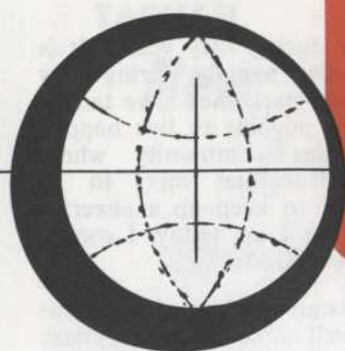




Series 4, No. 1, January-February 1977

Our Diamond Jubilee

Landmarks

JUNE 3, 1902 — The first house of the Congregation was opened at Cote des Neiges, Montreal.

DECEMBER 7, 1904 — In an audience granted to Archbishop Bruchési of Montreal, Pope Pius X approved the new foundation, naming it Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

AUGUST 8, 1905 — Délia Tétreault made her perpetual vows taking the religious name — Mary of the Holy Spirit. On this same day, one of her first companions made her temporary commitment while three postulants took the habit.

DECEMBER 8, 1909 — The first group of Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception left Montreal for Canton, China.

MARCH 7, 1933 — Pope Pius XI granted the final approbation of the Constitutions.

OCTOBER 1, 1941 — The foundress died peacefully after eight years of a lingering illness.



Délia Tétreault in her early girlhood

Cradle of the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception



"An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man." This saying well applies to Délia Tétreault, the remarkable woman, who laid the foundations of the first feminine Canadian missionary Institute — the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. Her name will be fondly recalled throughout this year which brings around the diamond jubilee of the Institute. The event will be marked with joyful thanksgiving in our houses throughout the world and we invite you all, dear readers, to share in our joy.

Born on February 4, 1865, in Marieville, Que., Délia Tétreault had since early childhood felt drawn to the missionary life. She ardently desired to do her share in the apostolate and to quicken in the hearts of her compatriots the flame of zeal. Like many another founder and foundress, however, she was to wait long trial-filled years before her ideal was realized.

God's hour finally struck for her in 1902, when the foundation of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception became a reality. On June



Greetings

May the New Year

bring you

the warmth

of Christ's love,

His Mother's

tender care,

and Joseph's faith.

Happy

New Year

to you all.



CHANGE

The world changes because life itself is change. Truth and love remain unchanging. Walk in that lovely light, this year and in all the years ahead.

Walk without fear — because Christ is, and Christ must conquer, sometime where the sick are gathered, sometime on the shore of a stormy lake, sometime on the cross.

Like Simon Peter and the others, you may not — at first — recognize Him, but you will know the message, for it has never changed.

Just TRY. He will do the rest.

Fr. Anthony, C.M.M.

Golden Jubilee Profiles

by Arlette Toussaint, M.I.C.



During the Golden Jubilee Eucharistic Celebration, Mother drinks from the chalice.

Father married mother in January 1926. They had twelve children, eight boys and four girls, of which seven boys and two girls survive. Fifty years ago they accepted the challenge of marriage; today they are renewing their commitment with a broader vision. Their mutual confidence is crowned with happiness after fifty

years of fidelity, of true love, of total self-giving, of staunch faith, of joy and sorrow borne together, of struggle too. The hearts of their children are overflowing with gratitude toward the Lord for the many graces bestowed upon them during these past fifty years.

To our parents we owe our love for life. Their example has given us an unquenchable taste for God. They brought us up in humble submission to His Holy Will. I remember Dad's answer whenever we asked him something he was unable to grant us. He would quietly say, using Christ's words, "My hour has not yet come." We understood, and refrained from insisting.

Our parents taught us to be satisfied with what we had, avoiding envy for those who had more costly things. Their life was one of sharing. When the harvest was good, even the most distant neighbours had their share, which was always the best. We lived on good terms with everybody. "Let not the sun set on your anger" was a Gospel truth put into practice in our home.

Their example shows that it is possible to be faithful to God and to

one another during fifty years. It is possible to live happily during fifty years. For my part, they have taught me that it is possible to live happily in a religious community where different nationalities mix, to be thankful, and to keep up a cheerful attitude. What I am today, I owe it to them and to God.

After twelve years of religious life, I may well make my own my dear father's words to me, "Remember that there is no sweeter life than a life spent in close union with God. What joy, what peace of mind flows from this union! All is love in God's company."

My father always rejoiced with those who were happy, and he shared the sufferings of those who were in distress. He sought his courage at the feet of Christ. May this example of Christian faith bring light, hope, and courage to those whose lives are shrouded in sadness. "I will be with you always until the end of the world," said Christ before He returned to His Father. Those words are true. If we have not felt the strength His presence communicates, is it not that our faith is too weak?

(Continued from page 1)

3 of that year, with two companions, she took possession of the small house which became the cradle of her missionary Institute.

Délia Tétreault made her perpetual vows August 8, 1905, taking the religious name of Mary of the Holy Spirit. On this same day, one other Sister made her first vows while three postulants took the habit. The Congregation she had so long dreamt about was at last established.

The work flourished in spite of trials and difficulties of all kinds. Délia Tétreault's faith never faltered. Once she had made sure of what the Lord wanted she never doubted of the outcome, no matter how hard the beginnings proved to be. As early as 1909, the first group of six Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception left Montreal for Canton, China.

But the foundress' zeal could not be limited to the foreign missions. She wanted to develop the missionary spirit among her own compatriots. In order to carry this aim into effect, she initiated the closed retreat movement for girls and women in 1911. Meantime, she launched another important project — the revival of the

Pontifical Works of the Holy Childhood and of the Propagation of the Faith in the various dioceses. She personally called on the bishops to obtain their approval and support. On these occasions, she seized the opportunity of mentioning plans for the foundation of a Canadian Foreign Mission Seminary. Before these plans were finalized, she suffered untold setbacks and rebuffs. It was only in 1921 that the bishops of the province of Quebec decreed the foundation of such a seminary in Montreal.

The crowning joy of the foundress' life came on March 7, 1933, when Pope Pius XI granted the final approbation of the Institute's Constitutions. By then, foundations had been made not only in China, but in the Philippines (1921) and in Japan (1926). Close to four hundred Sisters joined in her song of thanksgiving.

Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit died peacefully October 1, 1941, after eight years of lingering illness. The Institute she founded has spread all over the world. Chinese, Filipina, Japanese, African, Malagasy, Haitian, Cuban, Canadian, American Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception carry the Good News, in a spirit of

thanksgiving, wherever they are sent. The network of educational and charitable organizations sponsored by the foundress to provide for the needs of those who hunger after God, and for the relief of the ailing and the poor is proof enough that the twin flames of love and zeal consumed her heart. The most precious legacy she left to the members of her Congregation is a spirit of joyous thanksgiving. It may best be resumed by the following excerpts from her letters: "The main reason for the existence of our Community is thanksgiving in union with Mary Immaculate and all the saints in heaven... Our apostolate among non-Christians is an exterior means of manifesting our thanksgiving... To work for the glory of God, by all the means at our disposal, and to offer thanks for ourselves and for all men, this is the aim of our Institute."

Dear readers, watch for future issues of MIC Mission News in order to get better acquainted with Délia Tétreault, the woman with a universal heart. Each successive number, during 1977, will endeavour to make her better known that God may be praised and thanked for giving her to our country and to the world.

Sister Marie Marthe, M.I.C.

by Mrs. Jacqueline Coderre



Visiting the Coderre family: back row, Brother Wilfred Ojukwu of Nigeria, Mrs. J. Coderre. Front row: Marc Coderre, Sister Marie Marthe, Teddy Coderre, and Mary McLaren.

The day finally came. I was going to meet a missionary to whom I had been writing for several years. My nervousness in meeting Sister Marie Marthe Terrien quickly disappeared when a tiny twinkly-eyed lady appeared on my doorstep. This marked the first of only six times I met Sister during her recent year of study and rest.

The most memorable occasion occurred on the evening of June 23, at the Basilica of Notre Dame; it was the first Missionary Send-off Mass and ceremony in the archdiocese of Ottawa. Sister Marie Marthe was one of the twenty missionaries honoured, and was presented to Archbishop Plourde by her witness, Marie Clusiau, a life-long friend. His Excellency gave each missionary a copy of Pope Paul's VI encyclical "Evangelization in the Mod-

ern World" along with a contribution to show diocesan support of their work.

With her dear people of Malawi always close in her thoughts, Sister Marie Marthe publicly offered the Mass intention for them. After the impressive Mass and ceremony, an informal reception was held, allowing members of the diocesan community to personally congratulate each missionary. Sister Marie Marthe was quickly surrounded by the many new friends she had made on this trip.

Our family will go on holding Sister Marie Marthe in our hearts. As we prayed with her during her last visit to our home and kissed her goodbye at Mirabel airport, we felt that a part of us went with her to Malawi. Praise the Lord!

Congratulations! Sister Marie Marthe greeted by her friends after the Archdiocese of Ottawa Missionary Send-off at the Basilica of Notre Dame, June 22, 1976.



HONG KONG

In Our M

Dear friends of the missions,

During this last year, my work of evangelization took me on an altogether different trend, and inspired new decisions in my life. I have often pondered how the Spirit guided Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journeys. When I look back over my twenty-eight years of activity in Asia, I can see how the Spirit has led me also. I cherish the same faith Paul and Barnabas had in the action of the Spirit in our lives. This was inculcated in me through the teachings of our foundress, Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit.

Some time ago I received a telephone call from the Diocesan Catechetical Centre. It conveyed an invitation to join in the activities of the Centre as a member of the Executive Committee of the Hong Kong Association of Christian Teachers. This is an ecumenical association comprising three Catholic and eight non-Catholic members belonging to different denominations. After some consideration, I accepted and began working with this team, organizing seminars for teachers of all religions, preparing workshops, and participating in panel discussions with other speakers. Our meetings were held every month, and demanded quite a bit of "so-called" free time, which I gave most willingly,

VILLA TUNARI, BOLIVIA

Mission activities in Villa Tunari

by Pierrette Quevillon, M.I.C.

Many among you have perhaps never heard about a remote region of Bolivia called Chaparé... Situated in a tropical area, it forms part of the Cochabamba Department. I was assigned here in 1972 as a member of a small M.I.C. team. There is plenty of work to do and, as usual, too few missionaries to go around.

The Chaparé is a relatively recent Bolivian development. Its population numbers about eight thousand families mostly of Quechua Indian stock. A

Mail Bag

reflecting that this favoured both evangelization and ecumenism.

Later, I was again approached by the Catechetical Centre officials who wished to find out whether I would accept to teach the methodology of catechetics at the University of Hong Kong, in a Protestant faculty of theology and philosophy. I was delighted with the offer and after approval of my superiors here, I agreed. At first the work was rather vague, but I still believed that the Spirit was leading me on, and I began preparing. I had to meet the Department Heads of the University and expose my aim, my tentative programme, my method of procedure. These people were hiring a Catholic nun for the first time on their staff. It was a challenge, an opening into other people's beliefs and expectations. I was given full liberty to organize the courses according to the experimental catechetical methods I had specialized in, although I surmised such methods might not be fully accepted since the Biblical Approach had been used so far. At first, my way of proceeding seemed not only puzzling but also somewhat dangerous to my colleagues. To their credit, I admit they were broadminded enough to let me go ahead. I then prepared a series of twelve lectures with practical applications. My task was to convince the



Sister Therese LeBlanc spent twenty-eight years as a missionary in Asia.

student-teachers attending these classes, that we were like prophets, helping our students interpret the signs of God's presence in their lives. For the Catholics in the group, this proved fairly easy since they had the Documents of Vatican II to fall back on, especially the Document of Divine Revelation. For non-Catholics, the message took more time to get across. They were under the impression I was somehow "cheating" the students, presenting the Good News with a sugar-coating. However, they finally gave in, and we began our discussions, our lesson preparations, our practical observations for teaching all through

the school year. As I was already well-known in Ecumenical Associations, I was readily admitted into their schools, where my students enjoyed practical teaching experience for one month. This also gave me a chance to discuss with the ministers and devout Protestants, our many mutual problems regarding religious instruction in our schools. I even made friends with some of them. Once, when the opportunity offered, I invited Reverend Miss Joyce Bennett, a lady minister of the Anglican Church, to attend the religious profession of one of our Chinese Sisters. She joyfully accepted the invitation, eager to find out how we Catholic women consecrated our lives to the service of God and to the local Church.

Now, the year is coming to an end, and I am brought to the stark realization that our young teachers of religion need further help and guidance. Again the Spirit is leading me to ask to devote full time in helping out young and senior teachers in catechetics, so I hope to be able to share along that line in cooperation with the Diocesan Catechetical Centre. It will be a different life for me not to be present in the classroom all day, the classroom that has seen me day after day, for the past 35 years whether in Canada, in the Philippines, or in Hong Kong. But one must follow where the Spirit beckons. He has never let me down. Why should I doubt now? But I need the prayers of you all as I have always done in the past. And I do count on them.

Your loving Sister,

Thérèse LeBlanc, M.I.C.

minority of white settlers live in the vicinity, as well as a few primitive tribes of Indians. Spanish is spoken by the men while the women, especially the older set, speak only Quechua. Tribesmen use their own dialect.

The Chaparé's main crops are coca and fruits. A great variety of the latter is available, bananas, papayas, citrus, mangos, avocados, etc., not counting edible berries of several kinds.

Trees form part of the land's natural resources. Among the more valuable are those which furnish a very hard wood used in construction. Other trees like the balsa, with extremely strong light wood, are used to make floats, crates, and other useful objects. There are a few mines of asbestos and some oil wells. Inadequate industrialization, however, leaves these natural riches virtually untapped.

Villa Tunari, where we Sisters live, is a tiny village sited in the heart of the Chaparé region. Our house is built of homemade bricks coated with stucco. The villagers' houses are made of wooden slats or of bamboo poles with roofs of thatch or of corrugated iron sheets. They are usually left open on three sides to let the air circulate freely. No need to knock. Everyone is made to feel at home, even sundry small animals and insects of all kinds. Villa Tunari, the largest village for miles around, is home for about 120 families. The damp warm climate is pleasant.

We Sisters collaborate with a team of Italian Franciscans and committed laymen. One of the most important tasks is teaching catechetics in schools and training local catechists for the communities surrounding Village Tunari. A good number of

devoted men and women volunteered for the task. We also conduct religious courses on preparation for the First Communion of children and adults, and for marriage. The religious formation of youth is our chief concern. Girls and boys have their own clubs and I participate in various activities. Women's lib holds its own even in our remote region.

The village church is of very modest proportions and architecture. Made of brown adobe bricks it has been coated with stucco and paint. Over the altar stands a large inspiring crucifix. The style of these country churches varies according to the importance of the village involved. Some are mere shacks with a thatch roof. In other places, too poor to provide for a building, Mass is said in God's open air. All in all, I feel very happy to live among these warm-hearted lovable people.

TAIWAN

New Year's Around the World



For Taiwanese families, the first month is the liveliest and most colourful on the lunar calendar, as they celebrate holidays each day for over two weeks.

The highlights of this festive period include:

New Year's Day — Housewives are the first to rise, on this important day, to prepare noodles and other foods to be set on the ancestors' altar before breakfast. The noodles which symbolize long life are afterwards eaten by family members.

Although Taiwanese tradition stresses the family and does not encourage an extreme amount of visiting, close friends and relatives often come to pay New Year's visits. Guests are presented with a bowl of steaming "sweet soup" containing such delicacies as red dates, peanuts, and candy with words of good luck from the host.

Second Day of the Year — A big pot of sweet soup is kept, piping hot, on the stove as visitors keep on arriving. Spirited rounds of mahjong and card-playing are favourite activities.

Third Day — Folklore holds that this is the unlucky day of the "red dog", an angry god. Most people avoid leaving home. Kindhearted persons sprinkle grains of rice on the kitchen floor to feed mice, which tradition says, visit the home on this day.

Fourth Day — Meat and fruit are placed on tables outside to greet the "kitchen god" upon his annual visit. Most families set off firecrackers in the afternoon, rather than wait until evening, for tradition says "send the god off early and he will return late."

Fifth Day — This being the last day of the special New Year's celebration, food that was offered to the gods is brought back and shopkeepers prepare to reopen their stores.

Sixth Day — Business returns to normal. This is the first day housewives sweep their floors since New Year's Eve.

Seventh Day — After a week of days dedicated to animals, this is "people's day". Because it is the seventh day of the year, many families eat seven different kinds of food at dinner.

Eighth Day — A Taiwanese folk song calls this the "day of completion", as special New Year's activities have been completed. The streets present scenes of liveliness as people prepare to worship the "god of heaven".

Ninth Day — The steady popping of firecrackers is heard all day on several parts of the Island. Families traditionally place five meat dishes on a table in honour of the auspicious "god of heaven".

Tenth Day — Plenty of food is left over from the offerings of the previous day, and as one Taiwanese song puts it "on the tenth day, there is food, food!"

Eleventh Day — Married women use food remaining from the worship of the "god of heaven", and invite sons-in-law for dinner.

Twelfth Day — Married women spend this day at their parents' home and bring the grandchildren, if there are any. Red envelopes filled with money now replace the red ribbons carrying silver coins grandparents used to slip over their grandchildren's head on this day.

Thirteenth Day — Rice porridge is prepared as most of the food has already been eaten.

Fourteenth Day — Temples set up tents in their courtyards to prepare for the lantern festival — lanterns are on sale in stores by this time.

Fifteenth Day — This is the children's favourite day, and they eagerly await until dusk to light their colourful lanterns. Families eat glutinous rice balls filled with sweets such as red beans or sesame seeds, the roundness of the sweet balls representing unity.

Condensed from "China Post"

JAPAN

The Japanese, as a rule, attach great importance to the beginning and end of all events, in the hope of inviting good luck. This explains the reason why New Year's morning is felt to be the morning not only of this day but of the whole year. Although a good number of the traditional customs have gone out of fashion,

many continue to be observed at least by the older generation.

Ganjitsu, as the first day of January is called is, psychologically speaking, the beginning of a new life. Therefore, it is of great importance to begin this new life properly. Everybody wears holiday clothes. A festive atmosphere pervades the gaily decorated streets. Housefronts are decked with cut bamboo and pine tree branches intertwined in a certain manner. Bamboo signifies uprightness and rapid growth, while pine branches stand for youthfulness and longevity.

The New Year breakfast consists of delicacies which have a happy significance. **Mochi** or round cakes made of steamed glutinous rice are symbols of fulness and abundance. Other New Year dishes are small dried sardines, sea bream, herring roe, etc. Sea bream is considered the king of fish, while the sardine is of a common variety. Served as part of the New Year dinner, they signify harmony between the Ruler and the people. During this season, *otoso*, or sweet rice wine, flavoured with spices, is drunk and offered to guests as part of the New Year ceremony, conveying a wish for health, strength, and happiness.

The second day of January is the first day for people in all walks of life to resume their activities. For young children, it is the day for beginning to practise writing characters. Excellent calligraphy on this occasion means a good start for the rest of the school year.

January 20 is the day on which festivities are brought to a close, although the spirit of New Year's lingers until the end of the month. Those who failed to make their New Year calls earlier try to do so before the end of January.

Today young people in Japan, especially in large urban centres, do not care much for the traditional New Year's celebrations. Conventional delicacies and games hold scant appeal for them. They have plans of their own. Hundreds of skis bristle at railway stations, on the night of December 31, as boys and girls leave to celebrate the New Year season in the snowbound mountains. With Issa the *haiku* poet they may exclaim if the weather is fine:

*New Year's Day,
What luck! What luck!
A pale blue sky.*

Or with Sokan, another *haiku* poet:

*For this New Year's Day,
The sight we gaze upon shall be
Mount Fuji.*

NAN AO, TAIWAN

Little Girls of Taiwan



Chen Kia Hoei and Lin Ya Kin are fast friends. Leaders in games and mischief both attend our Nan Ao kindergarten where they learn to pray.

Like mothers around the world, Taiwanese mothers are very proud of their offspring. Some time ago, a woman of Nan Ao whose four-year-old girl attends our kindergarten, told us how pleased she was that her child had learnt to pray. "Before every meal," she confided, "Chen Kia Hoei, our little girl, makes the sign of the cross and prays the Lord to bless our food. We all respectfully stand at attention while she does. She is so serious about it all."

In the school yard, every morning, after the raising of the national flag, the Our Father is chanted in Chinese. One day, at lunch time, after the food had been served to the kindergartners, nobody stirred. When the teacher inquired why they were not eating their lunch, Lin Ya Kin piped. "We want to sing the Our Father first." All the children gladly joined her as she sang the prayer our Lord Himself taught us to pray.

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BOLIVIA

Our Lady of Copacabana

In the poetic language of the Incas, Copacabana signifies "the place where the blue stone is admired". How well the name fits in with our Lady's national shrine in Bolivia! It is situated almost in the centre of Lake Titicaca, the sacred lake of the Incas. Lying at the tip of a huge peninsula, on the shores of a sunny bay, it has the towering Andes as magnificent backdrop.

Historical documents show that as early as 1552, the invading Spaniards built a chapel dedicated to Mary. But the Virgin had decided that the statue to be honoured in what would one day become the national shrine of Bolivia would be the work of a descendent of the Incas. On the day he was baptized, the Indian, Francisco Tito Yupanqui, made a vow. He promised to carve a statue of Mary in order to obtain the reconciliation of two rival Indian tribes.

Francisco was no artist, but in the simplicity of his heart, he believed our Lady would inspire him with the means of realizing his project. It is related that Mary appeared to him, one day, dressed like an Indian woman. She carried the Christ Child on her left arm, and held a lighted candle in her right hand. Francisco set to work. After carving his statue in Potosi, he took it to La Paz to have it decorated. Mary did the rest. At the sight of the statue carried in procession to Copacabana, the chiefs of the rival tribes were reconciled. This statue is honoured on February 2, as Our Lady of the Purification, perhaps because of the lighted taper. On this day, the *Mamita*, Little Mother, as the Indians affectionately call her, is carried in triumph and enthroned as Queen of the historic village.

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