

40. Mary's simple and hidden life at Nazareth and in the new-born Church

Sister Marie de la Croix lived the simple, hidden life of Mary at Nazareth, sharing the life of the people of New Caledonia during the second half of the nineteenth century. Despite her fragile health, she led a fully apostolic life as an active missionary in the field of education. Her vocation, which is also ours, was "to unite apostolic zeal with discreet presence" (Const. 53) in the spirit of Mary both at Nazareth and in the new-born Church.

I am writing you from my palace with an upturned box for a table. ... I am so happy here in this stable, a wretched little corridor made of tree branches, badly lined with the bark of the "niaouli" tree, where the rain is pleasantly refreshing! This is my classroom!

In the morning I assemble all the children who are spared from sickness or death, for the latter mows down everything here, and I make them read while teaching them a hundred and one little things which will be developed later. In the evening I have as many women as my stable can hold. I have two reading classes, then I make them sew while we talk half in French and half in "Tuo", which is the language that has fallen to me by chance and which I am studying. I cannot do much, not being able to speak, but the Blessed Virgin who is the Mistress over us, has already won the hearts of these people for me; women and children jostle around me with affection. When finishing a class I have to repeat the signal ten times. I always give it reluctantly.

Sr Marie de la Croix (New Caledonia) to Fr Yardin (Lyons),
February 20, 1859, (OPS I, 133)

"Come now. If we are Marists, it must be seen in our behaviour".
(Fr Jean-Claude Colin)

