LETTERS from the MISSIONS

Each day, our mail includes hundreds of letters from foreign missions seeking help. It is impossible to print each and every one, but here is a sampling for your consideration. Through your generosity, we are able to send these servants of Christ donations of money and religious articles which help them minister to their people. The following appeals, in addition to the many others we cannot print, are worthy of your generous nature and Christian concern for those in need. If you will forward your mission support offering to me, I will see that it finds its way to these worthy missions and to others who deserve our support and prayers.

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Dear Rev. Father:

We are Franciscan Clarist Sisters of Kerala working in the mission area of Sagar Diocese under Rt. Rev. Dr. Clemens, Bishop of Sagar. This place is purely village and our locality consists of 480 villages. The people are very poor and illiterate. We give them education, moral and spiritual, and help them in all ways. We visit their house and find out their problems in their daily life.

We have only five sisters in this house. Two orphan girls are with us, Rajakumari of 8 and Janky of 7. They are very fine and smart. We give them education. They are very happy with us. At present it is very cold here and we feel very cold. We see many people, especially children, wandering here and there in the streets without food and shelter.

Please do help us in any way you can. We are badly in need of money since we have to give some houses for the poor. For that we have to buy some land. So any gift from you is most welcome. Please do help us in our mission work by your generous gifts and co-operation.

Please pray for us and for our poor people, especially for any children of our place. We assure you of our sincere prayers.

Expressing our deep sense of love and esteem for you and hoping to hear from you.

Sr. P., Vidisha Dt., India

Dear Rev. Fr. Joseph,

How are you! We are united with you in prayer and in the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the March budget, the government has increased the price of cement. Before the controlled price of one bag of cement was $4. Now the price is increased to $8. I need total 1700 bags of cement for the parish church. Please, join with me in the construction of St. Antony's new parish church. Once it has been started, it has to be completed also. Of course, the Lord will inspire good souls to heroic sacrifices. Nothing is impossible with God with our cooperation and good-will.

Fr. C. Kuruvilla, Tamil Nadu, S. India

Dear Marian Helpers,

Your Sisters in Christ are in dire need of financial help to be able to get a house or convent we can call our own. Since 1965 up to the moment we didn't move to get shelter for us hoping that at the end of ten (years) the owner of the house will finally donate the house to us; but it seems there's no move to that point yet; so we decided to move before the price of house and lot will go up sky-high. May we ask your help, please.

Sr. Ma. Gavina, Bacolad City, Philippines

Dear and Respected Father,

I am a young and new priest ordained on 22 December 1981. As a consequence (of a shortage of priests) my Excellency has entrusted me with a small poor mission parish consisting of six churches, which we call mission stations. A church bell, presented by a priest of our diocese to one of my sub-stations, St. Mary's. It is three years since the bell is presented. The sad thing is that it is not yet fixed in proper place, because of the lack of money. Another thing is that a good bell is essential factor here since the population is scattered. There are 120 families in this sub-station. Though they are very poor, they have collected Rs. 2000 to construct a bell tower. But the expense of constructing a bell tower would be Rs. 8000. So we are in need of the Rs. 6000 ($634.20 U.S.) more. In this situation if you help us we all will be very grateful to you always. We assure you of our prayers.

Fr. John Baptist, Trivandrum, S. India

CLIP AND MAIL TO:

ASSOCIATION OF MARIAN HELPERS • CONGREGATION OF MARIANS
STOCKBRIDGE, MASS. 01262

Dear Fr. Joseph:

Enclosed is my donation of $ _____
to be forwarded to the following:

- ☐ Sr. P., Vidisha Dt., India
- ☐ Fr. C. Kuruvilla, Tamil Nadu, S. India
- ☐ Sr. Ma. Gavina, Bacolad City, Philippines
- ☐ Fr. John Baptist, Trivandrum, S. India

Name _____

Address _____

_____

The Care of Youth - A Divine Privilege

by SR. M. BARBARA ANNE, F.M.S.C.

In a pastoral letter of Cardinal Suhard, we find the following words of Pope Pius XI: "The Christian education of children is of interest to all the Faithful. If it is necessary that parents should consecrate themselves to the care of their children, it is no less desirable that active Catholics should concentrate their efforts on it also, and that priests and Religious should dedicate their life to it. It is right, too, that contemplative Religious make it the object of their prayers and sacrifices."

This summary is a fine indication of the vast importance the Church places on the apostolate of youth. As a true mother, the Church is concerned about the early, formative years of her children. She realizes their impact on later life!

The first seven years of a child's life have been often thought to be the most important ones. This proves true in both the natural and supernatural aspects of child training. It is far easier to teach good habits than to undo bad ones.

Saint Therese of Lisieux has said: "When I consider growing souls, I compare them to soft wax on which one can imprint any image: good as well as bad, alas! and I understand the declaration of Jesus that it would be better to be cast into the sea than to scandalize one of these little ones. Ah! how many souls would reach high sanctity if, from the very beginning, they had been carefully trained!"

Dr. Maria Montessori has often stated that youth is the most privileged of life's periods. When certain necessities are lacking in youth, it's difficult to make it up later. If the Christian ideal is presented to the child in early youth, grace usually triumphs. The memory of a teacher who was held in high esteem has often been known to be a valuable aid in the last years of life, and even at the point of death. The Mercy of God wins out, even when youth might have fallen far from the ideal presented. It is never too late for conversion!

The child's social life, especially today, can exert great pressures upon him. There are many avenues of false teaching available to our children through the mass media at a very early age. Parents must be extra vigilant. These pressures have broken the heart of many a parent. Regardless, we can take heart in the power that a strong Faith in God and good Catholic Living can exert on our youth. Today more than ever they seek models and beacons in the darkness that pervades. Youth needs to be challenged.

We must be able to offer these challenges by giving them solid, not watered-down Doctrine. If they seek forms of meditation, we have many examples from masters of this art; as, Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross.

Care, yes, we must continue to care for them! The Master has told us that, "The person Who welcomes in My Name one such child as this, welcomes Me." The Model of Teachers has said, in no uncertain terms, that if we despise these little ones, we despise the Father, Who sent Him.

These are strong words from the gentle Savior. Yet, we see them disregarded today more than ever by the rise in the number of abortions, child abuse, the poison of pornographic materials, x-rated movies, and the unguided use of T.V.

Many adults do not realize the depths of their apathy. Let's pray earnestly for all of them that they will become enthusiastic about their Mission in the Church of helping Christ to grow in the souls of their children. In fidelity to this challenge, they will surely "shine like stars for all eternity!" ■