

MIC MISSION NEWS

Series 19, No. 2
March-April 1992



PEOPLE OF HOPE

*TODAY, as never before,
the Church has the opportunity of bringing the Gospel, by witness and by word, to all people and nations. I see the dawning of a new missionary age, which will become a radiant day bearing an abundant harvest, if all Christians, missionaries and young Churches in particular, respond with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time.*

*John Paul II
Redemptoris Missio*

Missionaries discover that Christ's invitation to mission comes in the midst of the joys and struggles of life. For them, hope in the face of hardships remains a mission message... a hope enlivened by the growing realization among God's people that mission is for all.

Photo credits

Front: M.-P. Charbonneau, m.i.c. (Madagascar)

Back: R. Guay, m.i.c. (Chipata, Zambia)

Mr. Arkanjelo Banda (parish catechist) and his wife, Catherine, anticipate a bountiful crop!

MIC MISSION NEWS

a bimonthly published by
the MISSIONARY SISTERS OF
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Issued: April, 1992

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

Directress

Micheline Marcoux, m.i.c.

Editor

Ma. Anthea Raso, m.i.c.

Assisting Staff

Helene Labelle, m.i.c.
Christine Desrochers

Circulation

Lucille La Salle, m.i.c.
and MIC team
René Cournoyer

Printed by "Imprimatic"

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

Subscription rates

1 year	\$5.00
Support (1 year)	\$10.00
3 years	\$14.00
Life	\$75.00

Change of Address

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

Health care opens doors

How difficult it is for me to realize that I'm finally in Africa!

I would like to share with you my first impressions and experiences.

At home in Katete

Malawi is a beautiful country. Katete is breathtaking with trees, flowers and mountains in the surroundings. The nights are spectacular. Without electricity, the only outside light is the moon and the entire sky lighted with stars. When the nights are cloudy, then it is pitch dark.

The Malawian people are very special. They always have a broad smile. Their singing is loud and clear. My first night in Katete was without sleep as I could clearly hear African singing and beating of drums from the nearby villages.

I also especially remember Palm Sunday when we gathered at a secondary school and received blessed palms. Then we all walked in a procession to the church singing in *Chitumbuka*, dancing and waving our palms. During the mass I was introduced to the parishioners (approximately 500 people). I went to the front of the altar and said "*Moniré mosé*" - "Hello everybody".

Primary Health Care

My work is very interesting. At the Katete mission hospital I am the coordinator of the Primary Health Care (PHC) division. I work with two other Malawian women who are trained homecraft workers. The PHC division involves working together with the community in creating a healthier population.

The main problems in this area are lack of food and poor sanitation. In a ten kilometer radius, our health services are given to a population of approximately 60,000 people.



Mother and child are first recipients of health care.



Pauline Barrette, with young friends in Katete.

Home visits in villages

One homecraft worker, Ivy, and I cycle to surrounding villages carrying on our backs a cool box filled with vaccines, audio-visual aids for health teaching and immunization cards for mother and child.

Leaving early in the morning, we spend the day going from hut to hut for tetanus toxoid vaccines for women aged 15-45 years and immunization of all children. The villages to be visited are many; we go at least twice a week.

I feel I am getting to know the Malawian people, their way of living and working. Also, my Chitumbuka is improving - if I may say so myself!

Growth-monitoring clinics

There are three growth monitoring clinics situated in a central area. Four other health care workers and I go monthly to these clinics. Mothers from surrounding villages come to have their children weighed and receive immunization. Supplementary feeding for children below normal weight, pre-natal care and health education are also provided. Up to 500 people attend a clinic.

Promotion of good nutrition

I am also in charge of the Nutrition Rehabilitation Unit (NRU) at the hospital. The NRU is designed to promote practical teaching of good nutrition. Both

mother and child are admitted to this unit and stay for an average of four months. During this time another worker, Monica, and I educate the mothers on the importance of good nutrition.

Each NRU mother has a chore such as gathering firewood, cooking and keeping the surroundings clean. This helps to affirm the mother's feelings of self-worth through active participation in the improvement of her child's health.

I am trying hard to work with the families most highly at risk. They suffer more than half the number of deaths of children under the age of 5. We see to it that regular follow-up is made and each child is referred to the nearest growth monitoring centre. This is one part of my

work in which I can really see the improvement of a child's health.

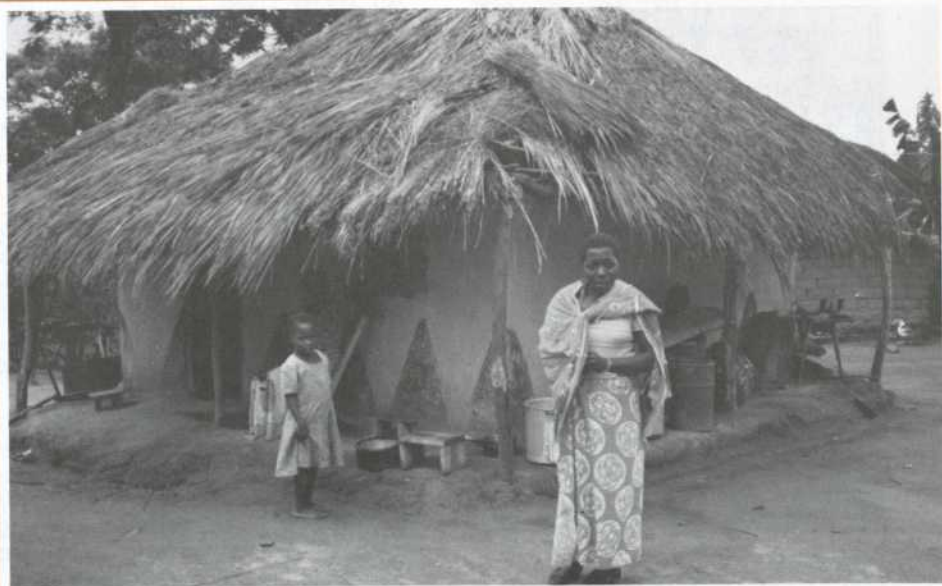
Working with the people

The MIC Sisters are quite supportive and they make me feel very welcome. Together with Malawian health workers and community leaders, we look for ways to help the poorest families so that they are able to become more self-reliant.

I don't know if I'm making a big difference... one thing sure, I am very happy to be working at "grassroots" level, directly with the people! Poverty is part of life here and yet the villagers appreciate life to the fullest. *

Pauline Barrette
Lay missionary

Home visits bring health care to isolated families.



H. Turcotte, m.i.c.

The mission fire alight in us



Partners in mission: Sr. Nicole Joly (center) and parishioners in Joliette.

As soon as I arrived from Madagascar, my fellow parishioners set a date to celebrate our reunion. There, at the Community Centre of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish (Joliette), more than 300 of my relatives and friends joined the celebration of the Eucharist and expressed their faith in the ongoing Mission of Christ which goes on. I let them speak for themselves.

Nicole, you took a big step, indeed, to give hope and share God's love with our brothers and sisters in Madagascar. Your example challenges us to 'live out a mission together'. You responded to the invitation; you lived

out the mission in a foreign land, far away from your loved ones. We have walked with you through this challenging experience.

The missionary life glows with powerful radiance. Your witness enlightens us all. We believe that our calls are different, and yet, parallel. We share with you a mission of light. There is no longer any distance between Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and Madagascar since we have the same goal: to 'Light up our world', through friendship, the best of gifts.

We are invited to grow and to become full of life. "Go to the ends of the earth and proclaim my Good News", says Jesus.



Mission joys in Madagascar shared with MIC Sisters.

We need models and witnesses; we ask you to remain part of our crew. With God as our companion, we will continue to pause from time to time in order to experience values which give meaning to our life.

No doubt you met many obstacles during your stay in Madagascar. Yet, as we see you serene and joyful, we know that all the space in your packsack was reserved for one great value: the love of God and of others.

Today is a lovely day for us, your parish family. When we sent you off on mission, we promised to be in solidarity with you. You proposed projects to us so that in a special way, we can help the people in your mission.

During these past years, we were one with you through our prayers and our commitment. We participated in your mission wholeheartedly because we love you.

We know that you can't keep this experience all to yourself. It is a special joy for us to be closely associated with your mission in Madagascar... our different parish groups are proud to be active participants. Today's event allows us to celebrate our common mission together.

If, for my family and fellow parishioners, I am a "messenger of the Good News", without doubt they are for me "good news"... peace, joy, love, gratitude, commitment!

My heartfelt congratulations and thanks to all! I am happy to be back in your midst! During the next three years, I also hope to share the Good News here in Quebec. Doubtless, we shall soon meet again. Let us carry on, keeping the mission fire ever alight in our hearts! *

Nicole Joly, m.i.c.

Credo

The condor winging its way in front of the sun
speaks to me of hope.
The light shining through the open door
tells me I am a son of Life.

My flute cheers up wandering nomads
and enlivens the feast in the village.

How true !... our earth is exploited, dried out,
our children go hungry,
our young are reported disappeared,
our leaders are powerless.

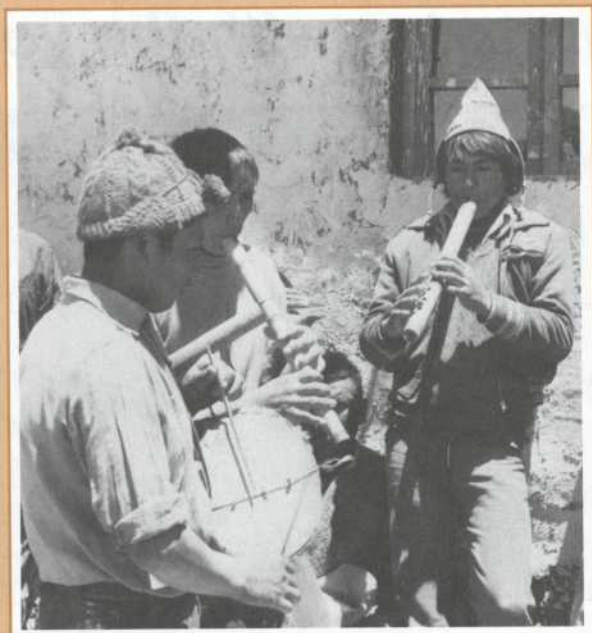
But... God was made man.
Man carried the Cross,
The cross became Life...
Life was transmitted to all nations.

To all I proclaim... I believe in the GOD of LIFE!

Your brother,

Roberto *





Text by Marie-Paul Ross, m.i.c.

Journeying with the youth



Sr. Zenaide Correia in Montreal's 'Little Portugal'.

It gives me joy to share with you my experience with the Portuguese community in Montreal. I thank the people and I thank God for all the gifts granted me in this apostolic undertaking.

A little Portugal in Montreal

Born in the Acores (a group of islands belonging to Portugal), I moved to Vancouver with my family as a teenager. In 1986, I joined the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

After having been away from the Anglo-Canadian-Portuguese

milieu for 4 1/2 years, I lived a new experience with the Portuguese community at Santa Cruz Parish in Montreal. There, I rediscovered in a new way the richness, joys and sorrows of my own people.

There are almost 50,000 Portuguese people living in Montreal. Many families have kept the traditions and values of their native land and try to teach this way of life to their children. Others adopt and adjust to new values and ways of living while remaining Portuguese deep within themselves. A small number gradually drift away from their roots to accept a different lifestyle.

Parish activities

At Santa Cruz Parish, I worked with young people together with two young women, Fatima and Inez. We accompanied 60 teenagers preparing for their profession of faith.

During our weekend encounters, the young participants were helped to deepen their faith through Bible study, prayer, reflection and sharing on their lived experience. The group was actively involved in planning the liturgy.

To journey with adolescents whose parents are immigrants, was a challenge. Actually, we shared a common reality with them since we too are children of immigrants. I felt deeply for them in the difficulties they met in their search for identity. I came to understand them better and to identify with them in their aspirations and hopes.

We are all God's people

One by one, I recall their names: Roberto, Sofia, Luis... I

am filled with delight at the memory of their wonderful qualities: simplicity, generosity, frankness, spontaneity. The more I knew them, the more I felt they needed to be encouraged, listened to and understood in their desires and goals. In some ways, Fatima, Inez and I attempted to help answer these needs.

These young people were part of my own journey and it made me happy to realize it. I discovered links with my young friends because of our cultural roots and our similar experiences as immigrants. I also became aware of the deep sense of gratitude shown in the way we shared and received one another's giftedness.

Moreover, my experience emphasized the fact that people of all nationalities form one body... we are *one* in the Kingdom of God. I am happy to have participated in this experience of life, communion and solidarity with God and His people. *

Zenaide Correia, m.i.c.

Missionary Intentions 1992

March

That more and more better trained catechists help in the New Evangelization.

April

That the Paschal mystery lead Christians to search for unity and favor dialogue and collaboration among all religions.

Reflections... Why a cicada sings



Flying up and away, what a wonderful day! Everything is so beautiful all around. Praise and thanks to the Lord!

What are you singing all day long?

Don't you know that I'm simply talking with the Lord? You humans also sing beautiful songs. Especially when you pray, I am delighted to make music and join in your hymns. What brings you here?

I come every year for a 'retreat'... a time to leave the 'old man' and to put on the 'new man'.

I also come every year. I change clothes - in a way, - as you put it, I come to leave the 'old man' and put on the 'new man'. Have you ever noticed my old clothes?

Go and look at the coffee bush: they are hanging there - everywhere!

Why do you take on new clothes?

After removing my old clothes, I joyfully praise the Lord, sing to Him with all my strength. I thus glorify Him with my life until my last breath. Moreover, I invite the whole of mankind to join me in giving thanks. See, I use all my might, from my head to the tips of my wings... trilling my songs to the Creator.



How come I never see you? Where do you hide?

Don't you know that I stand on the highest branch of a tree, singing at the top of my voice? I want my song to reach up to the Lord's presence. I only have this life to praise and thank Him.

You sing rather loudly... don't you feel worn out singing like that all day long?

*Not the least! Perhaps it is the expression of a deep and endless source of prayer. Indeed, the more I sing, the happier my spirit grows and the stronger I become. So I wish to sing even more. I sing with all my might, hoping that all the creatures of this world will make music with me... come, let us praise and thank the Lord together! **

Yolande Sin, m.i.c.

ZAMBIA

To the 'ends of the earth'!

I've just returned from a journey in the bush area, the farthest and most difficult I have ever undertaken since my arrival in Zambia. I went to a cluster of villages located at the very limit of the Diocese of Chipata.

A group of Christians preceded us, walking through long winding paths. The jeep which my companions and I used remained near a military camp. The remaining trip was made by canoe - one carved out of a tree. Paddling along, we travelled up two rivers.

After 5 hours, we stopped in a village. Other canoes came along with us. We took another 2 1/2 hours before reaching Kacindu, our destination.

The highlight of our trip and a first in the history of Kacindu, a mass was celebrated among joyful villagers in this remote mountain village.

Together, men, women and children sang: "Do not ask why we are happy. *Bambo* (Father) is with us!" All sang and danced in procession, towards the church - a small, and brand new church with an altar made of clay and bamboo. It was built without nails, cement or saw, but with a lot of good will.

Here, no one is baptized. Catechists from other villages had taught the new community a few prayers. So they sang and recited the rosary. In this isolated

village, there was rejoicing a good part of the night.

In the morning, the blessing of the church took place, followed by Mass. The entrance song began with: "There was no priest, no sacrifice... our lamentations were heard... *Bambo Simoni* is now here with us."

As I held a crucifix, I explained the meaning of the Mass. The rest went on in great simplicity and peacefulness. Catechists and Christians who came for the celebration animated the liturgy. A patron saint had to be chosen for the new church. We named it St. Odile of Kacindu (*Odilo Woyera Kacindu*).

A meeting with the village chief and speeches followed. Then, a dinner of elephant meat was graciously served to us. Farewells, with promises to re-

turn, took a long time; it became difficult to part.

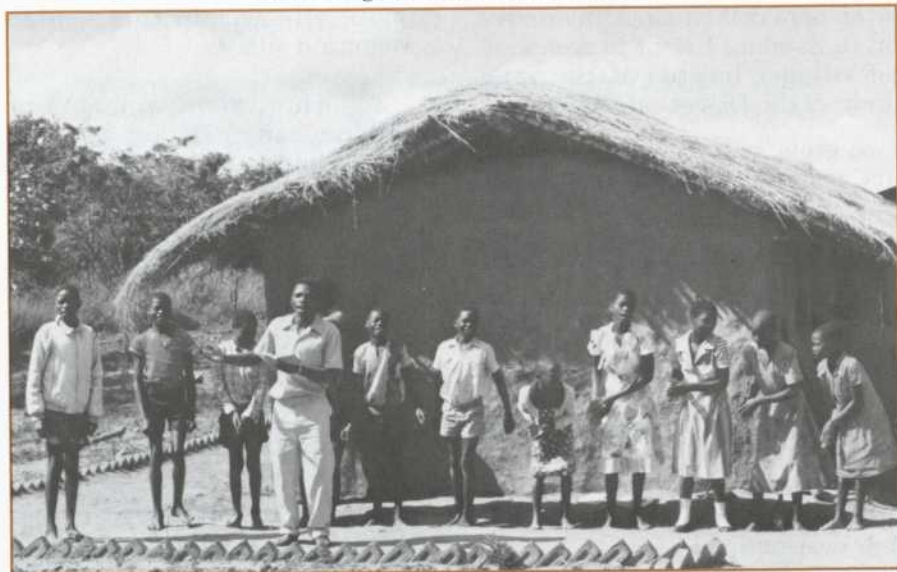
More farewells from the canoes and we were soon on our way back after such an unforgettable journey. I was overwhelmed with happiness, I cannot describe it! A very deep wish of mine had been fulfilled: to proclaim His name to the ends of the earth.

Indeed, how great is the Lord... He does marvelous things for us! *

Bambo Simoni

Editor's note: *Bambo Simoni* (Fr. Simon) has spent the past 34 years serving the local Church in Zambia, Central Africa.

Celebrating the birth of a new church!





Sr. Pauline Desroches and neighbors. (Philippines).

Bring them hope...

The MIC Sisters bring God's word and works to His people in 15 countries. You can help share the hope inspired by Our Lord's resurrection with those who might never hear of Him...

- by supporting our works through the use of annuities or with your will
- by donating a departure gift to Sisters leaving for the missions
- by subscribing to MIC MISSION NEWS

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

\$5.00 (1 year) \$10.00 (support 1 year) \$14.00(3 years) \$75.00 (life)



"The hope of the seed is in the harvest."

THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

If you wish to contact us, here are a few 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