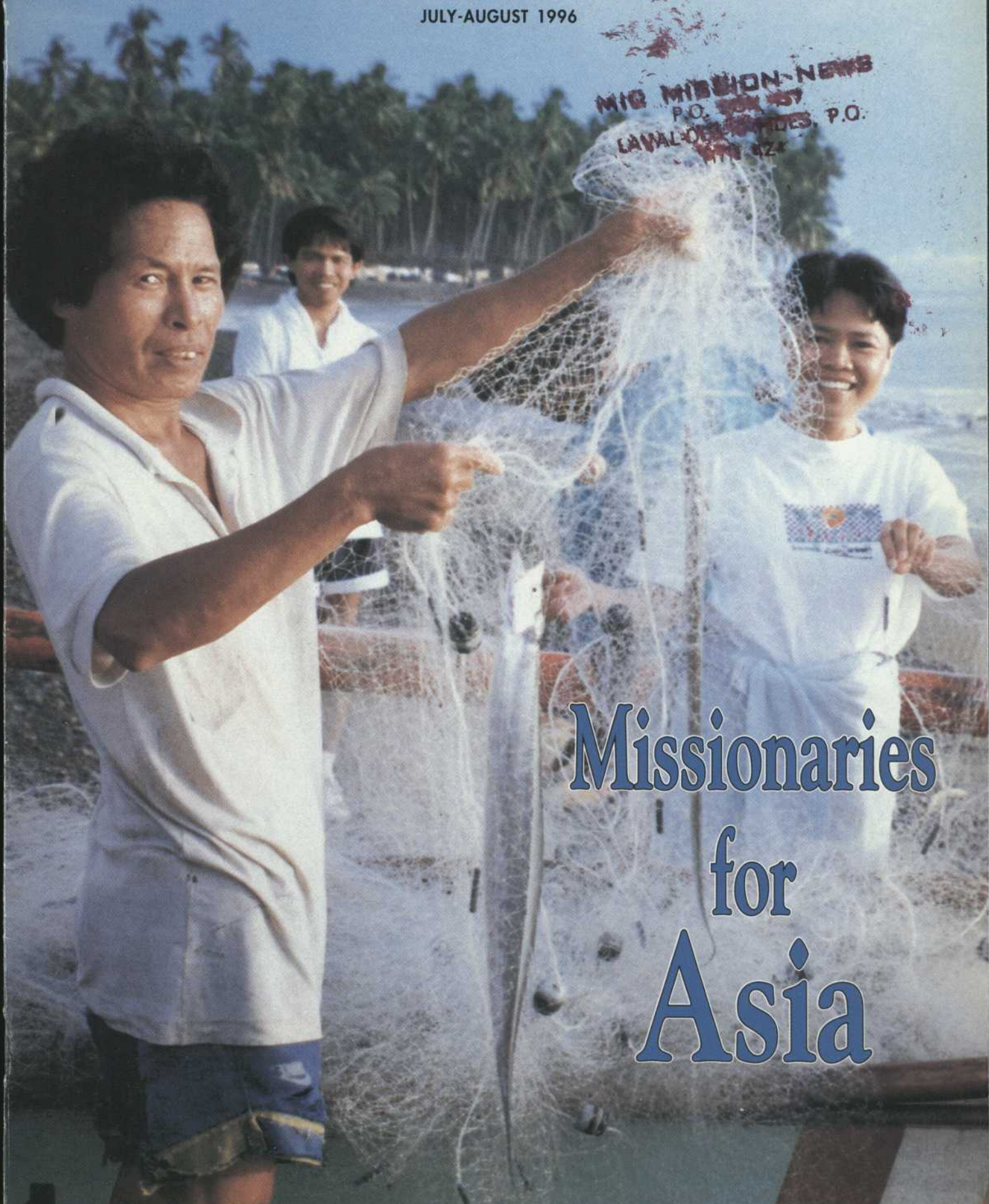


MIC MISSION NEWS

JULY-AUGUST 1996

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Missionaries
for
Asia



MIC MISSION NEWS

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**WORD
AND LIFE**
WITH
CHRISTIAN
BEAULIEU

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Fenecia

Dapitanon, M.I.C.,

and fishermen in

Malita

Photo: A. Raso, M.I.C.

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Yuh Ting Bellerive

and Hsiao Fen

Guénette

at the Montreal

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Life Lived to the Full

This issue of MIC MISSION NEWS asks the question: Does faith make a difference in our daily life? Our response leads us to Jesus; we hear His *good news*: "I came that you may have life, and have it to the full." (Jn 10:10) With these simple words, Our Lord describes his mission. It is also our mission - that of proclaiming and sharing the joy of the fullness of life. We are called to do this in faith and hope... and as people madly in love with life and the whole creation.

Pope John Paul II has stated on several occasions that Asia will be the great missionary challenge of the third Christian millennium. This challenge is felt more and more acutely by the Philippines, it being the only Christian country in the continent. One contribution of the missionaries in that country is a strong commitment to promoting the mission response of the local Church. Through their presence in the schools and in various pastoral ministries, the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception participate in the process of growth of the Philippines toward a mature Christianity, as they try to respond to the needs of the mission *ad extra*.

In Japan, the Catholic Church is small, like the mustard seed. Yet it has the respect of the population, many of whom send their children to Catholic schools. Reflecting a deep spirit of joy and hope, the M.I.C. Sisters of Japan give us some insights of the challenges they face living and working in a non-Christian culture.

Today, the Philippines and Japan share with other Asian countries the challenges to plan, work for and



build a better world for the future. The many common problems that arise can no longer be regarded in isolation; they must be seen as interconnecting in the very lives of the people. The lay missionaries who live their vocation in those countries play a crucial role in this regard. We are blessed with a growing number of M.I.C. Associates and lay collaborators. As our partners in the cause of the mission, their involvement is essential in helping to reveal God's love for all people.

The challenges of mission include the youth and there is the reality of Asia as a continent of the youth. Truly remarkable then is the increasing number of young people moving towards community and seeking a deeper spirituality. The clarion call continues... for us to stand in solidarity with their struggles for authenticity of life.

How encouraging it is to see areas of light all around us! In the initiatives and movements created by individuals, groups and communities we become aware of many signs of hope. We are often inspired by the learning experiences of those who travel to foreign lands. This is how faith lived at the grassroots level and love spontaneously expressed leave their imprint on our lives. It is with profound joy that we identify these expressions of life powerfully at work in ourselves and in one another. Our jubilees and festivities are peak moments of God's grace given to His people, assuring us that His Spirit is always present and at work in our midst. We hold sacred our own history and together we celebrate life lived to the full! □

Ma. Anthea Raso, M.I.C.

A Light to Asia

BY ANTOINETTE CASTONGUAY, M.I.C.

Christianity has come to meet the peoples of Asia, especially in the Philippines where the majority are Catholic. The first century of the third millennium will mark the 500th year since the Filipino people first accepted the Christian faith. Does that faith make any difference in their life today? During his visits in 1981 and in 1995, Pope John Paul II challenged the Church in the Philippines, inviting her to become missionary to Asia, to be the light to Asia! Sr. Antoinette Castonguay, a mission animator in the country, presents a brief exposé of how the Church lives up to this mandate and how the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (M.I.C.) participate in the Church's dynamic response to the mission call.



M.I.C.s
of Mindoro

"The Philippines has a special missionary vocation to proclaim the Good News, to carry the light of Christ to the nations... I wish to tell you of my special desire: that the Filipinos will become the foremost missionaries of the Church in Asia." Thus Pope John Paul II addressed the Philippine Bishops in February 1991. The Pope's invitation has become a mandate, renewed during his visit to Manila in January, 1995. Inviting the people to become evangelizers of Asia, the Holy Father proposes the example of Lorenzo Ruiz, the first Filipino saint, a missionary, martyred in Japan during the 17th century.

NEW CALLS TO MISSION

The Filipino people are now being challenged by the Spirit to offer their treasure of faith to other countries, particularly in Asia. This brings about a new phenomenon. Very often, I hear requests such as the following:

- I was 7 years old when I came to know the children of India through the Holy Childhood Association. I pray that soon I



During his visit to Manila, the Pope invites the people to become evangelizers of Asia.

may go to share my Christian hope and love with them.

A. Paunon, priest

- Bishop, let me give 3 years of priestly service to Solomon Islands.

G. Afable, priest

- As a lay missionary, together with my wife and children, we've spent 5 years in foreign missions and we want to renew for another term.

Participants, Philippine Catholic

Lay Mission Program

- Come to Japan to present us your Christian culture, writes Sr. Tatsumi from Japan.

"A SPECIAL MISSIONARY VOCATION..."

Why Asia? Why the urgency? Asia is the most populated area of our planet. It hosts 3,345,000,000 inhabitants - nearly three and a half billion persons who represent 60% of the world population. It is the continent of the future. (Carrera) While economy booms in Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Brunei, is the faith dimension in these countries to be neglected?



To raise mission awareness in the schools is a priority for the Missionary Promotion Team. - Sr. Antoinette Castonguay (l.) and Sr. Atsuko Sagara (center).

Statistics show that less than 4% of the continent has heard of Christ while 85% of all non-Christians in the world are to be found in Asia! Do the Filipino people still have the *Good News* to share with their Asian neighbours?

Indeed, we in the Philippines have much to be thankful for! A total of 79 dioceses cater to 51,140,000 Catholics; 82.5% of the whole population are Catholic. The Second Pastoral Plenary Council of the Philippines, held in 1991, committed the Catholic Filipino to *integral evangelization* inside and outside the country. This means being evangelizers, despite the poverty of the people themselves. There is a lack of priests, sisters and catechists to reach out to tribal and non-Christian groups and to pasture the flock. But *utang na loob* (gratitude of the heart) for the gift received in Jesus Christ leads the people to commit themselves as participants in His mission throughout the world.

The Philippines counts one million overseas contract workers and thousands of them share their faith as "the new bread" of missionaries. The Philippines Lay Missionary Program in its 21 years of existence has already sent about 100 volunteers to mission areas. Thanks to the Philippine hierarchy, the Missionary Society in the Philippines was established for the formation and sending of Filipino priests to the missions. As of 1995, the Catholic Directory counts 1,202 Filipino priests and religious men and women who are serving the Church in foreign lands. But this number is merely a "drop of water in the Asian Sea." Hence the need for a country-wide mission education programme!

THE M.I.C. RESPONSE

How are the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception facing the challenge? Since 1921, we promote mission awareness and responsibility through our works in hospitals and schools, and the sending forth of Filipina M.I.C. Sisters to mission areas in the four continents. Missionary animation is a priority in the schools managed by the Sisters. Teachers and collaborators have opportunities for experiencing mission life with the Sisters involved in ministries among tribal minorities. In the south, the mission education team is composed of three M.I.C.s:

Angelita Villarin, Filipina, Atsuko Sagara, Japanese, and Antoinette Castonguay, Canadian. We give time and energy to foster the missionary spirit throughout Davao and other provinces. This ministry allows us to experience a very close parallel with that of Délia Tétreault, M.I.C. Foundress, who fielded her missionaries to the whole Quebec studentry and later to other Canadian provinces, thus placing Canada on the missionary map of the Church. Our goal is as "imposing" as that of Mother Délia ... we share a dream: to strive to make the Philippines the first mission sending nation of Asia.

Is this an impossible dream? No! Working with other religious congregations as well as lay empowerment multiply our efforts. In collaboration with groups such as the Pontifical Mission Societies and the Diocesan Mission Education roving team, we give sessions and informative talks to basic ecclesial communities and to various youth groups. At this initial stage, we find ourselves in some ways being the missionary conscience of the diocese in Davao and Davao del Sur. Making the most of opportunities, the M.I.C. Sisters launched the movement for Associates among adults and young people who are desirous of living a spirituality of thanksgiving and a missionary charism. There is, too, our involvement in monitoring *Salamat Po Kai*, a Japanese association offering financial support to poor but deserving Filipino students in regions where the M.I.C. Sisters work. In this service, Sr. Atsuko Sagara, programme coordinator, aims to impart Christian values to the Japanese benefactors who are open to discovering the Christian faith of the student-recipients.

"Mission ad gentes, ought to be chiefly directed to Asia", writes Pope John Paul in *Redemptoris Missio*. The Catholics of the Philippines have heard the plea. Aware of the 28 neighbouring nations waiting for the *Christian light*, adults and young people alike generously put themselves at the service of the Gospel. □



The Philippines and Japan strengthen bonds of solidarity and sharing. Sr. Angelita Villarin (1st l.), Sr. Atsuko Sagara (2nd l.) and pupils of IHMA, Mati welcome visitors from Japan.

Photos: M.I.C., Philippines

Friends of Délia



Members of the group 'Friends of Délia'

BY DIGNA RAMONITA MAGTIBAY, M.I.C.

The Délia Tétréault Center in Greenhills was officially set up by the M.I.C. Sisters in 1989. Today, it is full of missionary zeal and dynamism, thanks to the active involvement of a group of lay people known as "Friends of Délia". Under the able guidance and coordination of Sr. Digna Ramonita Magtibay, the initial group has expanded to four Committees. Though pursuing different objectives, each Committee remains committed to a common goal - that of living a spirituality of thanksgiving and participating in the mission bequeathed by Délia Tétréault to her M.I.C. family.

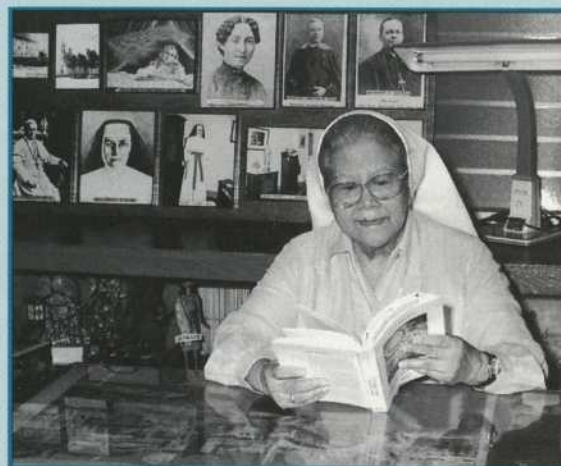
From 1989 to 1993, a core group of eight members and ten promoters, mostly parents and alumnae of Immaculate Conception Academy (ICA), compose the *Friends of Délia*. Among their activities, the group helps to finance a project undertaken by the Délia Tétréault Center - the printing of 5,000 copies of the Pilipino version of the comics book "They Too Shall Sing", *Sila Man ay Aawit*. October 1993 marks the printing and circulation of 5,000 copies of another publication on Délia Tétréault, *Ang Buhay ni Delia, Isang Magnificat* (Délia's Life, A Magnificat). This comics edition features the *Friends of Délia*. Like the first edition, it has for sponsors the group members, their relatives and the Magtibay Subdivision. Appreciated by readers from different parts of the country, the publication stresses Délia Tétréault's filial love and devotion to Our Immaculate Mother.

The following years saw to the growth of this initial group. Four dif-

ferent committees now function in view of helping promote various projects and activities undertaken by the Délia Tétréault Center. In December 1995, the four groups set aside an hour of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the ICA chapel. The *Friends of Délia* offer this special time of prayer for the success of the theologians' meeting on December 22nd in Rome à propos the Cause of our Foundress.

COMMITTEE ON THE CAUSE OF DÉLIA TÉTRÉAULT

The Committee, formed in 1994, undertakes significant projects. Among them is a contest on the life, vocation and mission of Délia Tétréault. The contest produces a number of entries - a beautiful collection of poems, songs, essays and drawings for the Délia Tétréault Album being prepared by the Office



Sr. Digna Ramonita Magtibay at the Délia Tétréault Center, Greenhills

of the Cause of Délia Tétréault in Pont-Viau. Participants represent the three M.I.C. schools in the Philippines: Immaculate Heart of Mary Academy, (IHMA) Mati; Immaculate Conception Academy of Manila (ICAM) and Immaculate Conception Academy, Greenhills. Xavier School, the Jesuits' school for boys in Greenhills, also participates. A similarly interesting Committee project is



Commitment ceremony for members of 'Missionaries in Thanksgiving'

the one-month exhibit on Délia Tétreault's life and mission set up at the Délia Tétreault Center for the students and teachers of ICA and the Religion teachers of ICAM.

COMMITTEE ON THE MISSIONARY PRESS

The Délia Tétreault Center works hand in hand with the M.I.C. Missionary Press. To date, the Center has solicited about a thousand subscriptions to the MIC MISSION NEWS. Part of its promotion strategy is the subscription drive launched in February 1995 at ICA, ICAM and IHMA to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the M.I.C. Missionary Press. To further help our mission magazine, the *Friends of Délia* take another move - the formation of a *Committee on the Missionary Press*. Still in line with the jubilee celebration, this Committee organizes a contest for the recruitment of new subscribers to the MIC MISSION NEWS. The generous participation of M.I.C. Sisters, members of the school communities, relatives and friends, allows the Committee to forward 630 new subscriptions to the M.I.C. Missionary Press Office in Pont-Viau.

MISSIONARIES IN THANKSGIVING

In April 1994, several *Friends of Délia* start to follow sessions on the goal and objectives of a nascent committee. Another activity which I also facilitate at the Center for this group is a three-day recollection based on the spirituality of thanksgiving, touching on the life and works of

Délia Tétreault. Fourteen participants, mostly ICA parents, pronounce their commitment as *Missionaries in Thanksgiving* on November 28, 1994.

A group discernment brings the members to decide on an initial outreach project. Their choice: to come up with a substantial donation for the support of the M.I.C. Sisters and their ministries among the Mangyans in Santa Cruz, Mindoro. This commitment is realized - this year, the M.I.C. Provincial Procure receives a gift of 100,000 pesos from the *Missionaries in Thanksgiving*.

MINSTRELS OF DÉLIA

August 22, 1995 marks the 'birth' of the *Minstrels of Délia for Mary Immaculate*. The *Minstrels* meet together to praise and give thanks to God in song. Their first performance takes place on December 8, Feast of the Immaculate Conception. In the past years, the celebration of this

special feast is an intimate family gathering of M.I.C. Sisters. In 1995, the feast is hosted and planned to the last detail by the newly formed group of ICA parents. The Sisters are the guests of twenty Minstrels who come with their own families to honor Mary in thanksgiving. The Eucharistic Celebration is an occasion for the singing group to make their debut... lively and inspirational singing, fruit of faithful practices at the Délia Tétreault Center!

One of the *Minstrels*, Mrs. Rosalinda Wee, aptly expresses the prevailing sentiment on this occasion: "Happy Feast Day, dear Sisters! This mass is offered by the *Minstrels of Délia* in honour of Mary Immaculate. We represent the fourth group among the *Friends of Délia*, formed to make known the Cause of Délia Tétreault, your Foundress. And as *Minstrels of Délia for Mary Immaculate*, we hope to become missionary, in thanksgiving in the Marian Way."

The Minstrels are asked to sing for the Pro-Life Celebration at Mary The Queen Church. On March 17, 1996, they are guest singers at a televised programme of ABS-CBN for the Couples for Christ - *Mater Dei* Jubilee Year. Without doubt, the *Minstrels of Délia*, are quite happy to go beyond the familiar confines of ICA to spread the Good News and to make Délia Tétreault known through their gift of song. The members of this group, like all the rest of the *Friends of Délia*, are indeed mission collaborators of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception! □



Winner of the contest organized by the 'Committee on the Cause of Délia Tétreault'

Photos: A. Raso, M.I.C.



Mrs. Akiko Ikeda from Japan and Sr. Librada Bantilan, M.I.C. Provincial in the Philippines, on their way to Sepuyo village.

Hiro Kawashima from Japan and a young friend in Mindoro



Photo: H. Kawashima

Photo: M.I.C., Philippines

Partners for the Mission

BY HIRO KAWASHIMA

A new world lies just over the horizon of the 21st century. Concerned about the future of Mother Earth and for a better tomorrow for their children, a group of Japanese parents formed the 21st Century Association. In partnership with the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in the Philippines, this non-government organization is making a big difference in the life of the Mangyan Tribe in Mindoro. Mr. Hiro Kawashima, a graduate of Sophia University in Tokyo and an active member of the Association, works in Mindoro as liaison officer for the Japanese-sponsored projects.

Towards the end of the 20th century, we find ourselves with the same recurring problems that beset the world we live in. Hope for a stable climate seems illusory and we are unable to confront terrible disasters taking place in different parts of the world. Year after year, what used to be green around us turns into dry, parched soil. The ozone-layer, that wall of protection that separates us from space, is in the process of being destroyed.

These problems and many others preoccupy us more and more. How can we help to resolve them? What does the future hold for us? For those among us who wish to leave a beautiful planet to our children, this looms as a big question and a challenge. Don't we have the responsibility to provide our children with a better future? Greatly concerned about these realities, a group of Japanese parents came together early in 1990 to form what is now known as the 21st Century Association.

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE M.I.C. SISTERS

This core group studies and discusses possible ways to help improve society and make it better for future generations. They agree that education is the best way. In fact,

they realize that much of the economic progress in Japan could be attributed to its programme of highly promoted education for the population. The members thus decide to start with scholarship programmes in neighbouring countries - the Philippines and Thailand. Dozens of interested people agree with this objective, thus increasing membership in the Association. However, another problem comes up. No one among the members has had experience in a non-government organization project; neither has any one established contacts with people in the other countries. Everyone agrees that for this "good idea" to be effective, a good partner is needed!

Providentially, Mrs. Akiko Ikeda, Chairman of the Association, meets Sr. Keiko Hasegawa, M.I.C., who has already worked in the Philippines. Mrs. Ikeda, a professional interpreter and a mother of two daughters, is a Catholic. She arranges a visit to Manila in 1990 to meet the M.I.C. Sisters. What a glad surprise for her to discover that the Sisters and the members of the Association espouse the same vision! Moreover, the Sisters are actually helping Tribal minority groups, especially the Mangyans in Occidental Mindoro. It thus doesn't take long before a partnership is formed. The Association members' role is

to look for funds and sponsors in Japan for the Mangyan scholars; that of the Sisters is to supervise the daily activities of the young students, and in particular, to provide guidance and counselling services.

There are no government-funded schools in the Mangyan-populated areas in Mindoro. We have to find out who among the children are interested in studying and bring them to the town of Santa Cruz so that they can be enrolled in the public schools. The Association then sees to the building of dormitories there for the students and the local Church community gives assistance through various services. Responsibility for the dormitories, the meals and material needs of the young natives, along with tutorial help in their studies fall mostly on the Sisters.

FOR A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

Besides the scholarship program, the Association actually has several livelihood projects for the Mangyans. As the number of Mangyan scholars increases, we realize that they come from very poor families. In most cases, the children are obliged to help look for food rather than go to school. Most of them have no other choice... The necessity to improve the living conditions of the family strikes home even more clearly. To help make this possible, the 21st Century Association secures a generous funding from the Japan Postal Ministry, providing several Mangyan families with funds to buy piglets and carabaos.

Through these family and community projects, the people are encouraged not only to look forward to their own food produce but also to learn how to organize themselves into cooperatives and to participate in the development of their village. The different projects unfold very well under the expert supervision of the M.I.C. Sisters. In Sepuyo, a remote Mangyan village, we are implementing what is called "wholistic farming", a type of agriculture particularly concerned with ecology. Trees, crops and vegetables are grown without use of any chemical fertilizer. While being the fruit of serious scientific studies, this approach allows farming to be viewed more as a traditional means of subsistence... an approach simple enough and acceptable to the Mangyan community.

DIALOGUE AMONG DIFFERENT CULTURES

With these additional projects, another problem comes up. Since 1990, representatives of the Association make regular visits to the Philippines twice a year for 2 weeks to evaluate the current phase of each ongoing activity. However, many things remain unattended due to insufficient communication. In most cases, solutions to problems call for a personal encounter, direct communication and quick decisions. There are no telephones, nor are there adequate means of transportation in the project sites. To help solve this problem, I accepted to go to Mindoro to open a Liaison Office. Our Association now works with the Sisters in a more open milieu where it is possible for all of us concerned to improve our communication and promote mutual understanding.

Education is not a one-way communication but a reciprocal interaction and instruction. Our projects among the Mangyans are for us enriching opportunities, allowing us to learn of one another's culture. Together - the Mangyan leaders, the Sisters and our Association - we are aware of the fact that we live in different cultures and that at times, misunderstandings and frictions can arise. I believe that when we have learned to integrate and go beyond our differences, a new culture will spring up, a new culture built of mutual respect and understanding. My present work gives me wonderful occasions to know the people and to learn more about Philippine culture. On my part, I am happy to tell them about my people and my country, Japan. □

Photo: H. Kawashima



Mangyan pupils welcome the chance to go to school.

An indispensable help to the farmer and his family - the carabao !



Photo: I. Bonpin

Associates in Action

BY ROGER CARON

More and more lay people share the spirituality and charism of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. Known as ASMIC, these Associates, men and women, are involved in various pastoral and missionary activities in their respective milieus. Mr. Roger Caron, president of the Association in Quebec, shares with us an initiative taken for the promotion of *LE PRÉCURSEUR*, the French edition of the *MIC MISSION NEWS*. A commitment to witness the Good News!



Roger Caron, ASMIC, at the church of St. Bruno in Laval



Nicole and Roger Caron (l.), Louise (3rd l.) and Robert Gauthier (1st r.) with parishioners of St. Bruno

Photos: St-Bruno Parish

One of the commitments made by our ASMIC group during the National Colloquium of Associates of the different Communities held in Montreal in the fall of 1994, was to contribute to the M.I.C. Missionary Press as partners in various projects of this ministry. On the suggestion of Gemma De Grandpré, M.I.C., promotion coordinator of the mission magazine *LE PRÉCURSEUR*, Robert Gauthier and I decided to ask the Pastor of the parish of St. Bruno in Laval for permission to present the magazine to our co-parishioners after the Sunday Masses. Since he already knows us as wardens of this parish, Fr. André Michaud readily welcomed our request.

The following Sunday, Sr. Gemma De Grandpré and Sr. Claire Préville accompanied us in our promotion campaign. I addressed the parishioners as a lay Associate. I explained to them briefly that the Gauthiers (Louise and Robert) and the Carons (Nicole and myself), couples belonging to this

parish, are also ASMICs, i.e. Associates of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. I further explained that we live a missionary commitment nourished by a spirituality of thanksgiving with a Marian and missionary thrust. This commitment was to be expressed in practical objectives, which were stated during the National Colloquium of Associates:

- to present Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him or to "re-present" Him to those who have lost touch;
- to support the M.I.C. Missionary Press: the magazines *LE PRÉCURSEUR* and *MIC MISSION NEWS*;
- to take part with the ALPA Center in welcoming newly arrived immigrants from different cultures;
- to introduce Délia Tétreault, the M.I.C. Foundress, and the mission of the Institute to young people in search of truth and wishing to get involved in apostolic activities and projects.

I then introduced the magazine *LE PRÉCURSEUR* as a modern, dynamic publication which brings the Word of God into the home and witnesses to the missionary activity going on in several countries. An important element ended my brief presentation: I encouraged my listeners to take a subscription and to leave the magazine lying around in the house.

We never know who will feel inspired... new vocations could spring forth!

After the Mass, Robert and Louise, Nicole and I presented magazines to those interested. The outcome of our visit? We received 25 new subscriptions to the magazine; a couple expressed the desire to join us as Associates of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception! This is how our witness as joyful Christians enabled others to recognize their own role and partnership within the Church. □

TO BELIEVE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Jean-Guy Roy, C.S., is familiar with the world of youth! He composed this personal creed when he was involved in youth ministry, a service he undertook at the "Office de la Jeunesse", Diocese of St-Hyacinthe. Br. Roy is now a General Councillor of his Community in Rome.



I believe in life. A life giver is always a winner.

**I believe in young people who change and in their capacity for change.
They usher us onward, they disturb our security and open new pathways.**

**I believe that God is present in the mutations of new generations.
These changes are a chance for young people, for us and for the Church in the world.**

**I believe that God's life works in the experience of young people.
Their cries of joy and suffering re-echo the word of Jesus.
Their initiatives for good reveal the motion of the Spirit.**

**I believe that in the life and dreams of young people,
the desire for the Kingdom is expressed, the desire for a more human and fraternal world.**

**I believe that in the hidden faith of the young people of today
the Spirit breathes renewal into the Church and into the world.**

**I believe that time is an important factor in the growth of young people.
Their maturing, their quest for meaning sometimes follow a meandering course.
This undoubtedly expresses their deep desire for autonomy, authenticity and freedom.**

**I believe that in the expectations of young people, there is a deep search
for reliable certainties, fundamental values and significant adults.**

**I believe that, deep down, young people are very much like those who came before them.
They did not invent the world in which they live.**

They learned almost everything from the generations that preceded them.

**I believe that to journey with young people,
is to say thank you to them and to give them a bit of hope. □**

Jean-Guy Roy, S.C.



The Philippine youth has a major role to play for the future of Asia. - Students of ICAM.

Emma Ferolino, M.I.C., and young people of Davao



Photos: M.I.C., Philippines

A Year After...

IN COLLABORATION

World Youth Day 1995 in Manila... what did this huge international gathering give to the young participants? A fire of straw nourished by emotions or a fire of the heart fed by the gospel message to be witnesses of the Good News in our world today? Manila celebrates the anniversary of this memorable event. Sr. Judy Saludes and Sr. Delia Regidor of the Philippines, and Hayat Hassan Ali, Ethiopian, now in Quebec, share their experiences of the past year... Concrete commitments in their milieu, personal life orientations and projects witness to the life-giving movement in their aspirations to transform themselves and those around them towards fuller life.

THE YOUTH OF THE PHILIPPINES CHALLENGED ANEW

A year after his visit to Manila, Pope John Paul II, through Vatican State Secretary Cardinal Angelo Sodano, sent his love and blessings to the Filipinos, especially the youth, whom he challenged anew to spread the Gospel: "Your response is vitally important to the Church and to your society."

Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin of Manila echoes Cardinal Sodano's message, telling the delegates that they are the hope of the country. In his homily, the Cardinal points out that "the explosion of faith and hope, love and rejoicing Filipino Catholics felt during the Papal visit is God's way of preparing them for their task of preaching the Gospel to Asia during the new millennium." For him, the 21st century will be the Asian century and the Filipino youth of today have an important role in shaping the future of hu-

manity in an Asia whose economic and political stability are rapidly growing. "Whether this world will be for the sake of human persons, above all for the sake of our multitudes of Asian people... that depends on whether Christ and the Gospel will have little or much influence on the peoples and structures of the Asian century which is born around us." The Cardinal asks the young people to remember the Pope's message during his visit, which shows that people, "bound by a spiritual kinship, are no longer strangers to each other".

Young delegates from all over the country participate in the anniversary celebration which formally starts with activities that include a dialogue between the young people and the bishops of Manila. Church officials present a gift from the Vatican to the Filipino youth: the Archdiocesan Youth Cross, a replica of the cross used during the World

Youth Day (WYD) '95, which is being brought on a tour of Metro Manila parishes. A plaque of appreciation is awarded to Trina Belamide, composer of "Tell the World of His Love," the official song of WYD '95.

LIVELY MEMORIES LINGER ON

A year has passed since the Pope graced the celebration of the 10th World Youth Day in Manila but the spirit of that special event is kept alive in the hearts of our young people. The theme song, "Tell the World of His Love" has become the graduation song of many schools in the primary and secondary levels. Whenever I look back on the dates of January 10-15, 1995, I feel very privileged to have joined the millions of young people in Manila who gave life to this memorable event! And now, as youth moderator in Mamburao, Mindoro Occidental, I am happy to continue journeying with the WYD '95 delegates in their follow-up activities and ongoing formation as sharers of the Good News.

In Our Lady of the Pillar Parish where I am presently assigned, the 32 delegates to last year's event undertake a series of activities to share their unforgettable days with Pope John Paul II and the youth from all over the world. These young people never fail to highlight in their sharing how such encounters have enriched their own lives. How do they *tell the world of God's love*? In organizing youth seminars in the barrios and in the town proper, in expressing in small but meaningful gestures their gratitude to their parents and sponsors and in participating more actively in various parish activities. During the parish Bible convention, they give a stage presentation of excerpts taken from the WYD '95 documents; several other presentations are scheduled in the following months. It is inspiring to see how these young people manifest a closeness to Our Lord Jesus, the center of their

activities, the great Missionary whose Spirit keeps them joyful, energetic and zealous in promoting His mission today. □

Judy Saludes, M.I.C.

SOWING SEEDS OF VOCATION

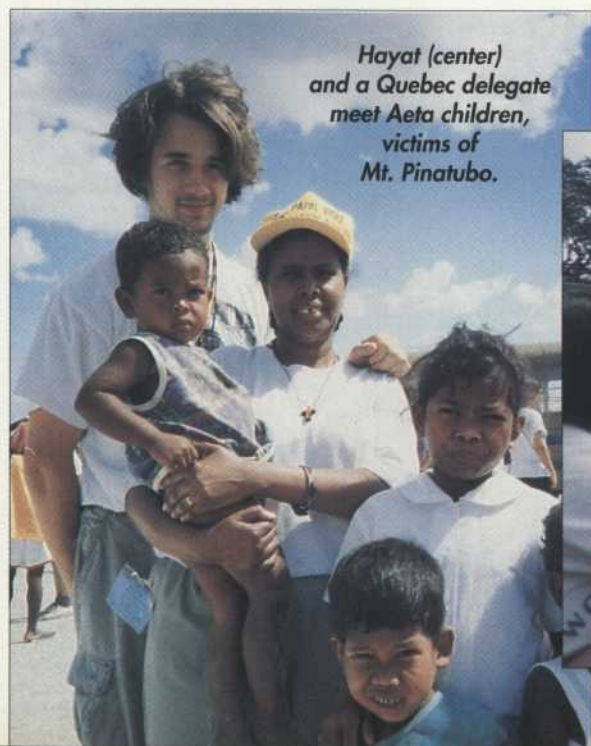
Nearly 2000 young people hold a Youth Vigil in preparation for Christmas at the San Carlos Seminary in Makati, Metro Manila. Organized by the Archdiocesan Youth Council, the Youth Liturgical Committee and the Diocesan Vocation Project, the conferences during the vigil are geared to the awakening of vocation to the religious life and priesthood. Students from the M.I.C. schools participate in this event, sharing with other delegates their experiences - indeed, the fruits of WYD '95. The World Youth Day format (catechesis, prayers, reflections) is followed and the theme, "Tell the World it's Christmas" allow the young people to relive their experiences of 1995! The youth delegations kept the groupings that were formed for WYD '95. These delegations, both on the parish and diocesan levels, continue to receive ongoing formation programs.

The World Youth Day Anniversary events which culminate in January 1996 offer me and my fellow vocation promoters varied opportunities to facilitate recollections and discernment sessions for the delegates in four parishes. I accept to facilitate a session for a group of 150 in Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish. These activities are in line with promoting and developing the culture of vocations among young people. More particularly, searchers (young professionals and university students) who attend sessions on vocations organized by the M.I.C. Sisters throughout the year are mostly WYD '95 delegates. Indeed, this is one of the significant fruits of the World Youth Day - the awakening of vocations among the Filipino youth. □

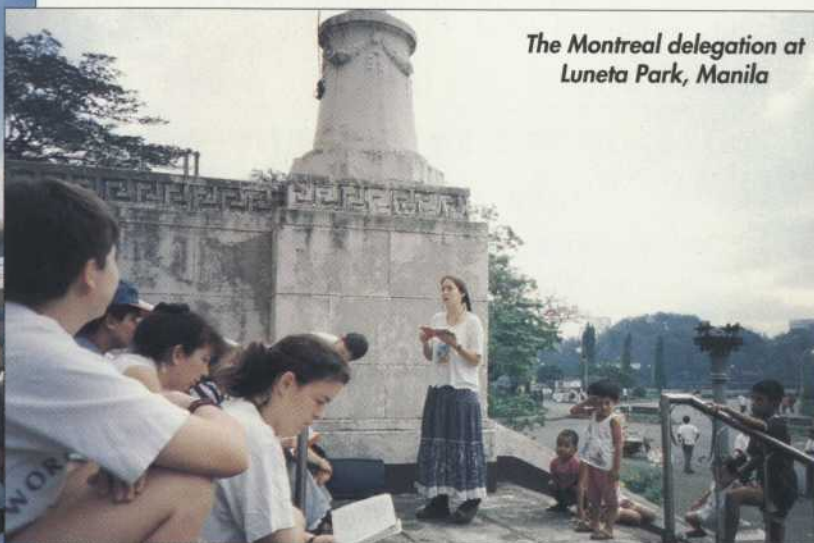
Delia Regidor, M.I.C.

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

One year ago, a group of young people from Quebec City went to meet Pope John Paul II in the Philippines.



*Hayat (center)
and a Quebec delegate
meet Aeta children,
victims of
Mt. Pinatubo.*



*The Montreal delegation at
Luneta Park, Manila*



Members of the Trois-Rivières delegation



Maria Vie Chua, M.I.C. (standing r.) continues to accompany the Quebec group.

This was for many of us the beginning of a spiritual journey. Indeed, our visit with the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception was most enriching. We discovered an authentic community totally devoted to its cause. Similarly, our encounter with the Mangyan people among whom they work showed us the face of love and hospitality.*

On our return to Quebec, we got involved in our own milieus in various practical ways. A whole organization was set in motion. We took the initiative of spending a night each month in adoration at the church of St. Roch. In front of the Blessed Sacrament, we prayed especially for vocations. This activity has touched more than 1,500 young people. We started this year and one member of the parish is now in charge. Some time ago, I set up a sewing center for the low-income women of the neighbourhood. These workshops also take place in the basement of the church of St. Roch. Also at this place, we celebrated Vocation Day in October, 1995; 290 young people were present. Our guest speaker, Sr. Rita Gagné, an Ursuline nun, spoke to us on the theme of "the call".

For the younger ones, 12-14 years old, we promoted a project of missionary awareness. It consisted of sharing on the missions and developing a sense of "responsibility" toward other countries. A group of 10, formed in March 20

this year, continues to meet once a week. We are also preparing a youth delegation for the next meeting with the Pope in Paris in 1997. Our sessions with these young people are aimed to help them become aware that the coming activity will not be a leisure trip, but a call from God to rediscover within themselves what is essential.

We want to keep in touch with the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception of Canada and of the Philippines because they are significant to us. They help us to discover some wonderful things and we are grateful to them. As part of our youth ministry, we wish to be of help to them too. Sr. Maria Vie Chua, an M.I.C. from the Philippines currently on assignment in Canada, is a great support to us. Praying with us during our nights of adoration, she has helped our faith to grow. She guided our youth retreats in St-Sulpice, thus enabling us to draw from our inner selves and to say 'Yes' to the Lord's call. Some of us have initiated steps toward the priesthood or religious life. Moreover, three of our companions are preparing for a future period of work of 8 months in the Philippines.

All in all, our pilgrimage to the Philippines enabled us to recognize our desire to serve God and to hear His call. The Quebec group included 21 people: three will return to the Philippines, two are going to the Grand Seminary to become priests, thirteen are involved in pastoral work in their respective parishes, one is studying medicine in the Dominican Republic and two, including myself, are journeying in a religious community with a view to joining it one day. There is something about religion that has attracted me since my childhood. Deep down in my heart, there is a force guiding me and when I set foot in the Philippines, this force manifested itself. I thus feel the desire to follow the way of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception. I am happy and proud to deepen my faith with them as an aspiring member... Together we can spread love and the joy of being alive! □

Hayat Hassan Ali

MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

JULY 1996

God, our Father, grant that numerous vocations may spring up to give a new thrust to missionary effort in the local Churches of Latin America.

AUGUST 1996

Lord, may your Spirit awaken the whole Church to the urgency of announcing Christ and his Gospel to the vast populations of Asia.

* The Quebec delegation included a group from Trois-Rivières and another from Montreal.

MARY, MOTHER OF YOUNG PEOPLE



Photo: A. Raso, M.I.C.

Mary, Mother of the Church! Mother of young people!

You were at prayer in the Upper Room with your Son's disciples when the Holy Spirit descended in tongues of fire.

Pray for us, that the flame of God's love will be rekindled in our heart and in the hearts of young people everywhere.

Virgin, full of grace! Immaculate Virgin!

Look upon the young people gathered in Manila and those elsewhere.

Pray that these young people will bravely take up the task that Christ your Son gives them when He says:

"As the Father sent me, so am I sending you".

Mary, Queen of the Apostles! Star of Evangelization!

You watch over all those whom your Son sends forth to be His heralds to the ends of the earth.

Inspire young people to be ardent witnesses to the Gospel message.

With your help and under the breath of the Holy Spirit may they share with others

the new life which radiates from the Risen Christ.

Mary of the new Advent! O Holy Mother of God!

To you we commend the preparations for the next World Youth Day

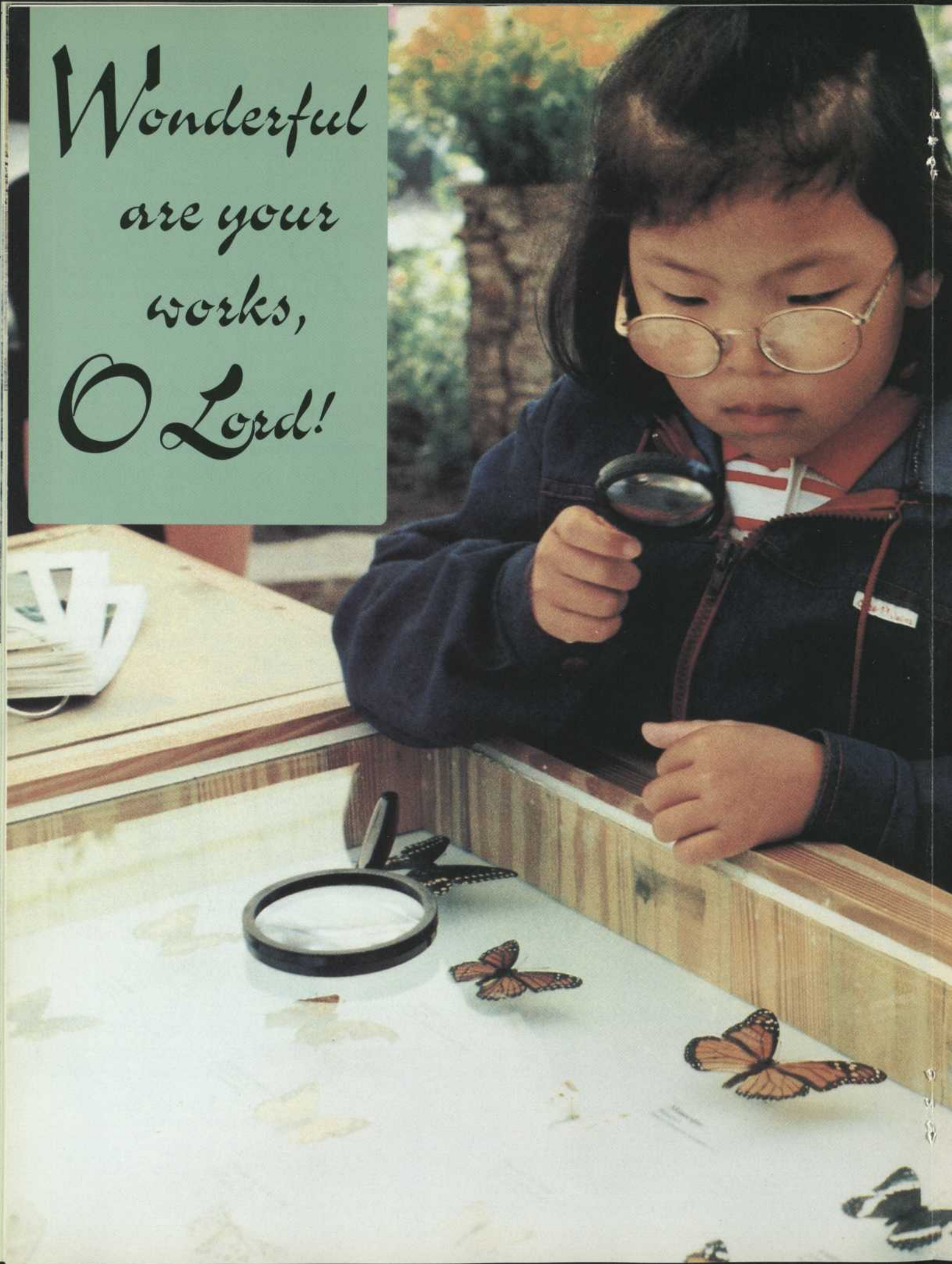
to be held in the heart of Europe,

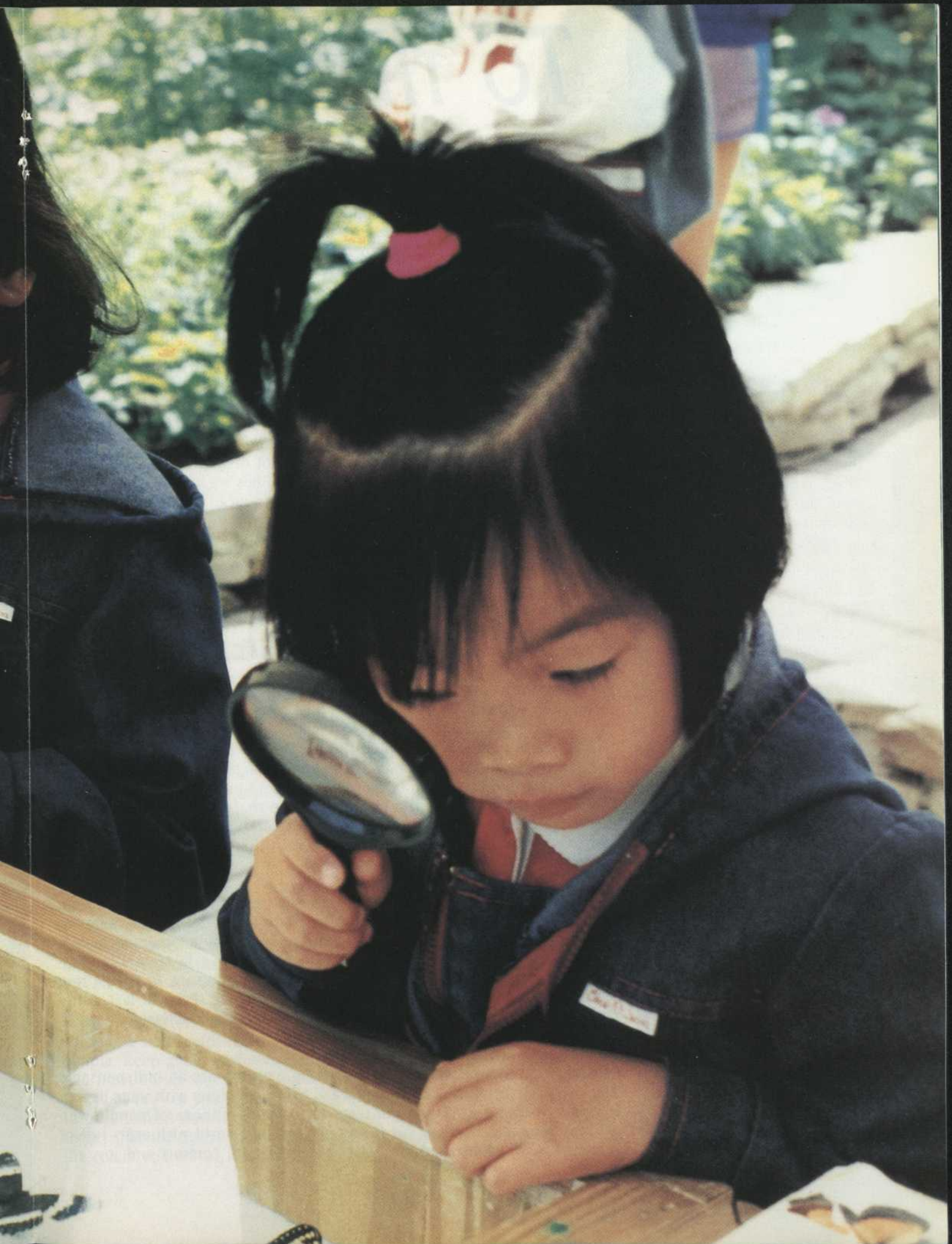
in Paris, France, in the summer of 1997. □

John Paul II

Text adapted from "Reflections with the Youth", Manila, 1995

*Wonderful
are your
works,
O Lord!*







BY CHRISTIAN BEAULIEU

Being 'madly in love' enables people to reach out beyond the limits of their ego and to believe in the impossible in order to change the world around them. This time, Christian Beaulieu invites us, as did the Apostle Peter, to dare to take the way of love... and to discover that in the chain of life, we are unique and indispensable links!

TO THE ENDS OF

I SHALL SUCCEED NO MATTER WHAT!

In our life, at the outset of all our loves, we must make this resolution: *I shall succeed no matter what and whatever the cost!* In our loves, there is this resolution to make: *I will live by a great love.* To be worthy to experience the greatest of all loves, it is fitting that we accept, right at the start, the sacrifices which are absolutely required to follow its way. To act otherwise is to expose ourselves inevitably to abort in the worst ways the most promising buds of life.

You will perhaps say to me: *But this is kind of crazy.* Yes, it is absolutely indispensable to accept a certain amount of craziness. And this is not without danger. There is no such thing as real love except one that is immoderate, excessive, overflowing - in other words, being madly in love! When one enters into this love, one never knows what will happen. There is no road map drawn in advance. A lot of improvisation and surprises lie in wait for us along the way. Oftentimes we had imagined something totally different. If we knew what was going to happen, love would no longer be a permanent miracle.

IT SURELY IS FOOLISH ...

Yes, one has to be a little foolish to tell a loved one: *No, not I, but you... always you!* A little foolish to concede: *No, not what I want, but what you want. All that is mine is yours...* to promise each other as did the newly weds of yesteryear: *In life and in death, for better and for worse, till death do us part.* Death to one's comfort, to one's whims and fancies, to one's petty concerns, to one's old habits, and to one's selfish ego. How many deaths one must undergo for the most wonderful resurrections to happen!

The Apostle Peter learned this the hard way. One day, in his mother-in-law's house in Capernaum, four bearers brought in a paralyzed man. Since they could not get in because there were too many people blocking the doorway, they decided to climb up to the roof and remove the tiles... (Mk 2:1-13). Picture this: Peter looks up in disbelief: *My house... my bricks... my roof... my tiles... What about me in all this?* Yes, in every love, the protective roof over our heads blows up!

Another day, Jesus said to Peter: *When you were a young man, you went wherever you wanted; when you get old, another will lead you.* (Jn 21:18) For those who do not accept - as Peter did - to be led by another, to have a seat belt buckled around their waist in order to move faster and go farther, to be tied down to one spot by some sort of paralysis, to have a ring slipped on their finger, how can they hope for a love that will last a lifetime? ... *Until one has given everything, one has given nothing!*

INDISPENSABLE LINKS IN THE CHAIN OF LIFE

Whether you are young or not so young, you too are an indispensable link in the chain of life. If you squeezed the earth globe with your hands, it would probably drip with the tears of so many millions of people who are wounded and hurting. But if you hugged this world with arms full of tenderness, it would shed the tears of consolation, comfort and joy.

THE EARTH

When I was a child, we used to "buy babies", as we said in those days, sponsoring them through our prayers. This was our way of being missionaries and of reaching out to the children of China, Manchuria, Japan, Vietnam... Today, the Holy Childhood Association no longer "sells" us children. The language and the pedagogical means of missionary promotion have changed... You can also be a missionary through your smile, by giving your neighbour a helping hand, by being present among the poor and by fighting with them for their rights. This is what puts a song into the hearts of those around you and thus, by chain reaction, conquers the world and spreads like fire.

Oh! if you could discover your indispensable place in your family, on your street, in your school, your community, your parish, your neighbourhood. If you could discover yourself as an indispensable link of the great chain which we all form! It is only when all the links hold strongly together, from the biggest to the smallest, that a chain cannot be broken. If you are not aware that you are indispensable, then you are a burden. A dead limb is always a risk of poisoning for the whole body. You are either a cause of ruin or a cause of growth for those around you. You either drain the best of their energy out of them, or else your presence restores their strength each day. It is for you to choose between the two! Perhaps you are wondering how you can repay those close to you - your family, your teachers - for what they have done for you? What these people have done for you, do now in turn for someone else.

LIGHT RAINS END UP FORMING RIVERS

The beginnings, the sources of the greatest rivers are often, at the start, but a few drops of water. Yet these drops fallen in silence one day, dug a tiny rivulet, which became a brook and then a river of living water. So then, get involved! Sow small seeds in the field of those around you. Those seeds will germinate in the heat of the sun. And pour out love... like the light rain falling in silence; as time goes on, it can cause rivers to overflow.

My commitments are but a drop of water in the ocean, you may say. Lives are never changed by a flood of words. It happens through a gesture, through hands opened in welcome or in giving, through small steps taken day after day, through the opening of doors and the building of bridges... These initial steps will give rise to others, which will be multiplied in the future ten times, a hundred times over.

At the start of any major venture, accept being without a programme, without a road map! Have a blind trust in the unlimited possibilities of people. Keep great confidence despite everything, regardless of the walls you must climb over, of the mountains you must cross, of the unleashed waves of the sea you must brave and of the battles you must fight! Expect to be knocked down, to have your plans "messed up". Above all, never forget that the Spirit - *the Mastermind of Creation* - accompanies you on the roads you travel. Therefore, safe journey! □





Lucie Leblanc (2nd l.) and Sr. Lucille Grenier (1st r.) with Sr. Catarina Hongo and her sister

Japan... Land of my Dreams

BY LUCIE LEBLANC

Many reasons can motivate one to travel overseas. In his encyclical Redemptoris Missio, no.82, Pope John Paul II presents new forms of missionary cooperation, especially when young people go and visit the missions... for some, to serve there and live a powerful experience in Christian living. Lucie Leblanc, a pastoral worker in Longueuil, Quebec, tells us about her stay in Japan and how she shares her discoveries with her students.

It is already one year since I returned from Japan... the land of my dreams. Actually, have I really returned? After travelling through Asia for three and a half months, I was given the red carpet treatment in the bustling land of Japan. I never could have discovered this unique society without the opportunity offered me by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. A seemingly greedy *yen* would have reduced me to tasting this culture merely through a few *sushis* washed up in Montreal. But I went.

Sr. Huguette Turcotte and Sr. Kyoko Takahashi, the first M.I.C. Sisters I met, realizing the importance of this personal plan, confirmed it: "Yes, it is possible! You are welcome." I go to understand something of the daily life of the Japanese people, but lo and behold, a completely different dimension dawns on me: that of women of faith and commitment. From the very start, the mission field chosen for me catches my interest. Being a pastoral animator in a secondary school of the South Shore of Montreal, the world of education is right up my alley. Needless to say that I was most interested in visiting their educational institutions.

What a difference between our two systems! No use trying to decide which one is better. What matters in my view is the passionate zeal that drives the missionaries. Japan is, of course, a rich country, but at what cost in hard work and deprivations! And what about relationships, which are at a great extent ruled by hierarchical values?

It is impossible to judge. One can not only see the oceans that separate us, but also the wellsprings that lead us to the same flowing river. My stay in Japan was a mere glance. Without the Sisters, I never could have come to know so many clues to the mystery of Japan, on one hand, and on the other, the tremendous commitment of these women missionaries half way around the world.

A great deal of tact, empathy and tolerance are needed to understand a culture from within. It is a full time job. My visit is a continuous exercise in thoughtfulness. When returning from such an adventure, one often wonders how to repay the favour. The tradition of presenting a gift is one way... but ever so limited! A continued friendship seems a richer way. This becomes possible when I hear that Lucille Grenier, M.I.C., is coming home to Quebec for her furlough. I am thus able to invite her to share her unique experience with my students of Secondary 3. This is a very special moment for Sr. Lucille and me, for I greatly enjoy the exchange. Just as I have shared in her commitment, she now can do the same in mine! What a delightful return!

Japan is still somewhat a part of my life, in a miniature *zen* garden given me as a present, in the *Ikebana* classes offered by these Sisters whom I admire and who took care of me as though I were their daughter. I thank them for making this long matured plan possible for me. □

With Open Hands

BY CÉLINE BOURBEAU, M.I.C.

Mount Fuji in Japan

Sr. Céline Bourbeau (1st l.),
Sr. Kesayo Sato (2nd r.)
and retreatants



Group prayer and sharing have to be seen and heard to be appreciated. In a non-Christian milieu like Japan, this activity confirms even more that young people can be brought to a sense of being united to one another and to God in a vital awareness of their own giftedness and potentials. Through the efforts of Céline Bourbeau, M.I.C., and with the help of Kesayo Sato, M.I.C., participants in a prayer meeting learn to open their hands before the Lord

When we talk about the vocation ministry, we often hear reflections such as: "There are no young people in the parish" or "Young people are not interested". This is our case too in Wakamatsu, a small town (for Japan) of approximately 10,000 inhabitants located in the mountains north of Japan. There are very few young Christians. Those in Junior and Senior High School are caught up in their studies and especially in school activities and clubs. The latter require practice every day of the week, often up to 6 or 7 hours, and part of the weekends and of vacation time. After completing Senior High School, the rush is on to pass the entrance exams for the university or the vocational schools or to get ready to join the labour force. Then they all leave for the capital city or for a bigger cultural center. In short, it is difficult to reach these young people, who are, at any rate, precious few. No sooner are they in Junior High School than they disappear from the parish.

Beginning last year, however, we have made plans as a community to organize days of prayer for young people. It is quite a challenge, but the miracle happens. On the 9th of March of this year, 12 young people are at our convent for half a day of prayer. Who are they? 11 girls and 1 boy between 16 and 30 years of age. Among them are four Christians, one of whom is a Protestant. Some are students, others kindergarten teachers, school teachers and one university student. In this beautiful diversity, the one thing all our young guests have in common is their interest in prayer.

Coming from various spiritual experiences, they take part with amazing seriousness in this day of prayer on the theme of *Light*. To begin, they each introduce themselves telling why they accepted our invitation. Some of the girls had attended an initial meeting in December and are interested in renewing the experience. I present to them the episode of the blind man of Jericho and Sr. Kesayo Sato who has come especially from Tokyo, leads them into an experience of prayer...

Stand before God with your hands open, place on them all that you hold dear: your own self, your health, your talents, your friends, etc... Then present it all to God, telling Him that He may take whatever He wishes; offer it to Him. Finally, allow God to place in your open hands whatever He wishes to put there. This is a beautiful prayer, but one that can only be said as we weigh the value and significance of each word and of each petition.

The participants express their thoughts and feelings in a personal prayer which they present as an offering on the altar. After a short celebration, each one is given back his or her prayer as a message from God Himself. On leaving, the young people request a follow-up of this experience. We can feel in them a thirst for prayer and a quest for values. This meeting is a challenge and it remains for us an ongoing call. Having helped to organize it, every M.I.C. of the fraternity gives thanks to the Lord for this day of grace. □

In the Glory of the Risen Lord

Photo: M.-H. Roy, M.I.C.

Sister Fernande Gouge (Saint-Fernand)

Born in Quebec City on April 14, 1925, in St-Sauveur parish, Fernande, the eldest of 12 children, did not enjoy good health. Her childhood and adolescent years as well as the realization of her vocation were marked by this hardship, which she endured with the help of the Blessed Virgin.

She joined the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in 1947 to fulfill her great desire to be a missionary. First assigned to community services in Quebec for a few years, she was sent to Madagascar in 1958. In this country, she devoted herself to the service of her sisters, of the poor and of parishes.



She declared having received more by sharing in Malagasy values than she was ever able to give.

In 1989, she took up residence in our Quebec City house on Avenue du Parc, where she remained an ardent apostle appreciated by all. In 1995, her health deteriorated quite rapidly and she died on October 21st at St-Sacrement Hospital.

Sr. Fernande leaves the memory of a prayerful, generous, devoted, patient, respectful and comforting woman... A woman who went by quietly, but left the mark of her kindness in the hearts of those who knew her. It was good to live with this woman of thanksgiving! □

Sister Anne-Marie Larocque (Marie-Aline)

Anne-Marie was born in Rawdon, Quebec, on September 25, 1917. She lived a happy childhood and adolescent years with her eight brothers and four sisters. At the age of 20, she went to Temiscamingue to teach for two years: a period which she called a "missionary noviciate".

She joined the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in 1940. After her first profession, she continued her teaching career, first in Quebec, and then in our schools of Haiti where she devoted herself for 33 years. As an educator, a school directress, a local superior, a group animator or a life companion, Sr. Anne-Marie manifested a joyful character, a great self-



control in the face of events and a deep tenderness and gratitude of heart towards everyone.

Her deep relationship with Christ helped her to live through every situation. She liked to call herself "Cinderella, the bride of Prince Jesus". Her desire was to grow into His likeness and her prayer was that she might love others as He does. Though she was in great pain during the last months of her life, she remained full of courage, happy to do the will of the Lord. On December 6, 1995, she departed from this earth, to go and celebrate as she had desired, with Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. □

Sister Gertrude Paradis (Marie-Gertrude)

Our Sister Gertrude was born in St-Édouard-de-Frampton, July 1st, 1904. She was the eldest of twelve children. Her parents, a courageous and ingenious couple, gave each of them comfort and happiness. Gertrude undoubtedly inherited from her family the beautiful qualities which enabled her to perform her missionary services with joy and in a way that made others joyful.

She entered the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception at the age of 23 and for 30 years devoted herself mainly to the work of closed retreats in Chicoutimi and in Nominique. Having returned to the Saguenay region in 1975, she worked for 11 years at the promotion of our magazine LE PRÉCURSEUR.



After spending three years in Rimouski, she settled in Pont-Viau where she lived a "busy" retirement, using her skills to make beautiful handcrafted items for the benefit of our missions.

In every place where she lived, Sr. Gertrude sowed joy; she had a way of winning people's confidence and opening their hearts to hope through her optimistic attitude towards life.

She knew how to raise awareness of the Good News, of which she wanted to be a witness, and she did so ardently. "To show Jesus to the world through who I am is my unique mission", she said. Her mission accomplished, the Lord came to take her to eternal joy on January 7, 1996, at the age of 91. □

Sister Alice Larouche (Marie-de-l'Assomption)

When Sr. Alice died at our infirmary of Pont-Viau on February 19, 1996, at the age of 89 after living 61 years in religious life, the Lord welcomed home a valiant missionary.

Born on May 19, 1906, in St-Théophile-du-Lac, Diocese of Trois-Rivières, Alice entered the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception in 1927. Assigned to Manchuria in 1930, the newly professed sister followed a course in nursing. On arriving at her mission, she helped her companions in the dispensary. She learned Chinese quite rapidly and taught catechesis. She devoted herself for 17 years in various posts of Manchuria. In 1947, she left China along with other missionaries and went to serve in the Philippines for five years. Then, after spending a while in Canada, she was assigned to Taiwan where, says a companion of the



time, "she was a real pioneer of our M.I.C. presence in the land of Taiwan". For 16 years, her experience, her sense of organization, her charism for bringing young people together and her admirable detachment fostered the growth of the Kingdom.

After two years in Hong Kong she returned to Quebec. She never forgot the Chinese people - visiting, counselling and giving them French classes. At 80 years of age, she lived her retirement with serenity, finding ways to make herself useful, suffering without complaint the difficulties inherent in her age and illness. All ready for the final encounter with the Lord, she is called to Him on the day of the Chinese New Year 1996. How thoughtful of the Lord! □

Jeanne Guinois, M.I.C.

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♥ HEARTFELT THANKS ♥



40 years of life at Good Hope!
Marie-Thérèse Beaudette,
M.I.C., Provincial Superior (3rd I.)
and Mary Olga Lam, M.I.C.,
school Supervisor (4th I.)

Jubilee Celebrations

IN COLLABORATION

Anniversaries are special moments for assessing the past, celebrating the present and pondering on the future. Special activities were held in Hong Kong in 1995 and in Vancouver in 1996, to celebrate such moments with joy and gratitude; in the Philippines, preparations are being completed to highlight the special events. Sr. Thérèse LeBlanc, Sr. Huguette Turcotte and Sr. Ma. Anthea Raso present to us glimpses of the M.I.C. history gracefully woven in the fabric of these celebrations.

HONG KONG

For the M.I.C.'s of Hong Kong, the year 1995 is a memorable one. Three jubilees! In all three celebrations, one word comes out spontaneously: Thanksgiving! This is expressed in song, in words, in art and in religious activities during these three important milestones in the life of the M.I.C. schools in Hong Kong.

ONE STEP MORE FOR GOOD HOPE

Let us look at the event celebrating the 40th anniversary of Good Hope Primary School through the eyes of a little schoolgirl, Fong Ho Yee. She is very excited! A big party celebrating her school's 40th birthday is taking place! Ho Yee and her classmate Wing Man are choir members; they are to sing for their parents and guests. Even though both of them are not Christians, they love singing praises to God in the beautiful chapel of Good Hope.

Ho Yee and Wing Man do not attend the Mass of thanksgiving in the chapel but they see their Catholic schoolmates and teachers assemble near the entrance, ready to praise and thank the Lord for all the good things He has done for the school since its opening. The head teacher, Miss Mary Wong, gives a touching speech to thank the Sisters for their dedication all these years. At the gala banquet everyone is happy, including Ho Yee who accompanies her mother. The alumnae remember the Sisters who had served in this school. Through contact with the Sisters, like her mother and aunts before her, Ho Yee discovers the meaning of love in the service of others.

A SILVER JUBILEE FOR TAK OI

September 1970... What joy for me to welcome the newcomers to Tak Oi School. It is the third school managed by the M.I.C. Sisters in the diocese of



Fong Ho Yee and her mother,
Mrs. June Teng

Hong Kong with *Good Hope* and *Tak Sun* (this one is no longer an M.I.C. school). These schools bear the symbolic names of Faith, Hope and Charity!

At this period, Tak Oi is the first Catholic School in the region of Tsz Wan Shan, amid the new housing estates of the area. The Sisters are happy to serve the growing population of the labouring class neighbourhood. In a short time, a lively community is formed among the staff and the student body, animated by evangelical values. The school motto *Love and Truth* grows in their hearts... The Sisters and religious education teachers have at heart to inculcate in the students a solid Christian education.

Sr. Monica Lam, present headmistress of Tak Oi, shares the following: "The tiny seed sown by the M.I.C.'s in Tsz Wan Shan in 1970 has taken root and blossomed. Today, ever sustained and nourished by the Tak Oi spirit of love and truth, the school sees many of its graduates serving the community, local and abroad. The school has always tried to inculcate lasting values of truth, love, justice and service in the mind and heart of its students. They are invited to integrate these values in their daily life."

GOOD HOPE CHOIR ON STAGE

A third celebration... the 20th anniversary of the school choir of Good Hope Secondary School! The event is planned by a group of alumnae, former members of the Good Hope School choir. For this event, in spite of their full schedules, these young business and professional women find time to organize a concert for the public and their friends. On the night of July 16, they give an outstanding performance of choral numbers which they had sung in competitions during their school-days. Together with the present day choir, they entertain the audience with their songs expressing thanksgiving, joy and love of nature, God's creation.



At the 25th anniversary of Tak Oi school, a reunion of pioneers: Thérèse LeBlanc, M.I.C., (2nd l.), Yolande Moquin, M.I.C., (3rd l.), and teachers

On its first performance year, the Good Hope School Choir wins First Prize in the Senior Girls' Singing in English in the Hong Kong Schools' Music Festival, an annual event in which thousands of students participate. Since then, this Choir has had a brilliant record of upholding its standard, being named the best girls' choir in Hong Kong. Apart from local performances, the Choir also participates in international events. In 1995, it was invited to represent Hong Kong to sing before Pope John Paul II in the Philippines during the 10th World Youth Day.

As Sr. Mary Olga Lam, supervisor of Good Hope School aptly expresses, borrowing the words of Shakespeare: "If music be the food of love, play on." At the jubilee concert, she reminds the alumnae and students that the excellence they achieve in their performances is due to three factors:

self discipline, commitment of the participants as well as that of the directresses, and love. As the younger members sing and act out "Delia's Dream", a lively message is conveyed by this harmony. Flitting about their arms as sheaves of wheat, these girls represent the sheaves of wheat visualized by Délia Tétreault in her prophetic dream, sheaves which are transformed into children's heads. Now, they are the ones interpreting our

Foundress' dream... A dream come true! □

Thérèse LeBlanc, M.I.C.

CANADA

VANCOUVER: 75 YEARS OF M.I.C. PRESENCE

The four Sisters of Montreal who arrive on May 6, 1921 in Vancouver in response to the invitation of Archbishop T. Casey, settle in a modest house on Keefer Street, close to the Chinese immigrants whom they have come to help. Neither the one who sends them, our Foundress Délia Tétreault, nor the pioneers who begin this work can guess how much the little seed they sow that day will grow and spread. Five years later, they open a small hospital on Campbell Street, which can house 32 patients; it is enlarged in 1933 to a capacity of 70. As the Chinese community keeps growing, it become obvious that a larger

Photos: M.I.C., Hong Kong



The Good Hope School choir celebrates 20 years of success on stage.

building is necessary to meet all the needs. With the help of devoted friends, Sr. Teresa Fung, of our Institute, solicits the funds needed to buy the land on which the present hospital is built and the construction begins in 1946.

GOLDEN AND DIAMOND JUBILEES

Seventy-five years after this historic date, the Chinese community of Vancouver celebrates with great solemnity the anniversary of the arrival of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception as well as the 50th anniversary of foundation of Mount Saint Joseph. Today, this general hospital has a 275-bed acute and extended care facility; it serves the east end of the city and the majority of its clientele are from various ethnic groups.

The history of Mount Saint Joseph, which is closely linked with the presence of the M.I.C. Sisters on Canada's West Coast, is recalled during the celebrations organized by the hospital's management, benefactors and friends. A long and elaborate preparation resulted in the remarkable success of these festivities, in which thousands of people contribute under dynamic and devoted leaders. Nine M.I.C.s delegates from Montreal represent all those who, at some time or other in their careers, have worked at Mount Saint Joseph.

Photo: H. Turcotte, M.I.C.



**A memorable feast of thanksgiving to the Lord...
75 years of M.I.C. presence in Vancouver
50 years of foundation of Mount Saint Joseph Hospital**

On April 13th, an impressive crowd fills the parish church of St. Patrick for a Mass presided by Vancouver's Archbishop Adam Exner O.M.I., surrounded by a number of priest friends. The Honourable Lieutenant-Governor Garde B. Gardom and his wife are present. A Portuguese youth choir performs a musical programme of great excellence. In his homily, Archbishop Exner speaks of the Sisters' presence in hospital work in his city as an incarnation of grace in people, in the M.I.C. Sisters themselves as well as in the numerous lay people who have been supporting their ministries since their coming. Before taking his leave, Lieutenant-Governor Gardom expresses his satisfaction in being present "to pay homage to Mount Saint Joseph, where a

family atmosphere reigns, a legacy of the pioneers, without discrimination of race, language, colour or religion. For your open hearts, helping hands and noble causes, for your compassion and sharing and for the mission you perform, for all these things the people of British Columbia congratulate you and thank you. May your light keep on shining in our sky and may God bless you!"

A reception at the hospital and a tour of the premises give the visitors, many of them former employees or patients, the opportunity to revisit familiar people and places. A panoply of flags of all the countries represented by the hospital personnel decorate the hall as well as photographs illustrating the evolution of Mount Saint Joseph over the years.

On Wednesday, April 17th, almost a thousand guests come to the Floata restaurant for a "multicultural" dinner and entertainment featuring dances of Punjab, Columbia, the Philippines and China. The nineteen Sisters present are invited to sing a vibrant *Magnificat* in thanksgiving, reminding everyone that God is at the heart of service accepted and performed with love, in Vancouver as well as in the other places all over our planet where there are M.I.C.s. The dignitaries present address the crowd. They go back into the past and recall the history of the Chinese community, the humble beginnings of 1921 and the developments of the years 1947, 1956 and 1977 which saw the birth and development of the hospital. To mark the special events, Mayor Philip W. Owen of Vancouver declares the week during which all these festivities take place as *Mount Saint Joseph Hospital Week*.

It is at this meal that a commemorative plaque is given to the Sisters, bearing the names of the M.I.C. pioneers: Sr. Marguerite Dumont, first registered nurse, Sr. Lucie Derome, first pharmacist, Sr. Olga Antosz, initiator of the department of pastoral care, Sr. Teresa Fung, promoter of the

Photo: R. Chan



At the Thanksgiving Mass in St. Patrick's Church, the guest of honour, Lieutenant-Governor Garde B. Gardom (1st row, center) commends and thanks the M.I.C.s and Mount Saint Joseph Hospital.



M.I.C. pioneers of the Philippines and some Filipina members at a celebration in Pont-Viau

first fund raising campaigns, and Sr. Germaine Roy, administrator for twenty years. Also honoured are the first doctor, the doctor and the employee with the greatest number of years of service and the longest standing volunteer. In her words of thanks to the organizers, Sr. Sylvia Dupuis, Vicar General, announces on behalf of the Institute and in conjunction with the Mount Saint Joseph Foundation the creation of a bursary to help the nurses of the hospital to pursue advanced studies.

The members of the Mount Saint Joseph Foundation organize the benefit concert of April 19 in the immense hall of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Before a mostly Chinese audience, the "Stars of the Pacific" from Hong Kong, a well known group among people of Cantonese origin, present a variety show which is greatly appreciated by the public. In his congratulatory address, Prime Minister Glen Clark expresses his joy and satisfaction that Mount Saint Joseph is a place where all barriers vanish and where immigrants of all nationalities are welcomed as brothers and sisters, thus realizing the motto of the hospital: *People Caring for People*. □

Huguette Turcotte, M.I.C.

PHILIPPINES

WITH THANKSGIVING

1996 is a memorable anniversary year celebrating four historic events in the life of the Missionary Sisters of

the Immaculate Conception in the Philippines:

- the 75th anniversary of M.I.C. presence in the country
- the 60th anniversary of Immaculate Conception Academy, presently in Greenhills
- the 50th anniversary of Immaculate Conception Academy of Manila
- the 40th anniversary of the first ceremony of acceptance to the M.I.C. Novitiate in Baguio.

75 years ago, on August 8, 1921, five M.I.C.s from Canton and Hong Kong came to the Philippines to assume the administration of the Chinese General Hospital in Manila.

Those young Sisters of the 20's and those who arrived in the 30's have gone; those of the 40's and the next decades are older now but they retain their youthful spirit. They've experienced both sadness and joy, yet they know that the Spirit has guided them and will always be present as new generations of M.I.C.s join in the celebration of love for their mission land and its people.

The story is still being written... the M.I.C. mission in the Philippines lives on! A small seed - the initial mission effort of 1921 - has grown and borne abundant fruits in the ensuing 75 years. With much joy and gratitude, we join all our Philippine missionaries, particularly those who have returned to their own country or are now working in other mission fields, in looking back today over those 75 years.

Proud and happy to see how the Sisters in the Philippines continue to move forward with hope and confidence in the pilgrimage to the future, we wish to express our gratitude and congratulations! We add a heartfelt wish: that our Immaculate Mother guide our dear Sisters as they look to the future of the mission in the Philippines with the creativity and courage that marked its beginnings. □

Ma. Anthea Raso, M.I.C.

Photo: M.I.C., Philippines



Nearly 75 Filipina Sisters participate in the M.I.C. mission worldwide! - A celebration at the Provincial House in Greenhills

NEWS FROM OUR SISTERS... HERE AND ABROAD

CANADA

A ROAD TO FOLLOW

Our Lord continues to call people today as He did in the past... On the subject of vocation, young people like to have witnesses talk to them. In line with the theme of the Vocation Ministry, Sr. Françoise Derome shares with us her short story which was also featured in a local journal of the Saint-Jean-Longueuil Diocese.

I was once 16, 18, 20 years old... and I tried to turn a deaf ear to the call: "Come, follow me". I had dreams with my boyfriend... he was the nicest guy. One day, however, I saw the road I was to follow and I went for it. A teaching community, no. There will always be teachers! A missionary community, yes... to go and care for the sick, the children, the needy, and especially to love them! I became a Missionary of the Immaculate Conception while my boyfriend joined the Jesuits.

After completing my studies in nursing at the Hôtel-Dieu Hospital in Montreal, I left for Haiti. There was a road for me there; how unexpected it was!... When I returned, I was asked to go to the Montreal Chinese Hospital; again an unexpected road... Then I worked in the health services and at the Human Resources Office of my Community; a road full of surprises. At present I am "missioning" in St-Jean among our senior Sisters.

On the road of my life, I have come across bumpy paths, paved streets, sidewalks and superhighways... where I learned to follow the Lord and do His will. From day to day, I take Mary as my model to live my mission like her in a spirit of



*Françoise, 1945 -
"One day, I saw the road I was to follow and I took it."*



*Sr. Françoise, 1995 -
"The Lord continues to journey with me on this road."*

thanksgiving. Yes, God has had a particular road for me and he continues to accompany me each day on this road.

You are 16, 18, 20 years old... God has a road for you to follow! ☐

Françoise Derome, M.I.C.

A MISSION OF PRAYER

When it comes to prayer, there is no such thing as retirement. Our elderly and sick sisters are aware of the important role of the offering of their life and sufferings for the world. Of this Sr. Amanda Létourneau of Pont-Viau is deeply convinced.

I wish to tell you in a few words what is my favourite activity in retirement: it is to pray and meditate the mysteries of the Rosary with one or another of our sick and retired missionaries at the Délia-Tétreault Pavilion: Sr. Armandine Dubois, Sr. Laurette Lapointe, Sr. Maria Auclair. Yes, we pray for the intentions of the Church and of the world; we pray with special attention for all the subscribers of our missionary magazines MIC MISSION NEWS and LE PRÉCURSEUR, not to forget the young people and vocations! We give thanks with Mary... we do so by praying the Rosary every day. It is a way of living the mission of prayer which is entrusted to us

Photo: M.I.C., Pont-Viau



For Sr. Armandine Dubois and Sr. Amanda Létourneau of Pont-Viau, the Rosary is a means to live their mission of prayer.

according to our age and health condition. Together with Sr. Marie-Simone St-Amant, I am happy to render this service to my sick sisters. Their faces light up with such joy when the moment comes to recite the Rosary together! Are we not reminded by the Holy Father of the missionary value of prayer and suffering? ☐

Amanda Létourneau, M.I.C.

A NEW CHALLENGE TO MEET AS A CHURCH

New challenges are being raised by the new forms of partnership with the laity. Sr. Pauline Williams, in charge of the formation of lay missionaries who are to work with the M.I.C. Sisters, tells us about a renewal gathering held last April at the residence of the Foreign Mission Society in Pont-Viau.

Being partners, living in partnership, is not something we do automatically. A quick look at our lived experience as a Church and a society helps us to understand this statement. The concept of partnership is widely talked about, but what exactly does it mean? Last April 20-21, several religious and lay missionaries experienced different facets of this reality under the guidance of Céline Girard. The dynamics proposed helped the participants to realize the social urgency of partnership, hence an inescapable future. A way of being and of living, isn't it? When dealing with this reality, it is essential to take into account the feminist sensitivity among both men and women, the greater or lesser degree of sensitivity that exists toward the issue of partnership and the partnership that does exist between men and women.

Through discussion, role playing and workshops, we discovered from within the value and strength of partnership: above all else it is a requirement of the Gospel. Living together as real partners demands a number of unquestionable attitudes: listening, respect, concerted efforts, mutual sharing and priority placed on people. Having now returned to our respective areas: Chicoutimi, Rimouski, Quebec and Montreal, enriched by this renewal experience, may we become in our Churches initiators of a real partnership! Such is our ardent desire. ☐

Pauline Williams, M.I.C.

THE ASMICS OF DAVAO

Associate members to the M.I.C. Institute are present in several countries. Sr. Agripina Fernandez tells us about the launching of a new group in the Philippines.

Since its launching on the 19th of March 1995, feast of St. Joseph, the Formation Programme for the Associates of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (SMIC) is attracting new members in Davao City. This programme is patterned after that of the two M.I.C. Provinces of Canada - Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of the Missions. A group of 13 lay people participated regularly in the monthly meetings held at the Good Counsel Hall. Most of the participants were alumnae and alumni of schools formerly administered by the M.I.C. Sisters.

During the first sessions, the group studied the history, statutes and organization of the SMIC. The 'aspirants' were also introduced to the life and virtues of Délia Tétreault. Last July, the participants expressed their decision to take part assiduously in the sessions and to encourage others to join the SMIC group. Thus motivated to live the spirit of thanksgiving and to be involved in missionary activities in their own milieu, each 'aspirant' expressed the desire to make a first commitment as an SMIC member. The commitment ceremony was set for Pentecost Day. The programme was realized, thanks to the initiative of an international team composed of three M.I.C. Sisters: Antoinette Castonguay (Canada), Atsuko Sagara (Japan) and Agripina Fernandez (Philippines) with the support of their M.I.C. companions at the Good Counsel Community. ☐

Agripina Fernandez, M.I.C.

Photo: M.I.C., Philippines



Photo: F. Vachon, P.M.E.



Lay missionaries in formation in Quebec

A new SMIC group in the Philippines with Sr. Atsuko Sagara and Sr. Agripina Fernandez (back row).

INTERACTION

Hi! Summer vacation and travels go together!

InterAction now takes you to Asia.

On our programme: exotic names of countries, activities with research work and reflection for your Team "Missio" Sharing...

Have a great time and enjoy your trip!

MYSTERY PHOTO

Look who's cooling off!

In my country there is also snow in winter!

From what country is Nozomi of Yokohama? _____



Photo: M.I.C., Japan

MYSTERY WORD

Answers on page 31
Good luck!

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Bhutan
Burma
Cambodia
China
Hong Kong
India
Indonesia
Japan
Laos
Malaysia
Mongolia
Nepal
Pakistan
Philippines
Sri Lanka
Taiwan
Thailand
Vietnam

5-letter word

COUNTRY OF ASIA _____

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

«MISSIO» PARTAGE

1. Organize quiz games with your group like those on T.V. Each member chooses a country of Asia from the list under the mystery grid or from a map, looks for information about this country and prepares questions with a choice of answers... Let the best player win!
2. Suggest to your group that they collect for a whole week news about countries of Asia, using newspapers, magazines, television or the radio. What sort of news are there? Politics - Trade - Tourism - International conferences - Catastrophes - etc. Discuss these findings in your group and present to God in prayer the reality of those countries.
3. The next World Youth Day with Pope John Paul II will be held on August 14-24, 1997, in Paris. Would you like to take part in it? Would you like to help some young people (aged 17-35) to attend it? Contact those in charge in your diocese or parish... Pray for young people. The Lord speaks to them in their heart.
4. Summer is a favorable time to relax and to marvel at the splendor of nature. In a moment of gratuitousness, take the time to give thanks to God for the wonders of His creation. Read slowly Psalms 104 (103), 111 (110), 139 (138) -
How wonderful I am!
How wonderful are your works, O Lord!
5. Summer is also a time for celebrating special events and jubilees. The 1st, 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th anniversary of a birth, a wedding, etc., are celebrated in the family, with friends or in the parish to give thanks for the gift of life and fidelity!
6. The way of true love is open to joy, to the gift of oneself for others. Read once again the text of Christian Beaulieu - *To the Ends of the Earth*, on pages 18-19.
What is there in your life today that is meaningful to you? What experience of commitment can you share with your group? Joys, difficulties encountered and overcome...
Make paper rings (using narrow strips of paper). Have each member write his or her name on one of the rings with one personal trait of character. Join them all together to form a symbolic chain. Ask the Holy Spirit to make you discover your mission in the great chain of life. □

IF YOU WISH TO CONTACT US,
HERE ARE A FEW ADDRESSES:

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THE GENERALATE
AND MISSION PROCURE
121, Maplewood Avenue
Outremont, Qc Canada
H2V 2M2 (514) 274-5691

CENTRE D'ANIMATION MISSIONNAIRE
314, Chemin Ste-Catherine
Outremont, Qc Canada
H2V 2B4 (514) 495-1551

OFFICE OF THE DÉLIA TÉTREAU CAUSE
100, Place Juge-Desnoyers
Pont-Viau, Laval, Qc Canada
H7G 1A4 (514) 663-6460

AFRICA :

PROVINCIAL HOUSE
P.O. Box 47, Mzimba
Malawi, Central Africa

CUBA :

Calle 146, No 904 - Entre 9 y 11
Mariano 16, Ciudad de la Habana
Cuba, 12100

HAITI :

MAISON PROVINCIALE (DELMAS)
C.P. 1085, Port-au-Prince
Haïti, Les Antilles

HONG KONG :

PROVINCIAL HOUSE
Good Hope Convent
381, Jat's Incline
Kowloon, Hong Kong

JAPAN :

PROVINCIAL HOUSE
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Tokyo 158, Japan

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Fishermen in Santa Cruz, Mindoro, Philippines

Photo: P. Montreuil

Missionaries of the Gospel in Asia

"As the Father has sent me, so am I sending you..." (Jn 20, 21)

On the eve of the third millenium, enormous tasks lie before the youth,
especially before the Catholic youth of the Philippines, of Asia and the Far East.

The largest mission land of the world is in need of workers,
and the Church constantly prays
the Lord of the harvest to send them. (...)

Indeed, the 20th century is now coming to an end.

Thus Christ invites you:

Come with me into the third millennium, to save the world! John Paul II

Vth International Youth Forum, Manilla, 1995

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THE RELIGIOUS OR LAY MISSIONARY LIFE?

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