

Series 9, No. 2
March - April, 1982

MIC

MISSION NEWS



Maryknoll / Philippines

*I dream of a Smiling World
Rejoicing in the Good News I speak;
I dream of a Radiant New World
that smiles in the Joy of the Risen Lord!*

The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception:

*In faithful response to the Spirit,
our Institute was born in 1902
of the jubilant thanksgiving
of Delia Tetreault,
of her intense desire
to make Christ and the Immaculate Virgin
known and loved
from pole to pole.*

*To be at the heart of the Church
perpetual thanksgiving
in the name of all men, our brothers,
is the motive of our missionary vocation
as well as of our apostolate.*

(M.I.C. Constitutions)

Around the world, from the Orient to Africa, the story of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception is a story of being sent... to discover and identify, "to point to Christ", living and suffering in our world today. MIC MISSION NEWS tells in this issue how our Missionaries walk with, live with and work with people in the frontier communities of mission... how our missionary vocation takes root in a strong sense of mutual encounter and commitment, in the irresistible attraction to be with brothers and sisters we have never met, with neighbours who do not live next door to us... how we respond to the unique privilege of deepening the signs of God's gratuitous love among our own people and those in other lands and to reflect this priceless experience, with joy and gratitude, to our families and friends.

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

JOY is the sister of GRATITUDE.

Delia Tetreault
MIC Foundress

MIC MISSION NEWS

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Tokyo, Japan



Feast Of Joyful Thanksgiving

by Sr. Ghislaine Parent, M.I.C.

I have always been happy to be a Missionary of the Immaculate Conception and the celebration of our feastday has increased my gratefulness. To celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception among and with non-Christians made me realize even more my unique missionary call. This year's celebration, organized by the M.I.C. Vocation Promotion Team, was meant to be an opening to other cultures, - that of the Philippines and South America.

During the Mass, my Sisters and I renewed our religious vows in the presence of forty young Japanese girls. How did it sound to them? It is difficult to say. For me, to renew my vows in the presence of the people to whom I am sent was a meaningful event. I felt very proud to be a Missionary, grateful to celebrate this special day with our young guests. I was struck by their attentiveness and eagerness to hear about my Missionary Community, to share with us, and to open their hearts to their brothers and sisters from other lands.

We spent a good part of our evening in the Philippines! As a missionary in Japan, I cannot but rejoice that these young Japanese girls heard about the Philippines through a slide show and through the witnessing of two of their companions who lived for a while in that country. A young lay Japanese missionary in Peru and a Canadian priest who were present stressed that the Japanese Church has been receiving from others... It is now time to share. With their inner sense of harmony, the Japanese people can contribute much in their own way to create better communities in other parts of the world.

This celebration has strengthened my awareness that to be a missionary is to bring others to a discovery of realities other than those of their own world and at the same time make them appreciate who they are and what they can be for others... I am called to carry the world in my heart and so help others widen their vision, stretch their hands out to a needy world.



Montreal, Canada

A Call To Share

by Sr. Jacqueline Villemure, M.I.C.

While on a trip to Montreal, the Taiwan Minister of Overseas Chinese Affairs, Mr. Sungmen-Mo, visited our Chinese Hospital. Before leaving he offered me, as a pledge of gratitude for services rendered to the Chinese community during my eight years as Hospital Executive Director, a trip to Taiwan graciously sponsored by his government. He explained that such a trip would contribute in making me familiar with health services as dispensed in the Republic of China. Moreover, it would help create closer bonds between me and our employees who are immigrants from Taiwan to Canada. The trip would also afford me the pleasure of meeting Sisters of my Missionary Congregation who are at work on the Beautiful Isle.

Ample opportunity has been given me to express my impressions on the Republic of China and on the fine way I was welcomed. The enthusiasm my host and his staff have aroused in me for the country, the people and their achievements in various fields, has grown by leaps and bounds. Members of the hospital staff and my friends, who either originally came from Taiwan or are

deeply sympathetic towards Taiwan, felt very good when I related the many positive happenings of my two-week visit. All felt happy to learn how my hosts had, in so short a time, given me such a complete overview, - historical, political, social, educational, artistic and economic, of their beloved Republic. I have had the occasion to speak in particular about Taiwan's health system and how, in this area as in so many others, the people have taken giant strides forward in the last 30 years. They continue to move forward with plenty of energy to promote further progress and improvement in their country.

For my part, I express my most heartfelt gratitude to my hosts for giving me the opportunity of visiting such a beautiful land. Above all, I thank them for giving me the opportunity of meeting people whose culture reaches back to many centuries.

This visit remains a personal asset and a great help in relating to the people I work with here in Montreal. Never will I forget the graciousness and warm welcome of my friends in Taiwan!

Freedom Song

by Miss Jeanne Majula

*If you could only tell me
What it might be...
Perhaps if you could explain
this word
this feeling
this thing
that every man is craving for,
day in and day out...
Fighting for,
crying and dying for.*

*Is it the carefree manner with which
birds fly away into the horizon?
the agility with which monkeys leap
from tree to tree?
Is it simply being able to rid oneself
of the burning feeling inside,
the immolating of one's soul to the
very core?*

*If freedom is the latter
then I fear,
O brothers who have ears to hear
and eyes to see,
that I,
like every other human being
with a searching mind,
have discovered
that I am not free.*

*One hears and
One speaks
of Jesus,
of a different kind of freedom
one may find in Him.
But where can this freedom be
found?*

*My eyes are unable to see it,
My hands are unable to grasp it.
Show it to me
on the palms of your hands.
Tell me about it
for I do not know it,
I do not understand it.*

*Tell me.
I will listen,
I promise you I will.
But I warn you, O brother mine,
I may not believe,
I may not agree.
There is no guarantee.*

*This world is like a whirlpool.
It goes round and round
in very many circles...
I am dizzy from trying to decipher
just how many of these circles
there are.*

*My vision has been impaired
and so I drift along
like a dried autumn leaf
floating
gently,
lightly,
in the noonday breeze.*

*This is freedom...
My freedom.*

The author, Jeanne Majula, is a 17-year old High School graduate who now awaits a place at the University for further studies.

We Are Woven Into Oneness



by Sr. Victoria Chirwa, M.I.C.

Already two terms have gone by for me at Chikungu Pastoral Centre. Time has gone so quickly that I did not realize it.

Chikungu Catechist Training Centre is in Chipata Diocese, Zambia. The Diocese is headed by a Zambian Bishop, Right Rev. Bishop Medardo Mazombwe, a native of that very Diocese.

The Bishop's aim for his diocese is to see the Christian Faith deepen in the Christians and Christian Faith spread. To achieve this double aim, he sees inculturation of Faith as a must. Inculturation is a long and painful process of purification. To inculturate the Faith, persons who live in a particular cultural context are the only people capable of efficiently undertaking and understanding the Christianizing process of their culture. Here lies the irreplaceable need of deeply con-

vinced Zambian Christians as leaders of the Catholic Diocesan Church.

When I first started to teach the Catechists, I felt ill at ease. I had the knowledge of Catholic Doctrine, if not in my head, I had books. This doctrinal knowledge could not have been clearer to me before. I drew up my 'Proposed Syllabus' to ensure that the Catechists would hopefully know the Catholic teachings and beliefs. But the more I was sure of the points of doctrine, the more I felt ill at ease. It seemed to me something equally important was missing... that which I would call the methodology of imparting Christian knowledge so that it becomes 'LIFE' in those who receive it.

Zambian cultural living has a philosophy from which values, aspirations, hopes, proverbs, wisdom, etc., draw their meaning. Philosophy is its unique fundamental conviction from which the 'Traditional Life Pattern' flows. To Christianize this philosophy, one has to realize its existence, know it, accept it as a reality, but surely not to judge it. This is not always easy.

My being both a Zambian and a struggling religious brings me to reason, think, meditate and contemplate both, the Zambian philosophy of life and the Christian philosophy of life. I try to perceive and live a Christian, Zambian philosophy of life with, and among the Catechists and others I am in relation with. This is precisely how I see my role at the Pastoral Centre, in the Church of Chipata Diocese and the Church as a whole.

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Memory Of The Heart

by *The Madagascar M.I.C. Team*

The Malagasy are a grateful people. They rarely accept to overlook a lack of appreciation on the part of those they have obliged in one way or another. An old saying goes, "The ungrateful man will be paid in kind." Gratitude is manifested in various ways. There is hardly any question of returning benefit for benefit, but rather of delicately reminding benefactors that their kindness has not passed unnoticed.

For the Malagasy, gratitude is above all the memory of the heart. It extends from one generation to another. One seldom meets ungrateful persons who selfishly look to their personal interests, disregarding what they owe to others. Such an attitude is held to be highly reprehensible.

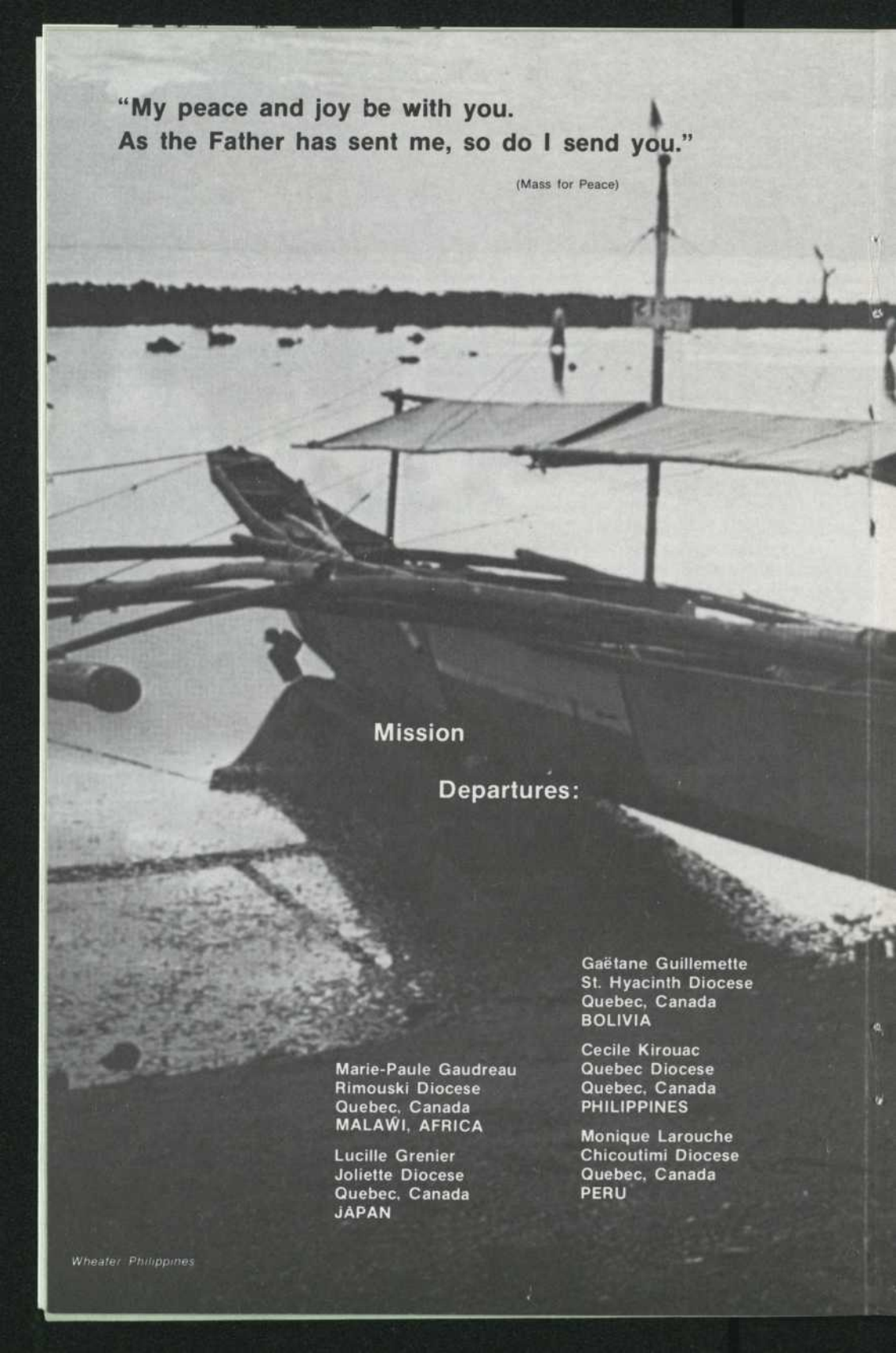
In traditional Malagasy society, the ritual of thanksgiving always stresses a deeply felt need of strengthening social bonds. It is also meant to ensure economic security. Thus, at the birth of an eighth or of a tenth child, a milk cow may be offered to relieve the child's mother.

How is their gratitude expressed? In many ways, such as through speeches, songs, fables, and poems. In the ordinary circumstances of life, one merely says a spontaneous 'thank you'. When the good turn is an important one, more courteous

expressions are used. Some such important occasions are as follows: invitations to partake of a meal; help provided during the rice transplantation season or at harvest time; building of a house or of a tomb; marriage of a daughter; the legacy of a piece of land, and the adoption of a child.

Children are expected to care for their aged parents, out of gratitude for the gift of life. There are no old people's homes in Madagascar, for each family takes care of its old members. It would be a public disgrace to act otherwise. Gratitude towards one's parents reaches out beyond the grave. This is an important aspect among the Malagasy people. For instance, if a child is too young to defray the expenses for his parents' burial service, he is bound to make up for it when he grows older. He may be fifty or sixty years old by then, but no matter. He remains in honour bound to pay his debt of gratitude to his parents.

The Malagasy are deeply sentimental and they appreciate warm human relationships. For them it is not mere efficiency that counts. Evidently, there is nothing formal about their gratitude. It essentially consists in sharing whatever they possess and signifies above all the bonds that unite all the members of a community. In this, it is truly the memory of the heart.



**"My peace and joy be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so do I send you."**

(Mass for Peace)

Mission

Departures:

Marie-Paule Gaudreau
Rimouski Diocese
Quebec, Canada
MALAWI, AFRICA

Lucille Grenier
Joliette Diocese
Quebec, Canada
JAPAN

Gaétane Guillemette
St. Hyacinth Diocese
Quebec, Canada
BOLIVIA

Cecile Kirouac
Quebec Diocese
Quebec, Canada
PHILIPPINES

Monique Larouche
Chicoutimi Diocese
Quebec, Canada
PERU



Leonila Stewart
Apostolic Vic., Mt. Prov.
Philippines
AFRICA

Bienvenida Torres
Nueva Segovia Diocese
Philippines
AFRICA

Elizabeth Vanchestein
Saint John Diocese
Quebec, Canada
HAITI



Sr. Ederlina Torres, M.I.C., attends to the women in her sewing class.

Peru

Threshold Of A New Life

by Sr. Ederlina Torres, M.I.C.

I have long felt drawn to the ideal of serving, in a practical way, an exploited class of our society – the domestic servants. Knowing how deeply our Foundress herself was committed to the cause of working with the poor, I asked to be sent out to these young people living in Lima. As they number thousands, it was impossible for me to reach them all. However, I set out to reach those whose need was greatest. In time, with God's help, I hope to reach out to a greater number.

What are the main problems to be faced? Well, these young girls for the most part come from remote country towns or villages where people barely subsist from hand to mouth. The land around our urban areas is not very productive. Farmers have to work hard and the results of their labours are pitifully meagre.

This explains the massive exodus of farmers into surrounding towns or cities. The young suffer the most from hunger and poverty. They know perfectly well that the farms will never yield an abundant living, and that there is no future for them in their villages. For many families, the only way out is to send their sons and daughters to the cities and wish them luck. Unfortunately, many are tempted to give their daughters into rich families, asking in return only food and shelter.

When they arrive in Lima, these young girls are tempted to answer ads such as, "Am in need of a servant." "Want a good cook..." "Willing to give work to an uneducated young girl..." As work is a must if they are to survive, many girls accept inhuman situations in a world they never dreamed could exist.

Everything is new and strange: food, climate, living conditions, transportation, hygiene, language, customs...

For the majority, the conditions under which they are forced to work are deplorable. A good number work for fourteen and even sixteen hours a day; of course they are not allowed to attend school. Many are even forbidden to go out at all. There is no question of a minimum salary. Existing laws do not limit a servant's working day to eight hours as for other labourers, and the social security system does not apply to them. The majority receive a salary of about 4000 soles a month (about \$15.00 Canadian dollars). Their wages may even be lower. A great many work merely for food and shelter, the latter often consisting in an airless cubicle, or a drafty shack. As for food, it consists of the leavings of family meals. They wear any castoff clothes the family may leave at their disposal. What can be the feelings of a young girl who misses her family and village, and finds herself a stranger among people who have no sympathy for her lot?

The future may even be darker for those who have been unable to repulse the unwelcome attentions of their patron or of his sons... If they had hoped to acquire some degree of education in the city, they soon find out that nobody is interested in having them better educated, and thus enabled to realize the injustice of their situation, and claim what is rightfully theirs. These girls are also barred from all social or parochial activities. In a word, they are limited to their role as servants of the household. This is a situation that needs to be remedied, and action must be taken in favour of the poor, the disinherited. We are faced with our responsibility as Christians to build, without hatred and without violence, a society that will respect

the rights of the weakest and the poorest.

With this aim in view, we have organized meetings on the level of parochial and pastoral organizations. The young are taught the meaning of vocation, liberty, labour laws, the significance of Christian festivals, etc. All these meetings have had positive results and have reawakened hope in many despairing hearts. It is good for these girls to hear that God is still at work in our world today. The young have assured us how much they appreciate our efforts on their behalf.

Marita who, at the first meetings, remained silent, too shy to express what she felt, finally admitted: "These meetings have done me lots of good. They have helped me acquire self-confidence..." Juliana, unwedded mother of two children, confided: "In these meetings I have learned the meaning of solidarity. I felt that you loved me and understood my situation. You have helped me cope with my personal problems..." Maria admitted that she no longer feared slipping away from her patrons' home without telling them where she was going. "Now, I feel strong because I know that even if they threw me out, you would find ways of helping me..." Many agreed with Carmen that they should work at having a governmental organization set up which would protect the rights of domestic servants.

All these testimonies have strengthened me in the resolve of serving my dear sister-servants. May the Lord send me collaborators who will help build bridges to a better society where the rights of the poor will be respected.

N.B. (Since this article was written, Sr. Ederlina has been assigned to Baures, our newly opened mission in Bolivia. Her desire to serve the poor full time has been granted. Best wishes for success to our dear Sr. Ederlina.)

Haiti

Team Ministry in Despas

by Sr. Arlette Toussaint, M.I.C.

In Haiti, a team of missionaries and of lay apostles is experimenting with the formation of basic church communities. I am a member of this mobile team with Father Jean Morin and Brother Michel Alfred, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and Miss Françoise Louis, auxiliary helper of St. Francis of Assisi.

My participation in our attempt to form a basic church community in the Despas Mission was a unique experience in my missionary life. During our stay in the village, Father Morin and Brother Alfred set up their living quarters in the sacristy, while Miss Françoise Louis and I took up residence in a nearby cottage. We lived so close to the people that they felt somehow at home and free to come and go as they liked. They saw that we lived as they did. Whenever we cooked our meals, we shared with any guest who happened to call. Neighbours, for their part, never failed to bring in from their vegetable patch modest gifts of spinach, cress, etc.

The villagers around here are hospitable even if they are poor. They appreciate our work and not a day went by, but someone brought in a gift: eggs, milk, a plucked chicken, melons, yams, peanuts, coffee, eggplants, tomatoes. With all these, they asked to be excused because, on account of the ravages of a recent cyclone, they were unable to offer more. How the poor have the true knack of sharing!

On our part, we really enjoyed our work. To reach as many villagers as possible, we had to climb steep hills and walk over corkscrew paths. When the people were absent from home, we sought them out in their vegetable gardens.

Over four hundred villagers gathered for the talks on "Meeting Jesus". This showed their goodwill and their desire to persevere in their resolution to live as fervent Christians. Some had to walk for hours to reach the gathering place, after a day of hard work in the fields.

For the first time, in order to comply with the people's request, our Team accepted to hold marriage preparation sessions. During our stay in the village, thirty-three couples received the marriage blessing. The chapel was crowded, welcoming seven hundred persons when only about five hundred could reasonably be accommodated within its walls. Others stood outside. All present were made to understand that marriage is a thing of the heart, not an affair of rings and finery.

Fifty-six villagers accepted to follow the regular formation program and the basic community of Despas was organized. We plant the seed, water it carefully, tend it lovingly, and leave the rest to God who will give a bounteous harvest.

Taipei, Taiwan



A World Of Neighbours

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

After 52 weeks, two hours a day of Chinese Mandarin lessons, you can see that I am using English to write to you. I am still unable to put the right tone to many words so that I might say 'horse' when I mean 'mother' (both are *ma*), or 'husband' when I mean 'boss' (*lau ban*). Towards the end of the year, I put the question: "How come the Lord created so many Chinese?" I did not have to answer my own question because I have also realized that the Chinese as a people are simple,

unassuming, and steeped in religiosity expressed in their trust in 'Heaven'. Perhaps in many ways they are like 'the little children' of the Gospel.

Since July 1980, I have been residing in Taipei. I wanted to do a summer job but ended with a long term contract with the Office of Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs as Assistant to the Executive Secretary. This Office which is a specialized agency of the Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) has been mandated to promote Church activities in Asia pertaining to ecumenism and dialogue with other religions. Since this work is carried out entirely in English there is no problem for me as far as Chinese is concerned. Our efforts in this Office are primarily directed to the Bishops of Asia, in organizing institutes or seminars of an interreligious nature. In the four months that I have been involved with the work of the OEIA, it is easy for me to see that I am participating in the task of evangelization of the Church of Asia, helping create the atmosphere that will make the dream of Jesus at the Last Supper come true, "May they all be one". I realize as well that this work demands the creative use of my 'one talent' - be it in the organization of the documentation and information centre, editing the OEIA newsletter, reviewing books, articles, periodicals on the subject of our concern, or writing to the Bishops and resource persons of this Office. I have also learned in the course of these past months, working with the French Jesuit, Albert Poulet-Mathis, Boileau's dictum: "Vingt fois (my boss says 'cent fois') sur le métier remettez votre ouvrage." To my own delight, I found out that, if adopted, the dictum worked to my advantage!

At this point, I would just like to roll back the twenty-two months I

Continued on p. 14

Mary Was A Meadow



Our Lady of the Barangay/Philippines

*Mary was a meadow for the Lord
Mary was His rich and fertile plain
Mary was the planted field,
Jesus was the seed,
Jesus is the harvest yield
to fill our every need -
Mary make my life a fertile plain
reap in me your rare
and golden grain.*

*Mary was a crystal for the Lord
Mary was the prism of His light
Mary was the windowed wall,
Jesus was the ray,
Jesus is the rainbow fall
to cheer our every day -
Mary be my crystal for the light
hold Him ever glowing in my sight.*

*Mary was a woodwind for the Lord
Mary was His pure and tranquil tone
Mary was the perfect key,
Jesus was the song,
Jesus is the melody
for all to sing along -
Mary make my love a perfect tone
that my heart may sing for God alone.*

Bill Peffley

WE ARE WOVEN...

Little by little we hope with God's grace and blessing to have more and more convinced Christian Zambians and families who, in turn, will be a 'LIGHT' among fellow Christians, deepening and spreading the Christian Faith which will not be merely a 'varnish' on peoples' lives but a transforming, directing agent from within.

I thank God and my Missionary Congregation for this rich experience.

A WORLD...

have spent in Taiwan, and thank God for every single day, every single event (joyful, painful, distressing, etc.) because it is to His pleasure and glory that "in everything" we give thanks to the Father. You have been with me all this time, in your kind thoughts, prayers, affection, remembrance, holding on in patience at my silence. And it is for you that I utter now my prayer of praise, to God, who has blessed me with your friendship and love. Thank you for your presence in my life!

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:

March, 1982:

Kaseye (Malawi)
Colon (Cuba)
St-Dominique, Montreal
Joliette (Canada) (Canada)
Rosal (Philippines)
Trou-du-Nord (Haiti)
Longueuil (Canada)
Taipei (Taiwan)

April, 1982

Cap-Haitien (Haiti)
Tokyo (Japan)
Pont-Viau (Canada)
San Juan (Philippines)
Chikungu (Zambia)
Tak Oi (Hong Kong)
Ambohibary (Madagascar)
Louis-Colin, Montreal (Canada)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

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and subscribe to the MIC MISSION NEWS.*

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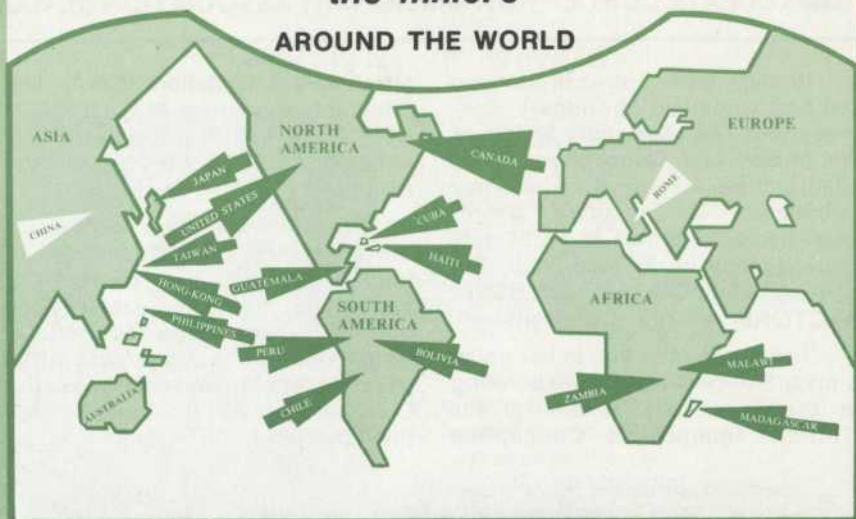
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the m.i.c.'s AROUND THE WORLD



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