work more keenly honored.

Over all this missionary activity, Our Lady seems to hold gentle sway. To a people with strong family ties, the maternal image of Our Blessed Mother is easily grasped and appreciated. Their sincere devotion to her was given fitting expression one day in the May procession that wound its way through the compound . . . " Hail, Queen of Heaven, guide of the wanderer here below "...

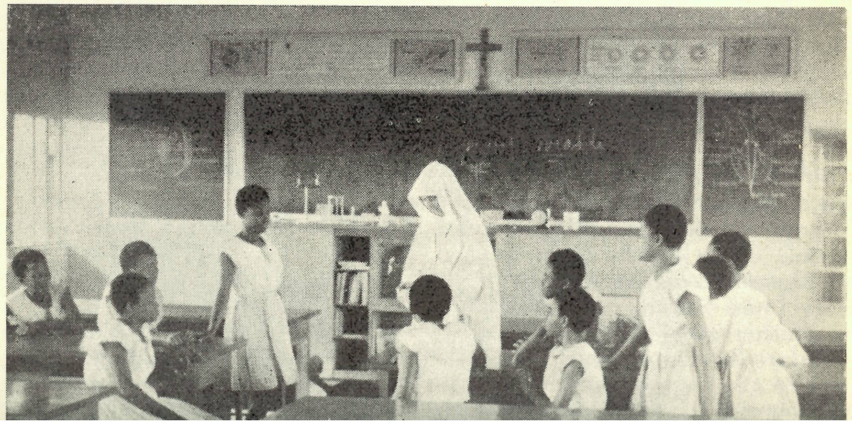
One evening the children demonstrated their dramatic skill in the presentation of ' Everyman " for Rev. Mother General's benefit. An improvised stage and glowing lamps added an authentic medieval touch to the production.

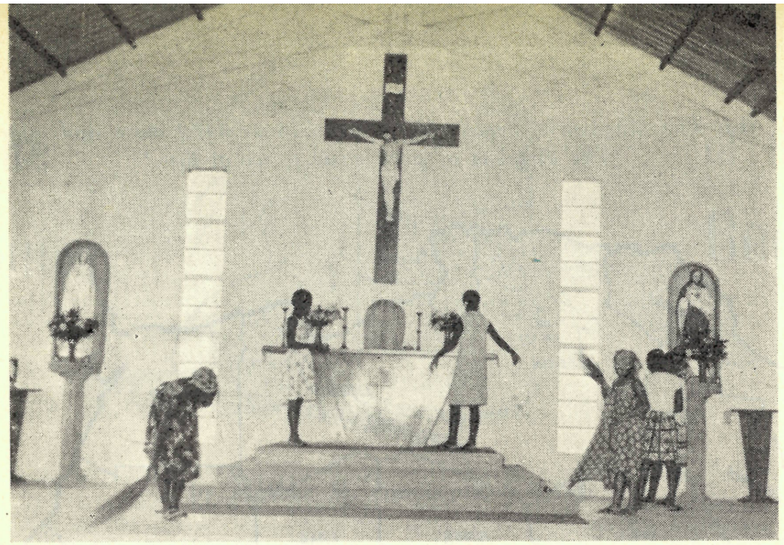
The finished performances given by the children in each of the missions is a tribute to Mother Cornelia Connelly's training which has been handed down through more than a hundred years and extended to three continents. The Foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus believed that dramatic work contributed to the character development of young people. It teaches them how to conduct themselves in public, to speak well — and to lose themselves for a time in the problems and lives of other people.

The plays presented in the mission ranged all the way from Shakespeare to an original dramatization on the Uganda martyrs, and from a medieval " character " play to a sparkling oriental comedy called " The Seven Slaves. "

The last-named was presented at Abakaliki, newest of the Holy Child missions. This was the next destination, about seventy-five miles from Ogoja. It was like a little miracle to view this scene: a well-built school, convent block, landscaped gardens surrounded by stretches of green lawn — and all hewed out of primordial bush within a five-year period. The Superior, Rev. Mother Teresa Xavier, is a veteran missionary of thirty-three years. As Vicar, she planned and supervised the construction of this

It could be a small spray of gloriosa **or perhaps it's a** ***bush bunny.*** **Anyway, whatever M. Frederick Mary is showing her science class (Abakaliki) holds plenty of interest. African children are born nature lovers.**





Abakaliki **— Each morning a group of students cleans the mission church.**

mission and took an active part in the " moving-in-and-settling-down " process.

The fruits of the harvest are already evident: in the nearby parish church where the students attend daily Mass and evening Compline; in the May procession richly meaningful to them with the recitation of the rosary in Ibo; in the spirited meeting of the Y.C.S. student group exploring means of self-improvement and school spirit; in the vernacular-conducted catechetical classes which the older girls themselves teach to the women and children in nearby villages . . . Here in Abakaliki simultaneously is a sowing and a reaping.

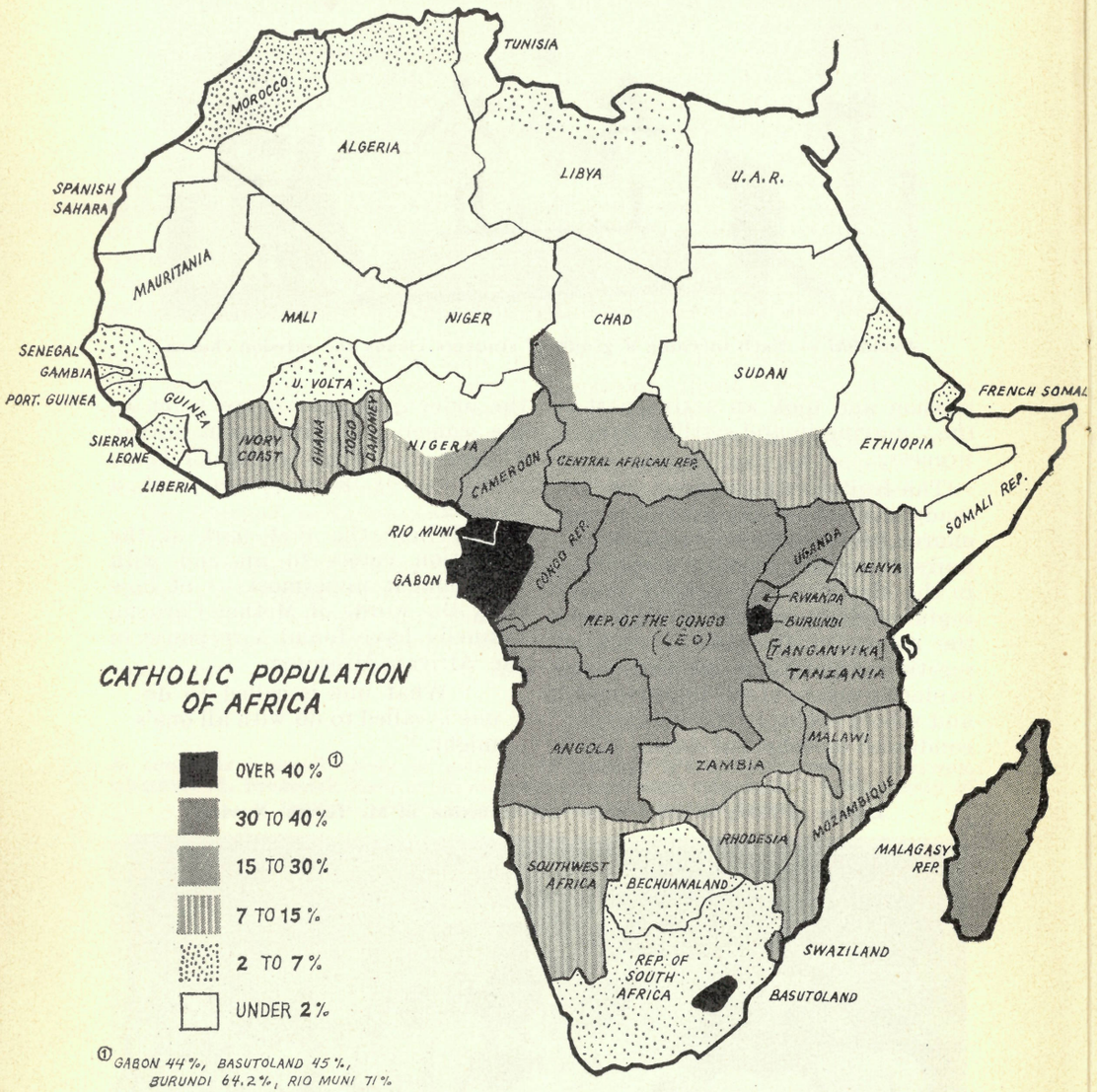
And here the first part of the Visitation comes to an end with one thought uppermost — of how truly the words of Mother Cornelia Connelly have found a response in the African Missions:

> " What one is called to do, one is called to do with all one's might. "

Legion of Mary meeting **under the direction of M. Teresa Xavier.**



'... that Thy kingdom of grace may advance in us daily more and more, and Thy kingdom of glory come to us at last.'



Copyright 1964, 1965 African Research and Information Center, 1622 21st St. N. W., Washington, D. C.

This map tells the story —

Hundreds more of Twentieth Century disciples are needed if Africa is to be won for Christ.

The Battle of the Bees



by Mother M. Assumpta, S.H.C.J.

The "Babes in the Wood" are now thirty years older than when we were given that name in England on our way from the States to Nigeria back in 1935. There is no doubt about it, Mother M. Damien and I were probably the "greenest" missionaries on this green earth.

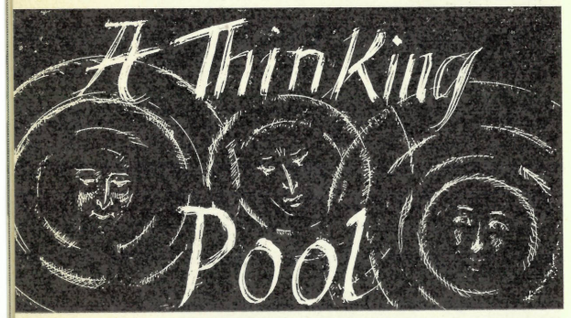
From time to time I look back over these thirty years with intense gratitude for every moment. But it might help some timid soul to know that in the beginning I was filled with a very real fear of going to Africa! When our missions were first mentioned – and likely missioners were being discussed – I had a secret dread of setting out for the "dark continent" and the great unknown. But that was all wrong, I knew. Doesn't a religious long for the chance to give God something worth while? This was my chance. Perhaps I would never get another like it. So I promised to trust Him completely and remain happy wherever He would allow me to serve Him. Almost immediately the sense of fear left me and my name went on the list of volunteers for the work. When the cable came from Rome announcing the new missioners, my joy was truly overflowing that I was one of them. And for thirty years I have been revelling in my good fortune.

And now I am asked to relate some of my experiences in an article, but where to start? They are so many and so varied. If I had been



What a bale of cotton-mill ends can mean! **This one was sent by the Joanna Cotton Mills through the assistance of Fr. A. Heibel, O.S.B., Gervais, Oregon. M. M. Assumpta gives a happy 'mammy' the first piece to make baby clothes**

Those who teach must think, but for want of time their ideas tend to die with them. We hope to persuade members of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus to pool their ideas in a series of short articles. 'Education' in this context means any positive advance towards our goal in life. It does not exclude self-education in the things of God. ***(Editor)***



'I'm sorry'

by

M.M. Norbert, S.H.C.J.

In its recent Liturgical Constitution, the Second Vatical Council has stimulated our traditional ways of thinking about the Liturgy, both as we live it ourselves and present it to others. Consequently steps are being taken to increase the effectiveness of liturgical participation " ex opere operantis " – by making the language, signs and ceremonies more " meaningful " to members of a given culture. It is in this spirit that I offer (as one of the first pebbles to cast into this new " pool of ideas ") some arguments from the field of child psychology in which I am at present doing some research (1)

I suggest that we also need some fresh thinking on the enduring problem of the best age for children to receive the sacraments, and in particular First Confession, so that these too can become more " meaningful " according to the recipients' needs at each stage of their religious development.

The historical background to all this has been admirably summed up by Jungmann (2) and will not be repeated here. He shows that there are two major arguments in favour of delaying formal Confession until after Flrst Communion, which can be received with devotion and understanding from the age of six or seven years. The first point concerns the validity of the matter for confession. " On account of insufficient insight, grave sins are as a rule not possible before the tenth or eleventh year" (p. 303). This statement could be amply supported from studies in experimental psychology, which show that children younger than this judge guilt according to the effects of an act, rather than the intention of the person concerned. Piaget (3) for instance shows that for a child of seven or eight, breaking a pile of cups while trying to help mother is far worse than breaking a single cup while stealing something from the cupboard. Similarly, a young child's concept of justice stems from what Piaget calls "punitive animism." When told the story of a boy killed by the collapse of a bridge after he had been stealing apples, most children of this age agreed that the accident would not have occurred if the boy had not been guilty. This type of reasoning decreases with age, but a variety of studies on these lines agree that not until the age between ten and twelve is there any objective grasp of right and wrong. By seven years, the traditional ' age of reason,' most children will have learned this distinction through their parents and teachers; but what is wrong for them is what is punished, or at least, disapproved. The recent raising of the age of criminal responsibility in Great Britain from seven to ten is based on experimental findings such as this.

How far is this relevant to the question of first Confession? What difficulties does this bring about that could be avoided not only at this age, but also in later years? How far are the experiences of these early years responsible for the mechanical listing of sins that so many priests complain of in their adult penitents? In young penitents, examples such as "I was disobedient five times...." can be broken down by further questioning by the priest to " I told a lie, and I kicked my little sister and I stole some sweets from mummy's bag. . ." etc. Many children are 'hard put to it' to find something of which to accuse themselves – a difficulty not peculiar to the present day. Jungmann quotes the example of a medieval boy accusing himself of having " killed the emperor with my battle axe " (p. 311). Consequently he suggests that private non-sacramental " confessions of devotion" should be made in preparation for First Communion, with no absolution administered. But is this necessary for children so young? Is there not sufficient remission of of their sins from the general *Confiteor* at Mass, or even more from the reception of Holy Communion?

Children of this age are only too ready to accept God's loving forgiveness for their " small lapses " – providing they genuinely repent and determine to try harder next time. A fellow psychologist (4) has recently pointed out that it is frequently a puzzle to children why they need bring it all up again in Confession;they conclude that God couldn't have forgiven them after all. This brings us to Jungmann's most important point – namely, the absence of valid contrition at this age. Apart from the short memory span of young children, their contrition is emotionally aroused and subjective, and, as we have seen, produced by acts of only minor gravity. At adolescence the problem becomes one of " not feeling " sorrow for what may be major occasions of sin. By this stage the penitent is possibly only too much in need of an objective act of absolution rather than relying on a felt state of sorrow, and then the practice of regular confession can be meaningful and helpful both spiritually and psychologically. Meanwhile, the training of the child's conscience and appreciation of Confession can be furthered by non-sacramental group confession services.

There is a parallel in the revised provisions for the treatment of juvenile delinquents in this England. In both spheres, to accept the concept of an 'age of reason' about ten years is not to ignore the developing capacities of the child younger than this, but rather to ensure that the final stage for which we all are working is not delayed or even permanently crippled by expecting too much, too young. Rather with St. Paul, we accept that "when I was a child, I talked like a child, I had the intelligence, the thoughts of a child ", in order that in due time " I shall have outgrown childish ways" (I Cor. 13:2).

(1) *The religious development of children*, Mother Mary Norbert Berridge, 1964.

(2) *Handing on the faith* – a Manual of Catechetics. J.A. Jungmann, S.J. 1959.

(3) *Moral Judgment of the Child*. Piaget. 1932.

(4) *Children and their Religion*. Eve Lewis. 1962.



Four New York home-missionaries wave off a Maryknoll Sister en route for South America.

Mission mosaic - in Manhattan

On the edge of Harlem is a home mission where the 'missioners' bring Christ to children of many nations – and frequently to their parents – without leaving New York. Some of the Holy Child nuns who staff this home mission, Our Lady of Lourdes School, give a graphic description of their work in the following:

Our school is "different." It has to be with a miniature league of nations in every class — living witness to the universality of the Church. On any one room there are children from such diverse countries as Cuba, China, South America, Africa, Italy, the Ukraine, the Philippine Islands, France and Ireland. Skin color and facial features may vary but these children are side by side, learning and living in practical fashion our Lord's own words: "*Love one another.*"

Many of these youngsters are first generation Catholics. This means a constant sacrifice and effort on their part to practice the Faith at home. One can almost see God's grace at work. There is George, for example. He is a Chinese lad and was a pagan when he entered the first grade. From the first time he heard of Christ, George had a strong desire to be baptized but his parents would not give their consent, not until last autumn. George, now an eighth grade pupil, came in one morning walking on air. "Sister, Sister! My father says that I can become a Catholic!" It was thrilling to witness this boy's Baptism. His first Holy Communion followed within a few weeks at the First Friday Mass. George's classmates shared his great joy as they remembered the many First Fridays when he had to be left behind. Now they were all one with him in Christ at Holy Mass. Another Chinese boy, also a classmate, is hopeful of obtaining parental consent during his high school years, so we continue to pray.

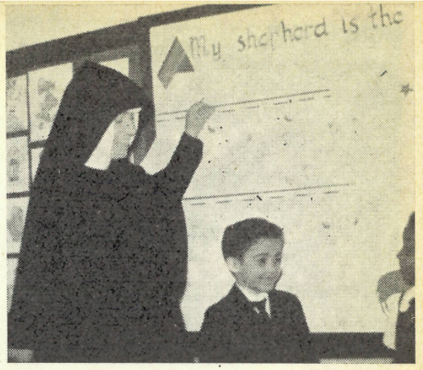
A generous spirit exists throughout the school, one that is really contagious – and easily caught by newcomers. On Hallow'een, for instance, it is traditional to have a collection of food for the Little Sisters of the Poor to help them care for the aged. Several truckloads are collected by our 775 pupils and distributed by the Sisters. During the spring, there is a clothing drive for the St. Vincent de Paul Society who give the clothes to the needy. Our Lady of Lourdes ranks among the leading schools in the City in this drive. If one was to question any child about giving more than he could afford, the reply would likely be, "These people have greater need."

Since many of our children have experienced real suffering, such as being an exile from their native land, poverty, broken homes or other human hardships, our Lord has made up to them by giving them a share in His own great virtue – *compassion*. Whenever a tragedy occurs, the children ask how they can help or what they can do. A certain class was praying earnestly for a sick little boy. Each day the members would ask, "How is Johnny?" One day, Sister told the class that several specialists were working to save Johnny's life. A little girl immediately said, "Please, may we take up a collection for Johnny's mother because specialists cost lots of money."

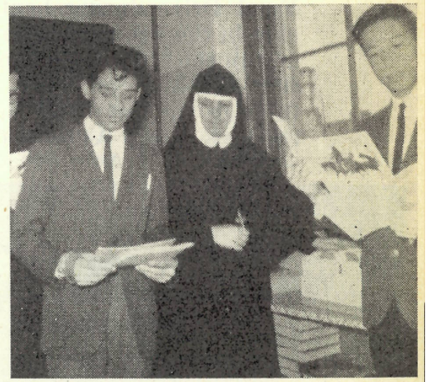
More than fifty years ago, these

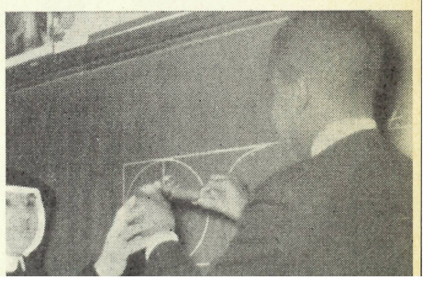
THE NEWER MATH:

HOW MANY TONS OF HAPPINESS IN AN O.L.L. CLASSROOM?

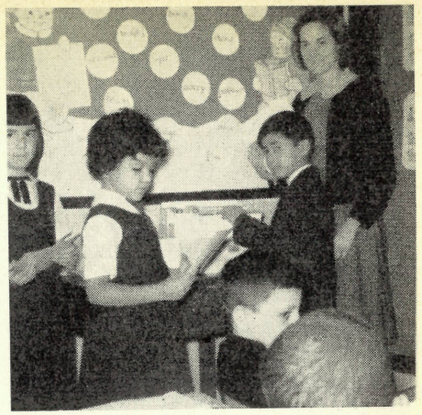












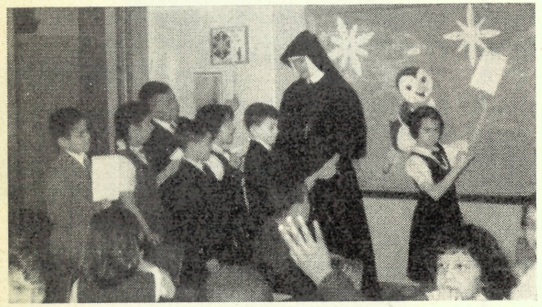
Left : **Mother M. Eulalia's music class - charmed with chimes.** *Right :* **Rosemont graduate, Miss Marie Roach, with her Second Grade.**

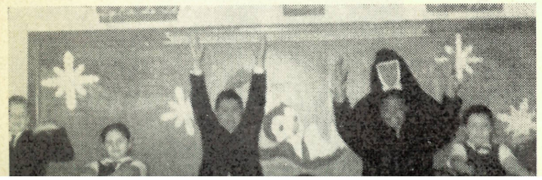
words were inscribed on the cornerstone of the school by the zealous pastor, Monsignor McMahon: " *For God, Our Lady and Our Land.* " This dedication has had an enduring force. " *For God* " endures in the children's great love for His cause, especially evident in their spirit of sacrifice for the missions. Pagan Baby Ransom drives, the Bishops' Fund Drive during Lent, membership in the Propagation of the Faith and in the Holy Childhood Association continue on year after year through the very real sacrifices of the little ones. As for " *Our Lady* " — all here claim her mothering and turn to her for help. The traditional Vocational Triduum for December eighth fosters this devotion as well as the Christmas Pageant, and in February the great Novena in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes.

And " *Our Land?* " . . . Ask any child of this amalgam of nationalities and he will tell you that " we're all Americans here! " A boy in the seventh grade has a deep-seated ambition to become President of these United States. His initial inspiration was sparked by President Kennedy with whom he corresponded; following the tragedy of November, 1963, he confided his hopes to President Johnson, at whose invitation he attended the Inaugural Ball!

Through the years, many of our boys and girls have merited scholarships to high school and later to college. This year two of the boys won four-year scholarships to Regis, a Jesuit school noted for its high academic standards and classical traditions.

The pivotal point of the school's activities is the active participation in the liturgy. The children sing





If snowflakes are beautiful, other aspects of the New York January need practical measures - in M.M. William's classroom.

Every detail counts - for Rev. M.M. Dominica, even a paper-chain.



Crystal Wilson talks to Mother Mary St Edward.

↓

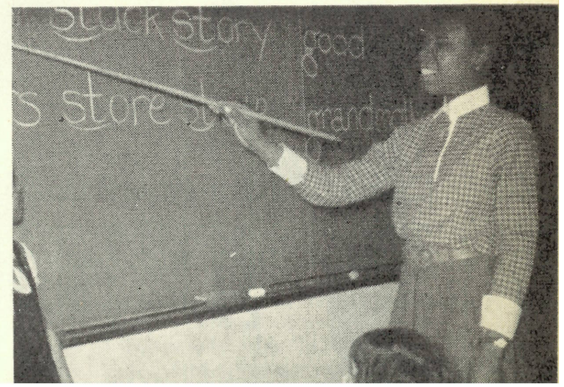


the High Mass every Sunday and the boys' choir sings English hymns at five other Masses. Missions and Novenas, all aim to bring Christ to the children and the children to Christ.

Integration is no problem. In the Christmas play, for instance, a negro Blessed Mother and a white St. Joseph proudly offer a Puerto Rican Christ Child to the Father of all before an audience representing a wide variety of nations. The play is presented several times; on one afternoon last year it was given to members of the Newman Club of City College and to their teachers and classmates in the English department. Our older girls sang carols for the employees at the neighborhood Savings Fund Bank and they also entertained the aged patients in the non-sectarian Nursing Home in the area.

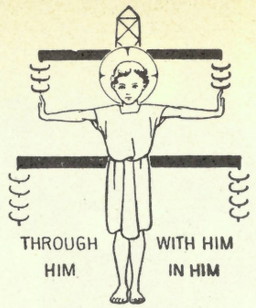
Three of the Sisters devote an evening during the week to teaching English to Spanish-speaking mothers. This summer, two of the community went to Puerto Rico to study Spanish and to do social service work.

In many ways here at O.L.L. we share the great happiness of a real missioner. When we hear a child exclaim that her one ambition is to help her Daddy learn more about God, we know that through His little ones we are able to reach out to others. As someone once wrote: " To enter the School of Our Lady of Lourdes is to join a caravan that is following the Star of Bethlehem; it is to find the Child with Mary His Mother in the cement jungle of New York."



It is the co-operation of our lay teachers which makes O.L.L. School what it is.

THE SPARK



Dear Electrons,

This story of Peter and Anna comes from Abakaliki. There's enough " spark " in it to inspire every Electron for the whole new school year!

You've heard how the children in the Holy Child school near Abakaliki visit the nearby villages each week-end to tell the people about Our Lord. Peter and Anna were planning to be married when they first heard the *Good News* of the Saviour. They listened — and they acted. They were two of the first local people to be baptized and married in the Church. Since then, their neighbors, Roseline and Patrick, have also become converts.

Now, Peter and Anna have a wonderful baby. It was Patrick who made the mattress for the little blue bed made by the Convent carpenter. And the Holy Child students pay regular visits to Anna to share with her what they are learning in the " home-making " course about the care of baby clothes and bedding.

We can't all carry the Gospel to pagans living along bush trails — but we *can* carry it to those who need it on our own street!

Electra.

MORE SPARKS

Imagine this! It was through reading *The Pylon* that one of the eighth grade children at **Old Westbury** had the inspiration to have a school carnival. Pony rides, puppet shows,

Abakaliki. **The students show Anna some fine points of what they have learned in the home-making class about care of baby clothes and bedding.**

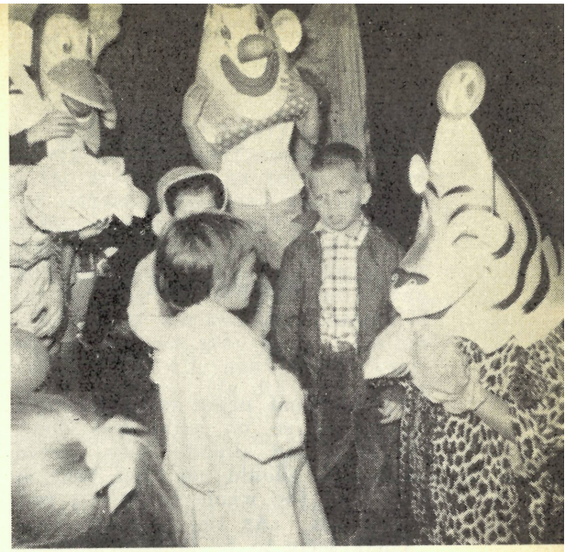


contests, AND fancy picnic lunches were all part of the show. A nice touch was their invitation to the city children (fourth grade) from Our Lady of Lourdes school in N.Y. to be their guests. How much profit did they make? Three guesses... $352!

The new Electrons in **Winckley Square** had to pass a test before they could be enrolled. The test consisted of learning by heart their Prayer which had been dictated and pinned up in each of the Third Forms. Money-raising events included a raffle and a one-act play and a concert given by the Recorder Group.

Our reporter from **St. Leonards-on-Sea** writes: " We try to raise at least £35 a year to contribute to *Our Lady's Burse.* (This scholarship has been awarded to Caroline Obi in Ogoja). In the Christmas term we had sideshows for the money we needed. These consisted of various stalls including " Guess the Saints' Names " and the traditional " Treasure Island " – the " treasure " being ten shillings!... In the spring term we made some crispy cakes one day and sold over one hundred of them, plus lemonade, in twenty minutes. When we went home for the Whitsun break, each of us brought something back for the " Bring and Buy " sale which was held the next week. Everything was cleared out in ten minutes!... Selling delicious toffee-apples always brings in a good sum... "

Toffee-apples in England — and in the U.S. they are called *caramel apples* — no matter what the name, they are popular everywhere! At **St. Rita's** in Portland each child in the third grade brought a dozen of these apples; then they went around the school, dressed in fancy aprons, hats and masks, and sold them for 15 each. " We made $75 for the Holy Child Missions and we had lots of fun! " says our third grader correspondent... On another day, the fifth grade went around selling popcorn balls on African-decorated trays... The eighth grade had a talent show. Writes Patrice Nelson, " The whole



The *PET SHOW* at the Holy Child School in Eortland included these unusual varieties!

room joined together in an attempt to show our class spirit. Smaller groups presented their acts, and the class worked together to improve them. The great day came, the show went quite smoothly, and before we knew it, was all over — and gone as well was all the fudge we'd brought to sell! "

Maybe you've heard: the fifth grade won the big *Pylon* drive in **Holy Spirit** school. They really ARE workers!

Senior Electron News: The chairman of the Mission Committee in the Holy Child high school, **New Sharon,** sends the following: " The mission projects at New Sharon made possible various contributions to India, Africa, the Philippines, and the Fiji Islands. These projects included an ' Autumn Mixer ' for the purpose of sponsoring a scholarship for a Nigerian girl (*Our Lady's Burse*); cake and watermelon sales; home talent skits, and the " raffling off " of Fourth Seniors as " slaves for a day. "... Another important project of this school was a serious effort made by the Third Seniors to economize on their Prom so as to be able to send more to a poor parish in Tennessee. In the end, they were able to send $100 to the pastor.