

Series 10, No. 5
September - October, 1983

MIC

MISSION NEWS



Taiwan

*Who am I without my neighbour?
Whatever the race, color or faith, the answer is always the same:
No one...*

...Who is my neighbour?

*For an answer, to whom should I turn?
To the wise man?
To the learned?
Or to some dusty manuscript?*

Seek the answer from within your heart.

*Your neighbour is the absence
that nothing,
however precious,
could ever fill.*

*Without him,
no encounter, no exchange.
Without him, no one to love
but only things to possess.*

*His presence pulls us
from the closed worlds,
the mausoleums
walled up around us
out of our fears and anguish.*

*He draws us far,
always beyond,
deep into the unknown,
where only those follow
who dare to face death
in faithfulness to him.*

He draws us towards God.

D. Michaelides, S.J.

Cover-photo credit: Angie Yap, M.I.C.

MIC MISSION NEWS

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IMPRIMERIE NOTRE-DAME INC

Philippines

My Heart Comes Home

Nancy Vy So, M.I.C.

I was born in the Philippines into a non-Christian family of Buddhist influence. However, my brothers, sisters and I went to Catholic schools. I was baptized into the Catholic faith when I was in Grade 2. As a young girl, I faithfully observed the rituals and obligations of going to Sunday Mass, receiving the sacraments and saying my morning and night prayers.

But as the years went on, I searched for the reality about my religion. I sought for a deeper meaning to my life.

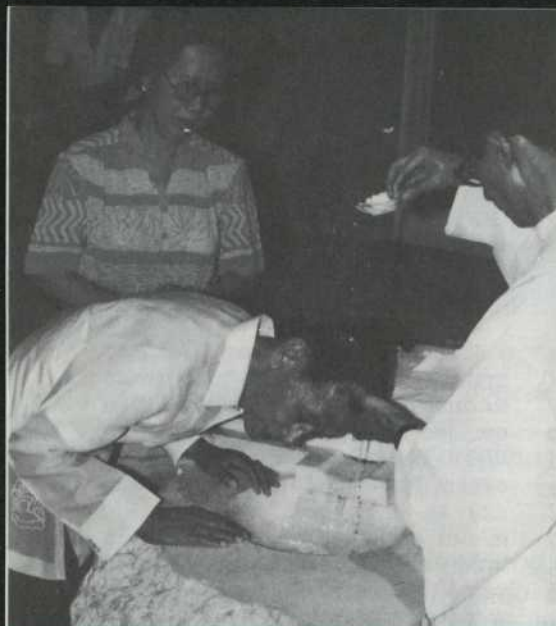
This was particularly true during my high school and college years. I started questioning the value and meaning of the Mass. And finding no answers or fulfillment, I stopped altogether going to church. I felt so free, proud of myself for having had the courage to uplift on my own the obligations which I felt were imposed upon me. From then on, I was going to search for my own way of worship, my own means of finding fulfillment in the relatedness of my life to a God who seemed so far away and distant.

After graduation from college, I worked for a year. Although I enjoyed my work and my social life very much, there was always, deep within me, an inevitable, gnawing sense of void that kept me searching for life's meaning. After coming home from a party or an outing, I would be confronted with an empty feeling of meaninglessness. Thus, I decided to venture forth to the States to see if I could find there the answers I needed.

To my disappointment, I realized that Los Angeles has no answers to offer me. Feeling helpless, I then decided that this was all there is to life... There was nothing more to expect from it but just to live each day as it comes... and that life is not a matter of 'where' but of 'how' one lives it. Thus, for three years, I drifted on, feeling myself without an anchor, without a direction... just floating on with the tide. Until in December 1974, when out of a need to divert myself on a long week-end break, I made plans to visit the MIC Sisters in San Francisco. I went for the fun of a new experience and adventure. These Sisters were my former teachers in the Philippines whom I had not seen for many years.

And it was there, in the hearts of these Sisters, where the Lord waited for me.

As I shared meals with the Sisters, prayed with them, and watched them go about their daily chores, I felt a sense of deep peace and joy within them which I wanted to have. In their conversations, God was so much a part of their lives that I began to tell myself: "If God can be *real* to them, He can also be *real* to me." This led me to further reflections and I came to realize that God had never been real to me and this was what was missing in my life. This was the "it" I was searching for - GOD. I believed in Him in a way, but He was up there and I was down here and we were so far apart from each other. The Sisters impressed upon me the reality that God really is.



"In May, 1982, both Papa and Mama were baptized."

Sr. Nancy, on the day of her Final Profession.

This started my process of inner conversion. I began to search more seriously for Him through reading the Gospels, through questions, through prayer.

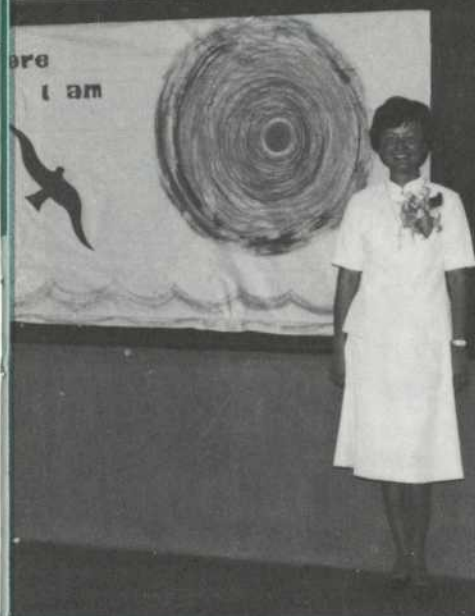
I was sincere in my search and this time, I felt I was going somewhere in the right direction. I began to understand and sense what a love-relationship with God is like. I experienced how close He was to me, that in fact, He has always been close, guiding my life. I had not been aware and I had not learned until then how to relate to Him, or even bothered to give Him time. I was seeking for my answers from the world, but the answer was deep within me. A new world opened up to me. I saw things differently; my values were reoriented to what is the essence of living... life held meaning for me. I wanted to live and live to the full in this love-relationship with a God who is very close. I experienced what St. Augustine lived: "My heart is restless, O Lord, until it rests in You". I have searched far and wide, high and low, and God was there, so very near. This was my experience of God which really changed my life.

He loves me! - these words became alive to me. And it was thus that I felt His call for me to be a missionary.

After some struggling and bargaining, I finally conceded. I felt a deep peace surrounding me as I said my Yes to the Lord. I entered on June, 1975, at San Bruno, California. It has been eight years to this day that I had to constantly renew my Yes to Him daily. Last May, 1983, I made my final vows. As I look back, I see how the Lord keeps His words in the Gospel - that He gives back the hundredfold.

Ever since I discovered the beauty of God's love alive in me, I have often prayed that my parents too would one day receive the gift of faith and baptism.

I hoped for the day that I could go to Church and receive the sacraments with them and pray together with them. Yet all these seemed so improbable that I dared not dream of having them fulfilled. In the two years I was back in the Philippines after I became a religious, I saw how the Lord had made use of my



stay to reach out to my parents and to allow the events which happened to our family reveal His loving care and presence.

My Papa had not been well for the past three years, with an illness the doctors were unable to diagnose. In February 1982, he had an operation which made him feel better. He was very grateful. It was then that both he and Mama accepted to receive catechism lessons and to be baptized. They felt that God has been so good to our family.

In May 1982, both Papa and Mama were baptized under the name of Joseph and Delia. The joy and gratitude which flowed into my heart was insurmountable. Soon after his baptism, Papa got very ill, was hospitalized and never recovered.

It was only the week before Papa died that the doctors finally diagnosed his illness as cancer of the bones. How Mama then prayed that he be delivered of further sufferings. The Lord did take Papa sooner and quicker than anyone of us expected. When he was weakening, Mama asked me to call the Sisters to come and pray so as to accompany him in

peace, home to the Father. God provided... during Papa's last few moments, I was there with 2 other Sisters, praying; he heard the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph whispered into his ears until his last breath.

I remembered a sentence my own sister had once written to me when I had just entered the convent. She told me, "Since you want to serve God, should you not serve Him through serving our parents first? Charity starts at home." After Papa's burial, I told my sister, "You see, sis, God did not disappoint our parents. When they needed me most, God sent me home here in the Philippines to be with them. When Papa needed me most, I was there at his bedside".

I did not expect all these to happen during the 2 years I was to be home near my family. To all that has been, I can only thank God that He was there... and to all that is and will come, I can only continue to trust in Him.

Yes, what better thanks can I give to God than by being His missionary to make the Good News known and to bring him children to praise His name forever!



"My students made real to me Our Lord's word: God is Love!"
 Sr. Therese (Wah Sau Neuih, 2nd from right, 2nd row)

Hong Kong

Teaching with Love

Sr. Therese LeBlanc, M.I.C.

The day before I left Hong Kong last June, someone brought me a gorgeous Chinese porcelain vase. On it were inscribed several Chinese Characters: *"To Wah Sau Neuih, our dedicated and inspired teacher, who taught us how to bring the Word of God to our students."* I was thrilled as I read the message for I was Wah Sau Neuih, and these words were addressed to me. They came from my students of the Chinese University where I had been doing some part-time teaching in a course called "Teaching Methods in Religious Education" in the Protestant Theology Faculty.

This Theology Department was one of the faculties of Chung Chi College, one of the four colleges amalgamated to form the Chinese University which receives about 6,000 students. Chung Chi occupies the most favourable spot since it was the first one established there, after they had been expelled from China. It had been founded in China by Canadian Protestant missionaries. On the present campus is a huge chapel, where the students meet each week for assembly, to pray, sing hymns and benefit of other cultural programs prepared for them and by them. My colleagues were men who studied in all parts of the world

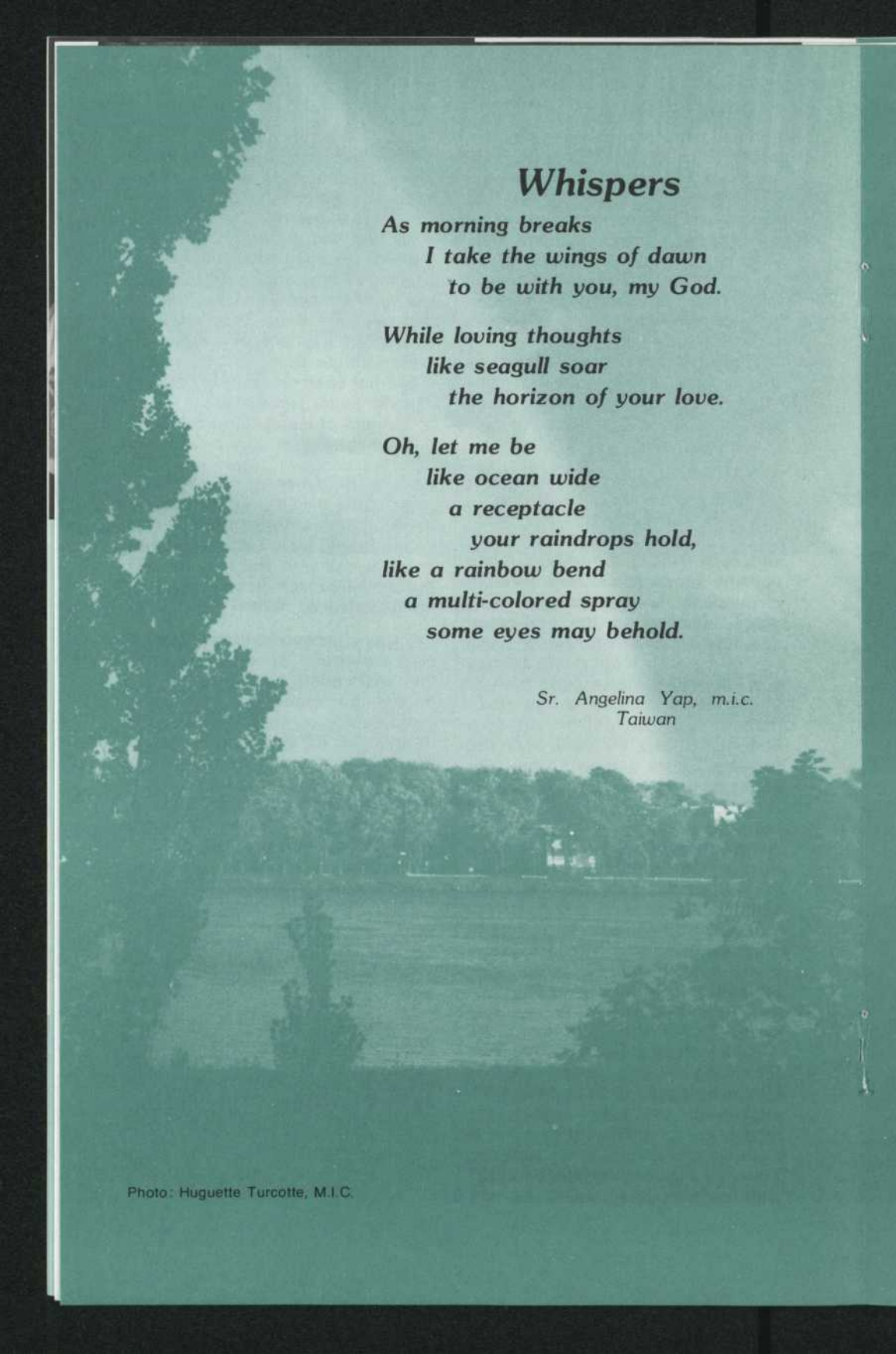
and had returned with their doctorate degrees in World Religions, Philosophy, Theology, Sociology, etc. They were open to all religions and we often had the opportunity to share on all these subjects together. They were all tremendously interested and involved in the study of the Chinese Church and they were often invited to go and share with their fellow brothers in China, particularly in the newly reorganized seminaries. Of course they were mostly Chinese, with a few foreigners like myself and my Jesuit colleague, Fr. B. Shields, professor of Bible.

For the past seven years, I had the full respect of the other staff members, and most especially for the fourth year students I came in contact with each week for three hours. As we became more acquainted through discussions on psychology, sociology, discovering the age-group characteristics of our Hong Kong youth, a strong rapport was formed and we soon became good friends. They would confide to me their dreams for the future, and they had high ideals for they were the privileged ones getting a University education in Hong Kong. Their ideals ranged from becoming dedicated religious education teachers in schools to that of accepting to serve their people in the ministry. One of them struggled all year, discerning whether to become a minister in the Anglican Church or to be a religious education teacher; I spent many hours listening to him after classes, helping him as he searched for God's Will in his life. (He had opted for the ministry and the Anglican Bishop had accepted him for Hong Kong.) Another girl, a Catholic, wanted to share her knowledge with the handicapped; she finally found fulfillment in serving in a camp of refugees from Vietnam, while waiting for her chance to work with the mentally retarded.

As these young mentors studied the modern approach to teaching religious education, new horizons opened to them, and they were more and more eager to go out teaching. They had had a touch of it in their practice-teaching when they had to face the youngsters of the "computer age" in the schools and they realized that already there was a whole generation gap between them and their younger brothers and sisters. It had not been an easy nor pleasant experience for some of them, for the teen-agers of Hong Kong belong to that universal teen-age culture and they are becoming more and more open as they are influenced by the mass media, the TV, the game centres; it was another way of life that even my young adults were not expecting to come across with. But they had met the challenge face-on and grew from the experience.

I also discovered that quite a few of these young people were using their extra energy, not only in sports or arts, but found opportunities to go to Canton, China, on week-ends, to share in Bible study and prayer with small groups of Christians there. They would take the train on Friday evenings and return on Monday, on time for their classes. Their zeal knew no bounds.

For me to leave that work was heart-breaking; it was like leaving a part of me there. If these students thanked me with the gift of a beautiful vase, I owed them much more than vases could express. They inspired me, they stimulated me to greater zeal, they kept alive in me that flame of love which I had come to share with my non-Christian brothers and sisters when I left Canada 35 years ago. They made real to me the Word of God: *God is Love!*



Whispers

*As morning breaks
I take the wings of dawn
to be with you, my God.*

*While loving thoughts
like seagull soar
the horizon of your love.*

*Oh, let me be
like ocean wide
a receptacle
your raindrops hold,
like a rainbow bend
a multi-colored spray
some eyes may behold.*

*Sr. Angelina Yap, m.i.c.
Taiwan*

Look up to the Star

Pauline Longtin, M.I.C.

For one who walks along an unfamiliar path on a dark evening, a shining star above brings light, hope, and joy. *"If you are in danger, lift up your head and look up to the Star, call on Mary..."* St. Bernard reminds us. So many times, Delia Tetreault, in her personal way, expresses her conviction that Mary will always be the guiding Star, the sure path to welcome the Lord and to go to Him.

How interesting it would be to retrace the countless interventions, the constant concerns of the Virgin Mary in the foundation and development of the religious community that Delia Tetreault gave to the Church.

We look at Delia and learn from her how to love and imitate Mary. While then a lay apostle, Delia dedicates herself to the Mother of Jesus and ends her act of consecration by saying: *"O Mary, I am yours. Do with me now whatever you wish."* Flexibility, trust, abandonment, availability – these emerge from her filial dedication.

We can summarize the life of the Virgin of Nazareth by these three words found in St. Luke's episode of the Annunciation and the Visitation: **Ecce – Fiat – Magnificat**. And it is thus for Delia Tetreault.

Ecce – 'Here I am!'

...a presence. Presence before God through prayer and action. Presence also to the world whose sufferings and multiple needs are perceived and taken to heart by Delia.

...a listening ear. *"Speak Lord, your child is attentive..."*

...an availability. *"What do you want me to do?"*

Fiat

A total Yes to the Father in whom she trusts. Loving acceptance of His Will. Yes, not only to the important events of life, but to the humble ordinary daily events.

Magnificat

A third attitude of Mary which we find in Delia: that of the Magnificat, radiating of joy in the service of God and of neighbour. The Virgin, filled with the presence of the Incarnate Word, goes in haste to assist her cousin Elizabeth before whom she proclaims the marvels of the Lord.

When the Magnificat is lived in one's being, it bursts into joyful actions. It is this which makes Delia lead her Sisters in the Marian way: *"May our whole life be a perpetual Magnificat!"*

Service and joy, constituents of the Magnificat, are also the characteristics of the spirit Delia Tetreault bequeathed to her religious family and proposed to all Christians... the simple and sure path on which she treaded, her eyes intently gazing at **Mary, Morning Star!**



"Zambian youths want to face up to their Christian responsibility".

Zambia

Together, Let Us Shine!

Sr. Jeannine Forcier, M.I.C.

This year, from July 1st to the 3rd, we participated in a diocesan premiere: a Catholic Youth Rally which brought together boys and girls, chosen delegates, from the many secondary schools and training centres of the diocese of Chipata, Zambia, which in itself covers an area of about 630 square miles.

The Rally was not a spontaneous and free-lance event but a long-thought-of and well prepared gathering. In fact, the preparation lasted over a year during which the basic Christian Communities of each school prayed, reflected and discerned. The aim of the Rally was to help the Catholic youths to deepen their identity and strengthen their commitment to Christ. The Rally theme: **Light**; its motto: **Christ Is Our Light, Together Let Us Shine**; the

song: **Let Us Shine Now** and the tag bearing the symbol of the lighted candle were all fruits of these discernments. Collaboration between students, school heads, Sr. Fernande Patry, S.O.L.A. and the student committee in charge of the organization was remarkable. Our own Bishop, Right Reverend Medardo Mazombwe, was the inspiration behind this project and the loving dynamism throughout its realization.

The highlights of the Rally were the two talks given by the Bishop: **A Portrait of Christ** according to the Gospels wherein Christ was depicted as God, King, Shepherd, Priest, Friend, Way, Truth, Life, Light, and **The Catholic Church**, an amazing synthesis of the history of the Church with an emphasis on its development in Africa; the camp-fire celebration

of light; the four-mile procession through the poorest section of Chipata; the hour of adoration to the Blessed Sacrament in the cathedral during which a group of girls from our two Homecraft Centres presented a cultural liturgical dance; the penitential celebration and the two Eucharistic celebrations.

An important portion of the time was allotted to drama: plays and sketches in which Africans excel and by which they convey the results of their reflections, their opinions, their aspirations and their fears. The delegation from each school enacted a sketch which expressed the group's experience of Christ and its answer to the question: "If Christ were to come back to earth now and in Zambia, what would He be... a politician, a preacher, a healer, a prophet, etc..."? The great majority of students see Christ as a combination of Preacher of the Good News and Healer, very close to the people and especially to the poor, the oppressed and the suffering.

The main play, **"The Fourth Magi"**, presented one evening, was the illustration of man's quest for

Christ extended over a whole lifetime and which can be summarized in Christ's response to the people of His time: "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brethren, that you do unto Me." The accompanying play put on by the Minor Seminarians presented the joys and pains involved in the unfolding of a vocation to the priesthood. Both plays were thought-provoking.

Now, the Rally is over or should I say it is just beginning... because the follow-up is as important as the event itself. It was my first experience of the kind in Africa and I can say I am deeply impressed. The seriousness with which our Zambian youths became involved in the event, the enthusiasm and perseverance maintained during the long preparation are signs of hope for the future. The love they manifest for Christ and the simplicity with which they acknowledge Him make many an adult ponder deeply. Zambian youths know the Church of tomorrow is in their hands and with Christ's help they want to face up to the responsibility.

"Christ is our Light, together let us shine!"

Sr. Jeannine (3rd from right, standing), Sr. Bien Torres (3rd from right, seated) and students at the MIC Homecraft Centre.



THE SUNDAY OF THE UNIVERSAL MISSION

under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, is the annual worldwide day of prayer and sacrifice for the Catholic Church's mission efforts.

MISSION SUNDAY (October 23, 1983)

- is the moment of truth for our fellowship with our brothers, the people of the whole world...
- is the occasion for crossing the borders of our own country, to open ourselves to the universe, to share with other churches...
- is the right time to recognize our responsibility with regard to the evangelization of the world.

SEPTEMBER 1923 - SEPTEMBER 1983



***This year marks the 60th ANNIVERSARY
of MIC MISSION NEWS
under its different formats.***

Mission Briefs



Koriyama, Japan

The Central Post Office invites Sr. Therese Renaud on Annual Communication Day. She is given the title of 'Postmaster' and mandated to supervise all activities of the different sectors. She admires the discipline and organization of the work team and she is surprised to find how the mail is handled by automation.

In her short talk to the Post Office employees, Sister Therese brings out the development of communications, as well as the need for better communication in our society today. She extends thanks for the good services given by the staff and invites them especially to delve into the type of relationship they have with one another.

The 'Postmaster' goes back home, enriched with her experiences and laden with representative souvenirs - stamps!

St. Hubert, Montreal

Sr. Émilienne Vézina shares her deep-felt joy as a volunteer-worker at "Maison du Père", a welcome centre and rehabilitation home for vagrant men. This centre was founded by Msgr. Paul Gregoire, with the help of charitable individuals and groups, and the archdiocese of Montreal.

I feel so happy to be working with the forgotten and oftentimes scorned members of our neighbourhood here in Montreal. I spent 30 years as a missionary in Asia and I feel very privileged to still have a select share in Our Lord's Vineyard.

I offer volunteer services two days a week at the Centre and have been doing this for the past five years. My visiting days are the two most beautiful days of the week.

I thank God for giving me the opportunity to love, to feel "myself" in the midst of our brothers "who have remained little because they lacked love to grow". Have we not discovered a secret of happiness which is found in the "gift of self"? I often want to shout my joy but people are too preoccupied with themselves; their hearts are too divided with many things.

Let us say Thank You to the Master who continues to spoil us with so much love.

Holguin, Cuba

The catechesis in the diocese is supervised by Sr. Bernardeta Col-lazo, M.I.C. Sister has taken as a priority among her manifold tasks the establishment of direct contacts with catechists and the communities they serve.

On a recent visit to a near-by village, she is welcomed by pleasant surprises. She finds at the village of St. André an active and enthusiastic group of some thirty adolescents and children. Her greatest surprise is to meet the unique catechist of the place: 87 years - old Alta Bracia, a retired school teacher. What zeal and a life with God does this catechist share with her fellow villagers! - she is truly the discreet soul of the village.

Altica, as she is known to everyone, is the oldest catechist. Next in line is Maria, who is 81 years old.

Whoever said there was an "age limit" to serving Christ? These two veteran Catechists each have a heart that knows no boundaries!

MIC Information, June '83

Mzuzu, Malaŵi

Excerpts from the homily delivered by Fr. M. H. Dupuis, W.F., on the occasion of the funeral mass for Sr. Yvette Carle, M.I.C., who died at St. John's hospital, Mzuzu, on April 20, 1983:

We read in St. John 15: 13 these words of Our Lord Jesus: "A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends." This Gospel passage summarizes Sr. Yvette Carle's whole life.

Sr. Yvette spent her life for the Malaŵians. For 30 years, as a Missionary Sister and a nurse, she gave herself wholeheartedly, day and night, for the spiritual and physical welfare of her patients. She started her apostolate as a nurse in Katete in 1952, then in Mzuzu, in Kaseye, in Karonga and again in Katete. These parishes profited from her tireless devotedness and medical care. Always cheerful and full of confidence in the Lord, she communicated her joy and confidence to all. She spared neither her time or her efforts to relieve the sufferings of the sick, the poor and the little ones who needed her help.

The only child in her family, Sr. Yvette lost her father early and her mother died a few years ago. In this way, we can say that God detached her from natural bonds... she was deeply attached to her religious family, the MIC Sisters, and to the Malaŵians - her cherished family for whom she dedicated her whole life until the end. May she rest in the Lord's peace!

The Echo, July '83

Ottawa

At the Chinese Center, our MIC family is rejoicing! The reason? Two of our catechumens received the Sacrament of Baptism. For the past months, I had been helping Anthony Lee prepare for this special event in his life. His wife, Christina, is Catholic and their two children were baptized a few months ago. His companion, Sherman Lee, is a student at the University of Ottawa. Sherman was prepared for baptism by Louisa Wong. Both Anthony and Sherman are from Hong Kong.

After Mass, Anthony shared with me his deep joy and gratitude, saying: "How strange is Providence. For the past seventeen years, I did not believe, - I refused to believe in God. Now, I feel I am completely changed; I feel my faith is strong and how happy I am!"

Sr. Odile Malboeuf, M.I.C.

Thanksgiving...

**Teach me, O MARY
always to sing out God's Goodness
with 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

September, 1983

La Paz (Bolivia)
Plantagenet, Montreal (Canada)
Moron (Cuba)
Chicoutimi (Canada)
Les Côteaux (Haiti)
Baguio (Philippines)
Cochabamba (Bolivia)
Ottawa (Canada)

October, 1983

Mzambazi (Malawi)
Antshirabe (Madagascar)
Maplewood Ave., Montreal (Canada)
Hinche (Haiti)
Holguin (Cuba)
St. Sulpice (Canada)
Llallagua (Bolivia)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

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and subscribe to the MIC MISSION NEWS.*

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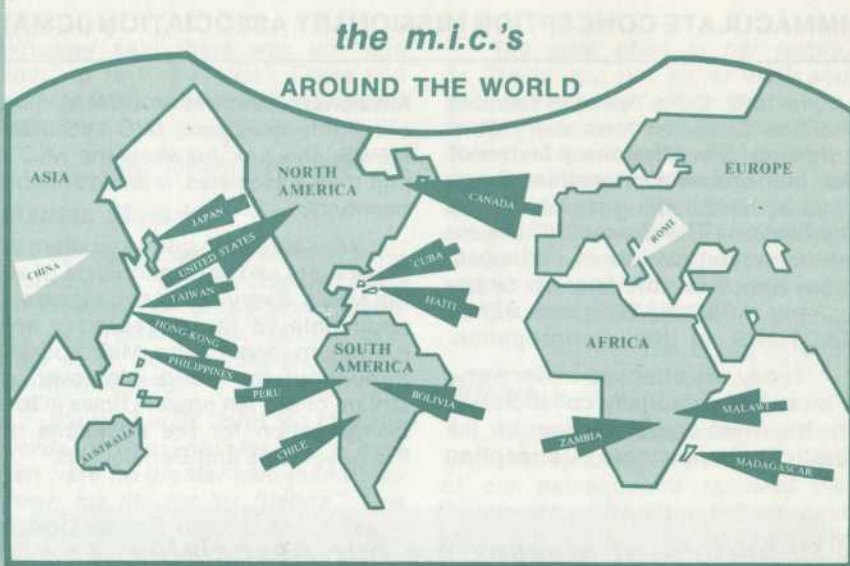
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