

MIC MISSION NEWS

JULY-AUGUST 1995

YOUTH
TODAY

75th
anniversary
M.I.C. MISSIONARY PRESS
1920-1995

MIC MISSION NEWS

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CONTENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ <u>3</u>
Young People Today | ■ <u>22</u>
Mahereza |
| ■ <u>4</u>
Heading for the Year 2000 | ■ <u>24</u>
Tell the World of his Love |
| ■ <u>7</u>
Made in Taiwan | ■ <u>26</u>
Becoming Free |
| ■ <u>8</u>
Planet Mission | ■ <u>27</u>
Prayer for Vocations |
| ■ <u>12</u>
In Search of my Mission | ■ <u>28</u>
InterAction |
| ■ <u>14</u>
Mary Present in our Parish | ■ <u>29</u>
InterMissions |
| ■ <u>18</u>
Young People Tossed About | ■ <u>32</u>
Vocations: A Gift from God |
| ■ <u>20</u>
Missionary Parish Communities | |

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Young people from Quebec and the Philippines meet in Manila

Photo: P. Montreuil

YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

After listening to the morning newscast with its usual list of calamities, I was surprised today to hear the anchorman introduce a young woman who had "good" news to report. This was news indeed! So few voices are heard with announcements that warm our hearts!

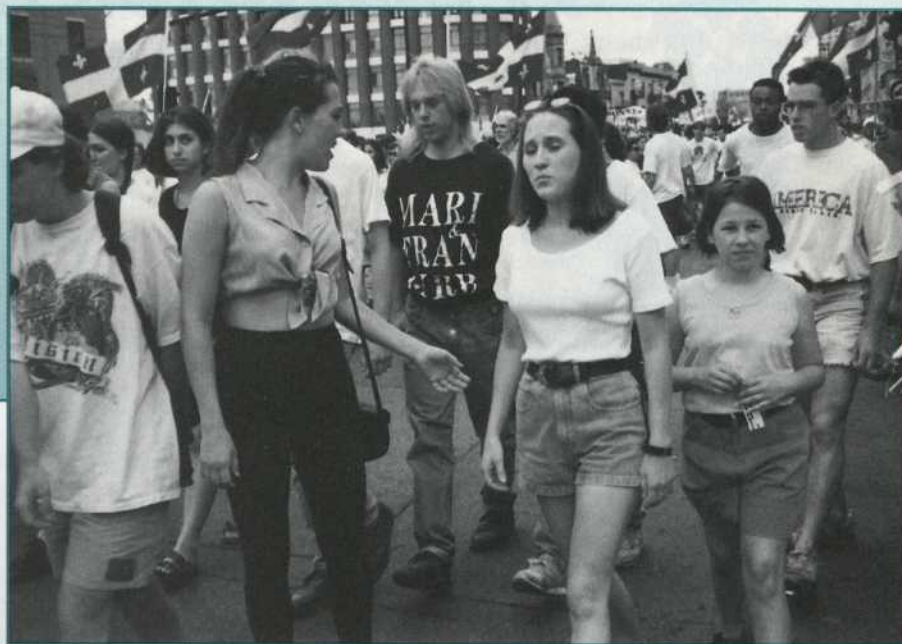


Photo: M. Marcoux, M.I.C.

Young people in a Montreal street at the St. John the Baptist parade

When you read a title like YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY, what is your reaction? You could be very interested because there are young people in your life and want to read what we have to say about them, or you are somewhat annoyed because you feel they take too much space in our society, or you are indifferent because there are few of them around you...

It all depends, of course, on the kinds of contacts you have with young people. True, some of them are drug addicts, many resent our society and reject the values that were dear to their parents and educators. Then we hear that the suicide rate in our Province is the highest in the country. And more often than not, these boys and girls for whom life holds no interest come from families of the upper bracket income of our society. Is this the image you have of young people?

This month, M.I.C. MISSION NEWS wants to show you another picture of young people, one that is good news, joyful news. You will read about young Canadians who spent weeks on the road, from coast to coast, inviting students to sign a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada in which they state their will to be responsible citizens. You will read about Kevin who is spending years of happiness in Taiwan helping migrant workers. Sylvie from Rwanda writes on the tragedy that struck her people and begs for help to erase these awful memories from the minds of those who were unwilling witnesses of hatred and death. After a search that led her as far as Africa, Guylaine finally found her mission among the mentally handicapped who are surrounded with love by the "Faith and Light" movement. Angela

from Peru sings of her new-found freedom, and thanks the loving hand that set her free; she now wants to commit herself to the worthy cause of justice. Young Japanese girls who went to Manila for the World Youth Day speak of the changes of attitudes this encounter has brought in their lives. Here in Canada, we see how a whole parish was mobilized by a benefit project for Haiti, involving youth groups as well as Golden Age members. The strange title 'Mahereza' tells a story of courage and commitment to improve the lives of people in a community of the Malagasy Republic. Finally, a huge rally on Mission recently held in Lourdes was attended by more than two thousand young people who prayed, sang and discovered the joy of being witnesses of Christ in their daily lives.

These are the good news we want to tell our readers. Yes, there are still many young men and women devoted to the ideals of fraternity, the sharing of their lives with others and the commitment to "an authentic adventure, such as that of the following of the Gospel", to use the words of Pope John Paul II in his message for the 1995 World Day of Prayer for Vocations. All they ask of us is a kindly attitude, one of understanding and trust.

Let me end this presentation of this issue with greetings to our readers, as it is my privilege to substitute for Sr. Maria-Anthea Raso, editor of MIC MISSION NEWS, while she is on furlough in the Philippines. She will be back at the beginning of 1996. □

Huguette Turcotte, M.I.C.



Heading for the Year 2000

In collaboration



The JM Mobile touring Canada



Photos: Jeunesse du Monde

"Puny Penny Project".
A challenge for
young people!

What sort of people are the youth of today? "Jeunesse du Monde" (Youth of the World) answered this question in a letter to Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, which was handed to him in Ottawa on April 24th, 1995. This letter had been circulated in all parts of the country for a few months thanks to the JM MOBILE team, collecting 80,000 signatures. This unprecedented initiative marked the 35th anniversary of "Jeunesse du Monde", a movement associated with the Pontifical Missionary Works of Canada in which Richard Chartier and Nicole Riberdy are involved. The message of this letter conveys the aspirations and motivations of young people as they head for the year 2000.

AN EXCITING PROJECT

The idea of a message first came to the members of "Jeunesse du Monde" (Youth of the World) - whose motto is "To live without boundaries" - at the Festival of Nations held in Shawinigan in July 1994. "Jeunesse du

Monde" (JM) has been in existence for 35 years and has its national office in the city of Quebec. Working through 500 clubs based throughout French-speaking Canada, mostly in the schools, this organization enables young people to be active citizens by realizing

various projects related to peace, justice, human rights, the environment and the struggle against racism.

The 9th of July, 1994, as they celebrated the 35th anniversary of "Jeunesse du Monde", the young people presented to the Prime Minister of Canada this message

Photo: J.M. Carisse



Guests of the Prime Minister (from l. to r.): Chantal Archambault, Winnipeg, Man.; Katleen Imbeault, Oshawa, Ont.; Suzie Therrien, Gaspé, Qc; Paul Laporte, Assistant-Director, Jeunesse du Monde; Sébastien Monfils, Hull, Qc; Bernard Marquis, Québec, Qc; Mr. Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister; Mike Lalumière, Le Gardeur, Qc; Clara Escobedo, Montréal, Qc; Claude Barabé, Shawinigan, Qc; Martine Arseneault, Bathurst, N.B.; Nicole Riberdy, Director, Jeunesse du Monde, Carol Gilbert, St. Félicien, Qc.

which conveys their intent to be helpful in their local milieus. They want to change the world by doing "something new on their own, wherever they are". They circulated a letter in every region of Quebec, in Ontario, New Brunswick and Western Canada, to be endorsed by thousands of young people in secondary schools, colleges and universities. This non-political and pro-youth message was handed to the Prime Minister of Canada at the beginning of April 1995 with thousands of signatures of young people. Adults wishing to support them in what they were doing had the possibility to sign a message of their own: "We support the young people in their effort to make their voices heard and to put their talents and energies into the betterment of society. We trust them and invite all of society to do likewise." It was an exciting and educational project which called for extensive youth participation, giving young people a voice, an opportunity for action and a way of being involved in a major trend of solidarity!

THE JM MOBILE EVENT

From September 20th, 1994, to March 30th, 1995, a lovely little van properly identified with the project, the JM Mobile, carried the message to most places across the country. Following an agreement with each educational institution and with the support of a local organizing committee, which often happened to be the local club of "Jeunesse du Monde", the JM Mobile driven by Carol Gilbert from St-Félicien, Lac-St-Jean, stopped at various places with all the material needed for signing the message. The stopover of the JM Mobile at a school was an event which warranted the greatest possible visibility, by setting up a press conference and inviting prominent people of the area. The van completed a 33,000 kilometer ride and collected more than 80,000 signature in 175 schools.

On April 24th, ten French-speaking young people from various regions of Canada carrying a message were re-

ceived at 24 Sussex Drive, the residence of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, for a luncheon during which they presented their opinions on various issues such as education, employment and Canada's international aid programme. In this message, they asked the Prime Minister to trust them.

MESSAGE TO MR. JEAN CHRÉTIEN

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

We are proud to write to you to declare the intent of young people to do something new on their own, wherever they are.

What does the youth of today represent if not the new generation of the future? Yes, of course! But we are also and above all people involved here and now in our living environments, and elsewhere in the world.

The social realities we have to face and the way they are analyzed by the media too often tend to assimilate us to stereotypes of the kind imaged by the drop-out, drug addicted, unemployed youth. No! We are something other than that. We, young people, are bubbling with energy, ambition and enthusiasm. Our drive is equalled only by our love of challenge and our confidence in our own abilities. We are not just dreamers; the things we do every day show our determination to carry out the projects we believe in.

Take for instance the environment: we are involved in selective garbage collection, in picking up recyclable clothing and paper, in the work of awareness-raising committees. These are examples of practical things we do.



Students of the Félix-Leclerc School, Repentigny, sign the letter.

Jeunesse du Monde is present at the Jean-Grou School, Montreal. Left, Carol Gilbert, driver.

A great number of young people everywhere in Canada joined a weapons control movement. Sensitization movements have been set up in our schools to say "no" to every form of violence.

We are conscious of and sensitive to the problems of poverty and unemployment. Our involvement in activities such as Christmas baskets for the poor, collecting food for the food banks and getting used clothing to organizations working for the poor, are proofs of our deep concern.

Education is another area about which we are concerned. As we have already mentioned, we are involved in our schools in building a better world. We want to establish a physical and human environment that favours learning. We are the ones most concerned about education and we want to tell you about many ideas and realizations that aim at improving the educational approach.

We believe in the future and we want to make the world a better place, not only for the youth of our country, but also for all human beings. World peace, the respect of human rights, justice, the environment, as well as the struggle against racism, are all issues about which we are very concerned.

Many of us are involved in awareness-raising activities in our schools, even reaching out directly to developing countries. Our openness to others and our sense of solidarity cross all boundaries, making us say "no" to discrimination.

We manage to achieve all these projects because of our determination, dynamism, solidarity and openness to other people here and abroad. Our desire to contribute in the betterment of society drives us to outdo ourselves, to look for new

ideas and to do all we can to implement them. We have carried out many projects already. Our heads are full of beautiful and good ideas. We hope to contribute all we can, in our own way, to the pursuit of a better world.

We ask you, Mr. Prime Minister, to trust us and thus to enlist the contribution of our overwhelming energy. Our firm intention to take our place in society now and in a responsible way makes us full-fledged citizens today.

Mr. Prime Minister, let us pursue together these ideals which are so close to our hearts.

*The young people
July 9th, 1994*

"OPÉRATION CENNES NOIRES" (THE PUNY PENNY PROJECT)

Here in Canada, young people can speak freely and even address the Prime Minister. In many countries, they are prevented from doing so:

- in Rwanda, young people go through the horrors of war and life as refugees;
- in Honduras, young people who speak up to give their opinions are often chased after by the military;
- in Brazil, a large number of children and young people are condemned to live on the streets;
- in Senegal, numerous children and young people will never get the chance to go to school.

Yet, in the United Nations Convention on the rights of children, signed by 142 countries, it is written that "every child has the right to education" (Art. 28 and 29), and that "every child has the right to express his or her opinion freely on any question of interest to him or her" (Art. 12).

To support projects aimed at helping the children and young people of these and other countries, "Jeunesse du Monde" launched "Opération cennes noires" (Puny Penny Project) in its Canadian network, from Moncton, N.B. to Gravelbourg, SK, and everywhere in Quebec. In June 1994, the Joseph Fecteau Secondary School in Thetford Mines, Quebec, made the headlines of Radio-Canada and impressed the whole population by collecting "puny pennies" for Rwanda: \$5,700 in a few days! The young people of this school challenged all the others to do as well. Will you be among those who will take up the challenge? ☐



Solidarity and opening to others in order to create projects together

Jeunesse du Monde, 920, Richelieu
Street, Quebec, Qc G1R 1L2



Kevin (1st left) with immigrant workers from the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

MADE IN TAIWAN

by Kevin Gallagher

*Kevin left his native Scotland five years ago to go to Taiwan where he volunteered to work in a home for mentally handicapped children. Moreover, he became concerned by the fate of young immigrant workers often exploited in local factories. He gave them moral support and even tried to intervene in conflicts. His fight for justice questions us: can we ignore these situations when we use products labelled: **Made in Taiwan?***

Ever fallen in love? One of life's greatest motivators and energy givers, without it where would we be? It just happens doesn't it, usually when we least expect it?

I think of this sometimes when I see the increasing number of young migrant workers here in Taiwan. I see many people in their twenties, a time of life when we are perhaps learning about the joys and sorrows of love or perhaps planning marriage and our own families. Then I think how so many of them are denied this period in their life as they are forced to leave their countries and work overseas, not to get rich but simply to support the basic needs of relatives at home. Their working contracts forbid them to marry and to bring their families here. Pregnancy results in deportation. The emotional strain on young Filipina mothers who have left their own children to come to Taiwan to take care of other people's children can be imagined.



In Kuanhsi, Huguette Chapdelaine, M.I.C. (4th right) and Kevin hold a prayer meeting with Filipino workers in the dining room of the textile factory.

Of course some are happy to be here, but stories abound of exploitation and abuse. So caught in another form of poverty trap with dependants at home and debts to pay to the agency that got them here in the first place, they continue... "it's still worth it". And they keep coming and coming. I have met skilled people - nurses, dentists, teachers -

people who should be in their own country building up the economy of their own people, but grinding poverty at home forces them to come to Taiwan to do the dangerous and dirty work the locals refuse. Both the Holy Father and the UN have spoken up on the rights of migrant workers, their rights to family life and to the same wage as local workers but such calls go unheeded, even sometimes by Church personnel.

As Christians we have to ask ourselves how should we respond to such issues of poverty and human abuses? There are never any clear answers but we must at least start discussions on what we can do. Our Church has to be more creative and more courageous in facing these abuses. At least it should be upholding Vatican and UN principles when hiring migrant workers, as a model to other organisations.

I'm sure many of you like myself have noticed the ever increasing number of "Made in Taiwan" labels on our clothing, toys, computer products, etc. Perhaps the next time we buy these goods we should think who the real givers of these products are. Behind these products is often a production process involving exploited labour and polluting industries. The next time when we see such a label we can spare a thought for Ayleen, Minda, Rico, Sunile and all the other workers I have known and who have touched my life over the years because their hard labour make our convenience possible. □



PLANET MISSION

by Huguette Turcotte, M.I.C.

Last November, the Church of France held a large missionary rally in Lourdes on the theme: "If you only knew the gift of God". Prepared long beforehand by those most involved in the Mission, among whom are the missionary organizations and institutes, this congress was preceded by a vast national enquiry in which other Churches and the media were called upon to participate. This is how an exchange of correspondence began between the organizers and LE PRÉCURSEUR magazine.

Sr. Huguette Turcotte who happened to be in Europe at the time, had the good fortune of taking part in the event. Every diocese of France was at this rendezvous which the Spirit designed to breathe new life into the Mission for the years ahead.



PLANÈTE MISSION

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I arrived in Lourdes in the rain, one November evening. There was nothing to suggest that I was about to experience one of the most stirring encounters of my life: Planet Mission. Early the next morning, I was immersed in an atmosphere of international festivity with a crowd of

6,300 people, including more than 2,000 youths and several hundred witnesses from other continents, milling about in cheerful fellowship. On entering the grounds one could not help being drawn to the old Basilica decorated with a large streamer bearing the theme of the congres: "If you only knew the gift of God" (Jn 4, 10). The tightly knot programme offered many options: round table discussions,

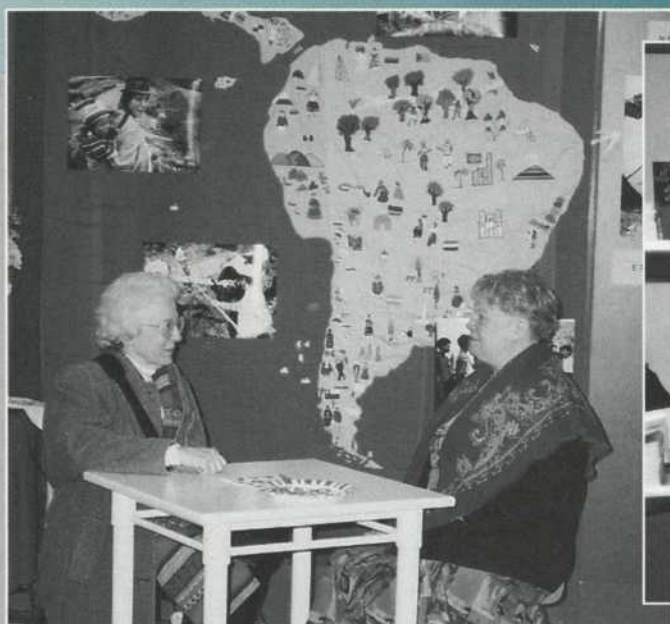
lectures, visits to Expo-Mission and several other types of activities, many of which were geared to young people. Not one minute was left unscheduled, unless participants decided to pause in front of a missionary history panel, or in a booth to consult a publication, to hear a witness telling about his or her personal stories, or to spend a moment of prayer in the church or the grotto.



"Dynamic' Jeunes" is the meeting place of the young French delegates



Inside the church where celebrations and meetings were held



Sr. Huguette (left) visits the stand of Latin America



A Madagascan lady hosts at the Propagation of the Faith stand.

ENQUIRY ON THE MISSION

My first choice of an activity was the press conference at which the results of the great enquiry and consultation of the Christians of France on the Mission were unveiled. Three million questionnaires had been distributed in Catholic and Protestant parishes, to subscribers of missionary magazines, members of Church movements, pilgrims of Lourdes and readers of Christian publications. One hundred thousand people had an-

swered the 30 questions, often adding their own letters and comments.

I was very moved when I heard that in response to the first question: "What, in your opinion, is the Mission?" 86% of respondents chose the following answer: "To proclaim Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him", a formula which is particularly dear to all M.I.C.'s since it expresses their common mission in the first article of their Constitutions. This was not my only surprise. The answers also revealed that the sending of missionaries to foreign countries is approved by 66% of respondents, as well as the integration of foreign priests in French parishes (61%) and the relevance of missionary magazines for animation and information (47%). Even if the enquiry was conducted in France, it is likely that some of the data are also applicable in the Church of Canada.

pletely filled, with additional participants standing and trying - vainly at times - to get a few bits and pieces of what the resource persons were saying.

I was amazed at the listeners' response to the lecturers: Bishop Jean-Marie Cissé of Mali and Fr. Michael Amaladoss, a Jesuit from India; they spoke of "Jesus Christ for the Life of Nations" and of the "New Faces of the Mission". The huge crowd that filled the church of St. Bernadette, interrupted by thunderous applause when Bishop Cissé, for instance, said that "the love that binds us is the sign by which all will know that we are His disciples", that "the Mission is love giving birth to a new sense of brotherhood...", that "when the Mission reaches out, it is the fruit of the vitality of the Church", and that "it would be fatal for you to allow yourselves to be confined to the mere evangelization of your own dechristianized societies..."

Theme of the
Lourdes
Congress

"SI TU SAVAIS
LE DON DE DIEU"

LECTURES AND ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

The large number of participants - 5,000 were expected; 6,300 registered - created logistic problems, especially with the sixty round table discussions on topics of current interest such as the renewal of the Mission, the welcoming of foreigners, sharing with the outcast of society (the handicapped, the sick, the prostitutes, the street children), AIDS, hunger, justice, fraternity, tolerance, etc.... Every room was com-

EXPO MISSION - "DYNAMIC" JEUNES

Half of the very large underground St. Pius X Basilica, well known to all pilgrims of Lourdes, was occupied by a missionary exposition on the theme "The Actors of the Mission", in which a multitude of movements, groups, institutes, magazines and congregations had contributed. As one entered the Basilica, there were panels on which the "Our Father" was written in 40 dif-



A blind musician (center) with his guide dog



*The handicapped are welcome.
Valérie and Laurent:
two inseparable friends!*



A special plastic bag is available for the literature given out at the stands.

ferent languages. A few steps further, there was a set of billboards entitled "20 Centuries of Mission" visually outlining the history of Christianity. Many visitors, especially young people, stopped in front of these billboards with their notebooks, to copy them.

On my first visit to Expo Mission, I only took a fast look at everything. I sometimes engaged in conversation, but if I wanted to see everything, I had to move on rather quickly. Yet I did talk with those in charge of the Missionary Childhood booth, four young people who were preparing the Planet Mission daily journal on a computer. At the booth of the Propagation of the Faith I met a woman from Madagascar who knew our M.I.C. companions of Antananarivo, and at the booth of "Services aux Immigrants" of Paris, two young Vietnamese women who had a friend in Montreal whom I happened to know. Decidedly, this planet is one great village! There were young handicapped people with smiling faces. I talked briefly with Valérie in a wheelchair pushed by Laurent. Further on, in the Pax Christi stand, I met Isabelle and Xavier; he is an agronomist and she, a physician, and they have three children. The cause of peace in the world is close to their heart and they devote much of their free time to it. My being a Canadian always draws a

friendly response from people. Like many others, Isabelle and Xavier plan to visit my country some day, and I gave them a few helpful hints. Who will ever know the number of addresses that were exchanged in the booths of Expo Mission?

The other half of the Basilica was reserved for "DYNAMIC' JEUNES" (Youth Alive). The fifty activities available in this section enabled young people to discover and create, and to listen to the Churches of Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania, as they learned to appreciate the richness of other cultures. Every nook and cranny was occupied, either by a witness from another country, or by a game, a craft table, a contest, a film projection, dances, a face make-up salon or, what was for many the favourite stop, the "cuisines of the world". Even the recipes were available!

The Saturday night play "Martin, Nino, Pauline et les autres" led the audience through two thousand years of history of the Mission in one hour and a half. This great fresco which included Columban, Francis Xavier, Matteo Ricci, the missionaries of the past and those of today, ended with the actors mingling with the crowd and distributing a candle to everyone saying: "Be a light", while the song of the great finale rose in vibrant strains: "Planet Mission, nations of brothers..."

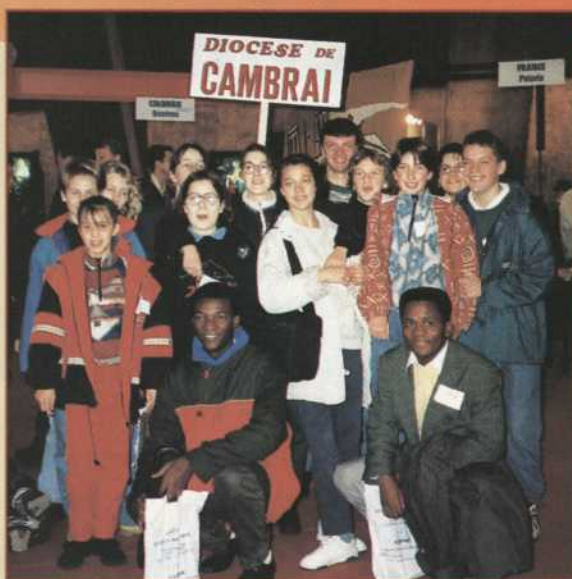
Nation of the baptized, witnesses of God... Hope for all nations, Jesus Christ, companion on our journeys".

CLOSING CELEBRATION

The festive Eucharist of the last day was for me the peak moment of Planet Mission. The new church of St. Bernadette, which is the latest addition to the sanctuary of Lourdes, was filled to capacity with an attentive and prayerful crowd, somewhat saddened by seeing this unforgettable event come to an end. I was very impressed by the creativity of the animators, who succeeded, by means of symbolic gestures, in giving every person the sense of being an active participant, even in a crowd of 6,000 people. The singing was led by an excellent Cameroonian artist, Gilbert Gafah, accompanied by an instrumental ensemble which included a young blind bassist with his guide dog, a handsome Labrador who sat quietly by his master all through the service. The water spring which decorated the middle of the sanctuary provided an appropriate setting for the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman staged as Gospel reading, which captivated the attention of the whole assembly. The homily stressed the fact that Jesus spoke to a foreign woman and that, transformed by this encounter, she became the messenger of the Good News and a witness among her own people.

Many times in the course of this Eucharist, the theme song of Planet Mission was sung, enthusiastically led by young people's voices: "If you only knew the gift of God, For all peoples and nations, If you only knew the gift of God, The source of living water and of sunshine, Christ risen today!"

I received the sign of peace from a French missionary and gave it to an African woman standing next to me. I noticed that she was weeping. We talked a little before leaving the church: "I am so moved by all these people who came here to listen to the Word of God, and by the joy of communing and praying together. It is like a current running through, while in my country..." Then I found out that she was from Rwanda and had managed to escape at the last moment with her



Delegates of the Cambrai diocese

younger sister. I didn't dare to ask about her family...

Bishop Cissé energized the crowd with his parting words: "Planet Mission, he said, was an exciting experience. A breath of hope lifted the hearts of our delegations and groups. What we have seen here is God's freely given love which is the basis

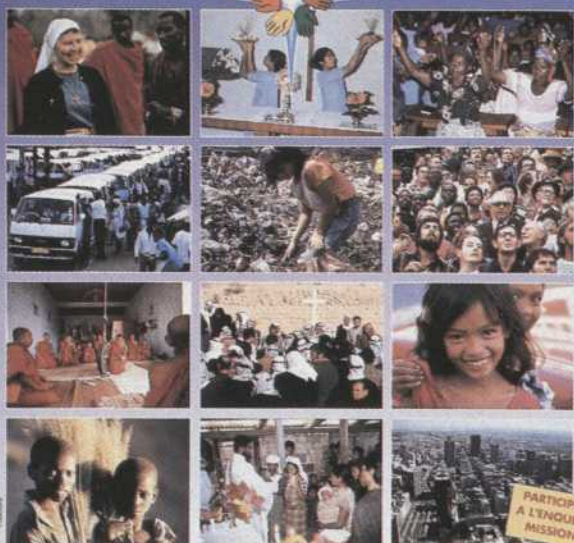
and the nourishment of the Mission and which keeps us going despite all the spasms that shake our planet Earth. We are special witnesses on the Emmaus roads of our respective countries. Let us go and tell our Churches what our eyes have seen and what our ears have heard! Thanks to all those, known and unknown, who have made Planet Mission possible, enabling us to know one another under the watchful eye of our Lady."

Having come to Lourdes on a rainy night in November, I left the city of Mary with sunshine in my heart! Mary worked the miracle of blowing a great wind of Pentecost on the thousands of participants - especially the youth. For all those of us who have pledged our lives to the proclamation of the Good News, it was indeed a hope-filled wind. You will now understand why I am as excited as the young people are about the "Planet Mission" event, and how I hope to live this experience again, maybe some day - why not? - in the Church of my own country. □

Photo: Planète Mission

Lourdes - 11, 12, 13 Novembre 1994

PLANETE MISSION



**1994 APRES JESUS-CHRIST
UN NOUVEAU PRINTEMPS
POUR L'EVANGILE.**

MP Maderhies Publications LAYE AFM CROISSANCE prier support NOUVEAU PRESE

BEING A MISSIONARY

We want to live the Mission today wherever we are.

We want to witness to the Love of God among people.

We believe that being a missionary doesn't mean ruthlessly imposing our convictions. It means, before all else, listening to others, being sensitive to what they experience and to who they are.

It means taking time to discover the other and to get to know him or her.

Being a missionary means giving and receiving. It means letting oneself be evangelized in order to be able to share the love of Christ. It means acknowledging that the other person has the capacity to receive God.

Let's get out of the walls of our churches. It is time for us to recognize the expectations of those outside and to get the Church living with them.

Let's not put all our energy into keeping our own shops in operation; Instead, let's build a Church that is "in tune" with the world. □

Message of the 19-25 Age Group at the **PLANET-MISSION** Mass.
Mission de l'Eglise, No. 106, Dec. 1994.

IN SEARCH OF MY MISSION

by Guylaine Pelletier

The Lord's call makes itself known in many ways. Through various types of experiences, events and people, Guylaine gradually discovered her vocation, her mission in this world. Here she describes the stages of her personal journey.

I am 95% happy with my life at present and extremely fortunate to have met Sr. Adrienne Guay, M.I.C., in Quebec one day at a vocational orientation retreat. Since then I have not ceased opening my eyes and heart to the beauties of life, slowly growing in wisdom and assurance of my abilities. Yes, I truly believe that I have found "my mission", that of being present to the poor and the little ones.

TO SEEK AND TO FIND

My desire for mission dates back to my school days. When I was 10 years old and in the 4th grade, a missionary sister came to my school. This is when I first had the desire to become a missionary. After my first communion I continued wanting to know Jesus better. As the years passed, I learned more about Him through youth sessions, a sharing group, lectures and prayer. Wanting more, I took part in weekends for young people with various religious communities. This led me to enter the novitiate of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception where I stayed a while. It was an enriching experience, but I was looking for something else.

A great sense of peace and happiness took hold of me when I found work with the intellectually and mentally handicapped and became a teacher in special edu-



In Warsaw, Guylaine was happy to meet the founder of "Faith and Light", Jean Vanier.



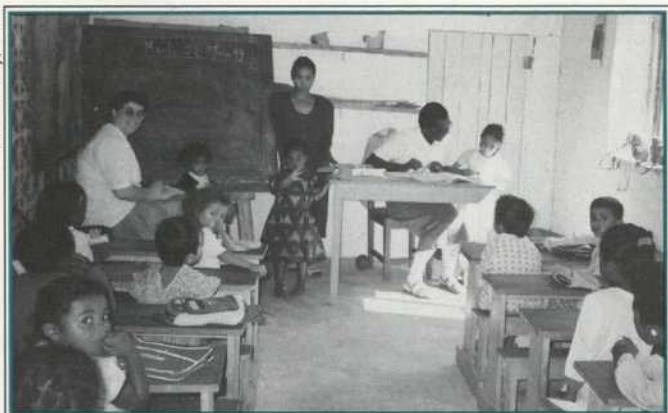
Photos: Faith and Light

Guylaine (right) and an Australian friend swap pullovers at the "Faith and Light" Congress in Warsaw.

cation. Constantly learning from them about the simplicity of life and the little actions that make people happy, I received grace after grace and needed to give even more. So I joined a "Faith and Light" group as a volunteer. This organization initiated under the inspiration of Jean Vanier is now ecumenical. At the center of "Faith and Light" is the person with an intellectual handicap. He or she is surrounded by the support of relatives and friends. The mission of "Faith and Light" is to gather these people together. Each community is made up of 15 to 30 people and usually meets once a month for sharing, prayer and celebration. In 1991, it was my first time to go on the international pilgrimage to Lourdes as group leader. It is there that I recognized "my mission".

AN EXPERIENCE "IN MISSION"

Life has a way of working things out. In 1993, my work allowed me a longer vacation. As I was still in contact with Sr. Adrienne, I decided to visit with her for three weeks in Morondava, on the West Coast of Madagascar. This is when she asked me to do volunteer work at the Catholic book store where



Guylaine in a bush school near Morondava, Malagasy Republic.
At the desk: Adeline Bonny, M.I.C., from Haiti.

she worked and needed help. With the encouragement of my family, friends and fellow-workers, I went from June 15 to September 15, 1993.

What a wonderful experience! I can't forget the first letter I received there - from Georgette, an intellectually handicapped woman and fellow-worker. Morondava was a dream come true as I found myself in "mission country". Being welcomed by the M.I.C.'s, Sr. Adrienne and the people of the book store, I felt great. My numerous contacts with the Malagasy people enabled me to get acquainted with their customs and way of life. Sr. Adeline Bonny, allowed me to join her at a bush school. We worked on a fair with Malagasy sisters. What fun it was to sell second hand clothing without knowing the local language! It is in this place that I began to learn the names of colours in Malagasy. I also learned to count at the book store, making photocopies and selling school and religious supplies. My knowledge of English often came in handy with tourists. Shopping at the public market was a good opportunity to get quickly used to the value of the Malagasy franc. In Berevo, I met the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. It took four hours on a forest road in a 4 x 4, to reach this place accessible only in dry season. Like everyone else in the village, the sisters have no electricity and flour is in short supply. Nevertheless all the people meet in church, looking their best, to give thanks for the harvest and for everything they received during the week.



At St. Anne-de-Beaupré, the theme said it all!

They have great needs, but when their health is good and they have proper medication, they feel blessed by nature. This was an experience of poverty which made me stop and think.

In August '93, I had the opportunity to attend a formation meeting of "Faith and Light" in the Islands of the Indian Ocean: Reunion, Mauritius, Rodrigues and Madagascar. I traveled with the Girl Guides of Morondava to Antananarivo. In their company I visited the capital city, very different from the West Coast, before going to the Reunion Island where the meeting was held. Another fulfilling experience of universality! The basics and life of "Faith and Light" are practically the same everywhere regardless of distance and the differences of culture.

CONFIRMATION OF MY MISSION

The time I spent working in the mission opened my eyes and really enlarged my heart to embrace the whole world. I made many good friends in Madagascar - Madagascans, Indians, Chinese, Italians, Polish, French, Americans and Canadians. I returned home in mid-September to resume my work, and received an extraordinarily warm welcome from my handicapped friends. Yes, I have returned to "my true mission", in a workshop with the handicapped and in volunteer work with "Faith and Light".

The national pilgrimage to Saint Anne-de-Beaupré was held in May 1994. The large family of "Faith and Light" extending from Ottawa to Gaspé, not to forget New Brunswick, came together to celebrate saint Anne. The theme said it all: "Let the little ones be great". At the end of this pilgrimage, I was delegated along with five others from Canada to an international conference in Warsaw, Poland. As of 1994, there were 1200 small groups of "Faith and Light" in 75 countries. Most of them were represented by 280 delegates; their discussions were carried out mainly in French, English and Spanish. But there were as many languages and cultures as there were countries. What a tremendous richness! What a symbol of unity in spite of the differences of language, culture and religion!

The Lord gave these young people parents who are able to love them, and these parents need friends to help them through the darker times of life. There can be many happy moments with them in one day. The "little problems" that come up open our eyes to see other ways of doing or to remind us of the amount of love and attention the other needs. Through all these experiences the Lord has confirmed me in my vocation. I am with "Faith and Light" because I feel that a handicapped person can be a great source of joy. This is why I say YES to Life: every person has the right to live! ☐

Mary Present in our Parish

by Gabrielle Tremblay, M.I.C.

Building a grotto in honour of Mary is for Sr. Gabrielle Tremblay a dream come true. Not much effort was needed to get the people of her area interested and to find the necessary resources to begin construction. The Parish of "Señor de los Milagros" (Lord of Miracles) in Pucallpa, where Sr. Gabrielle is in charge, encourages devotions to Mary among those simple people. Because of their moving faith, the primary objective of this project is being achieved: to obtain vocations through Our Lady's intercession.



Our
Lady's
grotto at
Pucallpa

A DREAM COME TRUE

"You will have vocations in Pucallpa if you have a grotto in honour of Mary", said Bishop Gustave Prévost. For a long time I had this dream of building a grotto, and the words of my Bishop came as a thunderbolt! This was on April 22nd, 1992.

The following day I met with the Pastor of my parish to talk about the matter. He agreed, but with some reservation. A working group was quickly formed including a builder, a carpenter, a foreman, etc. A plan was drawn up and a new proposal was made to the Pastor: "Above all, he said, no water, because the children will always be there and it will cost a lot of money!" His final word was: "Anyway, if you can find the materials, do it!" This was the word GO! All the members of the Lord of Miracles Parish went to work like busy bees. They organized raffles, bingos and fairs. They

wanted this project to be more than a material undertaking. Therefore a committee began publishing a bulletin to intensify devotion to Mary. This was the beginning of a prayer group that met every Thursday evening from 6 to 7 and still does today.

At the end of May, having gathered all the materials needed, they laid the first stone. You had to see the little children carrying their stone on their heads. Everything was donated, including water and electricity! Once the grotto was completed in all its beauty, Bishop Jean-Louis Martin, who had first been silent concerning the construction, said to me: "Prepare a beautiful blessing ceremony and invite the authorities, the city, etc..." The day before, despite running into several difficulties - broken pipes, no electricity - the statue was installed. The blessing took place on August 2nd with Fr. Marc Michaud, P.M.E., as sponsor with the oldest woman of the parish, aged 88. The grounds were crowded with people. Mary had overcome all obstacles.

"THE LORD OF MIRACLES"

Besides the grotto, another initiative was started in the parish. One day, Bishop Martin proposed placing the picture of the "Lord of Miracles" below the cross which is near the church. This cross has been standing for a long time by this highly travelled road where people can greet it and pray. No sooner said than done. Since the blessing last

Sunday mass
in Pucallpa:
Bishop Jean-
Louis Martin,
P.M.E.
(center) and
Sr. Gabrielle
Tremblay.
In the
background,
the image of
"the Lord of
Miracles".



July, people can be seen every day stopping by to offer their prayers, especially during the month of October. In addition to being the month of the Rosary, October is also devoted to the "Lord of Miracles", a devotion specific to Peru. By October 7th, the Rosary was recited at the Virgin's grotto once a week from daybreak to 6 in the morning. One year later, it was decided to pray it every day. Well organized teams prepare the recitation, assigning special intentions daily: families, the sick, world problems, vocations, children, prisoners, etc. The singing and meditation of the Rosary continue, preceding every Eucharistic celebration.

MARY AND VOCATIONS

Our parish has grown considerably in the last two years, both materially and spiritually. The Spirit has been at work and the people have received

Him well. On April 24th, 1994, a panel on vocations was organized which included Bishop Jean-Louis Martin; a couple, Gregory and Rosa; an M.I.C. novice, Ana; a seminarian, Noé, and a lay missionary, Simoneta. Nearly 300 people: adults, teenagers and children, took advantage of this encounter, which developed the following themes: "Vocation is saying yes endlessly" and "The family, a hotbed of vocations". Despite the shortage of priestly and religious vocations in Pucallpa, we keep hoping that, one day,

young people will respond to the call of the Lord. If it is said that by the year 2000, 50% of Catholics worldwide will be in Latin America, why not think of a vocational awakening that would run through the entire continent, urging it in turn to proclaim the Good News out of gratitude for having received it from other continents.



Panel on vocations - Ana, M.I.C. novice, with microphone

With the existence of the grotto, our parish keeps growing in fervour and apostolic commitment. This place has become a gathering place for prayer for all of Pucallpa. People simply come to salute and pray the One who is so well loved, their "madrecita querida" (beloved mother). Besides, the word of Bishop Gustave Prévost has come true: four religious vocations have blossomed since then. The harvest is growing slowly, but with our Mother Mary, our dream will lead us far. □

BENEFIT
CONCERT

M.I.C. MISSIONARY PRESS 75th anniversary CONCERT

A high quality concert with the participation of the Laval Choir was held on May 6th, 1995, to mark the 75th anniversary of LE PRÉCURSEUR. Mr. Gérard Proulx, Vice-President for the National Bank, Laval - North Shore region, and Marie-Paule Sanfaçon, M.I.C., Provincial Superior, acted as honorary presidents.

Mr. Proulx noted in his short address that: "... this missionary enterprise originated in Quebec and was initiated by women of Quebec. In this sense, the name of the magazine LE PRÉCURSEUR is twice as appropriate. One had to be a 'precursor', more than ninety years ago, to start a community of Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. These women entrepreneurs, teachers, nurses and missionaries, women from this land, left everything behind to go where the need was obvious. I feel that the M.I.C. Missionary Press is also a living work of our cultural heritage. We support a medium of the printed word which has been at work in various countries for 75 years to make known the Word of God."

We wish to express our gratitude to everyone who contributed in the success of this evening: members of the organizing committee, the volunteers, and all our generous donors. To each and everyone of you, our partners in the mission, our most heartfelt thanks!

The team of the M.I.C. Missionary Press
LE PRÉCURSEUR and MIC MISSION NEWS



The Laval Choir in the chapel of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Pont-Viau.



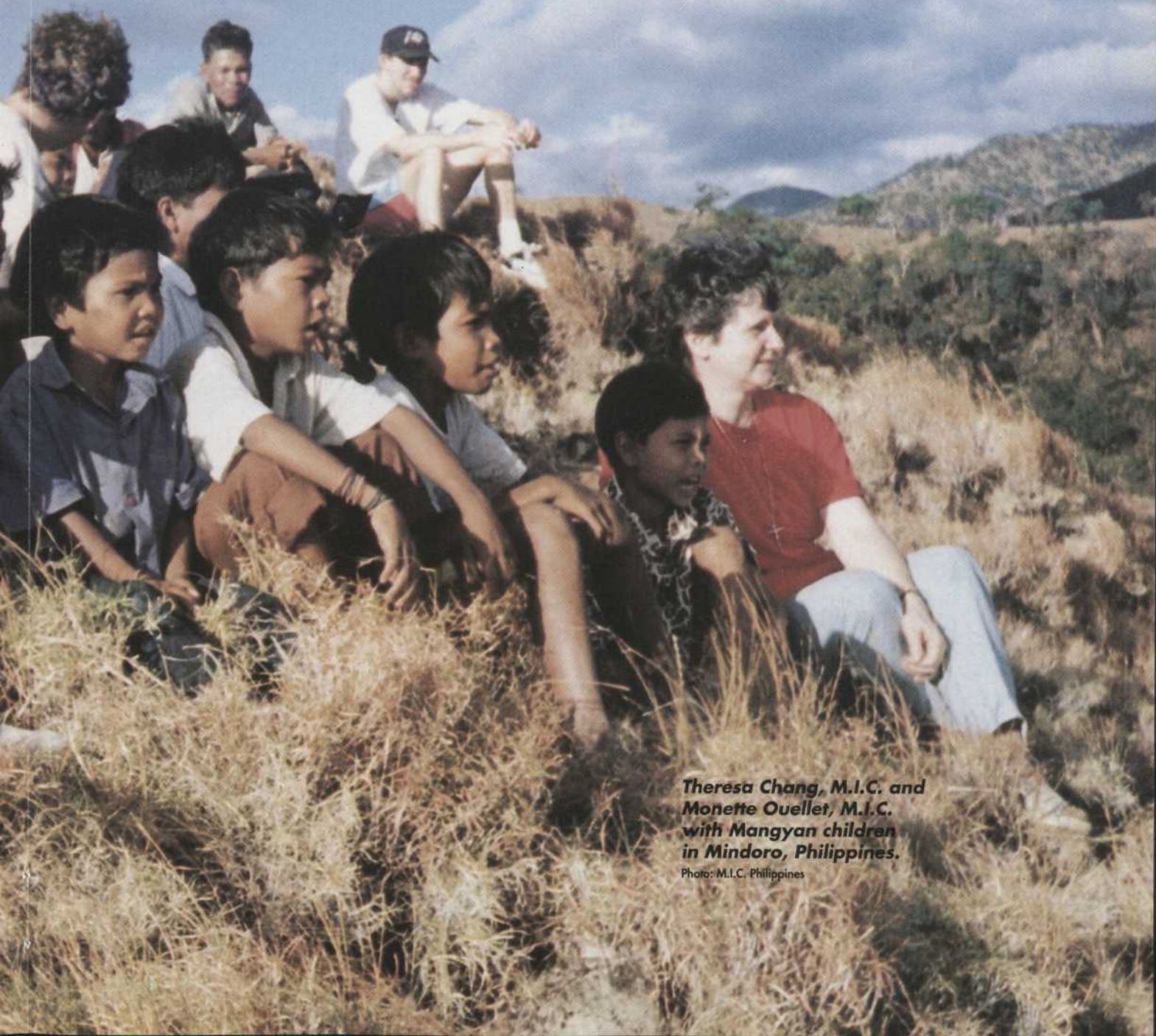
Members of the organizing committee: Louise Denis, M.I.C., Director, M.I.C. Missionary Press, Ms. Suzette Frenette and Mr. Roger Caron, Division Chief, Arts Service of Laval.

"TAKE A LOOK
RIPE A



LOOK AT THE FIELDS; THE CROPS ARE NOW
READY TO BE HARVESTED!"

Jn 4,35



**Theresa Chang, M.I.C. and
Monette Ouellet, M.I.C.
with Mangyan children
in Mindoro, Philippines.**

Photo: M.I.C. Philippines

AFRICA

YOUNG PEOPLE TOSSED ABOUT!

by Sylvie Iribagiza

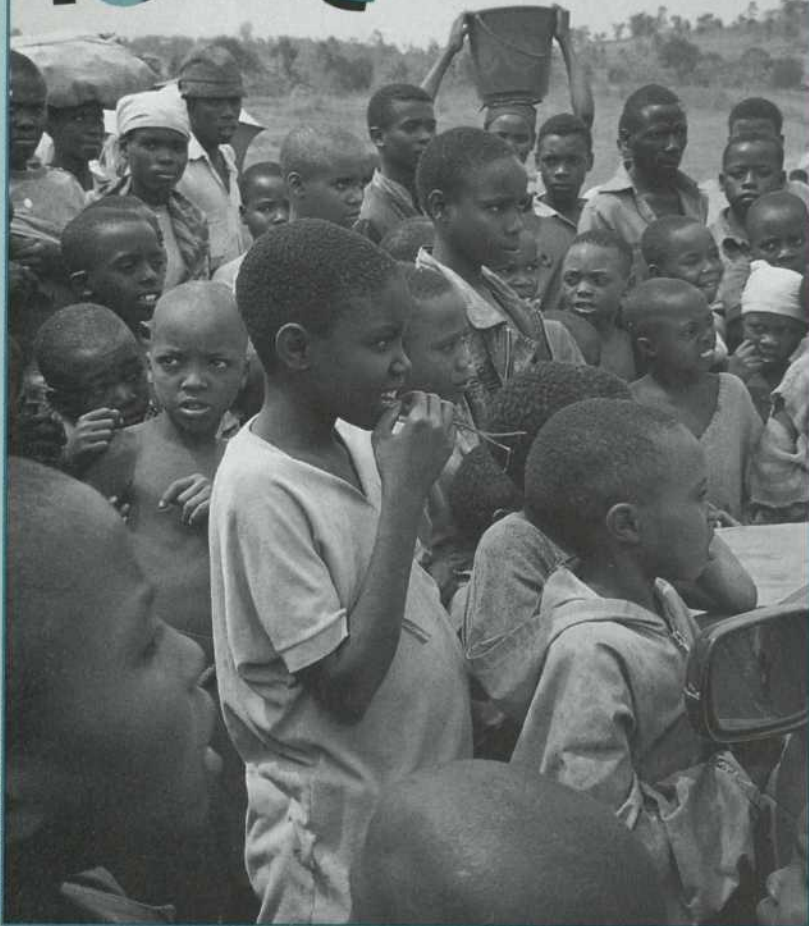


Photo: M. Morin, M.I.C.

Reeducation: hope for the future of young people in Rwanda and neighboring countries.

As a native of the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, I was deeply distressed by the war which devastated Rwanda, by the troubles that ripped through Burundi, and now, by the destabilization of the Kivu region of Zaire. Being attached to these areas by the very core of my being because of my African extraction, but also out of humanistic feelings, I feel obligated to contribute in my own modest way to the reconstruction of peace and well-being in this part of the global village, which our planet is. Therefore I am pleased to write this article.

The situation in this area is troubled and complex. To understand it better, it is advisable to look at it in three separate parts, i.e. Burundi, Rwanda and the Kivu region of Zaire.

A FUTURE MARKED WITH HATRED

After elections freely agreed upon by the two main ethnic groups, the Hutus and the

More than a year ago, a massive tragedy occurred in Rwanda. The recent events recorded in Burundi and in Rwandan refugee camps remind us that the situation is still volatile in that region of Africa. The challenges are of major proportion. Sylvie Iribagiza, a Rwandan student in Canada, has been deeply concerned about the fate of her people.

She has drawn valuable information from the article "Cri d'alarme" written by Mireille Morin, M.I.C., in the November-December 1994 issue of *LE PRÉCURSEUR*, and from other articles and media programmes on the subject.

Sylvie, who is a psychology student at the University of Ottawa, shares with us her analysis of the situation, especially with regard to the youth of her country and of neighbouring countries. What can be done to counteract the devastating effects of hatred in the hearts of these troubled youths?



Sylvie Iribagiza

Tutsis, Burundi gave Africa an excellent lesson in democracy. Subsequently, however, the situation deteriorated into uncontrollable chaos, which spread all over the land. Indeed, whole segments of the country are controlled by ethnic

bands. This can easily be seen in major urban centers such as Bujumbura, Kirundo, Darusi..., with the exception of a few rare places such as the central market.

Unfortunately and despite themselves, the major players of these interethnic confrontations are teenagers; they are the ones sent to the forefront by adult instigators. They are given weapons and encouraged to play vigi-

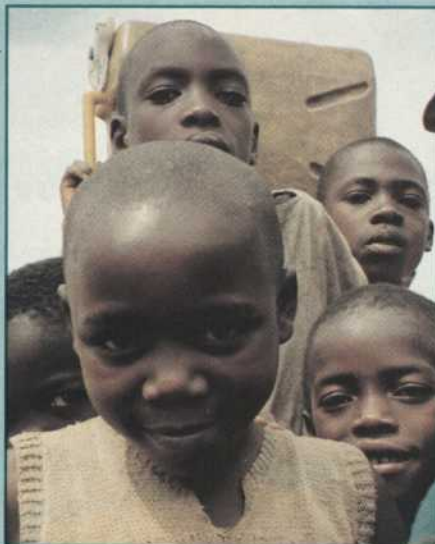
lantes, not to say soldiers in service. This cannot but seriously impair their physiological development, for what they are made to experience profoundly destabilizes them to the point of disrupting their growth. Their future will be affected by this, for they will now be filled with destructive attitudes, such as hatred of others, rather than with impulses of peace and brotherhood.

I appeal forcefully and with conviction to all Burundians to analyze at once the gravity of the suicidal course they have taken. This is a growing phenomenon among our young people. If it is not quickly addressed with them, the risk is extremely great that they will perpetuate this devastating tradition which they are assiduously learning under the eye of their elders.

THE SEQUELS OF THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE

As shown on the news in 1994 and again recently, of the three countries involved, the one suffering the most tragic and dreadful situation is Rwanda. In order to fully comprehend the horrible state of this country, it is best to look first at the internal situation, and then at how things are outside. Rwanda witnessed one of the most

Photo: M. Morin, M.I.C.



The tragedy in Rwanda will leave unforgettable traces

massive exodus of refugees on their way to Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi, so massive that it has set a sad record coupled only by another equally tragic: i.e. the genocide of thousands of Rwandan people.

Children have been traumatized not only by the bloody war which they witnessed, but also by displacements, deprivation and separation from their loved ones... They are going through these experiences at a stage of their lives when strength of character has not yet been formed. Adding to this the systematic learning of hatred can only breed, on the long run, people vowed to destruction. There are in Rwanda a large number of young people imprisoned without judgment. The question

is do these young people, if found guilty, really deserve the same punishment as the instigators of those same actions? The majority of young Rwandans of Hutu origin have been and still are receiving intensive training in Zaire and the Kivu region as well as in Tanzania.

It would be wise therefore that the African and international communities put their efforts into the re-education of these young people that they may once again take their normal place in the national framework of their country. All of humanity would be the better for it. □

A LAY MISSIONARY PROJECT

Does this appeal to you? ...
Would you like to look into it?
Here is a discernment process proposed by several Missionary Institutes.

GOAL: to enable participants to discern as clearly as possible whether they are called to live a missionary project.

OBJECTIVES:

- get a more in-depth notion of the Christian identity
- clarify the specific nature of the missionary vocation
- develop your sense of belonging to the Church
- name the kind of project you personally envisage
- determine the kind of training you need.

PARTICIPANTS: Single or married men and women, aged 20 or more, wishing to:

- live a faith experience in the Church
- live a commitment in this country in the name of their faith
- open their hearts to the universal mission of the Church
- learn about the practice of analysis
- eventually live a missionary project in a foreign country.

PROGRAMME: Self-Knowledge - Christian Identity and Missionary Vocation - Analysis of Reality - Belonging to the Church - The Mission at Home and Abroad.



Photo: Lay Mission

Myriam Laroche (3rd from left) from St. Constant, taking part in the formation program, will live a missionary project in Taiwan.

PEDAGOGY: Various pedagogical means are used: individual and collective activities, presentations by resource people, debate, panels, celebrations, etc... Additional training possibilities are also proposed to those participating.

ANIMATION TEAM: Lay people and missionaries of various Institutes.

Information: **Pauline Williams, M.I.C.**

Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception
4450 St. Hubert Street, Montreal, Quebec H2J 2W9

Phone: (514) 525-5125 □

MISSIONARY PARISH COMMUNITIES

by Gemma De Grandpré, M.I.C.

The Diocese of Chicoutimi needs no introduction when it comes to involvement in missionary concerns. In the early 70's, the establishment of missionary committees has long been fruitful. Sr. Gemma De Grandpré, coordinator of the collaborators of the magazine, LE PRÉCURSEUR, has testified to this more than once. The example of the Vachon family appropriately illustrates the vitality and dynamism of the people of this area. This family involved the whole parish in a project of aid to Haiti, also enlisting the participation of young people!

VIBRANT PARISHES

There are many lovely and vibrant parishes in such a mission-oriented diocese as that of Chicoutimi! I have just met the parishes of St-Ambroise and St-Charles-de-Bourget, and it is a pleasure for me to tell you what I saw with my own eyes and what I was made to experience there.

This fertile soil of the Saguenay region has grown a harvest. The seed was sown more than 20 years ago, and now one can notice the fruit appearing in various places. First of all, we must say that our companion, Gisèle Vachon, M.I.C., a missionary in Haiti, whose family lives in St-Ambroise, has managed to communicate not only to her family, but also to the friends, neighbours and even to the people of St-Charles-de-Bourget, the love she feels for her country of adoption. This love has turned into action and generosity. The

letters from Gisèle and the articles of LE PRÉCURSEUR spread by the collaborators with endless zeal have transformed these Christian communities into real missionary communities.

A MISSIONARY BAZAAR

Last spring, the proceeds of this missionary project headed by the Vachon family was presented to our brothers and sisters of DEAR HAITI! What project? - A bazaar, and quite a bazaar at that! A whole range of activities was organized and everybody wanted to do his or her share. Even the young people decided to use their creativity that evening. Madeleine Patenaude, M.I.C. and I had the opportunity to take part in this very busy weekend in which volunteer work was especially evident. If you know the people of this region, you know that there is no lack of enthusiasm or generosity!

Photos: G. De Grandpré, M.I.C.



The food for the meal was supplied by friends.



Everything is donated for the Haiti project.



The mission spirit is alive in the Vachon family. Ms Jeanne d'Arc Gravel Vachon (3rd left) has been a full-time collaborator of our magazine for 20 years. Sr. Gemma De Grandpré (2nd left) and Sr. Madeleine Patenaude (1st right) gave their support for the mission bazaar.

Even the very young bring their share for the mission of Aunt Gisèle.



Photo: G. De Grandpré, M.I.C.

The event began with the Saturday evening Eucharist, when the appropriate mood was set by some well chosen missionary hymns. The people were then invited to all the activities on the programme. In the afternoon, there was a gathering in the parish hall. While some people came up with donated items for the auction, others looked avidly at the exhibits from Haiti. Sr. Madeleine and I showed a series of slides about Haiti. The pot-luck supper featured delicious home-cooked traditional dishes of the Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean area, savoured in a family atmosphere. There was also a raffle during the meal. And lo and behold, the young people decided to get involved; they too wanted to do their share for the mission of aunt Gisèle. With the help of the scouts and guides of St-Ambroise, the play "Le sifflet" was performed brilliantly by our budding artists. On all accounts, the bazaar was a success!

LOOKING BACK AT THE EXPERIENCE

"See how they love one another", people said about the early Christians. Seeing all the generosity, dedication and sense of solidarity that went into this project I would say: "See how well they can love." Shortly after this most satisfying visit, I received a note from Jeanne d'Arc, Sr. Gisèle's sister and initiator of the project. For many years, Jeanne d'Arc has been one of the faithful collaborators of the magazine LE PRÉCURSEUR. She carries out her apostolate with an ever increasing devotion, which radiates throughout her parish. She desires that her parish be open and responsive to the missionary

endeavours of the Church. The gratitude and thanksgiving I feel for the missionary experience lived in this parish is very well expressed by the last part of Jeanne d'Arc's message:

"I'm sure you won't forget your visit in St-Ambroise. We surely will always remember yours! You were fantastic! Your short talk in church brought many people to the missionary bazaar and to meet you. They also loved your slides of Haiti. The parishioners of St. Charles had been hearing about Haiti for such a long time. They were very happy to see Sr. Madeleine at their table and to have the chance to discuss and share with her. The Vachon-Bouchard family, their relatives and friends were delighted by your presence, which was an added contribution to the success of the missionary festival. What I noticed all the time we prepared this event was that we made progress whenever we got together. We would talk about it with missionary enthusiasm.

We are grateful to the Holy Spirit for guiding us in the planning and in the realization of our work for the bazaar. Thanks a million to all those who helped us to carry out this project. For my part, this was a dream which I had wanted to live as a parish for a very long time. If you hadn't been with us, we would never have had the same results. Sr. Gisèle, our sister, will be proud of us all, and

yet we did it out of love for the missionaries. We are so spoiled here in Quebec. We must share a little of what we receive freely. I give thanks to the Lord for this wonderful JOY which He gave us. On days like these, we receive much more than we can give. The Lord said: "Whatever you do to the least of my people, you do to me."

THANKS FROM HAITI

From her mission in Haiti, Sr. Gisèle answered: "I was really moved by your tremendous generosity. The \$4,400.00 which we received as a result of the bazaar yielded \$9,147.17 through the currency exchange. This enabled us to help the catechists of Cap Haïtien. I distributed the amount specified to assist the elderly; the rest will be used for the missionary magazine "Timoun Misyonè". I work on the magazine and use this instrument with children and educators to help open the Church of Haiti to the missionary dimension. How can I thank you? Please accept this bouquet of THANKS:

To the Lord I bring each day
Heartfelt prayers in humble words,
As a bouquet of THANKSGIVING
Neatly made up of all your desires,
Knowing that He will accept them,
Sweetly blessing each of your souls.

Mabereza

by Suzette Jean, M.I.C.

Photo: S. Jean, M.I.C.



Sr. Thérèse Leblanc,
Directress,
and her assistants
at the Center's
dispensary.

Mabereza, is a Malagasy word which means "courage". It is the name given to a Center for development in Tsaramasay, a poor neighbourhood of Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar. The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, who are very much a part of the life of this neighbourhood, contributed to the opening of this Center. Sr. Suzette Jean describes the humble beginning of this work whose immediate future continues to depend on the generous help raised by Divine Providence.

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY CENTER

It is my pleasure to present to you the Mabereza Center for development established in our parish in 1993. It is a multidisciplinary center with three separate facilities: the medical, the social and the cultural facilities. This new activity responds to the needs of the local people who, for the most part, live in poverty.

The medical facility includes a dispensary with a physician, nurses, a nurse's aid and a pharmacy. On Tuesdays especially, mothers come with their babies to be weighed; it is possible in this way to detect those who are malnourished. In the social facility, tailoring and sewing are taught. We favour poor young women who want to learn. A modest monetary contribution is requested or tuition fees are reduced. The cultural facility has a library. There are not many books yet to meet the need. People who can read may come outside school hours to satisfy their intellectual curiosity by going through the books that are available. The half-empty shelves await new books, which would be greatly appreciated... If you come by the Center on Wednesday afternoons, you can hear music played. There are many children, teenagers and adults who learn how to play the

keyboard, the flute or the guitar. They come in groups of seven, on an average, for one hour each during the afternoon. It would also be very helpful to set up audio-visual services. If we had a television and video set, we could show videocassettes. In addition to being educational, this would help us to finance the project by asking for a small contribution.

To those three facilities is added another no less useful: the prayer facility. Every Saturday at 5 we meet for a sharing on the Gospel and for prayers. These are for the intentions of the Universal Church as well as for the Christian people of our parish.

INDISPENSABLE AID

The MAHEREZA Center was officially opened two years ago by the late Cardinal Victor Razafimahatratra. This was made possible thanks to generous donations received from various organizations: the "Fonds canadien d'aide aux initiatives locales" for the purchase of two adjacent houses, which have become one building after some restructuring work; "Misereor" for the restructuring of the two buildings and the purchase of materials; the

"Frères des Hommes" of the Reunion Island for the purchase of materials, and finally, the contribution of the parishioners themselves.

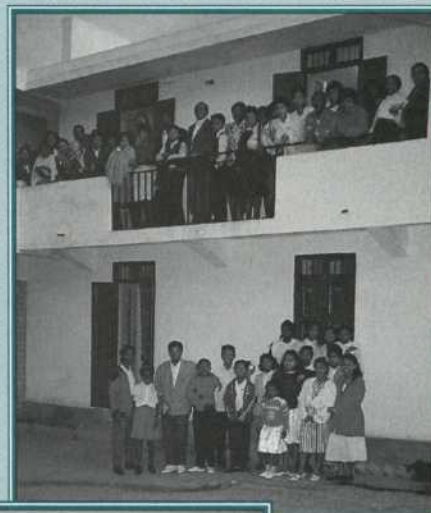
Father Rasolonjatovo Joseph Martial, Pastor of our parish, was the promotor of this project. He is a dynamic and devoted priest with boundless zeal for the life of the parish. He also knows how to call on the generosity of his parishioners by putting on festivals, fairs and collections for the survival of pastoral projects. Because of his numerous occupations: as pastor of two parishes, substitute in another parish deprived of its own pastor, and teacher at the Major Seminary of Antsirabe, which is 170 km from the capital, he has entrusted the direction of the Center to an M.I.C., Sr. Thérèse Leblanc.

I have been on staff from the beginning and I teach music. It is always a joy for me to see these talented young people eager to learn music. Last July, they played at a feast organized by the staff of the Center and by our devoted Pastor, who was the soul of the party! The special giftedness of the Malagasy people for theater and dance was repeatedly applauded for nearly three hours. The day began with a

solemn Mass, after which there was an exhibit of pieces of sewing made by pupils of the Center. The purpose of the feast was to raise funds to keep our finances afloat.

We can say that the Center has been "going" well since its opening, but right now, it is sort of "hobbling along", for money doesn't come in as fast as it goes out. Without the donations received at the beginning, our project would have been like a baby born dead. For it to grow, or at least survive, we need help, we need a support fund. It is a humble project to help the poor of our area, who were also affected by cyclone Geraldine which I mentioned to you last December. We confide it to the Providence of God who will surely call forth some gener-

ous hearts. I hope to return to you next year to tell you that the Center is growing and prospering... because of you. Thanks on behalf of the beneficiaries of Mahereza! □



Photos: T. Leblanc, M.I.C.

Partial view of the Mahereza Center.



Folk dance during the benefit show to support the Center - Sr. Suzette Jean (2nd right).

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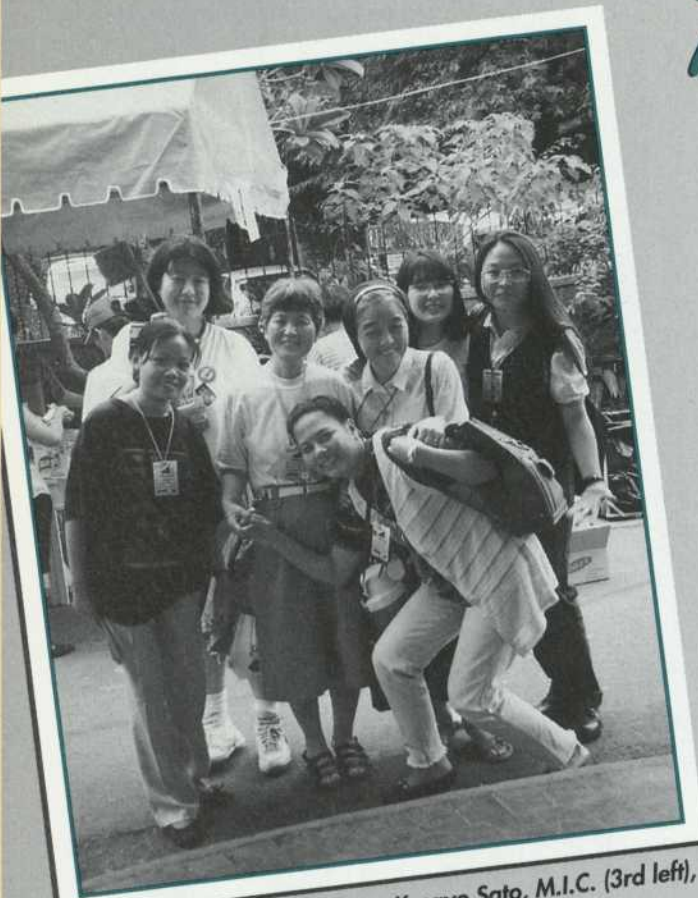
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♥ Heartfelt Thanks



Keiko Kowada, Satoko Kubota, Kesayo Sato, M.I.C. (3rd left),
Atsuko Sagara, M.I.C. (4th left) with Filipino youth.

TELL THE WORLD OF HIS LOVE

In collaboration

The 10th World Youth Day in Manila, was such a powerful experience that we are still receiving numerous testimonies. For the delegates from Canada, Taiwan, China and Japan hosted by the M.I.C.'s of the Philippines, as well as for the youth of this country, the reality far exceeds what we have been able to publish. The essence of this event is imprinted in the memory of the heart. Sr. Kesayo Sato and two young women of Japan also lived this experience of faith and universal fraternity. Sr. Kesayo shares their comments with us. Here are a few excerpts.

REACHING OUT TO ASIA

What led me to take part in this gathering was, first of all, the desire I had long nourished to reach out to Asia, and in Asia, I must say the Philippines especially attracted me. Being born and raised among island people and belonging to the small number who have kept their faith, I longed to have contacts with other countries like ours. It seemed to me that taking part in this international youth rally was my providential, God-given chance to realize both of my desires.

This encounter was the occasion for numerous contacts. Despite differences of language and customs, I felt deeply that we were one. It seems to me, however, that we still need to strive for better mutual understanding of our historical, cultural and economic differences. Though I want to remain childlike at heart, I also long to have an input in the effort to share with one another.

Satoko Kubota

A PRAYER TO MY LORD

Lord,

How are you? For my part, as You can see all things, You know me well, don't You? Yes, indeed! On Your invitation I took part in the World Youth Day in the Philippines. I thank You for the grace of living this very beautiful experience. I realized how easy and enjoyable it is to shake hands with a neighbour. This was a wonderful discovery for me, for up to now I saw this as being very difficult. There is nothing I can do with my weak hands, but if we all join hands, isn't it true that we can do something? And then I understood that this strength comes from You and that it is Your wish that it be so.

You know well, however, that I am a weak person and that I tend to think only of my own advantage and do only what I want. So this is why I need You. I felt that this is the number one need we, young people, have today. Did You hear all those friends from the entire world sing as they were holding hands: "Tell the World of His Love"? Aren't we pow-

Photos: M.I.C. Japan



Dressed in typical Japanese attire, Keiko and Satoko (2nd row center), fraternize with young people and M.I.C. Sisters of the Philippines

erful when we become one before You? This above all else is what makes us strong. I was really amazed. With You as our Maestro, each and everyone of us must practice

every day so that our voices may get more and more beautiful. What could be more beautiful than this song if it became a magnificent harmony resounding throughout the entire world!

If we could join hands with all human beings, right now, we would get much closer to You. One needs not be "Superman" or a great scientist to build a world according to Your desire. We can do it, - can't we? - as ordinary as we may be, if only we have compassion. It doesn't matter then if we're not very clever; we must continue singing together in a loud voice. That is what I felt very strongly as I took part in this encounter. I'm so grateful to You for giving me the opportunity to become aware of these things. This was a marvelous grace. I am so grateful! Sayonara!

Keiko Kowada

A MISSION IN TRUST

(...) We came back to Japan filled with courage and hope after this encounter which made us feel the warmheartedness of the Filipino people and their deep veneration of Pope John Paul II, an encounter which allowed us to praise the Lord, to sing with one heart: "Tell the World of His Love" and to become aware once again of our mission to convey His love. This gathering of young people from all over the world seems to have been the occasion for the young Japanese who were there to rediscover their faith and to experience "touching" the Lord Jesus as it were. This is a tremendous joy for me.

Sr. Kesayo Sato



Photo: V. Masinda, M.I.C.

"TELL THE WORLD OF HIS LOVE"

For God so loved the world
He gave us his only Son
Jesus Christ our Savior
His most precious One

He has sent us his message of love
And sends those who hear
To bring the message to everyone
In a voice loud and clear

Let us tell the world of his love
The greatest love the world has known
Search the world for those who have walked astray
And lead them home

Fill the world's darkest corners
With his light from up above
Walk every step, every mile, every road
And tell the world
Tell the world of his love.



Becoming Free

Photos: J. Boily, M.I.C. - J. Turcotte

by Elizabeth Angulo

What better way to describe a situation or reality which is difficult to explain than by using a symbol! Elizabeth Angulo, ASMIC (Associate of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception), uses the image of a dove to share her lived experience and how she learned interior freedom.

I was a little dove flying happily and freely across the blue sky. My wings, however, grew weaker and became too heavy because of accumulated fears, sorrows, sadness and anguish. All this made it impossible for me to fly any longer. Like many other little doves, I began to walk with weights under my wings, lifeless, listless, devoid of illusions and looking for a place to hide. Then one day I felt something very deep inside me.

A PROVIDENTIAL MEETING

I kept on walking day after day... when, one fine morning, as I continued my search, I came downtown Lima, more specifically to the Plaza de Armas. As usual, I was filled with fears and doubts. I made my way towards the Bishop's House. This was not easy, but I went. Without realizing it, I came to an office. I said to myself: "Who will answer me? Who can help me?" Then I heard: "Go all the way to the end, a lady will answer you." My interview with Lita was very short, but I had never thought this moment would change my life. Miss Lita listened to my concerns and gave me the name and address of a sister: Jeannine Boily, M.I.C.

I went one afternoon without making an appointment. I rang the door bell. A sister came out with a beautiful smile, looking at me in a

very special way. There was tenderness in her eyes. I asked: "Are you Sister Jeannine Boily?" I didn't need to say any more. I felt her affection. Ever since that moment, six years ago already, I was able to be myself again, fearless, unattached, uninhibited, without anguish, and "loved". Sr. Jeannine and the other M.I.C.'s helped me to lay down my heavy burden. I stretched out my wings, raised them up and learned again how to fly. In their own discreet way, but in all freedom and with great understanding, they were the Lord's instruments!

THE JOY OF FREEDOM

Now, as I follow the way of struggle, searching and desert experience, which is also a way of encounter, silence and prayer, I am able to fly very high through joy and sadness. My wings take me across the blue sky, as I fly more and more on trails of light. My heart is filled with thanksgiving to the Lord and to Mary, my Mother. I have become an ASMIC and now, I accompany young people on the journey of the Spiritual Exercises in every day life. Two years from now, I will be a lawyer and I will defend those who suffer because of injustice. □

(original in Spanish)

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

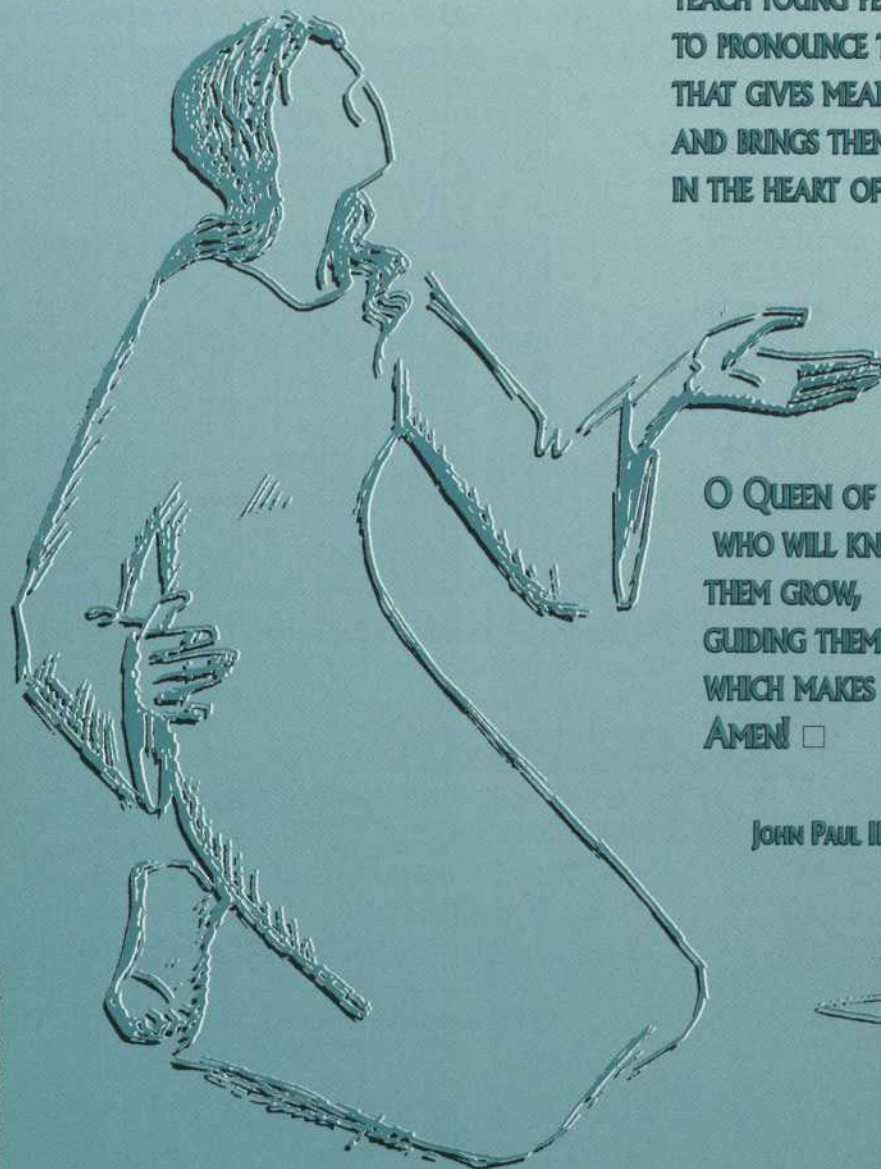
O VIRGIN OF NAZARETH,
THE "YES" SPOKEN IN YOUTH
MARKED YOUR EXISTENCE
AND IT GREW
AS DID YOUR LIFE ITSELF.

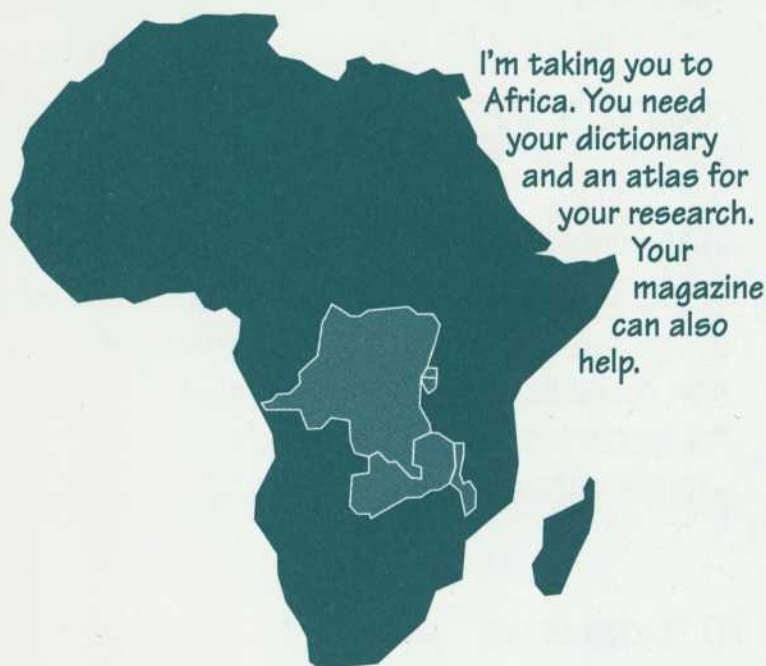
O MOTHER OF JESUS,
IN YOUR FREE AND JOYFUL "YES" AND IN YOUR ACTIVE FAITH
SO MANY GENERATIONS AND SO MANY EDUCATORS
HAVE FOUND INSPIRATION AND STRENGTH
FOR WELCOMING THE WORD OF GOD
AND FOR FULFILLING HIS WILL.

O TEACHER OF LIFE,
TEACH YOUNG PEOPLE
TO PRONOUNCE THE "YES"
THAT GIVES MEANING TO EXISTENCE
AND BRINGS THEM TO DISCOVER THE HIDDEN "NAME" OF GOD
IN THE HEART OF EVERY PERSON.

O QUEEN OF THE APOSTLES, GIVE US WISE EDUCATORS,
WHO WILL KNOW HOW TO LOVE YOUNG PEOPLE AND HELP
THEM GROW,
GUIDING THEM TO THE ENCOUNTER WITH TRUTH
WHICH MAKES ONE FREE AND HAPPY.
AMEN! □

JOHN PAUL II, WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS, MAY 1995





Write the names of the countries on the map following the order of numbers:

1. The country where thousands of people were massacred in 1994 and 1995. R _ _ _ _ _

2. The neighbouring country where thousands of Rwandans fled.

B _ _ _ _ _

3. Another bordering country where there are Rwandan refugee camps.

Z _ _ _ _

4. Countries where Sisters of the Immaculate Conception work:

M _ _ _ _ _ and Z _ _ _ _ _

Answers on page 31.

INTERACTION CONTEST:

MYSTERY WORD: a 5 letter word: Generation

The words used in the grid are contained in the articles of this issue.

BAZAAR	JAPAN	PLANET
CHILDREN	JOY	RALLY
COMMUNITY	JUSTICE	SEARCH
CONCERT	LOVE	UNIVERSAL
DAY	MARY	VOCATION
GROTTO	MIC	WORLD
HAITI	MISSION	YEAR
IMMIGRANT	MISSIONARY	

Y	A	D	G	R	O	T	T	O	Y	O	J
J	U	S	T	I	C	E	R	A	L	L	Y
I	T	I	A	H	S	E	A	R	C	H	Y
I	C	H	I	L	D	R	E	N	B	C	R
M	Y	N	O	I	S	S	I	M	A	O	A
M	M	R	M	J	A	P	A	N	Z	M	N
I	A	A	I	U	E	V	O	L	A	M	O
G	R	E	C	W	O	R	L	D	A	U	I
R	Y	Y	P	L	A	A	E	T	R	N	S
A	O	C	O	N	C	E	R	T	T	I	S
N	L	A	S	R	E	V	I	N	U	T	I
T	V	O	C	A	T	I	O	N	H	Y	M

Send your answers and personal information before August 28th, 1995:

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to: INTERACTION CONTEST
MIC MISSION NEWS
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SUCC. LAVAL-DES-RAPIDES
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The drawing will take place September 1st, 1995 - 2 winners
Because of the September-October calendar,
the names will appear in November-December 1995.

THE PRIZES ARE:

- DEPENDING ON THE WINNER'S AGE, A BOOK OR COMIC BOOK ON DÉLIA TÉTREULT.
- STATIONERY, BOOKMARKS AND CARDS WITH QUOTES FROM DÉLIA TÉTREULT.

Graciously offered by the Office of the Cause of Délia Tétréault.

INTERACTION CONTEST: MARCH-APRIL 1995

Answer: ASMIC -

Associates of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
No winners this time

Newsbriefs and excerpts...from Letters

HAITI

A MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

The CHR (Haitian Conference of Religious) planned a meeting of men and women religious with President Jean-Bertrand Aristide for Saturday, February 4th, 1995. After a few words of welcome and praying the Our Father together, he gave the floor to the assembly, who had prepared their questions. Whew! All the issues were laid before him: disarmament, with a desire that it be more thorough; justice before reconciliation; transportation which is rare, problem-ridden and expensive; the absence or distortion of information; cyclone Gordon and its victims; the roads all over the country; the controversial multinational forces; the economy; the health problems, and many others. He listed the steps already taken: the change in of the army; the training of a police force; road repairs in various places; the revamping of government ministries: Women's Issues, the assistance given to the poor of Cité Soleil, etc.

He called for our cooperation, we, the "men and women of God" (moun Bondye): "Keep on walking with God's people, energize all the human resources. The people have the Spirit of God." He begged us to reactivate the literacy campaign: "The greatest gift God is asking of you, men and women religious, is the elimination of illiteracy. I would leave the presidency to go and teach people how to read and write."

LITERACY PROGRAMMES

Soon after she arrived at the Provincial House, Sr. Lise Doucet, who is in charge of supervising remedial classes at the Immaculate Conception School, saw the need to establish solid bases and to extend her activity to a more numerous clientele by organizing literacy courses with the financial aid provided by Canadian friends. As early as March, she managed to get acquainted with and training two monitors and a supervisor in order to open two literacy centers in April.

Fr. Madelon Eustache, of Voluntas Dei, invited Sister Lise to join the fa-



Literacy programmes in Haiti.

Photo: T. Lortie, M.I.C.

cilitators of a literacy session organized for the group directors. (...) She now contributes her share of knowledge and experience in the matter. She suggested training multipliers. This is how Fr. Eustache sent two of his people to begin the courses given by Sr. Lise. □

Excerpt from *Mini-Information*, Haïti, April 1995.

ZAMBIA

I come to you from Zambia. First of all, let me thank you for the splendid monetary gift you sent me after the meeting in Châteauguay last year. I want to emphasize specially the presence of the young people who took part in this missionary activity at the parish. I would like to encourage them and tell them that the mission needs them.

Your generous donation enables me to continue to work at the ongoing formation of our leaders. I am thinking especially of the young African congregations. As soon as I returned to Africa, I met with approximately forty novices of nine religious congregations of Malawi. In April, I will meet those of the Diocese of Chipata, and in August the



Rita Guay, M.I.C. and Theresa Katongo, M.I.C.

Photo: M.I.C., Zambia

group of major superiors and those involved in formation in Zambia. Later on, I will deal with the group of sisters involved in parish ministries - and the list goes on. This work of maturation of the local Church is important and also very delicate. I feel the need for your prayers and encouragement. Knowing full well that the bulk of the work is done by the Spirit, our part, nevertheless, is required for the completion of the Kingdom.

Rita Guay, M.I.C., Chipata, March 17, 1995

ISRAEL

From Jerusalem, Sr. Ditma Luz Trocio writes her impressions after her period of studies:



Sr. Ditma Luz at Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel

"The programme has come to an end so swiftly, it seems that we have just started! And to conclude with the Holy Week in the very places where Jesus suffered his Passion is an extraordinary privilege. I even followed the Via Crucis with a group of Filipino pilgrims - all of which added to my emotions. Israel, the promised land, is really *the land of milk and honey*. When we first arrived, all we saw was barren land that stretched as far as our eyes could see: brown stony mountains, hills and valleys, except for a bit of green near the Jordan river. But when spring came, the rains started and the landscape was transformed as by a miracle. I can hardly believe my eyes now, all is so impressive and beautiful!

I feel so truly blessed to have been able to walk the paths Jesus treaded, to have contemplated the sceneries He saw, to have lived in His own country - in a word, this unique experience will remain with me for the rest of my life. I have now seen for myself places where David pastured his flocks, where he hid when hunted by Saül, where Abraham and Lot parted ways. From now on, when I read the Bible, memories of the places mentioned will always remain alive. I am so deeply grateful to my M.I.C. Congregation for all these blessings!" ☐

Ditma Luz Trocio, m.i.c.

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NAMES OF DEPARTING MISSIONARIES WILL BE PUBLISHED IN NOV.-DEC. 1995

1995 MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

JULY

Risen Lord, hear our prayer that the inalienable rights of women be promoted everywhere on Earth.

AUGUST

Lord Jesus, you prayed that all may be one. May visible communion increase between the Church of China and the Universal Church.

**If you wish to contact us,
here are a few addresses:**

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Responses to InterAction:
1. Rwanda 2. Burundi 3. Zaïre 4. Malawi and Zambia



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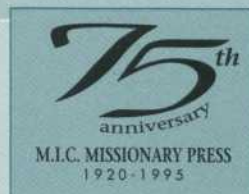
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Nadine and her brother Jean-Marc Raymond, from Haiti, in Montreal.

Photo: T. Lortie, M.I.C.

Vocations: A Gift from God

Let the whole Church pray with trusting hope, aware that vocations
are a gift to be begged for with prayer.

To Mary, who in her youth lived out the extraordinary call to be all for God
and all for man in the wondrous mystery of the incarnation of the Divine
Word, I entrust all the young people of the world and all those who,
journeying with them, make themselves their guides.

May "the Mother of the Redeemer" make intercession so that in the Church
life might beget new life and all members of the body of Christ may know
how to show the world that there is no true humanity unless there is
commitment to live as God wills.

John Paul II, Message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations, May 1995

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DO YOU WISH TO DISCERN THE LORD'S CALL WITHIN YOU?
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