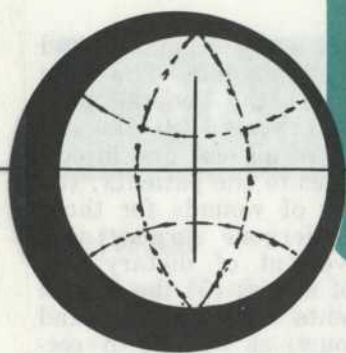




MIC MISSION NEWS



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Come Follow Me

by Madeline Maillet, M.I.C.

When Christ lived here upon earth, he once drew his disciples' attention to the fact that workers for the Kingdom were few. What did he advise them to do about this crucial problem? "There is a great harvest," he said, "but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out more workers to gather in his harvest..." Lk 10:2-3.

These words were not meant only for Christ's immediate disciples. They still apply to our situation today. Perhaps what is lacking most in our efforts to solve the modern crisis of vocations to the priestly and religious life, is prayer. Christ's call to the apostolate still echoes down the ages, but do we ever think of praying that this call may be answered, this challenge accepted? Potential labourers in the fields of apostolate are all around us. They need the proddings of our earnest prayers to follow the Master as of old did Andrew, Peter, James, Matthew, John...

Our young people have seldom been more idealistic than they are today. They have learned to look beyond the narrow horizons of the homeland to the "global village" that is the world. They thirst for justice and peace and are keenly aware of the plight of the Third World. They want to live completely, significantly, even dangerously for some worthwhile cause. Where else can they find a better outlet for their latent energies than in a missionary vocation?

Take a good look at our young generation. There may be among our youth many a budding Xavier, a Délia Tétreault, a Mother Teresa, a Charles de Foucauld, equipped to reap great harvests for the King-



Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out more workers to gather in his harvest... Lk 10:2-3

dom of God. During March, a month especially dedicated to prayer for vocations, it is our duty as baptized Christians to pray more fervently for those who hear the call that they may have the courage to respond.

This apostolate of prayer is within everybody's reach. Who cannot daily offer a decade of the beads, a few invocations, an "Our Father" with special emphasis on "Thy Kingdom Come"? We might choose a school, a youth group, a family as the special target of our prayers. Who knows what great results might be achieved? The words of the poet remain true, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

The Church is You and Me

Do we ever realize this? Do you ever stop to think that the Church which Christ Jesus gave us depends on us for its spreading? All of us are bound to be missionaries in our own calling, but some of us must be willing to give all our time to the spreading of the Good News.

Each year the Church determines one special day called Vocation Sunday. Where will vocations to the priesthood and to religious life come from? What are our obligations as young people and later on as parents? Are we aware of the particular needs of the Church today?

A modern apostle, a prosperous business man in the United States, decided to devote his wealth to the fostering of vocations. Asked why he had so much success with the candidates he recommended to the Bishops he replied, "I do not choose the candidates. I choose the mothers and fathers, and, if possible, the grandfathers and grandmothers. I do this even before I meet the candidates."

The duty of fostering vocations belongs to the whole Christian Community which should exercise it above all by living as genuine Christians, followers of Christ. Families animated by deep faith, love and sense of duty, become a kind of initial seminary.



Born on July 10, 1911, at Saint Robert, Richelieu County, Que., Cécile Frappier entered the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in 1936. She made her profession in 1938 and was at first assigned to our missions in China. The second world war prevented her from leaving. On September 12, 1943, she received her assignment for Haiti where she laboured for 31 years — years filled with happiness as she is fond of saying. She hopes to return in a few years.

Sister Cécile Frappier, M.I.C.

HAITI

Sister Angeline,

I am sending you the following paper written by Miss Pete, in case you would be interested in using it in your missionary publication.

*signed: L. Mellon
June 12, 1974*

L'Escale

There are no words in the dictionary to adequately describe our gratitude to and our affection for our gentle and benevolent Sister Cécile, Supervisor of the L'Escale Establishment. She is simply magnificent.

In 1962, at the inception of L'Escale, it was the supreme desire of the founding fathers to provide a safe, homelike haven for the T.B. patients already under treatment in the wards or clinics of Albert Schweitzer Hospital. This is what the word "Escale" means — "a step nearer home with improved health".

As is generally known, those responsible for the well-being of L'Escale and its patients were making efforts: (1) To keep the management and operational expenses as low as possible. They wanted it to be streamlined and bear a close resemblance to Dr. Albert Schweitzer's Hospital in Lamba-

rene, Equatorial West Africa. (2) To control financial affairs and keep only a limited staff on duty. The patients who were in a condition to do so, were asked to make their own beds, keep their sleeping quarters clean, take their medicine regularly, as ordered by the physician, and manage their own recreation, rest, and sleeping periods.

However, it soon became evident that the patients were not taking their rest or medicine regularly, nor were they eating the proper food. Their physical condition as well as their morale was at a low ebb. The Escale Committee was in the doldrums and changes were in order. In early 1966, a committee meeting was held to discuss these problems. The members included Dr. Gérard Frédérique, President; Mr. Marc Supplice, Treasurer; Miss Pete, Secretary; Mr. Jérôme Jean-Baptiste; and Miss Emmy Fullerman. Dr. Frédérique was commissioned to make an appeal to Mother Robert, Provincial Superior of the Immaculate Conception Sisters in Port-au-Prince, for a Sister to help with the development of the T.B. Village.

In August 1966, Sister Cécile was assigned to our unit. She came well qualified as she had been in Haiti for several years and was acquainted with the Haitian people, their customs, and their language, and was moreover well capable of handling their problems. Sister Cécile proved an "Angel" in disguise. In her short eight years of experience at L'Escale, she

accomplished more than we had ever dreamed possible. She soon took over: (1) the general management of L'Escale; (2) the administration of all oral and injectable medicines to the patients; (3) the dressing of wounds for those who had undergone surgery; (4) the improvement of dietary services and of meals; (5) the control of the patients' activities, rest, and sleeping hours, as well as of recreational and occupational therapy; (6) the supervision of staff personnel services.

Soon after her arrival, she organized an oven for baking bread, a modern chicken run for about 100 laying hens, a piggery, and a water reservoir. Patients who felt able to do so, helped with the vegetable garden chores. All these activities promoted the general morale and well-being of the patients in a remarkable manner.

She is now leaving us to return to her own Congregation in Montreal, Canada, to assist with the solving of several problems. She tells us that, in three years time, she hopes to have completed this work, and that she earnestly wishes to return to Haiti. So, God speed you, dear Sister Cécile, and may He grant you a pleasant and safe voyage home. L'Escale will look forward to your return. The Albert Schweitzer Hospital, the T.B. Services, L'Escale Committee,



Bakers in the making.

your patients, and your co-workers thank you a million times over.

We are pleased to announce that Sister Angéline, also of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Montreal, and until now stationed in Port-au-Prince, has been assigned to L'Escale to take up similar duties and to put her talents, efforts, and love at the service of L'Escale. Welcome, Sister Angéline. You have our blessing and good wishes.

Respectfully submitted,

Walberg L. Peterson,

Secretary L'Escale Committee



Mother and Baby happy to be on the way to recovery.

Hermit-on-the-Mountain

by Suzanne Labelle, M.I.C.

For reasons too long to explain here, I am for the present living alone. After years of community life, with groups varying from four to 250 nuns in the same house, I have been left completely alone for months, in a faraway land which I once heard described as "the end of nowhere" — altitude, 12,200 feet above sea level; temperature, always cold.

Considering the bright side of the situation, I pretended I was going to live as a hermit. Even though surrounded by 18,000 inhabitants of the mining camp of Catavi, I took the idea seriously and felt quite happy about it! But even hermits meet with disapproval. Comments like the following reached me: "What are you thinking of living alone in that rickety house? I just couldn't stand it!" etc. That particular house has many rooms opening on an inner courtyard or "patio". Something was wrong with the lock of my door. It just would not work. Finally I had it fixed to reassure those who were anxious for my safety. Then it happened that, as I was not used to locking the door, I closed it inadvertently leaving my keys inside.

Late that night (hermits do not always go to bed early) I realized I could not enter my bedroom. How could I open the door without a key? Examining the window from outside, I wondered if I could unscrew the screen. With a bench plus a chair heaved over a table, I finally succeeded in unscrewing the bolts that a good carpenter —

stronger than the said hermit — had screwed on years ago. The screen off, all I had to do was to break a window pane and creep inside, then go to bed for a badly needed rest.

At least this is what I intended to do. But as I did not want to leave an unpleasant task for the next morning, I carefully cleaned up the place and put back the screen, screwing it on not too tightly, thinking that it would be easier to remove it next time, if ever another such incident should happen in the future.

Well, this future was closer than I thought. I had just finished putting everything in order when the door banged shut once more with my keys inside the room. I could hardly believe my ears. How could I be so stupid?

Reflecting over the patience of holy hermits, I went to work all over again. It took me a little less time, of course. But the first thing I did upon entering the room was to shove the keys into my pocket, and secure the door so that it could not close me out again. Then I went over the same screwing process. Finally, I went to bed late past midnight with a short prayer to God thanking him for all that had happened during the day, from its first to its last moment. Please remember in your prayers the hermit-on-the-mountain, that God may bless her apostolate among the poor. In turn I never forget you and those near and dear to you in my daily prayers and labours.

LIMA, PERU

CATECHESIS



Sister Marie Paule congratulates a graduate.

Sister R. — Welcome to our office, Sister Marie Paule. I'm sure our readers would enjoy knowing about your work in Lima. In what part of the city is our school situated?

Sister M. — In the suburbs, among a population of workers. The school was built on what was once part of the municipal dumps. It comprises the primary and secondary courses. Fifteen lay teachers collaborate with the Sisters on the teaching staff.

Sister S. — What are your special assignments in the school?

Sister M. — Chiefly catechesis and counselling. I like to recall how Mother Foundress often said that we were first of all catechists. This

OTTAWA

TEEN TALKS FOR MISSIONS TODAY

During the month of October 1974, mission month in the Ottawa Archdiocese, various missionary activities took place, among which a quest for young people's opinions titled "Teen Talks for Missions Today". On this occasion, Monique Cloutier, M.I.C., a missionary from the Archdiocese, sent a prize from Japan where she has been at work for 23 years. Miss Anne Dickson was the fortunate winner. She sent us her photo together with the following verses which show her lively faith in Christ Jesus. We hope our readers will enjoy it as we did.



"FOR CHRIST'S SAKE"

"For Christ's sake" I will do my best,
"For Christ's sake" I will take the test;
Why not? He died for you and me,
"For our sake" He died upon a tree.

"For Christ's sake" I will take a loss,
"For Christ's sake" I will carry the cross;
Why not? He died for sinners, now and then;
"For our sake" and for sons of men.

O fellow sinners come with me,
Come and carry this awesome tree,
Be good and patient, kind, and nice,
Come fellow sinners
for the Sake of Christ!

S IN LIMA

Marie Paule Michaud, M.I.C., entered our Congregation in 1944. She left for Cuba in 1951. In 1965 she was assigned to our missions in Bolivia, and was transferred to Lima, Peru, in 1969. At present, Sister is on home leave in Pont Viau. In the following interview, she tells us about her work among students in Lima.

has been the greatest joy in my missionary life, to be able to share the treasures of my faith with the young. Besides teaching in our school, I have also been assigned to supervise the teaching of catechesis in a state-sponsored establishment for senior students. About 500 girls are enrolled.

Sister R. — We often hear that a certain religious indifference reigns in Latin America, especially among the young. How far is this true?

Sister M. — The fact cannot be denied. Popular religiosity is the result of an evangelization which had its special characteristics. It was a religion of vows and promises, of processions and pilgrimages, of numberless devotions. The religious values of our young people are characterized by a rejection of a disfigured image of God, and by a search of authentic evangelical values. I have always found them eager to discover genuine Christianity.

Sister R. — Have you made any personal contacts with the students, outside your courses?

Sister M. — I try to maintain a warmly receptive attitude towards all those who wish to make inquiries after scheduled courses. They know they will be received with open arms and helped in their search for God. I admire their willingness for authenticity, their acceptance of others as they are, their frank recognition of a pluralistic society. I am convinced that we, missionaries, must make a sincere effort to understand their problems for they live in a time of crisis and change. Youth is not only the largest sector of Latin America society, it is also a great new force for pressure.

Sister R. — Do you find them open to social problems?

Sister M. — I must say they are more sensitive than their elders to positive social values. They demand profound and rapid changes which will assure a more just society. Besides, they are receptive to a pluralistic world and to a universal dimension of fraternity.

Sister R. — Do you expect to go back?

Sister M. — I am looking forward with the greatest pleasure to my return in a few months. There is so much to be done and so little

time in which to do it. It will be an honour and a joy for me to serve my Latin American brothers and sisters in my humble capacity as missionary catechist for several years more. Coming into daily contact with them has enriched my life in more ways than I can tell. I admire their fortitude and acceptance of sacrifice which is not merely a sort of fanaticism. It is often translated into unlimited generosity towards the suffering and needy, to whatever class they may belong.

DAVAO, P.I.

Feeding future Apostles

by Lorraine Laflamme, M.I.C.

Born in Williamsett, Mass., on March 20, 1930, Lorraine Laflamme entered our Congregation immediately after graduating from High School. She made her final vows in 1954, and was assigned to the Philippine Islands one month later. At present she is on home leave in Canada.

When I first arrived in Davao, I had no inkling of what lay in store for me. My Provincial had sent me down to lend whatever help I could to Sister Madeleine Alarie, in her workshop for the needy of Fatima Centre.

One day, I went out with a group of Sisters to look around the city which was then new to me. We ended up at the Seminary. While showing us around, the Fathers complained that they were having trouble organizing their kitchen. One of my companions laughingly remarked, "Sister Lorraine is a first-class cook. Why don't you ask her to help you out?"

Within a few days, a formal request was sent to me. At first, I hesitated. Feeding 250 people was no easy job to undertake. But, then I reflected that it was truly an apostolic task, somewhat like that performed by the holy women who followed Jesus and the Twelve, providing for their daily needs. My Provincial was willing, so I accepted the proposal.

The Davao Regional Major Seminary is the only one functioning for the



thirteen dioceses on the Island of Mindanao. At present, it houses 120 major seminarians, 102 students on college level, 9 helpers, one secretary, one driver, five teachers, fifteen priests, and one retired bishop. Quite a houseful!

Rice is the staple food. Since the martial law has been proclaimed, however, we have had to mix it with two thirds of corn grits. Breakfast consists of rice and dried fish; lunch and dinner of rice, curried chicken, fish stew, vegetables, and fruit, bananas more especially. Every day, at 9:30 a.m., and at 3:30 p.m., snacks are also served. Have you any idea about the appetite of growing boys? For the snacks, 700 buns are served along with twelve quarts of fruit juice or of hot coffee. In one week we serve seven hundred pounds of pork, five hundred pounds of beef, and as much chicken meat, and fish.

It took me several months to get the organization of the kitchen running smoothly. An ordered household favours the studies of the seminarians and relieves their teacher-priests of many petty worries. This has been my apostolate in Davao for the last few years. Now, on home leave, I have been replaced by two members of a native Congregation, the Daughters of Saint Teresa who will keep up the good work during my absence.

Bits out of mission life

TAIWAN

Handicapped youngsters are no longer neglected by the Taiwan Chinese Community and Government. Special schools have been established for the blind, and the deaf and dumb. Taipei and Tainan each have theirs, and there are three in Taichung. Enrollment is nearly 2,600 from primary school through senior vocational school. About three-fifths of the pupils are studying at the elementary level — 800 in junior vocational classes and about 300 in senior vocational schools. The 188 organized classes are conducted by 300 teachers.

Until recently, the deaf were taught sign language and remained dumb. Today they learn to speak and to read lips. The blind are helped by new audio devices as well as by a Chinese Braille system based on 59 phonetic symbols. Reading is more difficult than with the Western alphabet, the Chinese language being tonal.

Some teachers have served many years in this difficult task and their spirit of love and respect for their profession deserves great admiration. It certainly is not an easy job.

The deaf and blind students have the courage and will-power to face the facts and shoulder this affliction. They certainly give us a new lesson in life. We should thank God for our five senses and make use of them all for the glory of God and the improvement of our modern society.

Odile Malbœuf, M.I.C.

MORONDAVA, MALAGASY REPUBLIC

For the first time we were invited to a Muslim wedding, that of Anissa, one of our former students who had asked us to attend the religious ceremony. Before entering the mosque, we took off our shoes as required, and joined the women in a room to the left. The men had gathered in another room to the right. Both rooms were tastefully decorated. We sat cross-legged on the mats spread over the floor. The Muslim women wore their best sari over which were thrown wide black capes. Their heads were covered with long black veils. The bride dressed in white and wearing rich jewelry, sat on the women's side, under a sort of dais while

gong sounded and songs were sung in the bridegroom sat with the men. A Arabic, with a few moments of silence in between. After this, one of the women passed through the ranks pouring a little perfume in the hands of all the guests, with the compliments of the couple. This is considered something of a charm. A special prayer was then recited. Refreshments served at the mosque consisted in wrapped up sweets and glasses of milk with eggs beaten in, symbols of fertility. Thus ended the religious part of the ceremony. Then we all rose and followed the bride outside where she joined her husband. The cortege left in cars for a banquet to be held at home.

CUBA

For the last few years of my stay in Cuba, I worked in a leper hospital conducted by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul. Built over fifty years ago, the hospital can accommodate 170 in-patients. A clinic is attached to it which administers to the needs of out-patients.

I worked as an ordinary employee, my salary being paid by the State. Daily contact with the doctors, who for the most part are Communists, taught me to know and appreciate them for their kindness and devotedness to the patients. In order to better understand their mentality and that of the other employees, I made it my duty to attend the monthly meetings. Willingly, I shared their working bees in the fields at sowing or harvest time. Whenever I had some free time. I gave French lessons to a group of doctors and technicians. I met my Lord among Cuban suffering sisters and brothers, and felt very happy and honoured to be his messenger of love in their midst. May their courageous attitude in the face of trial, and their efforts to construct a better world bring them back to their Saviour from whom they have strayed.

Claire Carrier, M.I.C.

"There is no greater love..." (cont.)

called to the girl, encouraging her to let go. He would catch her, hoping only that his old body would provide a cushion and soften the impact of her fall.

To his relief, Naomi fell right into his arms. He did not collapse, but remained stunned for a few brief moments. As soon as he recovered, he mustered all his energy and carried the child to the nearest doctor. When he arrived with his precious burden, he was completely exhausted, but happy to hear that the girl had suffered no injury. Naomi spent a few days in the hospital to recover from the shock. She is now attending school everyday as if nothing had ever happened.

The day after the accident, I visited the old man to express my gratitude, and offered him flowers, money, and a share of the graduation dinner. He invited me in, and his wife, bringing tea and cookies, joined us. We had a long conversation. He had just come back from his day's work, and while we talked, he sat on the floor at the opposite end of the low table, shaving as he always did at that time of the day. Oh, the simplicity and freedom of the poor!

But listen to what he had to say, and marvel with me at the treasures of faith hidden in his heart: "Don't thank me. It's God who saved the child and prevented me from being hurt. It's because she goes to His school, and you Sisters pray to Him all the time." And his old lady insisted, "Yes, he's right. Don't thank us. We talked it over and are convinced that my man was only an instrument; it's really a miracle wrought by God!"

I was moved to the depths of my heart and said that I rather thought God had saved the child because of him, because his heart was so much like Christ's who had laid down his life to save us. I told him how close he was to God, and how God dearly loved him. He listened with glistening eyes. I wondered how this non-Christian had come to believe in God ... "Oh", he said, "about twenty years ago, one of our relatives had a child at your school, and through her, we all learned a little about your God."

On my way back to the convent, tears blurred my eyes, but my heart danced with joy. O Lord, how true it is that your love is at work in the heart of the simple and the poor, that your Word is transmitted from generation to generation, far beyond the scope of our vision! Strengthen the hope of your missionaries and let them not be discouraged at apparent failure. You are the One and First Missionary and your love knows no boundaries. Deepen our faith in the power of your Word and kindle our heart with a love that gives endlessly, happy in the thought that **You** are keeping track of the statistics in your Book of Life!

GUATEMALA

Marina smiles her thanks.

Around Totonicapan

by Jeannine Boily, M.I.C.



Situated in a beautiful valley, surrounded by verdant hills and tall mountains, Totonicapan is the largest and most important town in the region. In pre-conquest times, it was the artistic and scientific centre of the Maya-Quiche nation. Its present population of 57,000 is chiefly made up of Quiche Indians, descendants of the Maya.

The staple food here is maize. Although some fields bear two or more crops a year, the main planting season extends from March to May. On the whole, the Indians are poor, the majority earning not more than eighty cents a day. I have been told that none can afford to spend more than twenty cents daily for food. Tortillas, thin round cakes of maize flour which replace bread, sell for one centavo (one cent) a piece. They form part of every meal with black beans. Meat is usually served only once a week but rice and vegetables are frequently part of the menu.

In 1962, upon the request of Msgr. Luis Manresa, S.J., Bishop of Quezaltenango, a group of our Sisters opened a school for the Indian children of the region. The people were very proud to have their own educational establishment. About 200 youngsters answered the roll call that first year. Since then, their number has gone on increasing. Some walk for hours, on a meagre breakfast, to attend classes.

With the years, our financial problems to keep the school going became more acute. Because of prevailing poverty, we could not ask for higher tuition fees. Things came to a head when, in 1972, the Montreal Motherhouse decided we would have to close the institution.

But, the parents vetoed the project and tried to keep it going by every

means in their power. Fairs, bingos, games were held to raise funds. In spite of their efforts, however, we still failed to make both ends meet. It was then that Providence intervened. Who was it who said, "The darkest hour comes just before the dawn?"

In August 1973, we had a visitor in Totonicapan. He was an American, a Mr. Bryand, member of the Methodist persuasion. He offered to assist in solving the problem thanks to the Christian Children's Fund (CCF). All we had to do was to send in to the headquarters of the Association, the name of a child to be sponsored, with a sketch of his social and family history, the actual situation of his parents, and three photographs. Officials in charge would thoroughly examine these documents in order to make sure the child was really in need of sponsorship.

At present, 250 of our pupils receive an allowance from their sponsors in Canada, the United States, or Mexico. This sum is used to provide each child with sound physical, moral, and intellectual education. A snack is served every day to all, and dinner to those who cannot have it at home. From time to time, there are distributions of warm clothing, vitamins, and school equipment.

We also extend our care to the needy children outside, providing them with food and clothing. Mothers are given courses in hygiene and house-keeping. On Christmas 1973, each child received a woolen sweater, soap, towel, tooth paste and other items sent by sponsors. The children keep in contact with their benefactors through correspondence. This is part of our apostolic task in Totonicapan, task in which you, dear parents and friends, share through your generosity. God bless you all!

"There is no greater love..."

by Monique Cloutier, M.I.C.

It happened the day before the graduation ceremony of our primary school in Wakamatsu, Japan. Naomi Katagiri, a second grader, had gone shopping with her mother at a large department store. After a short while, she left her mother to go to the rest room.

There she locked herself in, but something went wrong with the lock so she could not get out. She knocked at the door, called at the top of her voice, but all in vain. In a panic, she decided to escape through a window, not realizing that she was on the fourth floor. When at last she faced the terrifying reality, it was too late. She was hanging helplessly outside the window. How long could she hold on? If she let go, instant death awaited her on the pavement below. Desperately, she cried for help.

Just then, an old rag-picker who was carrying empty boxes out of the department store, heard the cry, looked up and saw the child. What to do? There was no time to notify anybody. Should he try to catch her? What if



Naomi on her way to school.

he missed? And if he did succeed, such a weight falling from so high would most probably break his arms, if not his back. Of this he was well aware, but he did not hesitate a moment. He

Continued on page "Bits out of Mission Life"

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