

Series 16, No. 5
September-October, 1989

MIC

MISSION NEWS



THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Dear Readers,

October is once more upon us, with World Mission Sunday, on October 22. This year's theme of the Propagation of the Faith touches our lives closely. It relates to family love, and tells us how through our Christian families we must "Go and say to the whole world I love you!". This month, we really should take time to stop and reflect on our individual mission responsibility. Yes, by the very fact of our Baptism, we are all called to share the Good News that Jesus came to save us. It is usually within the family circle that our mission begins and then it should quite naturally expand and reach out to the whole world.

In the arms of our parents, we learned the meaning of love. In this issue, we have two articles about Christian families. One tells about how a Zambian mother brings up her children in the atmosphere of love. The other, relates how the extended family of Delia Tetreault was the source of her vocation to found a missionary congregation that would soon spread out over the whole world.

In this same spirit, we'll introduce you to all the MIC missions founded in China since 1909. The young nuns went there to bring the faith and love received in their families to others who needed to hear about the Father's love. Then again, it is a delightful surprise to read about a group of Japanese people extending a helping hand to young needy Filipinos by giving them what is most precious to a Japanese family: a good education.

We are beginning a series of short articles introducing you to some of the promoters we have in various regions of Canada and overseas. This time, it is a lady from Toronto who takes time to find subscribers for our little magazine. (Our French issue has 650 promoters!) I also would like to thank our benefactors who so generously send us now and then support we need to carry on our mission work.

May Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles, guide you and inspire you to offer us a helping hand in one way or other. If you wish to become a promoter, just drop me a line and we'll do the rest!

Now, "Go, say I love you to the whole world!"

The Editor

Cover photo: Japanese Kindergarten tots at work

MIC MISSION NEWS a
bimonthly published by
the Missionary Sisters of
the Immaculate
Conception.
Issued October, 1989

P.O. Box 157,
Laval-des-Rapides
Laval, P.Q., Canada
H7N 4Z4
Tel.: (514) 663-6460

Editor

Therese LeBlanc, M.I.C.

Assisting Staff:

René Cournoyer
Suzanne Tremblay, MIC
and Office team
Christine Desrochers

Printed by "Imprimelec"

Second class mail
Registration No. 0358
Return postage
guaranteed
ISSN 0315-9655
Printed in Canada

Subscription rates:

\$4.00 (1 year) \$7.00
(2 years)
\$10.00 (3 years) \$50.00
(life)
\$4.00 (U.S.A. other
countries)

Change of Address:

Please send your old
and new addresses.
When renewing subscription
please include file number.

Exchanging Gifts

Lorna Erikson is a young Filipina MIC Sister. She recently went to Japan as a delegate of the association which offers scholarships to 500 young Filipinos.

Dear Sister Theresa,

I have been waiting for this opportune moment to share with you the marvelous events happening here within my group called the Salamat Po Kai. (Thank you)

You may wonder what this is all about. It all began in 1975 when a Japanese student was visiting the Philippines. She noticed that so many little boys and girls were on the street, begging or scavenging around dumps and garbage bins. She asked why they were not in school. When she discovered that these kiddies could not attend classes because they were too poor, she determined to do something about it.

On her return to Japan, she told her family and her parish that she was going to send her allowance to help some of these children. This plan of hers eventually came out on TV programs. In no time at all, a core group of Japanese Christians organized an association. These volunteer housewives and others, members of the Tanaka Catholic Church of Tokyo showed their warmth and affection. Soon sponsors began showing up from all walks of life. There were

teachers, farmers, business men and factory workers... who reached out. They were non-Christians searching for a meaning in life. Today, they are helping over 500 students in the Philippines. I am supervising a group of 37 of them here in Tondo, Manila. Four are college students, 10 are in High School and 23 are in Elementary.

The generous sponsors do not expect much in return for their good deed. They merely ask a letter or a photo from their protégé. But it happened that these young people did not know what to write about. So, we decided that they should come to a meeting once a month where together we would pray for their benefactors, and we would share our Christian life experience with one another. From this sharing, we would be able to write a positive and Christian response. In no time at all, this communication channel became a means of apostolate, a diffusion of the Christian faith. Without knowing it, these young beneficiaries became missionaries in their turn. Today, many of the sponsors are asking for instruction in the Catholic Faith in Japan.



Some students receiving help from their Japanese friends.

They are searching for a catechumenate where they can be prepared to enter the Christian community.

These Japanese persons were struck by the joy they witnessed in the poorest people they met. They asked what made them so happy in spite of their needs? They discovered by various means that it is God in the lives of these poor people. In the heart of every Filipino is a wellspring of HOPE. We Filipinos have that hope that whatever he does not have now, God will provide for tomorrow. If not tomorrow, the next day, if not here on earth, then in Heaven. Though materially poor, we are very rich spiritually in faith and hope. These sponsors recognized our richness. Thus, their help through the scholarships is born out of gratitude for the enlightenment, the encouragement, the faith they received from us especially through the scholars. That's why they named the association program *Salamat Po kai*, meaning **THANK YOU!**

While we Filipinos were able to discover the warmth and affectionate nature of the Japanese through their generosity, they in turn realized that most Filipinos live a simple life, that they're a peace-loving people, easily contented, grateful and faithful. It was an exchange in a discovery of values that God gave us all.

In my visit to that group in Japan last year, I realized that many Japanese recognize our sense of joy, warmth in relationship, our sincere hospitality, our keen judgement in events and things. I



Lorna Erikson, MIC, addressing the assembly

was deeply touched by the VIP treatment they gave me as a delegate, as if I were an important official. I did not deny the crimes and misgivings of some of my people. I helped them understand that the majority of Filipinos are living a simple life in the provinces; they are good, honest people.

While in Japan, I had the opportunity to see the value of discipline and education. Even the Kindergarten tots took their responsibilities seriously as they attended the chores around their classroom. Each child is trained very young in his own responsibility at home, in the schoolroom or in the country. They are so neat and orderly in all they do. I wish our own people were as well trained. It made me realize the importance of a good education.

In their turn, these same Japanese people offer us Filipinos scholarships as one of the best gifts they can offer us. They understand that the best means to build a nation is through the education of the citizens, because it is in them that the potentials lie. These scholarships will help many a young Filipino to stand on his own feet to participate in the National Reconstruction demanded by our government. This help is not only for the individual but has a consequence on the family, on the nation and on the whole world. For us Filipinos, whenever an older member of the family finishes his/her studies, he/she has a responsibility towards the others. This is a Filipino tradition that may seem irksome to some foreigners, but for us it is a blessing because we can help our families.

I really marvel at what goes on through this program. I feel happy and thankful to God, to these benefactors, to these young "missionaries" sharing their Faith with their brothers to whom they owe so much. I feel that in this work, I can recapture the heart of Mother Foundress, who was forever living and preaching thanksgiving, by her words and her life.

Am I not myself one of her children, having studied in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Academy all through my school years with our MIC Sisters? During my College years, I boarded with our Sisters at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Davao for four years. I have become a fruit of the love and labour of the MIC Sisters in the Philippines all these years. Now, I have started singing His praise as an MIC.

Lorna Erikson, MIC



Family Ties

S. Angeline Tetreault, an Assumption Sister of Edmonton, Alberta, shares with us the family ties of the Tetreault family, relatives of Mother Delia, as her Cause for beatification is being processed in Rome.



Sr. Angeline Tetreault, s.a.s.v.

Benoit Tetreault, my father, was an elder brother of Delia. This family was of the 9th generation of Tetreault's who had come to settle in Canada in 1662. Somehow, my father came out West in 1894. He was one of the founders of Vegreville, Alberta, a small town 65 km from Edmonton. Besides being a pioneer, a farmer, a manager of a country store, and a church warden in St. Martin's Parish, my father was also a town councillor for years. Our farm was far inland, and I can still remember when the Oblate Fathers would come to our house on horseback to celebrate Mass for us and our neighbors. As children, we were sent to boarding schools run by the Assumption Sisters of Nicolet, Quebec.

In 1918, when I was 7 years old my mother took my brother Georges, aged 10, and myself to visit our far off relatives in the Province of Quebec. One day, we went to Outremont by tramcar to visit our Aunt Delia, who was a nun. We never understood then that she was a Foundress... it would have meant nothing to us at that age! We were told to behave but it was uncalled-for advice. We were so struck by Mother Delia in her long white habit, her blue sash, her long black veil and especially her winning smile that we forgot everything. In my little head, I classified her immediately as a saint... because for me, God, the angels, the saints, priests and nuns were very special beings... I dare not say from "outer space" but something close to it!

Twelve years later, in August of 1930, I went back to Montreal as a young lady. This time, it was

to inform my Aunt that I was about to enter the congregation of the Assumption Sisters in Nicolet. This information really pleased her, for right away, she answered: "Oh, I'm so happy! I know that these Sisters really love and revere our Blessed Mother!" I felt delighted that she understood my Call to follow Christ in that religious order.

On February 17, 1933, after my first vows, I returned to Montreal on my way to Alberta where I had been given a teaching assignment. At the Motherhouse of the Missionary Sisters, Mother Delia greeted me warmly once more. She took me to the novitiate to meet some of our cousins there. All day, I had her full attention, as if I was the most important person in the world! It was wonderful for me to hear all about the missions, but it did not tempt me at all. My Aunt was the missionary, I was the teacher.

Luckily for me then that I did not know this would be our last meeting ever. When I came back in 1939, I was broken-hearted to hear that she was too ill to receive visitors! Her kind words, her deep smile had been so comforting to me as a religious!

In 1941, I was notified of her decease. It was not until 1944 that I had the good fortune to return to Outremont at the Motherhouse to visit the small oratory where her heart had been preciously encased. I sat down in her old chair to pray God with her... I felt her presence there with me in the room where she had prayed and suffered for so many years.

(to be continued on page 10)

This year the Propagation of the Faith throughout Canada have as theme: "Go say I love you to the whole world!" It is addressed particularly to Christian families. That is why today I'd love you to meet a wonderful mother and wife who is building up her family on those strong love ties that bond a family together. I'm speaking of Anne Chirwa.

Anne Mduzi Chirwa is my first Zambian friend. She is the wife of John Chirwa and the mother of three beautiful and healthy children, Linda (7), Vicky (5) and a son Chiza (3). They lived in our house for some time while waiting for their immigration papers to enter the USA to join John studying at Atlanta University in Georgia.

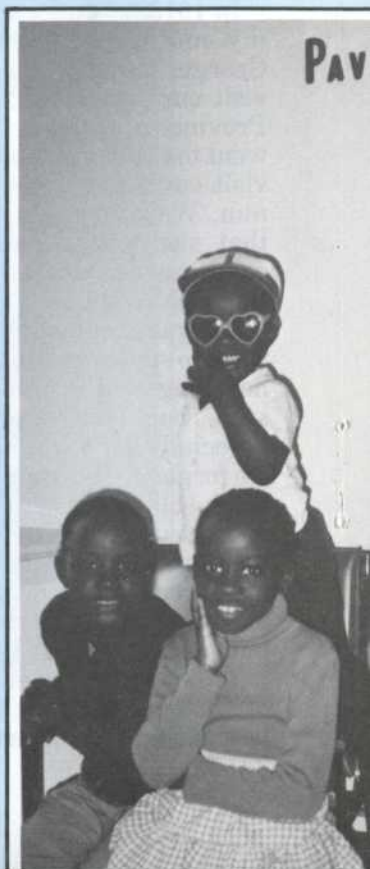
Anne confided to me that she was born in a small Zambian village in Central Africa. They lived a simple life style like all southern Zambians. Her father tilled the land for their vegetables and raised cattle to provide for his family. Her mother saw to the household chores such as fetching the water from the village well each day with heavy buckets. Her father, originally from Malawi spoke Chitumbuka while her mother, a Zambian, communicated in the Tonga dialect. The children spoke some of each dialect but soon learned English at school.

After attending classes in the primary school of their village, like many other girls, Anne was sent to a boarding school, St. Joseph's Secondary in Monze, run by the Irish Sisters. There she learned the rudiments of keeping house as well as her school subjects.

Go Say I Love

At that time, the girls had free boarding and lodging at the school while the parents were asked to pay for the school uniforms and a school fee amounting to about \$20 US.

On completing High School, Anne had to comply to the law binding all youth for National Service. That meant 6 months in a military camp undergoing military training. Afterwards, she took a commercial course where she learned typing and stenography for clerical work. In no time at all,



(seated) Vicky
and Linda (back)
Chiza, with Mrs.
Anne Chirwa

Love You...

she found a job in the government service. At 23 Anne Mduzi married John Chirwa. They both looked upon married life as a building up together of a home with a family. Linda, her first daughter was born in Winnipeg when John and family were there on a study leave. Vicky and Anne's son Chiza were born in Lusaka. Anne looks on her husband with love and respect. "He is the head of our family", she says. "But I am consulted on all important matters as a wife should be."

Anne's children hear their

Daddy talk Tumbuka at home; they themselves speak Chi-nyanja or English. That is why little Chiza won everybody's heart because we could all communicate with him in English. "Every Sister is my best friend", he'd claimed! Later on, these children will learn that Zambia counts around 70 dialects. They will also learn to what tribe they belong according to their ancestors. They will hear about the customs of each tribe, though many will be forgotten by then, because their country is changing fast. They will see that some men in the tribe of their parents, the Watumbuka and the Watonga have several wives as there is still polygamy in the country, in the far off villages.

Anne believes sincerely in her vocation as a mother and wife. She gives full time attention to her children with whom she is forming a tight bond of love. She knows that little Chiza and his sisters will probably have a university education one day. They will be free to choose their career, their marriage partners and the place to live in. But Anne is hoping and praying that one of her children will become a religious, "like you Sisters", she says.

I looked in the eyes of Anne and saw that glow that springs from love. Anne—to many of us MIC's—is really and truly a model mother. She perfectly brings out the message of "Go and say I love you to the whole world!" She is happy, her children are happy, her husband is happy!

Therese LeBlanc, MIC



(cont. from page 7)

Then in 1987, two MIC Sisters from Montreal came to meet the Tetreault descendants. Srs. Antoinette Castonguay and Therese LeBlanc updated us on the latest events regarding the process undertaken by the community toward a possible beatification. They gathered all the nieces and nephews, together with Rose, my married sister and myself. They gave us the history of their missions all over the world. We were astounded that one of our relatives, one of us Tetreault's had done such fantastic work in the spreading of the Kingdom of God! We then understood why these Sisters claimed that Delia had a heart as big as the world!

Finally, at the end of the same year and later, I had the opportu-

nity to spend many days with "my Sisters", at Pont-Viau. Many times I went up to the tomb where her remains are reverently kept to pray God with her. I prayed in the beautiful chapel she herself had supervised during the construction. I prayed with many elderly Sisters who had known her. In all of them, I saw the spirit she had handed down as their way of life. I joined in their enthusiasm for the mission of the Church.

The Aunt that I had classified as a saint is on the way to being proclaimed one by the entire Church as her writings and life are being studied in Rome. I wonder whether I'll be there when that happens?

Angeline Tetreault, s.a.s.v.



The crypt where the remains of Mother Delia are kept in Pont-Viau.

Kiss The Soil For Me

It was on September 8, 1909, eighty years ago, that six young Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception first left Montreal for Canton, China. They were going to the first mission of this newly founded congregation (1902)... the first Canadian missionary community of religious women. It was a great event for the Canadian Church. There would be many such departures to follow.



Sr. Marie de Loyola, (RIP) with the dedicated virgins in Canton, China

MIC Archives

In her first letter to her Sisters, two days after the departure, Mother Delia Tetreault wrote expressing her concern and love for each one. "When you arrive there, kneel and kiss this soil that you will make fruitful by uniting your little prayers, your little sacrifices, your little works to those of your great Leader, Jesus. With you, in spirit, I too, will kiss this Chinese soil and ask it to be hospitable to you!"

Many letters were to follow during the next 50 years between the 172 MIC Sisters who worked in China and their Motherhouse. Sixty five of these elderly Sisters

are still alive, cherishing memories of a China they loved, of a China which they left reluctantly. The events of the past months have revived the concern we all have for a China which has evolved, a China which is suffering, a China which is still closed to missionary enterprise. But we MIC's still have a foothold on the Mainland, in Kowloon, Hong Kong, where we work.

The following facts may be of interest to you, showing the various mission posts and activities that were carried on there by the MIC Sisters.

Opened in

Closed in

1909	Canton, China	1951
	Foundling Homes. School for Chinese. Boarding School for foreigners.	
1913	Shek Lung, China	1952
	Leprosarium.	
1927	Leao Yuan Sien, Manchuria	1951
	Dispensary. Apostolic School. Beginning of the Novitiate of Our Lady of the Rosary. Catechumenate. Foundling Home. Orphanage. Workrooms. Home for the Aged and Crippled.	
1928	Tsungming, China	1948
	Foundling Home. Orphanage. Apostolic School. Workroom. Novitiate for the Theresian Sisters.	
1929	Tsung Shing, China	1931
	Foundling Home.	
1929	Pamientcheng, Manchuria	1947
	Dispensary. Catechumenate. Orphanage. Old-Age Home.	
1929	Tong Shan, China	1931
	Dispensary. Training of Virgin Catechists.	
1930	Fakou, Manchuria	1947
	Dispensary.	
1931	Taonan, Manchuria	1943
	Dispensary. Boarding School.	
1931	Szeping kai, Manchuria	1953
	Novitiate of Our Lady of the Rosary Sisters. Apostolic School. Dispensary.	
1932	Tong Leao, Manchuria	1947
	Dispensary. Catechumenate.	



Sr. Ste Alexandrine, (RIP) with a dying man on the streets of Canton

MIC Archives

1933	Paitchengtze, Manchuria	1953
	Dispensary. Catechumenate.	
1933	Koungtchouling, Manchuria	1947
	Dispensary. Catechumenate.	
1934	Suchow, China	1948
	Dispensary.	
1938	Fong Tsun, China	1946
	Hospital for the Mentally ill.	
1947	To Kom Hong, China	1951
	Foundling Home.	
1949	Shameen, China	1952
	Private Courses in English and French. Catechumenate.	
N.B. (British Territory on Mainland China.)		
1927	Hong Kong	
	Schools. Social and Pastoral work. Clinic. Catechumenate.	
1980	The last MIC Chinese Sister.	
	Marie-Lucia Ho, came out of China to Canada.	



JAPAN

Sr. Janet Delisle of Worcester, Massachusetts, USA, now working in Japan has recently celebrated her diamond jubilee in religious life. For this occasion, the Sisters offered her a trip to Canton, China, where she had taught for 13 years as a young Sister before the revolution.

Sr. Janet was accompanied by Sr. Nicole Beaulieu and Sr. Madeleine Delorme. She had the joy to meet some of her former students of 40 years ago. She visited her old school, Holy Spirit School, now a public school. As she walked about the corridors, the memories of all the little girls she had taught came back. Quite a few of them came to meet her. Some had been in the orphanage when the Sisters had to leave China in 1951. One lady wrote a note of thanks for her unexpected visit. "I feel so happy to see you. In the past, you religious women taught us when we were children, now we are grown ups.

Some of the Sisters are now in heaven; only a few are still alive, but they are too old to come and visit us. I know you are over 80, but you managed to come back to visit us. This is really a grace of God". For Sr. Janet, this journey to her first mission was indeed a grace of God!





PHILIPPINES

Sr. Yolanda Oducado was our MIC "candidate" at the Mission Sending Ceremonies held at the Villa San Miguel on February 24. Mass, celebrated by Cardinal Jaime Sin, was followed by a despedida merienda offered by the Cardinal in honor of this year's candidates for the missions from the different religious communities in the Archdiocese of Manila. During the offertory procession, Sr. Yolanda carried a symbolic offering from our MIC Community—a harp beautifully made out of cardboard by Sr. Milagros Duque. Sr. Yolanda's heart surely continues to sing as she prepares for her mission in Malawi, Central Africa.

TAIWAN

Sr. Nancy Vy-So, formerly of Manila and Toronto, who had been studying Mandarin these last months, has now started to work in the parish of Holy Rosary, in Wanhua, a suburb of Taipei. This parish is under the charge of the C.I.C.M. Fathers. Her work will bring her there 5 days a week. She will:

- help animate the different parish groups
- help create and bring about a Christian community spirit among the parishioners
- help animate the liturgical life of the parish community
- visit families, teach catechism and be available for spiritual direction to the parishioners, helping them grow as a people of God.



MIC MISSION NEWS and our Promoters

Among the several promoters of our mission publication, we'd like you to meet Mrs Purificacion Tuazon of Scarborough, Ont. Puring, as we call her, has participated in our mission effort by finding subscribers as far away as California, and all over Toronto. Congratulations, Mrs Tuazon!



Mr. Ricardo S. Josue, Sr. Theresa LeBlanc, MIC, and Mrs Purificacion Tuazon in Toronto.

In Memoriam

On April 19, 1989, Sr. Antonietta C. Ortiz passed away peacefully at the MIC Provincial House, Greenhills, Manila Philippines at the age of 35, after 7 years of religious life. We invite our readers to join in prayer with us.

October, Month of the Missions

YES! I want to help the missions this month. I have found a new subscriber to **MIC MISSION NEWS**.

Name: _____

Address: _____

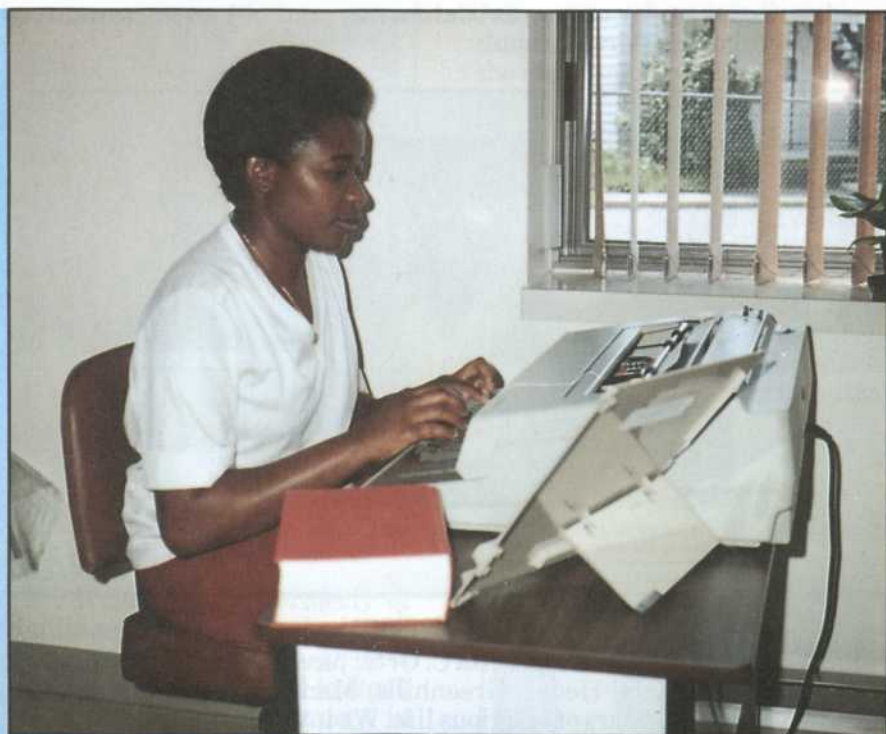
_____ Code: _____

My own name is: _____

Address: _____

_____ Code: _____

(I hope my little effort will help the MIC Sisters).



Joy is a sign of gratitude breaking into a song of praise. (D.T.)

MIC MISSION NEWS

*I wish to subscribe to MIC MISSION NEWS
published by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
P.O. Box 157, Laral-des-Rapides
Laral, P.Q., Canada H7N 4Z4*

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTAL CODE

\$4.00 (1 year) \$7.00 (2 years) \$10.00 (3 years) \$50.00 (life) \$4.00 (U.S.A.)