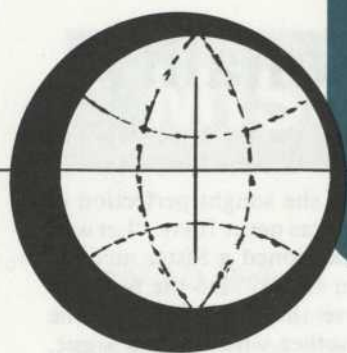




OTTAWA

World-Mission Exhibition

by Jackie Coderre

Bright Eastern silks, black African statues, dainty Amerindian beadwork and Polish costumed girls were just some of the attractions at the 1978 annual World-Mission Exhibition. The Ottawa Missions Office sponsors this event on World-Mission Sunday in a different parish each year. Our Lady of Perpetual Help of downtown Ottawa was this year's host.

The MIC Sisters' display, under the direction of Sr. Noella Brisson, was considered the most decorative, informative exhibit. Sister Noella, who has recently returned from Japan, was assisted by Sr. Yvonne Ayotte, Sr. Diane Bigras, Sr. Céline Cloutier, and Sr. Yolaine Lavoie.

Ottawa's two Auxiliary Bishops, Belisle and Beahan, took time from busy schedules to visit the exhibits. The participants were encouraged by this sign of support and the genuine interest of parishioners. Besides the MIC Sisters, the other participants were the Oblates (St. Peter's Province), FMM Sisters (Franciscan), St. Hyacinth Mission Fund (Polish), White Fathers,



Sr. Noella Brisson and her niece Pierrette Horvat dressed in Japanese finery.

White Sisters of Africa, Missions Office, Servites, Extension Society, and St. Joseph Missionary Association.



Bishop Beahan of Ottawa chats with Sister Noella Brisson as she prepares the MIC's display.

Joseph Head of the Holy Family

In the opinion of the people of Nazareth, Joseph was considered the father of Jesus. Saint Luke says of him in his Gospel, "He was the son, so people thought, of Joseph who was the son of Heli..." (Luke 3: 23). Among the Jews of that time, the father was, in every sense of the word, the head of the family. Indeed the word family itself was translated "the father's house".

Jesus, therefore, while he lived in the "father's house" at Nazareth was in all things a dutiful and respectful son of Joseph, the carpenter. The Gospel resumes the thirty years of his hidden life as follows, "He was obedient to them" (Luke 3: 51).

In a Jewish family, the father was the most complete image of the Eternal Father. The deep respect with which he was surrounded by his wife and children was close to that shown to God himself. In one of his parables, that of the lost son, Jesus shows us a perfect image of this "father" figure. We see the unfailing tenderness of the father for the son who has strayed far from him. The answer the father gives to the elder son, annoyed at the indulgence shown to the younger, reveals the depth of his love.

What we know of the dignity of the father in Israel, helps us understand that Joseph, husband of Mary and father of Jesus, was invested with a God-given authority. He was a patriarch in the Biblical sense of the word, and as such was respected and obeyed by Jesus and Mary. Together they formed the ideal human family such as conceived by God from all eternity.

Facets of Delia Tetreault's Personality

A wise old teacher used to tell her graduating students, "You are all anxious to have important letters tacked on to your name... Believe me, the most important ones are C.S. — Common Sense". Common sense has sometimes been described as the knack of seeing things as they are and doing them as they ought to be done. This gift Delia Tetreault possessed in a remarkable degree. She knew that it was not enough to do the right thing; it must be done at the right time and in the right place.

To someone who complained that the Community was making very little progress, she replied, "Rapid progress seldom has lasting effects. We might compare religious communities to children or to trees... If they shoot up too rapidly, they either die young or degenerate."

She encouraged the Sisters to learn all they could before leaving for the mission field. "We must consider ourselves poor people obliged to earn our living in the sweat of our brow... If a Sister can say 'With my own two hands and the courage God has given me I can earn my own way', she will make a good missionary."

A young Sister's health was failing and the doctor had suggested a prolonged stay in the country. Always considerate of each person's feelings, Delia inquired of the patient if a stay in our country house of Nominique would be agreeable to her. "If God wants me to go, I'll go," was the timid reply. But Delia was not satisfied with this answer. "Just now, my dear, God wants you to tell me outright whether you would really like to go or not." The ailing Sister, who secretly dreaded being sent to the country, then said she preferred to stay at the Mother House. Her wish was readily granted. She saw to it that the sick Sisters were given the best of care and stressed the necessity of providing them with cheerful surroundings. To a Sister in charge of our rest house in Nominique, she wrote: "To help our dear Sisters recuperate, it is not enough to give them nourishing food and proper medication. What they need above all, is to be surrounded with affectionate care, to live in a joyful, serene atmosphere."

She gave the following advice to a Sister in charge of some business matters, "Rumours have reached me that you are too easily taken in... You

Her common sense

by Madeline Maillet, M.I.C.

Common sense is, of all kinds, the most uncommon.

Tryon Edwards

have always faithfully put into practice our Lord's advice to be simple as a dove. It is about time you should follow the latter part of the advice — be prudent as a serpent!"

To a highly-strung Sister, always eager to see her plans realized within the shortest possible delay, she wrote, "Do learn to be patient, to live one moment at a time. The will of God is manifested through daily events. When apples are ripe they fall to the ground. Then comes apple-picking time..."

Adept in housekeeping activities, she taught the Sisters in charge of preparing the community meals how to make these both nourishing and palatable. In her letters and in advice given to superiors, more especially, she often insisted on the necessity of providing the Sisters with nourishing food. "Good health is one of God's most precious gifts. It is not ours to squander; we must use it in furthering his glory and procuring the salvation of souls." When organizing a community house, she declared that the two most important persons to choose were the superior and the cook. By her order a dessert was served at every meal. She knew that sugar was a much needed source of energy for her Sisters. To a group of Sisters sent out to work at the promotion of the mission magazine she had launched in 1921, she wrote, "Congratulations on the good work you have accomplished. Your success has surpassed my expectations. But, I am sure you must all be tired. Take a few days off once in a while. Keeping yourself in good health is much more important than promoting the magazine."

On a certain occasion when the Sisters had been hosts to a group of bishops and priests, she shared the chores of putting things in order after the guests' departure. It was late and there were still many things left to be done when the bell rang for evening prayers. She paused, then turned to the Sisters, tired out with the day's work. "It is time for prayer, but I think God will not mind if we finish what we are doing, then retire for the night. For once, we

will be leaving the Lord in prayer to serve him in work done for his sake."

Although she sought perfection in all things, she was never fussy. "Let well alone," she cautioned a Sister inclined to worry over trifles. "Do the best you can and leave the rest to God." She cautioned another who liked to argue, "Do not be so opinionated. In things that are indifferent, why not let everyone think as she wants? We cannot all have similar opinions."

Many more instances could be cited of Delia's sound common sense. Enough have been given to allow us an insight into her rich personality. She was ever considerate of circumstances, of particular cases, of human weaknesses. If to act with common sense, according to the moment, is the best wisdom, Delia Tetreault possessed this faculty in an uncommon degree.

Twofold Love

Every true vocation springs from faith, and perseveres with faith. This faith is felt and lived each day with simplicity and generosity of spirit, in trusting friendship with the Lord. Nobody follows a stranger, nobody offers his life for one whom he does not know. If there is a crisis of vocations, is there not perhaps a crisis of faith?

Every vocation is also an act of love, of two-fold love: the love of the Lord who calls and the love of the one who responds. Very great is the love that God gives in the case of a vocation to a special consecration serving him and his Church. There should therefore be a specially great capacity for love on the part of those who receive this privileged and demanding call to the priesthood or religious life. Perhaps there is a crisis of love rather than a crisis of vocations. Parents, pastors, and teachers should help generous young people to deepen their love for Christ and his Church.

A religious vocation means sacrifice from the very moment a person begins to think seriously about a call from God. Would the crisis of vocations conceal a fear of making this sacrifice? Let us pray that the love of Christ may stir up God's call in many fine young people and in other noble and generous souls, and sustain in perseverance those who have already made their choice.

Pope Paul VI

LIMA, Peru

Things Hidden from the Wise

Veronique Bernatchez, M.I.C.

All along my missionary life it has often been given me to experience with startling clarity, the words of our divine Saviour, "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden to the wise (Luke 10-21)." The following facts were chosen among many others: the first was related by Father Jacques Loew in one of his books on Christ Jesus; the other comes from my own recorded memories of mission life in Peru.

Before founding, upon request of Pope Paul VI, the School of Faith in Fribourg, Switzerland, Father Loew laboured as a missionary in Brazil. His work took him to the heart of the Sao Paulo slum district, among poor working-class families. It was in this area that he organized basic Christian communities intended to be replicas of the first Christian communities.

It happened that one of his priest-companions was arrested and brutally thrown into prison for having, in a peaceable manner, participated in a workers' strike. The people of Sao Paulo were indignant. Students and intellectuals proposed staging a noisy manifestation; the clergy threatened to close the churches...

But Renato, a thirty-five-year-old penniless worker, father of five children, had other ideas. When he returned from work at 6:30 that evening, he made the rounds of twenty poor families, rich in the faith, and asked them to assemble in the chapel by 9:30.

His appeal was heard. When all had gathered around him, he addressed them as follows: "We are present here tonight because our dear friend, Father Pierre, has been arrested. What happened to him is nothing new." Renato had attended school for only three years but he had learned to read the New Testament. He went on: "We find in the Acts of the Apostles that Saint Peter also was arrested. It is further mentioned that while he was in prison, the people of the Church gathered to pray for him. Well, I think we should pray for our priest, Pierre, just as the first Christians prayed for

Saint Peter..." And the workers, although tired with a day's work, prayed earnestly part of the night for the imprisoned priest.

Quoting this fact, Father Loew remarked, "While we spent our time in discussions and high-flown propositions, this poor untaught worker had found the right answer to our problem." Renato was surely one of those "little ones" to whom the Father continues to reveal his secrets.

Another of these "wise ones", unlearned from a worldly point of view, is Mrs. Ada, who for all of fifteen years has been caretaker in our Lima school. Some years ago she had married a man, who unknown to her, was already bound to another woman by marriage. As soon as she learned about this she left him, taking in charge her four children and moreover providing for an orphaned niece. In order to earn her

own living and that of her children, she asked to be hired as caretaker in our school.

Every day, she gets up in the small hours, cooks meals, does the cleaning, prepares the children for school, then rides for a whole hour on a crowded bus to reach our school on time. Although so sorely tried, she is always cheerful. She goes from one room to another, sweeping, dusting, washing, and singing as she works.

Having heard that we had a prayer sharing every Wednesday evening, Mrs. Ada asked to participate. After her hard day's work, she is happy to spend this hour communing with the Lord and sharing her spiritual riches with others. Thus she prayed last December 28th: "Father, I thank you for your divine Son, your Word made flesh to dwell among us poor sinners... I thank you for the grace of my baptism... I thank you, Holy Trinity, for making your home in my soul..."

Mrs. Ada has not benefited by more than a few years of primary schooling. Where does her wisdom, her love, her knowledge come from if not from the Father who shows to the unlearned what he has hidden from the wise?

Youthful Apostles

by Odile Malboeuf, M.I.C.

At the beginning of Lent, I had suggested to the pupils in my First Communion Class that they offer a few little acts of self-denial to the Lord as a proof of their love. After Mass, on Easter Sunday, David told me what he had done: "Before Lent, I used to rush home from school to eat the largest apple in the dish Mother prepared. During Lent, I took my time coming home to give my little brother a chance. While I ate a little apple, I told our Lord, 'I'm doing this because I love you, dear Jesus!'"

Another of my pupils, a girl, told me that her sacrifice had been to chat with a classmate she did not like. "Why don't you like her?" I asked. She replied, "Because she used to tattle on me and to laugh at my mistakes. Deep down inside, I felt that it wasn't right for me to snub her, but I couldn't help it. Then, I made up my mind to be nice to her. The very next day, I tried, but failed. This happened two days in a row. On the third day, I managed to say, Hello! It took me about a week to be

able to say more. Now, I can chat with her as I do with my other classmates. She has even become one of my best friends..."

An eleven-year old boy confided: "My father and mother had not been going to church for a long time. After he left school, my elder brother followed their example. At the beginning of Lent, I said to myself, 'You must be a true missionary, not only in words but in deeds.' So, on the eve of the first Sunday of Lent, I coaxed my mother, 'Mamma, it would make me very happy if you accompanied me to Mass on Sunday...' She seemed to be waiting for my invitation to take up religious practice again. Perhaps she had stopped merely out of the fear of displeasing Papa... She kept on accompanying me to church every Sunday from then onwards. During Holy Week, my elder brother joined us and so did Papa on Good Friday. Ever since, the whole family has been going to church every Sunday. Seeing this change of conduct, our neighbours have followed suit."

God's Mysterious Ways

by Marie Simonne St-Amant, M.I.C.

Early in the Spring of 1978, I joyfully began preparing for my third home leave since my arrival in Japan in 1950. There were only ten days left and lots of things remained to be done before the end of the school year which in Japan comes in March. As I was in charge of the boarders, there were still a few difficulties to iron out.

One evening, a graduating student asked me to accompany her to a course given at another school. She was afraid to venture out alone after dark. It was only a ten minutes' walk from our place but the streets were slippery with melting ice. We took our time and chatted as we went along. Suddenly at a street corner, before I knew what was happening, I slipped and fell into a puddle, one leg at a grotesque angle. My companion was a few steps ahead of me. I called out to her as loud as I could, for by now I was in great pain and could not hope to get up unassisted. "Go back to the convent at once and call the Sisters," I asked.

Meantime, a group of passersby stopped, trying to help. It took only a few minutes for Sister Monique Cloutier to arrive and to call an ambulance. She accompanied me to the Wakamatsu Chuo Hospital, well known for its excellent orthopedic service. Dr. Ko, a Taiwanese specialist, immediately took X Rays. I was told that the thigh bone was badly fractured in four places. What a disappointment

for me who had flattered myself on having suffered a mere sprain! My trip home would have to be cancelled at least for the time being. Dr. Ko, kind and cheerful, encouraged me saying the time would pass so fast I would not even notice the delay. I had my doubts as the pain increased and my injured leg was put into traction.

In the days that followed I gradually came to see the divine plan in allowing this to happen. God wanted me to come closer still to the Japanese people I loved so well, especially to those who were in pain. I lay in a common ward, like any other Japanese patient, with my bags and other indispensable gear stored under my bed. In most Japanese hospitals, nurses attend only to the medical needs of the patients. All the rest must be done by members of the patients' families or by paid attendants.

My own dear M.I.C. Sisters saw to it that I lacked nothing. One came in the morning to change my bed and help me to eat what she had brought. She then left to pursue her duties at school. Others came during the day to see to my needs, especially during the first week when I had to lie down flat on my back. One even volunteered to sleep on a padded coverlet on the floor, beside my bed, on the nights when the pain was worse. The ward was small and I shared it with five other patients, their attendants and their baggage. Never can I be grateful enough to Dr. Ko for his competent care, to the nurses, and especially to my dear M.I.C. Sisters who surrounded me with tenderness and delicate attentions.

One of our former pupils who, after her graduation, had gone on to study Nursing gave freely of her time and services during one whole month. Japanese Christians, neighbours, and acquaintances came often to visit and offer their sympathy. Teachers and students from our school, as well as their parents, also came bringing flowers and gifts.

On each of their visits, our M.I.C. Sisters made the rounds of the wards distributing smiles and kind words. After they had gone, the patients would



My accident was a door opened onto a new form of apostolate.

remark, "We have never met such cheerful persons. They seem to be so happy... We really envy you living with such people."

After a while, as I felt myself accepted by my companions in misfortune, I ventured to suggest a few prayers, before all retired for the night. We prayed spontaneously for one another to have the grace to make good use of our sufferings. The Our Father became the ward's favourite prayer.

One night, a young boy of eleven was carried in, victim of a car accident. His two arms fractured, his legs bruised, his mouth bashed in, he was in a pitiful state. His lips were so badly swollen that he could hardly absorb a few drops of water. He was an only child and his parents were frantic. By then, I could move about on a wheel chair, so I went over to where they stood to proffer sympathy. Before leaving, I offered them a miraculous medal which they attached to the child's hospital gown. During the following days, I visited the mother several times while she sat by the boy's bedside or ministered to his needs. As soon as he became strong enough, he was transferred to a hospital in his home city. His mother later wrote that he was on the road to complete recovery.

These are but a few of the episodes lived during the four months spent at the hospital. My accident was a door opened onto a new form of apostolate, one which I had never had any opportunity to exercise while I enjoyed good health. I have been home now for several months, but I can never forget my friends of Chuo Hospital.



I can never forget my kind friends of Chuo Hospital.

MISSION BRIEFS

NAN AO, Taiwan

We have recently had another striking proof of the courage and endurance of our Taiwanese people. While working in a distant mountain region, Mr. Lim was bitten on a finger by a venomous serpent. What to do? There was nobody around to give him first aid. He knew that if he did not act immediately to stop the poison from penetrating his blood stream, he would surely die. It did not take him long to adopt the only possible way out. He snatched his knife and stoically cut off the bitten finger, at the second joint, so the poison would not spread. Then, after applying a tourniquet of his own fashion, he plodded down the mountain and arrived at our dispensary on foot. He is minus one part of a finger but at least he is still alive and well by now.

MZIMBA, Malawi, C.A.

Soon after my return to Malawi, I met a lad who came to the convent on an errand. His face was vaguely familiar, but try as I might, I could not remember his name. As he seemed to know me, however, I inquired, "What is your name?" He flashed a beaming smile and proudly announced, "My name is Patrick..." To him this was all I needed to know in order to recognize him. As I remained perplexed he went on, "I'm Eliza's child." Then it all came back to me in a flash. He was the son of one of our first students in Katete. Now a devoted wife and mother and a competent teacher, she has moreover become a committed Christian, a dynamic lay apostle. Patrick had every right to glory in being identified as Eliza's son. After the lad had gone, I mused, "What if people asked me my name? Would I be proud to say, I'm Delia Tetreault's daughter?"

Bernadette Dumas, M.I.C.

PONT VIAU, Quebec

Recently, the Pastors of two Churches met and fraternized in our Pont Viau house: Msgr. Juan Luis Ysern, Bishop of Ancud, Chile, and Msgr. Raymond Sato, Bishop of Sendai Japan. It was deeply touching to see these two heads of Churches, situated at such a great distance one from the other, share their prayers, problems,

and projects. On this occasion, our reception hall was filled with guests eager to hear about Christians in other parts of the world — our global village.

SANTA LUZMILA, Peru

A new missionary experience has been launched in Lima. Three of us M.I.C. Sisters have opened a fraternity in the suburbs. Our aim in this venture is to live as close as possible to the poor, the better to understand their spiritual and material problems. We are thereby responding to an appeal made by the bishops of Latin America. Santa Luzmila is the name of the new sector where we now live. It is situated at about fifteen kilometres from downtown Lima. Our present lodgings consist in a few rooms on the second floor of an uncompleted house. The owners assured us it was an honour to have us living with them, although they had not at first intended to rent their second floor. As electricity, water, and sewer systems have not yet been installed, we have to do without the amenities of life. In front of each house, a cement barrel is used to store precious water, distributed by trucks making their rounds several times a day. As soon as we hear the drivers' horn, we hurry down with our pitchers to buy our provision for the day. We admire the people who surround us on every side. They are hospitable, generous with the little they have, always ready to do someone a good turn. The three of us share chores: cooking, sweeping, washing, going to market, etc. just like ordinary housewives around here. We live in a desert of sand, in front of a denuded mountain. This is true of the entire coast of Peru. As there are no paved streets or sidewalks, we walk in sand as soft as snow. Our venture here is just a beginning, but it fills us with the hope of coming closer to the poorest of the poor, and in turn drawing them closer to Christ Jesus.

Aline Quirion, M.I.C.

KANYANGA, Zambia

Today was a sort of thanksgiving day for our people. The church was packed with people who had come to thank the Lord for a bountiful harvest. At the Offertory, a picturesque

procession made its way to the altar. Adults carried bags of maize; others big bundles of vegetables; the children, basins full of fruit, expertly balanced on their heads. Even the toddlers joined the procession with a cup or other small recipient, filled with grains of corn, not a grain being dropped. Food is too precious to be scattered around. This is one of the first practical lessons taught to the African child. I am always deeply touched by the spirit of thankfulness which animates the hearts of our dear people.

Irene Champagne, M.I.C.

CATAVI, Bolivia

My first experience of life in the campo or remote country districts was rather painful. I had accompanied Sister Alice, who is a nurse, on a tour of the villages. Sister took everything in stride. She readily ate the same coarse food as the peasants; slept like a top on bare boards, alongside bags of potatoes; shoved away foraging mice, and generally acted like a trooper. To my shame I could hardly eat the food presented, and slept only by fits and starts. I do hate mice! The worst part of it was being two whole days without a bath, and sleeping with all my clothes on, smock included, because of the intense cold. There was a complete lack of privacy. Several M.I.C.'s plan to adopt this style of living. My advice to them is, "Try for at least a week or two before taking a radical commitment."

Anita Perron, M.I.C.

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Children of Africa

by Yvette Caron, M.I.C.

Nearly everywhere in Africa, the child is ardently desired. To be childless is the supreme disgrace for women. It may even become a cause of repudiation, for children are the end and purpose of African marriage.

Mother and child are one. Baby's permanent abode is Mamma's back on which he rides like a king on his throne. From this vantage point, he shares in all household chores and in every family gathering. His small body thrills to the rhythm of the dance or sways to the tempo of his mother's pestle as she pounds maize or millet for the family meal.

All too soon, however, this pleasant state of affairs comes to an end. When his mother again becomes pregnant, Baby loses his privileged status. At times, he is sent away from home to his grandparents, to an aunt, or to the group of women comprised in the family clan. In Africa, this clan has a great sense of solidarity.

Separation from the mother is a trial for the child hitherto accustomed to have his every whim obeyed. Eventually, he learns to accept this new life among a great number of adults and children. While he is still very young, any woman belonging to the clan may take care of him. As he grows older, he finds out that all the adults of the clan have the right to admonish him. Thus he discovers at an early age, the realities of life, through the close relationship that reigns among adults and children, and also through the quarrels which inevitably take place.

The following are popular sayings often used to instill in the heart of the African child the virtues which make for a happy life.

Considerateness

Whenever you see your father taking out his pipe, run and light it before he asks.

If you see a woman bent double

under her bundle of firewood, give her a helping hand without being told.

Your father took care of you while you cut your teeth; take care of him now that his own are falling out!

Solidarity

The ants say, "Let's unite. We can kill an elephant."

If the bricks say to each other, "I can't bear to lie next to you," the house will never get built.

You can't wash your face with only one finger.

Love of life

Listening to an old woman's cough is more enjoyable than the silence of an empty hut.

Respect for God

God is the Lord of all. If God does not take your life away, nobody else will.

Thanks to fables, stories, proverbs, the African child gradually learns about his people's traditions, their customs, the bonds of family clan. He grows up into a serious lad, aware of his responsibilities.

As catechists we place great hope in the Christian formation of the children.



Mother and child are one.

Parents are encouraged to preserve all that is good and commendable in the customs and traditions of their people, while being courageous enough to oppose whatever is in contradiction with God's law. Upon receiving baptism, they have become members of God's clan, so to say. They now belong to the people of God.

Their duty as Christian parents is to show that by living up to their faith and raising their children accordingly, they are genuine Africans. The mere testimony of their lives will gradually draw unbelievers to the faith.

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