

Series 18, No. 3
May-June, 1991

MIC

MISSION NEWS



THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Profiles of peacemakers

"Nothing you do for peace is insignificant!"

Most of us are already involved in working for peace. By our prayers and by our actions, we are "peacemakers"—persons sent to give and receive God's peace.

Never have peacemakers been more important than during this time! 'Instruments of peace'—to this we are called. We strive to respond faithfully because Jesus offers us His peace as a gift from God.

This issue of MIC MISSION NEWS reminds us that there are a variety of ways to share Christ's peace with God's people. It tells us how our missionaries around the world help to bring this task into families and communities, working to do away with barriers which divide and separate people from one another.

In mission lands and in their own countries—from Canada to Bolivia, from Japan to Africa, MIC Sisters are privileged to work hand in hand with a host of peacemakers. With joy and perseverance, they seek to build a better world, taking initiatives to share faith, love and hope with people around them. Quietly and assiduously, they serve and minister, effecting changes of heart, with God's grace. Together, they continue to search for peace, even as they look forward with confidence to the day when the resources of the earth will be devoted to promoting the well-being of all peoples.

Ma. Anthea Raso, MIC

Cover photos: C. Belley, MIC (Bolivia)
'Peace' is taking joy in one's skill and artistry.

MIC MISSION NEWS
a bimonthly published by
the Missionary Sisters of
the Immaculate Conception.
Issued June, 1991

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

Editor
Ma. Anthea Raso, MIC

Assisting Staff
Helene Labelle, MIC
Christine Desrochers

Circulation
Lucille La Salle, MIC
and MIC team
René Cournoyer

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.

In the footsteps of Delia Tetreault

The first experience of an MIC international scholasticate is being lived in Longueuil, Province of Québec.

In this evangelical and multi-cultural fraternity, the charism of Delia Tetreault is alive and active, inspiring in us the same thrust for thanksgiving and missionary zeal.

I share this same privilege with ten other Sisters. Eight are from Bolivia, Cuba, Haïti, Madagascar, Peru and the Philippines. The Sisters accompanying us and coordinating our activities are two Canadians, Sr. Monique Préfontaine, Responsable, and Sr. Michelle Payette, and a Japanese, Sr. Theresia Kyoko Takahashi.



The Scholastics enliven an MIC gathering with a Canadian square dance.
(Photo: H. Turcotte, MIC)

The world and the Church are experienced as one. Beyond our human and cultural differences, we recognize the one God who has brought us together and who in-

spires us to fulfill the objective: "to live and grow in the love and life of Christ by deepening our spirituality of thanksgiving for the missions."



MIC Sisters at the International Scholasticate

1st row, L. to R.: Gloria Perez (Cuba), Rossina Bautista (Philippines), Carmen Uipan (Peru);

2nd row, L. to R.: Lorna Erickson (Philippines), Berthine Razanadrasoa (Madagascar), Emmanuela Vincent (Haiti), Francine Ravaoarilala (Madagascar), Ana Martha Torrez (Bolivia) (Photo: M.-P. Sanfaçon, MIC)

We are pursuing intensive preparation before our final commitment to God through the MIC Institute. Even now I see how the Lord is molding us to be His missionaries following in the footsteps of Delia Tetreault.

Our common lived experiences are manifold: Household chores, prayers, conferences, sessions, and different other activities. Whether we cook, pray or play, the challenges of a multicultural community are necessarily encountered. One never knows what menu will appear at table. Turns are taken by two Sisters in preparing the meals. Depending on who are the cooks of the day, it can be at times a combination of Cuban and Haitian dishes, or Malagasy and Peruvian, etc. All are a rich and delicious surprise! Our taste buds have become multicultural as well!

To facilitate communication, there are two groups—English and French. Often, there is confusion. Indeed, a language barrier is experienced, but we also realize that there is more to words... we are learning to listen attentively and understand more clearly.

Through formal and informal sharing on one's family, home and country, our horizons have broadened. We have become more sensitive and concerned for each others' people, their richness and their struggles. Indeed it feels like the world has become one family to love and to embrace!

A variety of sessions are given to us dealing with relevant topics for our mission life. All provide

means of greater awareness of who we are and of what we are in relation to God and to His people. This deeper awareness moves us to reaffirm with the words of Mother Foundress: "Our vocation is sublime!" And we recognize that we face a challenging responsibility.

Our ten-month stay at the International Scholasticate allows us to be involved in the different apostolates undertaken by the MIC Sisters in Longueuil and in Montreal. In these apostolic activities, peoples of all walks of life are encountered; their kindness and hearty welcome of our services are greatly appreciated!

When I was first captivated by the love, life and person of Jesus, I wished that one day I could walk on the land where He had walked. Today my wish is granted—not in Jerusalem, but here in Canada. The life of our beloved Foundress, her history and heritage lived to this day by her daughters, my Sisters, who come from all over the world, have made this a reality.

How can we express our appreciation to the countless hearts and hands involved in the realization of this project? To all of you, dear Sisters here in Canada, who have showered upon us your love and witnessed to what it means to be Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception—you have our deep gratitude. Our hearts beat as one with you in a symphony of one long Magnificat!

Lorna Erickson, MIC
(Philippines)

Small gestures of love

Although I'm not getting any younger, my eyes continue to see the existing needs here in Cochabamba and my heart invites me to make it a duty to do something and to hold firmly to the task.

Visiting prisoners has always been one of my favorite occupations. At present, the women I visit are of all ages and of all social conditions. I'm convinced that 'hope gives new life' because every time I visit the prison, the best news that a prisoner can give me is that her case will soon be settled.

My friend, Rosa, a nurse in her thirties who has been in prison for a few years, asked me one day if I could provide her with a Bible. This being her first contact with the 'Word of God', it affected her deeply. Many an hour was spent daily in reading and pondering over the Holy Scriptures—and she acquired new courage and strength to carry on.

The ending of the prison term of certain prisoners gives an added dimension to my work. At their request, I call on them at their homes to help them make a good start. One day as I walked along the street, I came across one of my 'good friends' who was radiant



At the Center, children partake of a good bowl of porridge.

with joy. Needless to say that I promised to see her at her own home.

Another area of concern is the great mortality rate of children in Bolivia. They are hospitalized because of undernourishment, but due to economic problems, they are not kept longer than a month. After having been discharged and returned to their family, the children soon suffer from malnutrition once again and many do not survive.

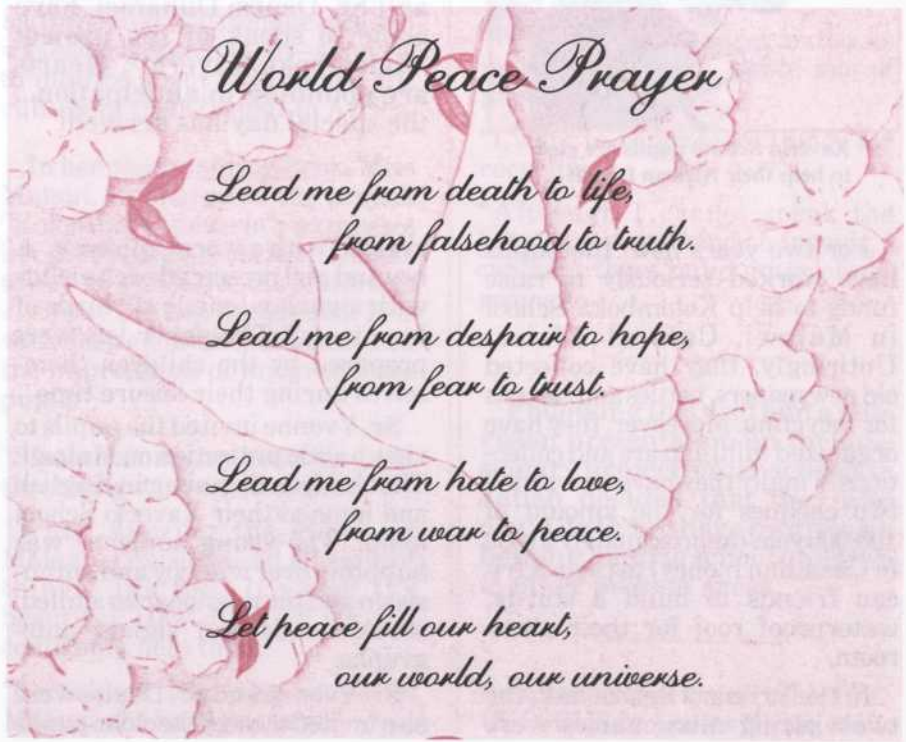
Aware of this problem, a group of women from Cochabamba volunteered to found a rehabilitation center. After some years of research and work to assure its continuity of services—the supply of food for the children and money for the salaries of employees—the Center started to function on a limited scale. Three small rooms are available with an open-air space and only seven children can be admitted at a time. Since its opening, about thirty children have recuperated fully and have returned to their homes.

When I arrived at Cochabamba, the group of volunteers invited me to join them. Ever since, I've shown great interest in the fate of

these little ones who, because of a lack of proper diet, attention and affection, do not develop like normal children. Once a week I report to the Center to accomplish the work of volunteers which is clearly specified—to execute the instructions of the psychologist who knows the needs of each child.

This gives you a glimpse of my pastoral ministry. I believe that it is necessary to improve the situation of the numberless poor in order to boost up their courage and morale. It is through these small gestures of love that attempts are made to help God's people in this humble corner of Bolivia.

Suzanne Longtin, MIC



World Peace Prayer

*Lead me from death to life,
from falsehood to truth.*

*Lead me from despair to hope,
from fear to trust.*

*Lead me from hate to love,
from war to peace.*

*Let peace fill our heart,
our world, our universe.*



Xaverio School pupils are glad to help their African friends.

For two years now, the pupils have worked seriously to raise funds to help Kolomboka School in Malawi, Central Africa. Untiringly, they have collected old newspapers, bottles and cartons for recycling. Moreover, they have organized mini-bazars and collections. Finally they have forwarded two cheques for the amount of 100,000yens (approximately \$1600 in Canadian money) to their African friends to build a sturdy, waterproof roof for their classroom.

In the Primary School hall, the two visiting missionaries were

Reaching out

Do you recall how years back MIC Sisters visited schools to speak about the Holy childhood? At present, missionary animation is still carried on by our missionaries throughout the world. Today, Louisa Nicole, MIC, extends an invitation for us to attend the activity at Xaverio School in Koriyama, Japan. Two MIC missionaries from Africa, Sr. Yvonne Ayotte and Sr. Denise Duhamel, have come to speak of the project "Kolomboka-Xaverio". Hearts are pounding in anticipation... the special day has arrived!

greeted with a warm applause. A boy and girl presented each visitor with a garland made of "birds of happiness". The paper leis were prepared by the children themselves during their leisure time.

Sr. Yvonne invited the pupils to view a slide projection on Malawi. The children then sang in English and intoned their Xaverio School hymn. The young audience was bubbling over with joy and enthusiasm and the missionaries smiled, shook hands and signed autographs.

Sr. Yvonne and Sr. Denise were also invited to meet the older pupils



L. to R.: Sr. Louisa Nicole, school directress, interprets in Japanese the mission messages of Srs. Yvonne Ayotte and Denise Duhamel.

in their classrooms. What precious moments! With great pride, the students read the questions they had prepared. This unique occasion was eagerly anticipated—a chance to inquire about the life and the culture of their friends in Africa.

In her classroom log-book, Miss Matsui, in charge of the project “Kolomboka-Xaverio”, expresses her personal discoveries: “Thanks to our two visitors, the children’s vision of life has broadened. It is with deep emotion that I gathered the impressions of my grade-two pupils”:

“Since morning my heart has been throbbing with excitement.”

“When viewing the slides on Malawi, I experienced all sorts of things. It’s fun! It’s sad! It’s beautiful! How difficult! Oh, if I could only help them!”

“I realized that the people of Malawi are hard workers.”

“They make their own bricks to build their school! It must take them a long time!”

“The children lack paper and books in their schools. I waste lots of paper!”

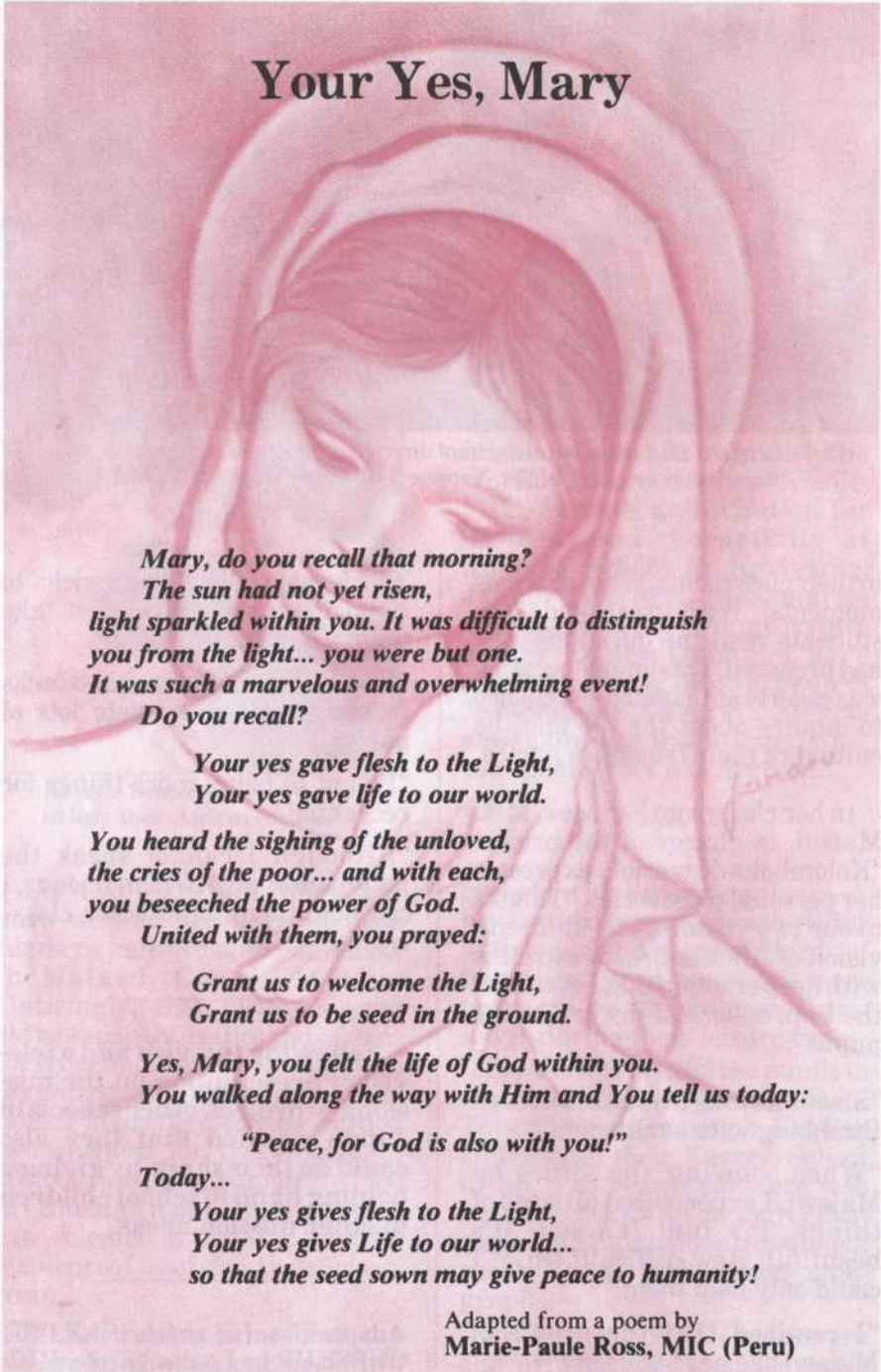
“I want to bring more things for recycling!”

“Although I cannot speak the language of my African friends, I can help them build other classrooms.”

Following this visit and a television presentation on the missionary project, other schools in Japan decided that they also could do their share by giving a helping hand to school children in other mission areas.

Adapted from an article in *LE PRÉCURSEUR* by Louisa Nicole, MIC

Your Yes, Mary



*Mary, do you recall that morning?
The sun had not yet risen,
light sparkled within you. It was difficult to distinguish
you from the light... you were but one.
It was such a marvelous and overwhelming event!
Do you recall?*

*Your yes gave flesh to the Light,
Your yes gave life to our world.*

*You heard the sighing of the unloved,
the cries of the poor... and with each,
you beseeched the power of God.*

United with them, you prayed:

*Grant us to welcome the Light,
Grant us to be seed in the ground.*

*Yes, Mary, you felt the life of God within you.
You walked along the way with Him and You tell us today:*

"Peace, for God is also with you!"

Today...

*Your yes gives flesh to the Light,
Your yes gives Life to our world...
so that the seed sown may give peace to humanity!*

Adapted from a poem by
Marie-Paule Ross, MIC (Peru)

How to live a long life

Having returned to Canada after 29 years of missionary work in Haiti, S. Jeanne d'Arc continues to be involved in her task of teaching the Bible in spite of her 74 years. Because of her active and joyful specialization, she was nicknamed "Biblical Mother". Happy, she confides her secret: "To improve one's Christian knowledge by personal readings, occasional updating and sessions—this is partly my secret to live a long life in its fullness. And why not yours, too, perhaps?"

In Matthew 18,20, it is stated: "For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them." Yes, it is certainly in the name of Jesus that every Monday afternoon, a group of parishioners from St. Dorothy's, Laval, gather to study the Word of God.

All this began on a Mission Sunday some time ago. The pastor of the parish had invited me to bear witness of my lived experience in Haiti, my adopted land. Filled with happy memories, this was an occasion for me to emphasize the Bible Circles which were so greatly appreciated by the Christians in Haiti. Spontaneously, I offered to share my knowledge

of the Bible with those who might be interested. The suggestion echoed in the minds and hearts of some of the people in the audience.

Without hesitation, a first encounter was set for the following Monday. Twelve persons turned up. What a great beginning! This responded to a secret desire of long ago, I was told later.

In Luke, 2,38, the prophetess Anna is presented to us as a woman of God whose mission knew no bounds. All of 84 years, she praised God and spoke of the Child to all who awaited the Messiah. Like her I have a taste to speak of the Lord, through the Holy Scriptures, to all those who come to me.

At our first meeting, the Gospel of the day challenged the persons present. Luke spoke of the choice of Jesus: "When day came, he summoned his disciples and picked out twelve of them; he called them 'apostles'." (Lk 6,13) They also had become apostles. And as time went on, the number of participants increased.

Although I reside at PontViau, the distance created no problem. Every week a volunteer from the parish provided transportation for the "Biblical Mother" and for other members of the group as well.



Sr. Jeanne d'Arc Nolin (2nd row, 2nd fr. R.), with members of the Bible Circle of St. Dorothy. (Photo: H. Turcotte, MIC)

Since five consecutive years now, our biblical meetings have been holding fast. A very lively cell of the Church has become a family. After these years of weekly encounters, our team is characterized by a great enthusiasm, a thirst for God, a deep friendship, faithfulness and involvement.

And that's not all! Last year I was requested to give a helping hand for night courses at the "Café Chrétien" in Laval. A programme was prepared by the permanent deacon, M. Marcel Levert, who made it a point that the objective of the "Café" be kept alive—"to nourish the faith through the Word of God". Together we experience 'gifts' the place offers to all—it is an oasis of fraternity and peace.

Indeed, wherever we are, the Holy Scriptures bring us together and revive our joy of living. A group of adults and young people, thirsting for God and eager to become more deeply acquainted with the Christian faith, meet on Tuesday evenings to study, reflect and share on the Book of Revelation.

Our motto for the year is: "Look, I am standing at the door, knocking. If one of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come in to share his meal, side by side with him." (Rev 3,20) Yes, each Tuesday night, He knocks... we open the door and a superb biblical banquet is served us!

Jeanne d'Arc Nolin, MIC

In Katete mission... never a dull moment !

Parish activities in Katete mission are not lacking!

The gardens have already been hoed and the maize planted. One of our women parishioners stated recently: "I think that I have said as many 'Hail Mary's' as the number of maize grains that I have planted in my garden." A member of the Legion of Mary, her faith is sound and vigorous.

At our parish, the villagers display a great love and respect for the Virgin Mary. There are now 19 Praesidia and 2 Curiae of the Legion of Mary.

During the month of October, four statues of the Virgin Mary were carried around the villages in the parish and the rosary was recited every evening in either one of the villages. Wherever the Blessed Mother was carried, the Christians were happy to welcome her with joy and make a small contribution.

In November, 56 couples who had lived together for years but had not received the sacrament of matrimony, came for a week of instructions. Their union was blessed at the church in their children's presence. Great was the



The youth choir provides lively singing at liturgical celebrations.



Sr. Marguerite Legault assists catechists to plan their lessons.

joy of these people who had not received the Eucharist for years. To hear them relate in simple words the interior peace which they experienced, created a deep impression upon those present.

To respond to the desire of our Apostolic Administrator, Mgr John Roche, S.P.S., who wishes that much time and attention be dedicated to our youth, week-ends of prayer and of religious instructions have been offered to the

"Wawukirano" (Christian Parish Youth) of Katete and of the outstations of the parish. At one such event held recently, more than 700 young people attended. Teachers cooperated fully as well. On their part, the participants expressed the desire that more meetings of the kind be repeated. It is wonderful to see the youth! It keeps one young at heart!

Marguerite Legault, MIC

In Memoriam

A prayerful remembrance is requested for our Sister Jeanne Piché, MIC, who was called to her eternal reward on January 29, 1991, at the age of 89, and for our Sister Alice Pépin, MIC, who was called to her eternal reward on February 2, 1991, at the age of 86.

Both of our sisters had labored as missionaries in Africa for many years.

Missionary Intentions 1991

May

That Local Churches live their communion by sharing material and human resources.

June

That the Church in Asia be able to announce the Gospel freely and fruitfully.

YOU COULD HELP OUR MISSIONS IN MANY WAYS

- by subscribing to MIC MISSION NEWS
- by giving a gift subscription to a friend
- by donating a departure gift
- by supporting the works of the MIC Sisters through the use of annuities or with your will.

For further information, write or call:

Procure for the Missions
Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception
121 Maplewood Avenue
Outremont, Qc., Canada
H2V 2M2
Tel. (514) 274-5691

MIC MISSION NEWS

*I wish to subscribe to MIC MISSION NEWS
published by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
P.O. Box 157, Laval-des-Rapides
Laval, 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.)



Mission is weaving... helping people to weave a better fabric of life.

If you wish to communicate with the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, here are some addresses:

The Generalate
121 Maplewood Avenue
Outremont, Quebec
Canada H2V 2M2

MIC Sisters
236 Glynn Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1K 1S3

MIC Sisters
2950 Prince Edward Street
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada V5T 3N3

Provincial House
P.O. Box 47
Mzimba, Malawi
Central Africa

MIC Sisters
P.O. Box 510107
Chipata, Zambia
Central Africa

Provincial House
P.O. Box 468
1502 Greenhills
Metro Manila, Philippines

Provincial House
Tak Oi Convent
8 Tsz Wan Shan Road
Kowloon, Hong Kong

Provincial House
13-16 Fukazawa 8
Chome Setagaya-ku
Tokyo 158, Japan

MIC Sisters
30, Lane 148
Fu-Hsing South Road,
Section 2
Taipei 10641, Taiwan