



LIFE AND LABORS
Rt. Rev. FREDERIC BARAGA,
 First Bishop of Marquette, Mich.
 By
P. CHRYSOSTOMUS VERWYST,
 O. F. M.
 of Los Angeles, Cal.

On the 10th of July I left the Sault Ste. Marie on a trading vessel at La Pointe, where the good people received me with exceeding great joy. For many years they had longed for a priest and had urgently requested that one might be sent to them. However, on account of the sad want of priests in our poor diocese, nothing thus far could be done in the matter. Their joy, therefore, was unspeakable when they saw a priest coming to their place.

"Truly the want of priests in our diocese is sad. Would that zealous priests in my fatherland resolve to come to this wilderness to rescue from eternal ruin the poor pagans who live scattered in this country, all of whom it is impossible for one priest to attend. Would it not pay to work and suffer much in order to save even but one soul and make it forever happy! But here souls are saved not by one or two, but by hundreds. Every priest that would come here would infallibly, with the help of God, save hundreds, were he to have even but a little persevering missionary zeal.

"From the Sault Ste. Marie to La Pointe is considered to be 330 American miles, and my nearest neighbor priest is now so far distant. When I came here and noticed the good feeling of my people I immediately began to encourage them to commence the building of a church. They started in with such zeal that in seven days they had finished it so far that I could bless it on the 9th of August, 1835, and say Mass in it. I dedicated this little church to God under the patronage of St. Joseph, this powerful intercessor with God. The building is strong and durable, although constructed of hewn logs, according to the American style of building. It is large enough for the people here, being 50x20 feet and 18 feet high, with a pretty high steeple, wherein a small bell hangs which was cast in Detroit.

"The number of my catechumens is quite considerable. All ardently long for Baptism, which they will receive as soon as they shall have been more fully instructed. On the 2nd of August I baptized 25 Indians of those more fully instructed, and who had previously gained some knowledge of religion; I likewise baptized some children. Between the 3rd and 9th of August 25 others received holy Baptism.

"This week they will begin the building of my house, in which a large room will be partitioned off for a school. I am very contented and cannot sufficiently thank God that everything goes so unexpectedly well in the establishing of this mission, though I am now wholly in want of all earthly resources. After defraying the expenses of my journey hither, I have but three dollars left. Our Rev. Bishop could not give me more, for he is so heavily in debt for the cathedral-church in Detroit and for the church in Green Bay, and has to make so many new outlays to properly equip his school and provide for other necessary institutions in Detroit with what they need, that he expends all the money he gets for these purposes. Had I

not found the people so good here I would not have been able to begin anything. However, I see that this cannot continue so on the long run. The soil here is poor. The climate is not favorable to agriculture. The necessary clothing, which they procure from Canadian traders in bartering their peltries, is exceedingly dear, for it has to be brought hither from such a great distance.

"It grieves my heart to see their children running around naked. Their parents would gladly clothe them, if they had the means. How much would it not recommend the missionary and his religion, could he but clothe these poor creatures a little! O how gladly would I do it if I could! At Grand River I have done so, and likewise at Arbre Croche, because I was supplied with sufficient means, but now I have nothing.

"Ninety miles from here is another Indian village, called Fond du Lac, where there are also many Indians, who desire to embrace the Catholic religion. They heard from a pious fur-trader of the religion and the priest. They wish very much to see one in their place. As soon as I shall have transacted the more urgent mission affairs here, I will go there, please God, and spend a couple of weeks with those good Indians in order to receive them by faith and Baptism into the number of the faithful sheep of Christ. I am told that in the neighborhood of Fond du Lac there are many other Indians, who have often made the remark that they, too, would embrace the Christian religion when a priest would be stationed in Fond du Lac to teach religion to them and their children. Moreover, in the interior toward the northwest there are other large lakes, where there are a great many Indians, who are still walking on the road to eternal perdition. Alas, is it not awfully sad to see so many souls go to eternal perdition through want of priests! Ah, why do not some Austrian priests make up their minds to come to the assistance of these poor pagans! Would to God that some would come to me; I would certainly get them good places. The want of linguistic knowledge should not deter them from coming here. They would soon learn the languages. Let us pray the Lord of the harvest that He may send laborers into His vineyard!"

(To be continued)

SLOVENSKI MISIJONARJI NA KITAJSKEM.

Kitajska ("cesarstvo sredi"), od leta 1910 nekaka republika šteje po najnovejšem ljudskem štetju blizu 450 milijonov prebivalcev. Skoro vsi so pogani (konfucijanci, taoisti, budisti). Na kitajskem tla stopiti je bilo tujece od nekdaj strogo prepovedano (kitajski zid).

Še pred dobrimi 80 leti so veljale take postave. Kljub temu so zahajali katoliški misijonarji v deželo. Pravi, da je že apostol Tomaž oznanjeval vero na Kitajskem. Gotovo so pa bile tam katoliške občine v sedmem stoletju. Kdo je izmed slovenskih misijonarjev šel prvi v misijone na Kitajsko, bo

težko z gotovostjo dognati. Ako je bil slaven misijonar blaženi Odorik iz Pardenone v Furlaniji Slovenec, kar je dokaj verjetno, je on morda prvi. Leta 1318. je odpotoval preko Carigrada, Perzije in Indije v Peking in oznanjeval evangelij paganom. Domov je šel čez Tibet in bil tako prvi Evropec, ki je obiskal sveto mesto Lhaso.

Po 12 letih se je vrnil v domovino. Na smrtni postelji je po ukazu predstojnikov narekoval svoj potopis, ki ga še danes hranijo. Štiri sto let pozneje (1705 pa odpotuje drugi slaven slovenski misijonar na Kitajsko — Ivan Mesar, rodom iz Gorice (1673). Potoval je okoli Afrike. Deloval je precej časa v Makao v južni Kitajski, potem pa v Tonkinu, kjer je v preganjanju kristjanov bil ujet in v ječi umrl leta 1723.

Danes je na Kitajskem 2,200,000 katoličanov (leta 1900. komaj 300,000). Izmed 2,552 duhovnikov je 1,071 Kitajcev, drugi so večinoma Francozi, pa tudi Italijani, Nemci in drugi. Slovence zastopajo štirje misijonarji. V sredini Kitajske delujejo franciškan Peter Rapt. Turk, rojen 1874 v Toplicah na Dolenjskem, Engelhard Avbelj, rojen 1887 v Ljubljani in Veselko Kovač, rojen 1872 v Studencu pri Krškem. V južni Kitajski (okolica Makao) misijonari salezijanec Jožef Kerec, prekmurski Slovenec. V Sankhajju je ena usmiljenka (be-neška Slovenka). V severni Kitajski sta dva misijonarja iz

Hrvatake: Tomaž. Češka, lazarist in franciškan Horvat.

Pomen naših misijonarjev za naš narod in državo razberemo na primer iz pisma Jožef Kereca (8. junija, 1924):

"Ker me obiskuje tudi precej kitajskih izobražencev, ki si želijo večne resnice, se večkrat pogovarjamo tudi o razmerah v naši domovini. Za razumevanje in proslavo svoje domovine bi rad zemljevid Jugoslavije. Ker gre za dober glas Jugoslavije, bi mi morebiti vlada lahko podarila nekaj jugoslovanskih zastav..."

In dalje 20. oktobra, 1924: "Pisana zbirka 'Visions de la Slovenie' in slike Jugoslovanske tiskarne, mi dobro služijo."

IZ ZGODOVINE JAGODE.

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