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MIC

MISSION NEWS



(Photo Rhéa Bigras, M.I.C.)

**...What better way to thank God
than by giving Him children
who will sing His goodness forever.** Delia Tetreault

Editorial

As early as 1902, Delia Tetreault opened herself to the universality of the Mission and launched her daughters along the ways of missionary activity in Canada as well as in far-off countries. Her influence and action place her at the origin of the missionary movement, called to bring the Gospel to other lands and to awaken zeal for the extension of Christ's Kingdom at the very heart of the local Church. Now an international group, the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception has spread out to fifteen countries. Missionaries in Thanksgiving, the members are at the service of the missionary Church in varied apostolates.

Delia Tetreault also took all the means possible to obtain the participation of the laity in the Congregation's work. She encouraged lay people to collaborate with her missionaries at home and abroad in bringing to others the Good News, - thus participating in the mission of the Church.

In the hearts of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, the desire to maintain a missionary spirit through the collaboration of the laity is always alive and promising. Faithful to the initial impulse given by Delia Tetreault, they continue to promote the missionary spirit in many ways. An important aspect of this is the fostering of awareness among Christians of their duty to live the evangelical values of justice, of love and of sharing, especially on behalf of the suffering and oppressed, wherever they may be.

For some years now, the pages of the MIC Mission News have made known the ICMA (Immaculate Conception Missionary Association). This Association is a resurgence of the wish of Delia Tetreault to affiliate lay people to her missionary Family. Thanks to the generous help and concern of our Associates, Collaborators and Benefactors, the ICMA will continue to develop and bear abundant fruits.

In this issue, several Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception give us a glimpse of their mission work in other lands, and those at home in Canada tell us of their experiences in sharing with others the call to Mission so as to awaken their participation in Christ's mission in their own milieu.

From September 1923 to December 1973, 'The Precursor' faithfully carried far and wide the invitation to heed the Good News. Since January 1974, the MIC Mission News has taken the same call. The New Year opens new vistas, new possibilities... and so we launch the MIC Mission News into 1982 with a new format. May our friends and readers continue to find in this mission magazine the interest and concern in the missions and in the task of evangelization calling for personal commitment.

Sr. Ma. Anthea Raso, M.I.C.

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*"Dear Sister, what do you ask?" Postulant - Theresa Hsiao
Provincial Superior - Sr. Marie Therese Beaudette, M.I.C.*

Taiwan

Here I Am, You Called Me

by Sr. Angelina Yap, M.I.C.

Vocations in Taiwan are not rare nor plentiful. Of the 762 Chinese sisters in the island, seven are MIC's. Little wonder then, that when Miss Theresa Hsiao formally began her noviceship on the eve of September 7, 1981, that the MIC community who had gathered at Kuanhsi for the occasion, profusely gave thanks.

What does Theresa desire by requesting admission to the Novitiate? The answer is contained in the initiation rite: "To learn and live your way of life, and to be tested by you, so that I may be admitted to this religious community..." After being accepted, Theresa went on: "Drawn by God's merciful grace, I have come here to experience your way of life. I ask you to teach me to follow Christ crucified, and to live in poverty, chastity, and obedience. Teach me to persevere in prayer and penance, in the service of the Church and mankind. Teach me to be one with you in heart and mind. Help me to

fulfill the Gospel teaching every day of my life. Let me learn your rule, and the observance of Christ's law of love."

Aware that it is God who calls, and God who waters the seed and makes it grow, the Community then implores the Lord of the Harvest to continue the work He has begun in Theresa.

Because every vocation to the MIC community is a call to live Thanksgiving after the charism of Delia Tetreault, the words of our Foundress are hereby recalled:

"May our entire life be, through prayers, sacrifice, and work, a perpetual hymn of thanksgiving for ourselves, and for all who forget to thank the One from whom they receive everything. Let us be penetrated with this idea, let us live it so faithfully, that we will leave it as a heritage to those who come after us."

Sharing Joys and Hardships: Life in Baures.

by *Sr. Marie Paul Ross, M.I.C.*

A year has already elapsed since I came to this country. When I arrived here, I felt like I had landed on another planet. I wondered what I was doing in this little village of northern Bolivia. Little by little, I am getting used to it... in fact, I love it! The people are open-hearted and live very simple lives, that one can hardly help loving them and wanting to assist them in their direst necessities.

There is so much to be done and I find myself at a loss as where to begin. Being a nurse, I discover varied opportunities to care for bodily ills, teach rudiments of hygiene and help to train health promoters who could extend very important service in distant villages. Indeed, work abound in many areas and I realize that my own contribution is but a drop in the bucket.

Last week, ten-year-old Jacintha called with her three-year-old brother. She was sobbing and the boy had a frightened expression on his grimy little face. I took him in my arms and he soon fell asleep, worn out with his own cry. Jacintha calmed down after I took her by the hand and led her inside our house. Her sad story then spilled out. The mother had been

taken away for psychiatric care and the father had abandoned them. They had gone to their grandmother's hut for help, but the old woman is a drunkard, living with a drunkard. Both being under the effect of liquor beat the children and threw them out.

Jacintha has to be father and mother to her little brother. She is already a good housekeeper, so when the grandmother comes out of her drunken stupor she allows her to keep house. She cooks, does the washing, fetches kindling, keeps the hut reasonably clean, and goes to school when she has time. She is in the sixth grade and at the head of her class. To earn a few pesos for her notebooks and pencils, she runs errands for neighbours. As she is too poor to own a school book, she borrows one from her schoolmates or goes to their homes to study after she has put her brother to sleep.

I later went to visit the grandmother and saw for myself that things were even worse than what Jacintha had told me. For the moment, there is nothing much I can do for her except to listen and to encourage plans for better days ahead.



For Sr. Marie Paul Ross, M.I.C., a ministry of presence and service among the villagers of Baures.

Jacintha and her brother are not the only children who need our help. Many others here in Baures and in neighbouring villages need to be loved and be helped out of situations where they are too often left to shift for themselves as best they can.

I realize more and more that the most important thing is thus to get to know the villagers, to take time to

listen to the recital of their small joys and mostly, of their woes and difficulties. I feel that this is the surest way to adapt myself to their most urgent needs. By welcoming people to our house and by visiting them in their homes to share their joys and trials, my MIC companions and I truly experience a precious ministry of presence and service.

* Translated from French.

Mary is with us

Mary brings forth the missionary to give the Bread of Life, the living bread, to God's people.

Mary guides the missionary as he attempts to call forth in each person the dignity and greatness, the divine and human potential God has given.

Mary stands next to the missionary as each is lifted up on the cross to draw others to the loving Father.

Mary is with us now as we allow the Holy Spirit to work His wonders in every person.

Maryknoll



Sr. Veronique Bernatchez, M.I.C., and her fellow 'Apostles' during the **Escoge** sessions.

Peru

A New Generation Comes of Age.

by Sr. Veronique Bernatchez, M.I.C.

The youth of Peru are not very different from that of other parts of the world. During two days of intense sharings, I met groups which amazed me by their vitality and deep love for Christ. Allow me to introduce them in their authentic role as future leaders of their community. We had received a pressing invitation from Father Daniel LeBlanc, O.M.I., to attend sessions according to a programme called *Escoge* (Choice), with a group of 75 persons. Sr. Aline Quirion and I decided to join groups made up mostly of young Peruvian men and women. Sr. Aline belonged to the group called *Christians*, while I found

myself with the group named *Apostles*.

What struck me most was the dynamism and sincerity of the participants. They sang with gusto a song which they had composed, "The New Generation":

*We come from the south and from the north,
From the west and from the east.
We come from everywhere
And we walk the paths of life,
Alive with the wish to help
Anyone in need.
Our song is a song of peace.
We scale the mountain heights,*

*We push ever further afield.
The world is too small for our
desires,
We walk ahead ever in search of
peace...
We want above all to live!
We carry the cross of Jesus,
In our hearts we bear His message
of love.*

*We know that we are young,
That our minds have not yet
matured,
We have lived so short a time...
But we know that we are bound
To seek the truth and to tell it to
others.*

*The world is worn, weary of its dark
past,
Of its never-ending wars.
The world is afraid of the bomb,
Afraid because it has lost its faith...
The world relies on us, the young
generation.*

*This, then, is our message -
We have no past, only our love.
The love of Him who was crucified
To make the world a better place to
live in.*

*We belong to the company of those
who believe
In the strength of the followers of
Christ.*

*We carry His Cross,
In our hearts we hear His message
of love.*

Themes studied during the sessions were related to the problem of communication, and aimed at stressing the lack of dialogue, the aloofness too often manifested among closely related persons and groups. Members were made more conscious of obstacles, of prejudices, of harsh attitudes, of refusals to forgive, etc. A deep atmosphere of trust and sincerity reigned... each participant freely expressed his or her attitude towards family relations, friendship, sex, commitment, situations with regard to the Church, and with regard to Our Lord ever present in all human relationships, in all human conditions.

The extraordinary part of the programme was the witnessing. Mostly young people whom the Lord has led here witnessed to His love and tender mercy. They had been brought here even from prisons and dens of vice. Some were drug addicts, drunkards, thieves... Nearly all of them affirmed that they had first been led astray because in their homes they had been deprived of love and care. They were urged to follow the *Escoge* by a good friend. Transformed by grace, they in turn had become zealous apostles among their peers.

Significant religious celebrations marked these days: a penitential service and Masses. The penitential celebration was particularly impressive. To foster an atmosphere of recollection, the room was lighted only by a big paschal taper. Small candles were distributed to all present, and these were lit from the large candle representing the risen Saviour. The young people were invited to write a short note expressing what they felt to their parents or to any of those present whom they may have offended or pained. The same invitation was extended to the parents and to other adults concerned. Before the Gospel reading, many young participants advanced to beg forgiveness from their parents or from other persons. They asked to be not only forgiven but loved. In turn, the parents admitted that they had often erred by giving priority to their work, their friends, their pastimes and other things, instead of being available to their children at home.

The young members also manifested their appreciation and gratitude to the Sisters. A young girl wrote to Sr. Aline, telling her how much she had been impressed by her joyfulness. Our fellow participants thanked us both for having joined their sessions and for having shared with them an unforgettable and fruitful spiritual experience.

* Translated from French.



Dear Sister Rachel,

It has been almost six months now since I came to Canada. I am glad to know that my letters bring joy to you and our Sisters in the Philippines. This time, I wish to share with you my wonderful experiences these past months.

I joined our MIC Missionary Animation Team last September, 1981. I must admit that I started my work with apprehension; I felt very inadequate in French and I felt I have nothing more to share with people who belong to an affluent society and who seemingly have everything. Looking back at my varied encounters with our Canadian friends, I marvel at how the Lord has used my poverty and my limitations to work wonders!

Sr. Louise Denis, M.I.C., who coordinates our Missionary Animation Program, gave me all the trust and freedom to do my share of the work in a manner I think and feel best. It is in this atmosphere that my M.I.C. Being soared high and broke the barriers of language and culture, enabling me to reach all kinds of people - to proclaim our God of Love.

Upon invitation of the White Sisters of Africa, Sr. Anthea Raso and I celebrated Mission Sunday at St. Bruno. This gave us the beautiful opportunity to share our call to mission with the children at Don Bosco School and with the parishioners of St. Augustine of Canterbury Church. On these occasions, we were made more aware of our richness as Filipina MIC's. We both saw that Canadian pupils are open to learn new things about other people from other lands. They place no barriers and prove very responsive to and interested in our sharings. We discovered that we do have something to share with these young Canadian friends and their parents, - 'specially that which are most inherent in us, - our cultural and religious heritage. Our sharings on the slide presentation "Christian Philippines, A Light To Asia" was enhanced by our rendition of our favorite dance of the lights and by our expression of some Filipino sentiments through our folksongs. What is this Light we want to share? - the Gift of Faith we have received, so that together, we may be convinced of our calls as Christians to share this Faith with those who have not yet heard of Christ and His Gospel.



A medley of Filipino folksongs from Sr. Mila Duque, M.I.C., for school children at St. Bruno, Quebec and parishioners at Grand Falls, New Brunswick.

The afternoon of Mission Sunday, we joined our MIC Sisters in Pont-Viau. In the spirit of being one with the whole Church, our Sisters, especially those who can no longer go out and share their deep sense of mission, pulled resources together so as to bring the experience of mission to relatives, friends, employees and students. A mini-exhibition was prepared, featuring our different missions. Our MIC family spirit permeated the whole affair and filled hosts and guests alike with joyful enthusiasm and generosity.

Our encounters with the school community of Don Bosco was supplemented by that of Holy Rosary at Mascouche. This time with an added element for me - that of working in a team with fellow MIC's of different nationalities. Coming from varied mission fields in the third world, we wanted to bring and share with our Canadian audience a deeper awareness and appreciation of the wealth of cultural values and traditions of our mission lands.

Another highlight of my time spent for Missionary Animation was our ten-days stay in New Brunswick. For me, these were days full of mission challenges and experiences:

assisting and participating in a missionary send-off by the Grand Falls parishioners for our Sr. Therese Godbout who returns to Africa; meeting parents and relatives of some of our Sisters who are away in mission countries; making the rounds of parishes to meet old and new collaborators for our mission publications, and sharing a common vision with the religious communities which offered us hospitality during our stay. The Daughters of the Assumption and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart were warmly welcoming and made us feel very much at home. During these days, I became deeply aware of our Mother Foundress' missionary zeal and the particular attention she gave to involve lay people and have them collaborate with us in our apostolate of the press. Most of the people we met spoke French... I happily experienced that the heart has its own language which knows no barriers!

Again, I invite you to rejoice and give praise and thanks with me for all the wonderful works the Lord has done!

Your loving Sister Mila

Toronto, Canada

Mission Sunday:

A Festival of Faith.

by Sr. Jeanne Gauvin, M.I.C.

For the first time in the history of the diocese of Toronto, 18 groups gathered to celebrate together their missionary calling. They prepared with joy and enthusiasm the celebration of Mission Sunday, on October 18, 1981.

Saint Peter's a parish comprising several ethnic groups, was chosen as a kind of international rallying point. On the grounds in front of the church, 12 flags fluttered in the breeze, symbols of the community gathered here from the ends of the earth, in fraternal unity and sharing.

The M.I.C. Team of Toronto at their exhibition booth for Mission Sunday.



The Masses offered at 10:30 a.m. and at 12:00 noon stressed the need to deepen international solidarity: "Since the people of God lives in communities and becomes visible in them, in a way, it also devolves on these to witness Christ before the nations." (A.G. 37)

To emphasize this call, a group of about forty missionaries accompanied by persons from the countries where they had worked, walked in procession before each Mass, joyously singing, "Go up to the mountains, joyful bearer of Good News..."

Msgr. Robert Clune, Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto, concelebrated with a group of missionaries from various countries. In his homily, Bishop Clune reminded the assembly that this missionary awakening calls for a response, and that the response cannot be limited to one's own milieu, but must assume a universal dimension. He went on to say how the very presence of missionaries expressed the universal character of the Church. They leave their families, friends, acquaintances, in the name of the Canadian Church, in order to proclaim Jesus Christ. What are we really doing to support them in a practical way?

After Mass, and throughout the day, the missionaries were happy to welcome anyone interested in their activities. There followed a worthwhile exchange of experiences and information regarding mission countries. The gala day of October 18 was

enlivened by exhibits, music, diaporamas, - fraternity, solidarity, sharing...

The festivities took on a deeper level for it was at the same time a celebration of our Lord Jesus Christ. Father Bill Lynch, W.F., who worked in Uganda as a missionary for 12 years, summed up the aims of the gathering. Afterwards, a group of dancers called Ruah performed the Dance of the Walls, symbolizing the barriers we put up around us and which separate us from our brothers in Christ.

This festival so carefully prepared calls for a response, - a response to celebrate and to share our faith in our everyday life. It is also a clarion call for the future. Our faith must be strong enough to motivate others, to remind them of their duties as Christian believers, to move them to action. The light must be passed on.

As executive director of the Diocesan Missionary Council, Sr. Claudette Bouchard, M.I.C., believed in the possibility of this celebration. Together with her missionary team, she dreamt for the Church in Toronto a festival of faith with many facets: festival of solidarity, festival of brotherhood, festival of sharing, festival of justice.

Other such festivals are being organized. The spirit of joy is alive within our hearts.

* Translated from French.

Our life is a perpetual hymn of THANKSGIVING.

Delia Tetreault
MIC Foundress



Sr. Denyse Belanger, M.I.C., encourages students as they try to experience a temporary handicap.

Montréal, Canada

Oases of Hope

by Sr. Denyse Belanger, M.I.C.

1981: Year of the Handicapped

During the International Year of the Handicapped, pastoral animation directors in the Papineau, Marie Anne and Sophie Barat Secondary Schools organized a joint project with a view to quickening the interest of the student population in the situation of handicapped persons. The program included meetings of 126 student-groups accompanied by a handicapped person and a pastoral program animator.

I was invited by a kind friend, then animator at Marie Anne Secondary School, to assist at the meeting of some groups. During these days, I enjoyed the privilege of meeting numerous new friends, not only among the students but also among the teachers and other handicapped guests. Everywhere, I met with warm sympathy and understanding. For me, these were exceptionally pleasant, unforgettable days.

Such meetings are meant to give people a clear idea of what the

handicapped think of the prejudices they have to fight to win their own place in society. They invite deep reflection on the meaning and value of every human life. They are also meant to arouse a sense of solidarity with disabled persons, a sense of commitment. They are meant to help us discover and understand what it is Christ is saying to us through these stark realities of life.

In all, I met about fifty groups. All showed lively interest and were happy to discover a world they hitherto had feared and shunned, not out of indifference, but out of a certain dread of emotional disturbance. At the start of each meeting, the students spent ten minutes in an exercise to try to experience a personal temporary handicap. Nearly always, the following hour proved too short to answer all the questions regarding my own individual experience: shock felt when afflicted with a sudden serious handicap; difficulties met in readaptation and reinsertion in a normal milieu; annoyances resulting from meetings with

certain thoughtless healthy persons...

Nearly all the participants asked, "How should one go about helping a handicapped person without risking to annoy him or her?" During the following days, we went over various situations together. I pointed out that the world of the handicapped is not the static, impervious world one is often led to believe. These persons are able to function on their own in the community; to perform the duties of their calling, to hold a job. They enjoy the company of normal people; they resent patronage. Each is individually handicapped in his or her own being.

I enjoyed this new experience to the hilt. The affectionate attention of the young spoke volumes. For their part, the teachers expressed deep interest and satisfaction. They expressed the wish that such programs ought to be organized in favour of other marginal groups. Perhaps the time has indeed come for society to adapt itself to the world of the disabled.



1982 YEAR OF THE ELDERLY

When sunset comes

*You will forget your misery;
you will remember it as waters
that have passed away.
And your life will be brighter
than the noonday;
its darkness will be alike the morning
and you will have confidence
because there is hope;
you will be protected
and take your rest in safety.
You will lie down
and none will make you afraid.*

Job 11: 16-19

A Letter From Guatemala

Excerpts from a letter sent by Msgr. Luis Manresa Formosa, S.J., former bishop of Quezaltenango, Guatemala, to Sr. Monique Prefontaine, M.I.C., Superior General, and her Council:

Several years ago, the hour of God had come, which marked the arrival of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in the diocese of Quezaltenango. The hour has come for your missionaries to withdraw, little by little. Actually, the last group has left. Quietly, in a profoundly evangelical way, repeating, "We did what we had to do...", your Sisters have left us.

*Even though I am no longer the bishop of this dear diocese of Quezaltenango, I have been the one who, up to the time of your Sister's departure, has seen their work and their missionary endeavour. I have the obligation, the pleasure as well as the duty to say **thank you!** To give testimony that the Sisters' evangelization work has been admirable. That their witnessing was penetrated with the strength of Christ. That they gave themselves entirely to all. That they discovered the values of our people, particularly of the poorest. That they knew how to integrate the character proper to the Guatemalans. Never was it felt that they loved your own country more than Guatemala. Your Sisters knew how to witness the consecrated life. They have been women of the Church for the world of today where they were placed. I can assure you that they have enriched the local Church of our diocese.*

In thanking you for all that the diocese has received, I, for my part, ardently beg the Lord that a great number of young people may discover the great treasures that this missionary Institute contains and that you may grow in such a way that you can reach other regions of the missionary Church, so as to help, as you did at Quezaltenango, for the building of the Kingdom.

With sincere affection and gratitude.

* Translated from French.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

In 1902, Delia Tetreault founded the first Canadian Missionary Congregation: **The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception**. Since 1923, at the launching of a missionary publication "The Precursor," she invited her compatriots to participate more directly in the Mission by becoming ASSOCIATES and BENEFACTORS of the Congregation.

Today, we offer you in her name a means of personally collaborating in the missionary service of the Church: **Immaculate Conception**

Missionary Association (ICMA). The bimonthly magazine, MIC MISSION NEWS, the link between the MIC's and their Associates, is sent to all the members.

Your affiliation gives you share in the prayers and apostolic works of all the MIC's. Every week, two masses - applicable to the deceased - are offered in one of the MIC houses throughout the world. Moreover, a stream of Marian prayers flows in the Congregation for the intentions of the Associates and Benefactors.

Schedule of Masses for our Associates:

January, 1982

Generalate (Canada)
Mzimba (Malawi)
Port-au-Prince (Haiti)
Tananarive (Madagascar)
Kuanhsi (Taiwan)
Vancouver (Canada)
Jeanne d'Arc, Montreal (Canada)
Yauri (Peru)

February, 1982

Cochabamba (Bolivia)
La Boule (Haiti)
Ottawa (Canada)
Good Hope (Hong Kong)
Morondava (Madagascar)
Miarayon (Philippines)
Dutrisac, Montreal (Canada)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

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and subscribe to the MIC MISSION NEWS.*

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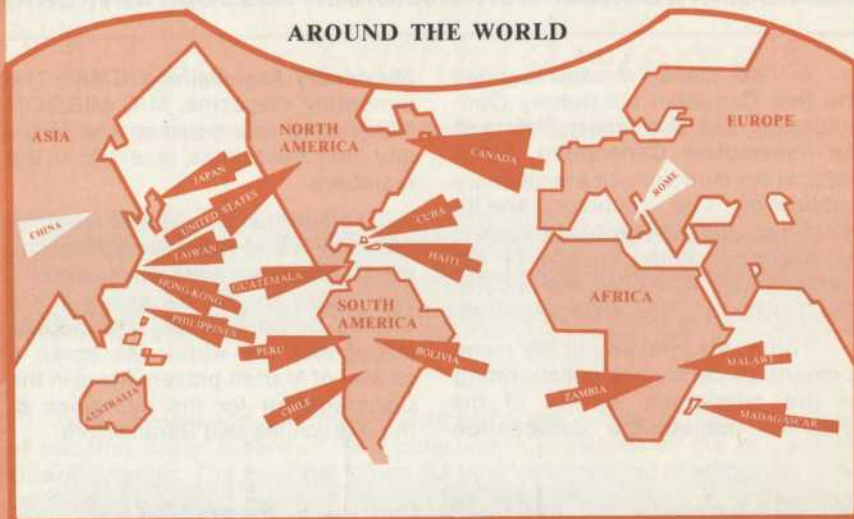
Please remember a dear departed one at Masses offered for deceased Associates:

Cut along line and return to ICMA:

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the m.i.c.s

AROUND THE WORLD



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