

Spiritana

missionary news



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Some seed fell
on good soil...

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Continuing the Spiritan Family Album

Spiritan Missionary News is now twelve years old: almost a teenager. Ever since its birth in 1982, it has been brought up by Fr. Michael Troy. Over the years he has taken readers on a guided tour of the Spiritan family. His commentaries and stories have enabled them to become acquainted with the outreach of English-speaking Spiritans in Canada, the United States, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Brazil, Nigeria, Kenya, Malawi, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Mauritius, Ethiopia, Papua New Guinea and Pakistan. Because the Trans Canada Province was founded from Ireland 40 years ago, Michael Troy's final issue was a comprehensive tribute to the work of the Irish Province.



Fr. Patrick Fitzpatrick, C.S.Sp.

With this issue a new editorial team takes over: it was agreed that no *one* person could carry aloft the torch that Michael Troy passes on. The more the team learned about how various issues of *Spiritan Missionary News* were written and published, the more their admiration grew, the more in debt they became to the man who year by year, issue after issue, told the Spiritan story. The present editors add their thanks to the compliments he has received from many readers. Our best expression of gratitude will be to ensure that the high quality of Michael Troy's magazine will not be diminished.



Fr. Gerald Fitzgerald, C.S.Sp.

The Irish Spiritans who came to Ontario in 1954 were by no means the first Spiritans to come to Canada. Our association with this country goes back 262 years to 1732. In this issue we trace our Canadian roots among the Micmac Indians and the Acadian settlers of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. A century of Maritime missionary work came to an end when the last surviving French Spiritan working in Canada died in 1835. Our East Coast beginnings, at a time when France and England were fighting for control of the New World, show how deep our Canadian roots go. Canada, in fact, gave the Paris-based, French-speaking Congregation of the Holy Ghost the opportunity and the challenge to become a missionary Congregation. We will continue to keep you in touch with what Spiritans are doing in Canada and throughout the world. We will introduce you to some of the people they work with, some of the issues they deal with, and some of the reflections they come up with.

As more and more pages are added to the Spiritan family album, we are sure you will enjoy browsing through it with us.

Patrick Fitzpatrick
Gerald Fitzgerald C.S.S.P.

CONTENTS:

- 2 Editorial
Continuing the Spiritan Family Album
- 3 Interview with Fr. Michael Troy
- 6 Gospel Reflections
Disposable Things, Non-Disposable People
- 8 The First Seed is Sown... Acadia
- 10 Pierre Maillard, Religious Educator
- 11 "By Making a Nuisance of Myself I Hope to Succeed"
- 14 The Micmacs
- 16 St. Pierre et Miquelon
- 18 The Role of the Spiritans in the Genesis of Our Nation
- 19 On the Move
- 20 One hundred and Forty Years Young
- 21 Pentecost Around the World
- 21 In Memory of a Life Giver
- 22 Golden Jubilee
- 23 Five Candles on the Cake

Front Cover: Church at Grand-Pre.
Photo courtesy Tourism Nova Scotia.
Back Cover: Autumn in the Rouge Valley.
Photo by Mairi Haza.

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Interview with Fr. Michael Troy

Founder of Spiritan Missionary News 1983

Editor and Publisher 1983 – 1994

How did Spiritan Missionary News begin?

I first produced a simple newsletter in March, 1982 to introduce the people of Western Canada to the Spiritan movement. We Spiritans had been working in the western provinces for over a decade, and had been warmly welcomed everywhere we ministered, but our friends and supporters knew little of the Spiritan movement to which we belonged.

How did it evolve into the magazine we know today?

In 1983 Fr. Bernard Kelly, Provincial Superior of Trans-Canada, asked me to expand the scope of *Spiritan Missionary News* to cover the work of the Spiritans across the whole country. Our first edition appeared in November 1983 with the format and colour which it retains to this day.

Did the magazine evolve with the passage of the years?

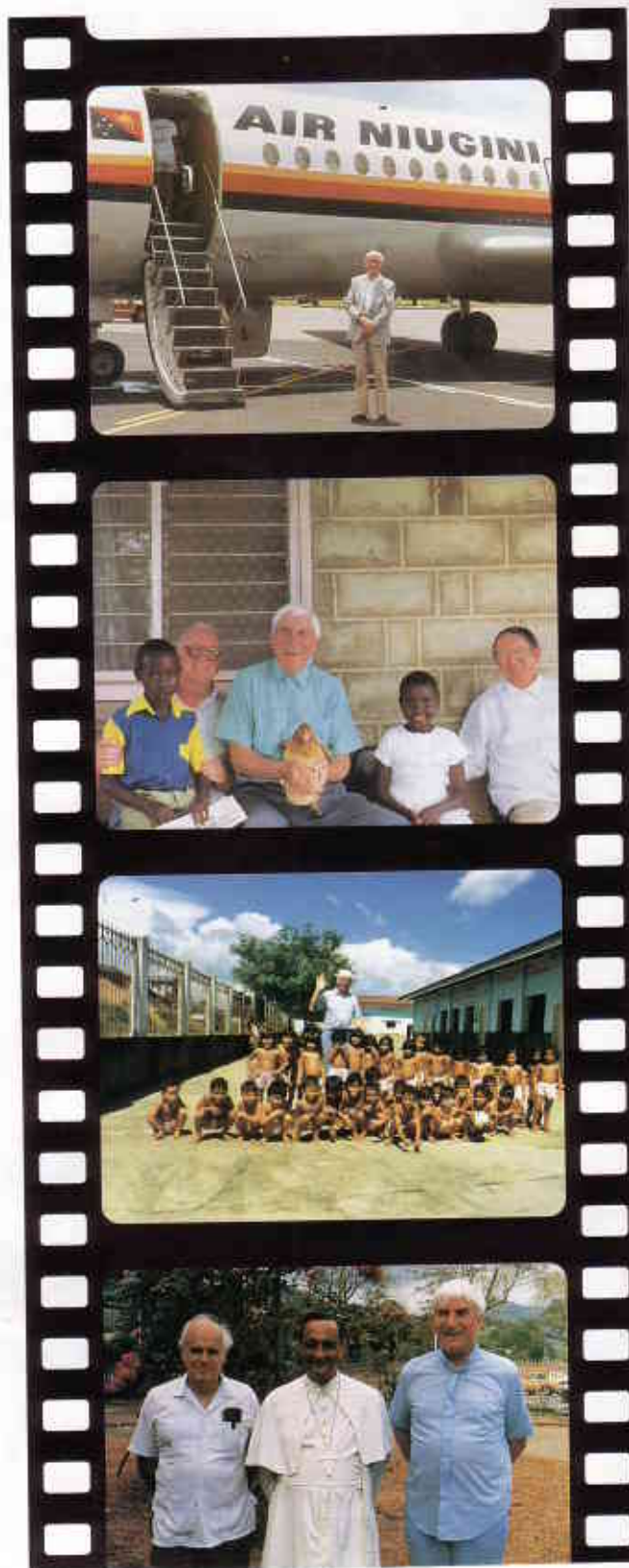
Yes. As the Trans Canadian Spiritans ordained their first Canadian vocations and as members of the group went overseas, *Spiritan Missionary News* covered their work in the missions and asked its readers for prayers and financial support for their efforts. The work of Frs. Locky Flanagan and Conor Kennedy in Malawi, and Colum Corrigan, Mike Doyle, Pat Doran, Gerry Scott, Neal Shank, John Van Dyk and Paul McAuley in Papua New Guinea were highlighted as the journal began to live up to its title as a missionary news magazine.

Did this expanded Spiritan magazine evoke much interest?

Yes. Letters of appreciation were received from the Superior General of the Spiritans, and from members of the movement world wide. The Spiritan province of U.S. West asked if it could become part of the production. So the magazine increased in size to cover the news of the U.S. West and their missions in Mexico, to which a whole issue was devoted. And the U.S. East Province asked to be part of an issue on vocations. This was the biggest issue ever, with over 37,000 copies printed and distributed.

Where did you go from there?

We gradually became a voice of the Spiritan movement in English speaking countries, in the way that *Pentecote sur le*



Monde covered the Francophone Spiritan world. Issues followed our missions in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Kenya, Mauritius, to name a few. *Spiritans Missionary News* has become, in many ways, an international magazine.

Who did you see as your audience?

Anyone interested in the missionary work of the Church, in the Spiritan missionary movement, and in the TransCanada Province of the Spiritans, in that order. Recent issues dealt with topics such as Education, Lay Missionaries, Vocations, and their place in Spiritan evangelization.

What have you learned in your years as editor of the magazine?

I came to have a far deeper knowledge and appreciation of what the Spiritans have achieved the world over. In many third world countries, especially in Africa and the Caribbean, they set up educational systems which, because of the excellence of their standards, continue to thrive today. Many of the leaders of the new nations are products of Spiritan schools.

I also got a true appreciation of the work which is being done today, all over the world, by Spiritans, both religious and lay people, and by their co-workers who belong to the Spiritan inspired movements such as VICIS. (Volunteer International Christian Service). I saw nurses, teachers, technicians and tradespersons, experts in agriculture and social services, working together with ordained Spiritan priests and professed Spiritan religious in teams that ministered to the physical, social, cultural, educational and religious needs of the people they serve. I became really proud of the organization to which I belong and I resolved to catch a little of their story, their history and their spirit in the pages of the *Spiritans Missionary News*.

Where should your successors as editor be looking for material in future issues?

To the Orient, to our early mission efforts in Asia and to our current involvement there.

Why was your final issue devoted to the Irish Spiritans?

They launched us in TransCanada forty years ago this year. I wanted to say "good bye" to *Spiritans Missionary News* and "thank you" to the Irish Province in my final issue.

What are your own personal plans for the future?

I would not want the magazine to be used to promote myself. So turn off that tape recorder and I will tell you my plans and dreams for the years that lie ahead. ☪



Disposable Things, Non-Disposable People

Between Thanksgiving and Remembrance Day 1994, Mark's Sunday gospels invite us to listen in on some demanding outdoor religious education classes as Jesus journeys to Jerusalem.

Family Life Education

The Pharisees have a question for Jesus: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" They are curious about the rights of the husband — the rights of the *man*. Can he get rid of his wife if he observes the proper legalities? Can he then dismiss her? This was the mentality that brought adulterous *women* to be stoned by "sinless" *men*.

Jesus takes them back to the original intention of God: you cannot "dismiss" someone with whom you have become one flesh. Husband and wife image God's faithful love, the love of a God who promises to be true to us, a God for whom love and fidelity go hand in hand.

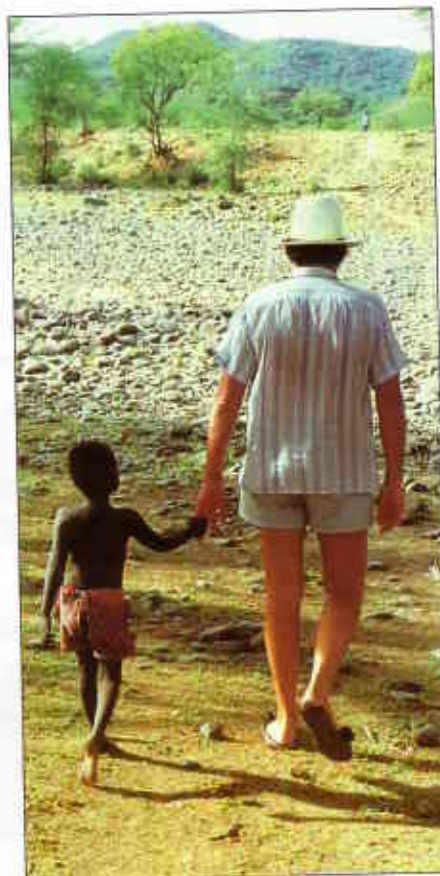
Yahweh's love will last for ever,
God's faithfulness till the end of time.
Yahweh is a loving God,
Yahweh the faithful one.

A lifelong commitment between equals is for keeps. No human being can dismiss another human being. People are not disposable.

Children are people too. The disciples shoo them away: "Run away and play, get lost, stop bothering the Master, he has no time for you." An



In my group, the servants are the great ones



Time for the children —
Fr. John Kevin, C.S.Sp.

angry Jesus explodes: "Who's more important than the little ones? Let them come to me. Of course I have time for them. I came for such little ones: the powerless, the least, the dependent, those with no official standing in life, those who are pushed around, those who are at others' beck and call."

Disciples of the Master are invited to welcome the "child" within themselves, and

in the world around them. The child is fully human. The child fully belongs.

Family life education as the International Year of the Family draws to a close — faithful love, time for children.

Self Importance taken down a peg

A man of many possessions patronizes the "Good Teacher". A self-satisfied man — "I have kept the whole law" — is told there is one thing missing in his life: he needs to sell his possessions, give the proceeds to the poor, and then join the group en route to Jerusalem. He finds this requirement, and this Teacher, too much for him and he walks away. People whose whole focus was "keeping the law" usually found this Teacher too much for them. They were the ones he had most trouble with.

"How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" It's so hard to let go of what they have accumulated. Yet in



Fr. Sean Mullin, C.S.Sp. serving his people in Sierra Leone



Geraldine Merck with her Women's Self Improvement Group in Ethiopia

order to enter the kingdom they have to let go — only the open-handed, not the tight-fisted make it.

The wealthy cling to their possessions; two of the inner circle cling to their positions. James and John wonder if they might work out a special deal with Jesus. A James — Jesus — John head table looks good to the sons of Zebedee. Their request is met with another question: "Can you drink my cup?" "Sure, no problem," they answer, "but how about our special deal?" Jesus has trouble with the upwardly mobile. "I am talking about your special request. In my group the servants are the great ones. Lording it over others is no better than disposing of others. Surely you don't think that sitting at a head table and being waited on is what I'm all about?"

Later on, in Jerusalem, Jesus returns to the same topic. He notices the teachers in the Temple who dress differently and are treated differently. These are head table people: best seats and places of honour, their sake-of-appearance approach to religion. A widow's two small copper coins, worth a penny, mean more than all their abundance.

**Take heart; get up,
He is calling you.**

Meanwhile, on the road out of Jericho, there has been an encounter with Bartimaeus, the blind beggar. They told him to stop his shouting and be quiet, to behave himself. They wanted to get rid of him and his annoying persistence. Jesus, however, halted and said he wanted to speak to him. The dismissers suddenly changed sides: "Take heart; get up, He is calling you." With the spontaneity that only an unexpected invitation can arouse, Bartimaeus

threw off his beggar's cloak. He let go of his collection basket and sprang up. He had a simple request of the teacher: he'd like to see again. And when he regained his sight, when his eyes were opened, he followed Jesus on the way.

Mark's portrait of Jesus shows a strong, challenging, up front, yet welcoming and open hearted person. Some people find him hard to take and walk away. He disturbs those who think they have it made. Those who have nothing to lose are drawn to him. ☩

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THE FIRST SEED IS SOWN...

ACADIA

In August 1994, some 300,000 Acadians celebrated a special homecoming in New Brunswick. The Acadian World Conference gathered them together from the Maritimes and Quebec, from Massachusetts and Louisiana, from their original homeland, France. Home cooking New Brunswick style mingled with the more spicy Cajun flavours of the deep south.

Once upon a time *Acadia* signified all of Nova Scotia: the famous Evangeline Trail along the Bay of Fundy

was the heart of Acadia. At other times *Acadia* meant all the land between Maine and the St. Lawrence River; Acadia National Park is situated south of Bar Harbor, Maine.

As the Acadians gathered to celebrate their common roots and distinct identity, Spiritans were reminded that their Canadian roots were among these people.

After Champlain

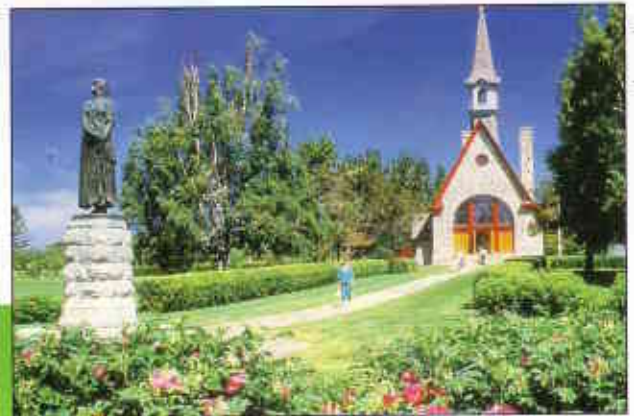
“discovered” this territory for France (and ran aground off Bar Harbor in 1604), French settlers (Acadians) arrived in this part of the New World. In the 1700’s and 1800’s

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of
the huntsman?

Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers, —
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands.
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of Heaven
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o’er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastwards,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o’er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o’er the plain; and away to the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne’er from their station descended.
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Church and statue of Evangeline at Grand Pré

Courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism

they cultivated the rich soil of the tidal marshes of the Bay of Fundy. The large dikes they built kept out the notoriously high tides of the bay and preserved the land for agriculture. The Acadians grew enough grain to feed themselves and enough hay to feed their large herds of cattle. Add abundant orchards and vegetable farms and you arrive at a garden paradise. That is, if the settlers had been left in peace.

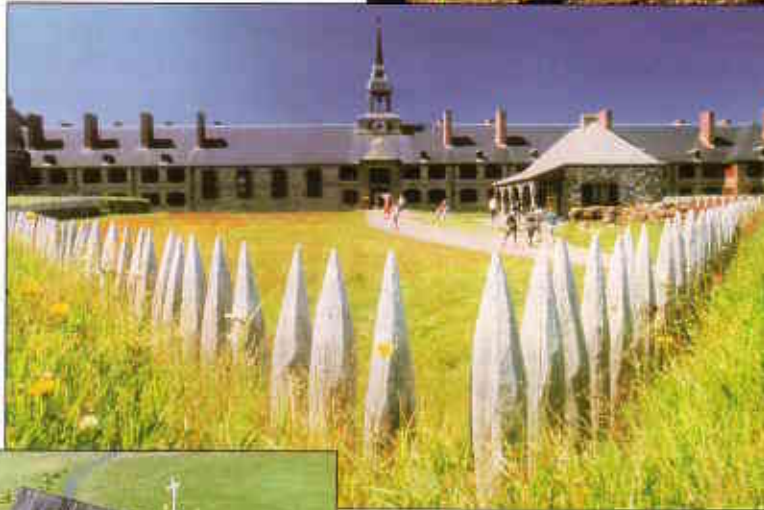
It was not their Micmac neighbours who made life difficult for them. The two groups often intermarried. The fact that many Micmacs had become Catholics was also a common bond. The upsetting reality was the ongoing war between England and France. Acadia became a battlefield in the clash of these two European powers for control of North America.

The Acadian farmers were willing to take an oath of allegiance to the British crown, but they refused to take up arms against the French and the Micmacs. Their allegiance was conditional on their neutrality. They became known as "the neutral French of Nova Scotia".

In 1713 France gave up all claims to Acadia and withdrew to small settlements on Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island. Most Acadians, however, independent and proud of their land development around the Bay of Fundy, refused an offer of free land in Cape Breton.

They developed a profitable trade with the new French colony of Louisbourg. Then in the early 1750's they build a strong fortification called Beausejour at the north east end of Fundy.

In 1755 the Governor of New England sent 5000 troops from Boston to take over Beausejour. The 200 Acadians left in the town were captured and they and all other Acadians were given an ultimatum: either take an unqualified oath of allegiance to the



Top: The Acadian farmers developed a profitable trade with the new French colony of Louisbourg.

Centre: Fortifications at Louisbourg

Bottom: Port Royal Habitation

Photos courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism

A Lay "Bishop" in the 1700's

To secure the survival of the faith among the settlers during the long periods in which no priest was able to visit them, the most respected elder of each settlement was appointed its lay apostle.

He would preside at prayer meetings, baptize the children, witness marriages, accord certain dispensations, and conduct funerals. On Sundays people would gather to sing together the Kyrie and Gloria, to listen to the reading of the Epistle and Gospel, and to hear the spiritual reading or sermon delivered by the elder.

When death struck, they would gather for a three days' wake, and then sing the Requiem Mass before the elder would conduct the corpse in solemn procession to their cemetery.

Here and there the people began to call the presiding layman their "Bishop", and in this way the Acadians never lost contact with their faith.

— Henry Koren, C.S.Sp.
Knaves or Knights? P. 113

Crown or be deported from the colony. Out of a population of 10,000, more than 6,000 were deported. The troops burned their villages and destroyed their crops, loaded the Acadians on to ships bound for the British colonies along the eastern seaboard from Massachusetts to Georgia and further south to Louisiana and the West Indies. The miserable conditions on board these overcrowded ships meant that many Acadians died at sea.

The remaining Acadian families went into hiding in the forests. Many died of starvation. Spiritan Fr. Francois Le Guerne became known as the "chaplain of the hunted" during the round-up of the Acadians for deportation, "living always on the alert, nearly always in the woods". As time went on, most of those who had escaped the first deportation were captured and sent into exile.

When New France fell to the English in 1760, the remaining Acadians were allowed to own land again. Their independent spirit lives on in Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. ☪

PIERRE MAILLARD, RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR

On Sundays, and when the sick or the dying required his attention, the first priest came out, attended to them and then immediately shut himself up again. He continued this all winter, until Easter. He then sent word, that if the people would assemble, he would preach to them. They did so, and to their astonishment, he spoke Micmac as well and as fluently as any of them.

When Pierre Maillard came from the Spiritan Seminary in Paris to Louisbourg, Cape Breton, in 1735, he was convinced that if he was to work among the Native People of that island, he would have to be able to speak to them in their own language. Their astonishment that Easter Sunday resembled the bewilderment of the people of Jerusalem that Pentecost Sunday when each of them heard, in his or her native tongue, the group of apostles in the streets of the city speaking of the marvels of God.

There was nothing miraculous about Pierre Maillard's fluency. He spent years learning Micmac idioms and developing a pictorial script that the people could use. This hieroglyphic script contained more than 5700 different picture letters to speak to their imagination. In addition, he wrote the first Micmac grammar and dictionary, he produced religious handbooks containing prayers, hymns, sermons and forms for celebrating baptisms, marriages and funerals. When the government no longer allowed resident missionaries to

work among the people, their chiefs would gather them in their villages for Sunday services, read Fr. Maillard's "sacred text" and comment on his written sermon. Then they would say the prayers and sing the songs taught by Fr. Maillard. The missionary was no longer there, but the Micmac book had taken his place.

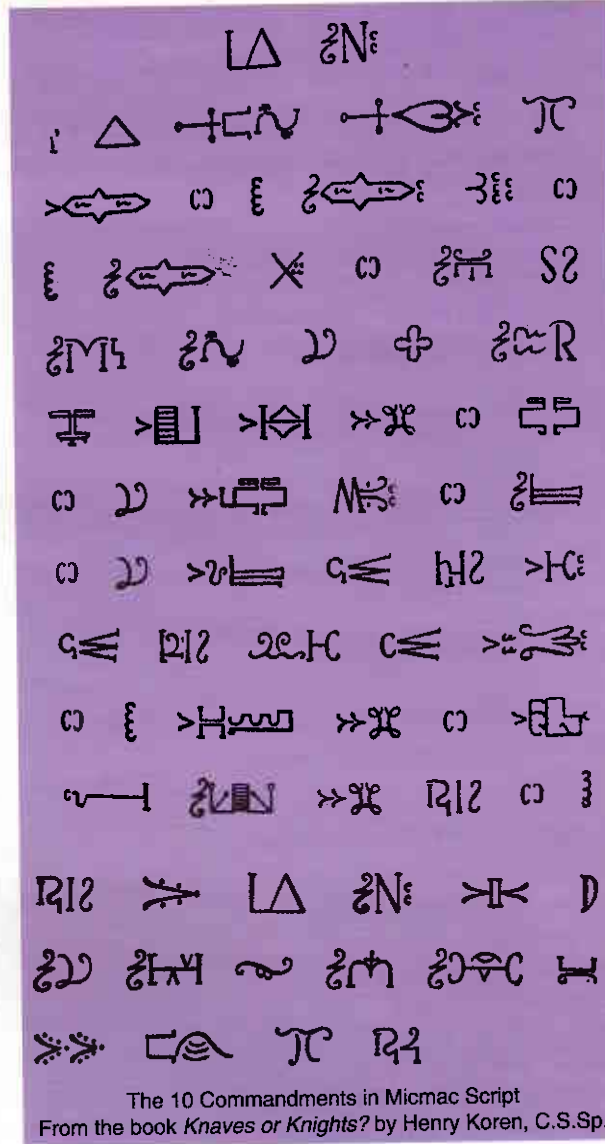
In 1740 Pierre Maillard was appointed Vicar General of Cape Breton. Five years later he was among

the Catholic priests arrested by the British, and deported to Boston and then back to France. Four years after that, this determined Breton was back in Cape Breton, living and working in Bras d'Or.

After the capture of Louisbourg by the British in 1758 and the deportation of the Acadians in crowded boats to France, Fr. Maillard led his Micmac people to Miramichi, New Brunswick, where they joined the Acadians who had gone into hiding rather than face deportation. Two years later, he convinced the Acadians and the Micmacs to accept the conditions of a peace offer from the British, convinced that trying to hold out against them would be no good.

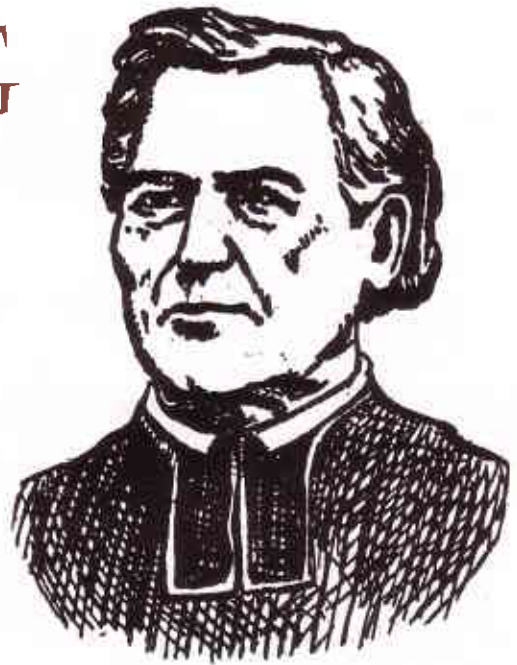
He moved to Halifax and lived there for two years. But his health was deteriorating and in 1762 he died there, the last Catholic priest allowed to remain in Nova Scotia. A rare tribute was paid to him after his death. In those unecumenical times he was given an Anglican funeral and buried in the Protestant cemetery.

Pierre Maillard identified with the Micmac people. He lived with them, spoke their language, shared their joys and endured their hardships. According to a Micmac legend, after his death bushes bearing beautiful flowers sprang up over his grave. The influence of his twenty seven years among them did not end with his death. As late as 1927 it could be written, "the Micmac book has taken the place of a missionary for nearly a hundred and seventy years." ❀



The 10 Commandments in Micmac Script
From the book *Knave or Knight?* by Henry Koren, C.S.Sp.

“BY MAKING
A NUISANCE
OF MYSELF
I HOPE TO
SUCCEED”



Jean Le Loutre

During his eighteen years in Acadia he was called “the Author and Adviser of all the disturbances the Indians had made in the Province.”

He was accused of being an accomplice to murder.

He had a price of 6000 livres on his head at one time.

He helped set fire to a newly constructed church.

He spent three months in prison in England.

After leaving Acadia he was captured at sea and spent eight years in jail on the Channel Islands.

Who was he?

Jean Le Loutre, Spiritan priest.

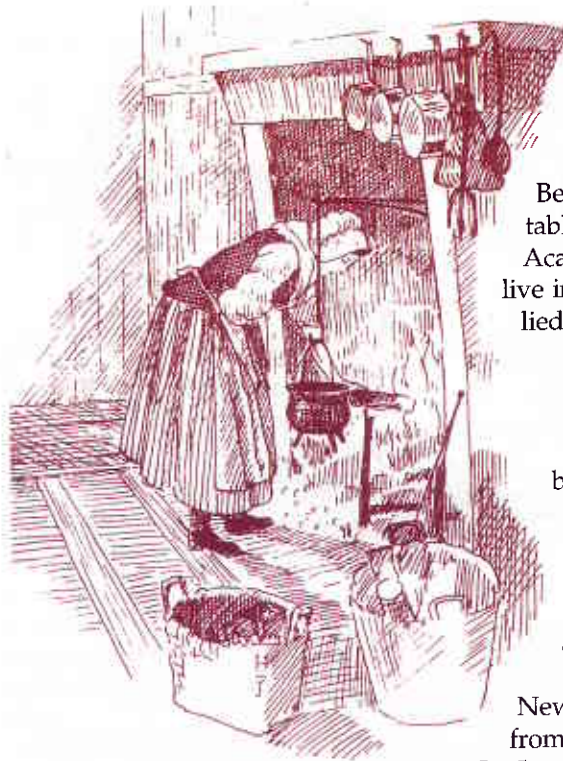
When he arrived in Louisbourg in 1737 he was told by Pierre Maillard that he would be working with the Micmacs and that the first thing he had to do was learn their language. Maillard himself would be his teacher. After ten months Maillard considered him sufficiently fluent to begin his pastoral work. He appointed him to Shubenacadie, between Truro and Halifax.

This territory was under British control and no priest had been there for twelve years. Le Loutre promised to keep the local Acadians and Micmacs loyal to the British government. The Lieutenant Governor wrote to him, “I trust you will keep your

promise,” and “the esteem I have for you leaves no room to doubt that you will be disposed to help maintain peace, law, and justice.” Le Loutre did keep his promise — for four years. Then he handed over the care of the Acadians to another Spiritan in order to work full-time among the Micmacs. As a missionary among the Indians he did not feel “in any way subject to the government”. These were a free and independent people as far as he was concerned.

The British government accused him of leading the combined French-Micmac attack against Port Royal (Annapolis) in 1744, so he thought it better to make his escape to Quebec with a band of Micmacs. From there he set out for Halifax to meet a French fleet. But only a remnant of the fleet made it across the Atlantic. Their badly organized, disease





ridden ships returned to France and Jean Le Loutre went with them to plead with the French on behalf of the Acadians and Micmacs.

On the return voyage he was captured at sea by the British. He pretended to be M. l'abbé Rosanvern, the ship's chaplain. It didn't work: he spent three months in an English jail.

A year later he was at sea again — with the same result, except that this time he received a one month sentence.

In the 1784 peace treaty between France and England, Louisbourg was given back into French control and Jean Le Loutre was free to return to Acadia.

From Halifax, Governor Cornwallis ordered the Acadians to swear unconditional allegiance to the British flag, to renounce their neutrality and to be willing to fight the French. Le Loutre interpreted this oath of loyalty as meaning they would also have to become Protestants, so he resolutely decided to defend the Acadians and the Micmacs against Cornwallis.

But he was not totally on the side of the Micmacs: he bought the freedom of several British prisoners captured by the Micmacs. He wanted to wean them away from scalp-

ing their prisoners of war.

Many Acadians had resettled along the shore of the Bay of Fundy and Jean Le Loutre wished to see Beausejour (Cumberland) established as the centre of a new Acadia where the people could live in peace and security. He rallied both Acadians and Micmacs to rebuild its fortifications and dikes as well as to construct a new church.

The next accusation they brought against him was that he was an accomplice to the murder of a Captain Edward How at a truce conference between the English and the Micmacs.

In 1755 the Governor of New England sent 5000 soldiers from Boston to attack Beausejour. Le Loutre escaped before the town surrendered, after having agreed with the defenders' decision to set fire to the newly built church rather than have it fall into Protestant hands.

He went to Quebec and then to France, but on the way across the Atlantic he was once again captured at sea. This time he was sentenced to eight years in jail in Jersey. On his release, he spent the last nine years of his life ministering to the 2500 or so Acadians who had survived the

Grand Dérangement that followed the fall of Beausejour and had settled in and around St. Malo, Brittany.

Late in life Fr. Le Loutre wrote a revealing autobiographical sentence: "By making a nuisance of myself, I hope to succeed." On his death, the Chairman of the French Navy Board wrote of him: "He has neither goods nor income because he has spent his entire personal inheritance for the welfare of his missions and in aiding the poor."

To the historians, officers and political figures who opposed them, the 18th century Spiritan missionaries were "a set of rascally priests". The most "rascally" of all was undoubtedly Fr. Jean Le Loutre:

"Unquestionably religious, but a fanatic..."

The Missionary most devoted to the cause of justice that Acadia ever possessed...

Greatly renowned for his sanctity."

Religion and Justice — Religion and Politics: "What belongs to Caesar, what belongs to God?"

A question as perplexing in our times as it was in the time of Jesus, as it was in the time of Jean Le Loutre. ♦



Lifestyle illustrations courtesy of Parks Canada

This Place Belongeth to Me

Micmac letter to Governor Cornwallis when he began the construction of Halifax (Chibucto), as an administrative centre of English colonization in 1748.

Sir:

The place where thou art, ...the place where thou makest a fortification....
this place belongeth to me.

I am come from this soil as the grass, as a native I was born here from father
to son.

This place is my land, I swear.

It is God who has given it to me to be my country forever.

The works which thou art constructing at Chibucto cannot fail to give me much
matter for reflection...

I cannot make any alliance or peace with thee.

Show me where I, a native of this place, could retire.

Thou driveth me away, thou!

Show me then where thou wilt that I seek refuge.

Thou has seized nearly the whole land, so that nothing but Chibucto remains as
my sole support....

and thou wilt chase me even thence.

This shows that thou thyself do not want me to cease warring against thee or
ever enter into an alliance with thee ...

Even the grovelling worm knows to defend itself when it feels attacked.

Surely I, a native, am worth more than a vile worm and I will know even better
how to defend myself ...

I am coming to see thee without delay.

Yea surely I shall see thee soon and I hope that what I shall hear from thee will
comfort me.

Henry Koren, *Knives or Knights?* P. 41-42

THE MICMACS



Courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism

They lived along the sea coast in the summer. They moved inland in winter to the rivers and lakes and forests. You could meet them any-

where from Cape Breton to the Gaspé, all through Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, the Bay of Fundy and New Brunswick. You could also come across them trading down the New England coast and along the St. Lawrence River.

The French settlers heard them greet each other with a sound like "Nikmaq". Later they realized they were greeting each other as "kin-friends". So they came to be known as the *Nikmaqs* and, as time went on, the Micmacs.

Along the Coast

Out at sea the Micmacs found food: seal and walrus, sturgeon and porpoise, swordfish and small whales. At night they would attract the sturgeon with a torch, spear it, fire it, and tow it to shore. It pro-

vided food and the fishermen provided the story of their daring expedition for many nights to come. Along the shoreline there was no shortage of shellfish: clams, mussels, squid, crabs and lobster. In the shallow waters of the bays they caught

food and supplied an excellent hair and body oil.

Inland in the Winter

Fall saw the Micmacs on the move, migrating inland before the winter freeze-up.

The land and its abundant forests provided an easily obtainable supply of birch, maple, beech, oak, pine and fir: the bark for their houses and canoes, the roots for binding, the wood for fuel and tools.

The land sheltered many animals: bear, moose, caribou, hare, porcupine, grouse and pigeon. Its lakes and streams were home to beaver, muskrat, raccoon and otter. Its waterways became rivers of fish at certain seasons. Its natural meadows offered groundnuts and berries: cranberries, blueberries, raspberries

Words we have borrowed from Micmac vocabulary include:

caribou — from Halibu: an animal that "shovels snow with its foreleg"

toboggan — from Tubagun or Tabagan

tomahawk — from Tomehagen

wigwam — a Micmac word meaning dwelling or shelter



The Micmac lived in conical, A-frame or round wigwams. They travelled out to sea, up-stream and down white water rapids in birch bark canoes light enough for portage, yet sturdy enough to carry heavy loads. They constructed their canoe with high

ends and high sides at the centre to keep it from taking on too much water.

Family and Community Life

Community life was very important for a migrant people. Small villages (200 — 800 people) were set up along the coves in summer or near fresh water in winter. The whole community would come together to hunt or trap salmon or eel in season. Their community meetings had three parts to them: first, the men alone, then the men and their families, and finally the men together to make the necessary decisions. The

elders were given great respect and had a lot of influence.

In general, boys and men kept to themselves, as did girls and women. Children learned by watching: boys their fathers, girls their mothers. The community handed on their way of life through storytelling: stories about why the world was so; how many persons got along or did not get along with each other; stories about their life, their history, their customs.

Passages

When a boy and girl wanted to get married, the boy moved in with the girl's family for three years. During this period, both of them wished to show their elders that they could look after each other. The boy hunted, fished, made tools and weapons, a sled, a canoe and snowshoes. The girl showed she could skin and butcher an animal, prepare meat, cook, make clothes and weave.

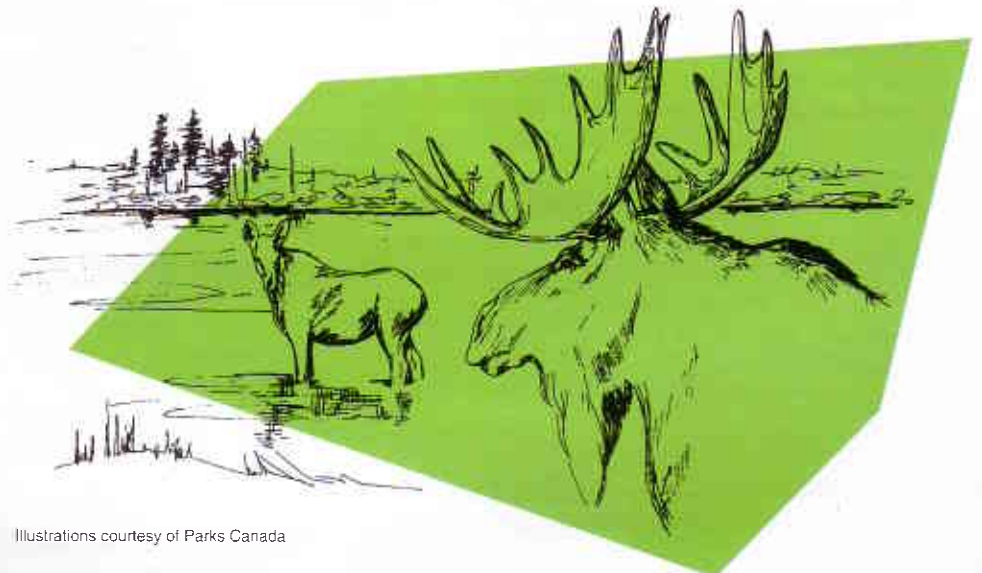
When death drew near, the Micmacs encouraged each other to face it bravely, to look back and celebrate the events of a lifetime. Many died in battle, fighting against another Indian tribe or the Inuit from the north.

After death, the family would bury food, furs and tools with the body to keep the dead person comfortable in the spirit world. The body was wrapped in robes and reed mats and enclosed in a shroud of birch bark. ☉

and strawberries. Many medicinal plants and herbs grew there too: brewed as teas, they healed both body and spirit.

The Micmacs accorded both plants and animals the respect due to the living. Human persons were one of many different kinds of persons, all of whom shared the same environment, all of whom were interconnected. Plants and trees were very good to the human persons: they provided rope from their roots and bark, bedding from their boughs, and canoes from their wood, bark, sap and roots. The tobacco plant supplied a good smoke for men, women and children: all of them used stone or wooden pipes.

Animals were especially good to humans: they gave hides and skins for clothing and containers; they gave needles, awls and spear points from their bones; thread from their sinews; flavouring from their oil; decoration from their feathers, shells and quills. In winter the Micmac was grateful to the caribou or moose for donating its rawhide which he shaped into a snowshoe inside an ash frame for overland travel. Each human person had a special non-human friend, a spirit helper in time of need. A very strong bond developed between the human person and the spirit-helper, e.g. a bear.



Illustrations courtesy of Parks Canada

ST. PIERRE ET MIQUELON

Did you know that it takes only 55 minutes to get from Canada to France? If you take the high-speed ferry from Fortune on the tip of the Burin Peninsula of Newfoundland to St. Pierre, you will be going through French Customs inspection one hour later. The islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon form a *Département* of France, nestled in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence.

Everything about St. Pierre is French. The 6,500 residents elect their own M. P. to the French Parliament. Their bishop, Bishop Maurer, a Spiritan from Strasbourg, is a member of the French Bishops Conference. The food, the customs, the feast days, the justice system, even the sports (for instance, *pétanque*, a Basque squash game), and the French they speak were all brought to the islands by the first settlers who came from Brittany, Normandy and the Basque region in the 1500's. Jacques Cartier claimed the islands for France in 1553 and they became a port of call and a home away from home for generations of fishermen from France. When they were expelled from Nova Scotia, the Acadians sought refuge on these French islands. They were subsequently deported, but they returned and were granted the right to stay when France and England signed the Treaty of Paris in 1815.

In the 1920's, the islands enjoyed the dubious honour of frequent visits from Al Capone's rum running ships as they plied the waters

Courtesy of French Tourist Office



The church on Miquelon

between Canada and the United States with their cargoes of whiskey, champagne and spirits of every description. The rocky coves of the islands provided havens for these Prohibition inspired smugglers.

Down through the centuries, the residents of St. Pierre et Miquelon have lived by the sea, and not infrequently, they have died by the sea. The fog and high seas off the coast of Newfoundland and St. Pierre have swallowed many ships and claimed many lives. The debris from such shipwrecks can be found even today, along the rocky coves.

Today, the islands promote and enjoy a thriving tourism industry. The guidebook phrase





Courtesy of French Tourist Office

Work from the sea — a way of life

"So close ... so French!" brings visitors from the United States and Canada, eager to experience the European culture so close to home. If they go in July, they can celebrate Bastille Day on the 14th, and later, in August, they can experience a Basque festival. Many people go to St. Pierre and Miquelon to learn the French language. Immersion courses are offered throughout the year.

As the Fortune ferry approaches St. Pierre, it passes by Ile aux Pigeons, Ile aux Vainqueurs and Ile aux Marins, the latter island a fishing village for more than two centuries, and a reminder of the lucrative catches of cod that attracted so many European fishermen to the Grand Banks. On the quays the *képis* of the local gendarmes and the black berets of the men awaiting the arrival of the ferry catch your eye. You are *en France* just 25 kilometers from Canada!

fog shrouded the islands and prevented the small plane from taking off. It was a sharp reminder that in the Atlantic, bishops may plan, but the elements decide! Fathers van Osta, Jean-Jacques Boeglin (Strasbourg) and Frederic Heudes (Miquelon), continue a 230 year Spiritan presence on the Islands.

The first Spiritans arrived in 1765, making this the oldest of all Spiritan missions, given to the Congregation when the two islands were separated from the Diocese of Quebec. The first two French Spiritans appointed to what remained of France's once vast territories in North America had formerly worked with the Acadians in Nova Scotia, but had been deported to France when the Acadians were expelled from that territory. Their return to Canada was marked by an interesting detour. Their ship was

blown off course and landed some 5000 kilometres away on the Island of Martinique in the Caribbean!

Today there are five ordained Spiritans from St. Pierre and Miquelon who belong to the Spiritan Province of France.

An End of a Way of Life?

St. Pierre et Miquelon's coat of arms and motto "*A Mare Labor*" (Work from the Sea) recall our Spiritan beginnings off the east coast of Canada and raise disturbing prospects about the future. The people of St. Pierre and Miquelon, like their Canadian neighbours in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, face an end to their traditional way of life. Ocean temperatures have dropped and fish are scarce, hinting at an uncertain future for those whose storied past has been so dependent on a plentiful supply of cod along the Grand Banks.

Tourists come in the summer, but they don't stay. They go home and start saving for next year's vacation in some other place. Meanwhile, down on the docks, the catch is meagre — smaller fish in smaller numbers. A thriving fishing industry is dying because it has been overused, abused, used up. The sea and all that teems within it seemed so vast, so deep, that we foolishly thought its bounty was endless. Today we are sharply aware that plentiful is not synonymous with unlimited. We face the disturbing question: What does the future hold for the fishermen of St. Pierre? ☪

The Spiritans in St. Pierre et Miquelon

Bishop Maurer was on Miquelon when I arrived, but Father Jean van Osta (Belgium) assured me he would be back later that evening. He was wrong; a thick North Atlantic

Priest blesses the boats at the Festival of the Mariners



Courtesy of French Tourist Office