



The villagers of Ututu dance a welcome on their own hill surrounded by hills. Note the leader of the dance with the monumental headdress characteristic of Eastern Nigeria.

TWO AT UTUTU

as recorded by Mother Mary Assumpta, S.H.C.J.

On January 7th this year there was rejoicing in the village of Ututu in Eastern Nigeria because two Holy Child nuns were coming from Ifuho, thirty-five miles away, to live there. The whole place turned out, complete with band, to welcome them in true Arochuko fashion, with singing and dancing and speech-making and many generous "dashes" of yams, fruit, chickens and eggs.

For many years the Sisters had been visiting Ututu to supervise the large primary school staffed by teachers, most of whom had been educated in Holy Child Training Colleges. But Ututu had no girls' secondary school, and the people wanted one. So when two years ago a Government Elementary

Training College for men was closed, they petitioned the Ministry of Education to allow the buildings to be used for a Community girls' secondary school. Their request was granted, on condition that the school should open in January 1965. Bishop Moynagh of Calabar was asked and consented to assume responsibility for its management.

The first two forms, sixty strong (for the Ministry had stipulated that the school should be two-stream from the first) took possession, and the first "Headmistress" was no other than Father Hannelly, a St. Patrick's Father and Parish Priest of Ututu, but on the day when the nuns arrived he handed over school and scholars to Mother Maria Assumpta and

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The Chief of Ututu reads an address of welcome. He is the father of a large delightful family.

Mother Mary Benignus, the new Headmistress, and a staff of lay teachers, though he plans still to do some teaching in the school.

The Bishop had asked Father to build a little convent for the nuns, and on the evening of their arrival he offered Holy Mass in the parlour to bring down God's blessing on the work they were beginning.

The Convent contains three cells, a parlour, refectory, and community room, kitchen and pantry, the latter complete with frigidaire and water filter. The nine other West African convents had given the furniture and all household necessities, even down to bookshelves and about a hundred books.

Mother Maria Assumpta, who is in charge of this new outpost of the Holy Child apostolate, writes of the first days of school when a hundred and twenty children, sixty of them new girls, arrived:—

“The school buildings and dormitories presented a BIG problem, which has been only partially solved. Mother Mary Romana and Mother Mary Dermot did wonders, helping us to settle the place before they had to return to Uyo and Ifuho, to which latter community Mother Mary Benignus and I really belong, as Ututu is only a ‘daughter’ house, dependent on Ifuho. But white ants had worked havoc in the dormitories, and classes had to start without desks, though these were later provided by Calabar. And everything had to be cleaned, scraped and painted, and you can imagine what else besides!

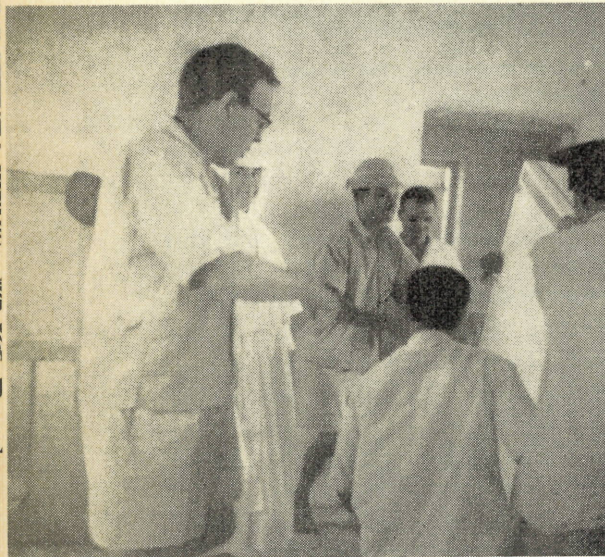
“The students have been in for nearly four weeks now. What a time they have had, learning to answer bells, tidy up, study in silence and so on. However, they are really trying though our insistence on order somewhat troubles them. ‘Already the whole



the parishioners and school children as well as our students have been taking it in turn to carry water from the springs. Water in the dry season is always a problem, but we are fortunate in having several springs nearby. Perhaps one day we may be able to pipe the water from one of the springs when the money becomes available.

3. The beds move in through 'the dim religious light.'

4. Mother Gabriel Dolores has learnt to sweep Africanwise.



1. M. M. Assumpta is welcomed back to Africa by those who have been 'making house' for her.

2. Fr. Hannelly unpacks the 'frig' - that major material blessing in equatorial Africa.

place looks different,' one remarked, 'but *why* does Mother keep telling us to try to be tidy?'

"We are using one room in the science block for a temporary chapel while Father Hannelly is building a new church. This week the men were laying the sanctuary floor, putting down the concrete, and so



5. M. M. Benignus, a little apprehensive about the contents of this trunk.
6. Her namesake (from Ireland) has come to Afikpo to give a pair of hands.
7. Rev. M. M. Bernard (right) from Ifuho knows all about pioneering in a new compound. She looks delighted with this one.

“Last week we had a real ad-
 venture. One of the laborers had
 been engaged in burning grass,
 which the girls had collected into
 piles. When he went off at noon
 on Saturday, the fire appears not
 to have been as completely quenched
 as he thought. It is the Harmattan
 season now, when the grass is
 extremely dry, and there was a
 strong breeze. Mother Mary
 Benignus and I went to lock the
 office at one-thirty and found the
 whole lower compound ablaze. At
 least three or four acres were burn-
 ing, and this all around the two
 school buildings. Luckily the grass
 had been cut in most places and so
 the flames were low, running along
 the ground.

“What next? Students were
 alerted and came with water, sand,
 and branches to beat out the flames.
 They skirted the area and worked
 in. By the time the fire was under
 control, we realized how fortunate
 we were. Nothing important was
 damaged. The fire had been guided
 by unseen Hands to travel around
 the building, leaving about four
 feet of green grass all round it.
 The school benches, which had
 been put out in the field in pre-
 paration for Sunday Mass, were
 untouched, although the fire had
 run completely under them, burn-
 ing the grass. Even the young
 trees had escaped harm. His loving,
 protecting Hand again... And
 we?... His grateful children.”

THE PYLON

