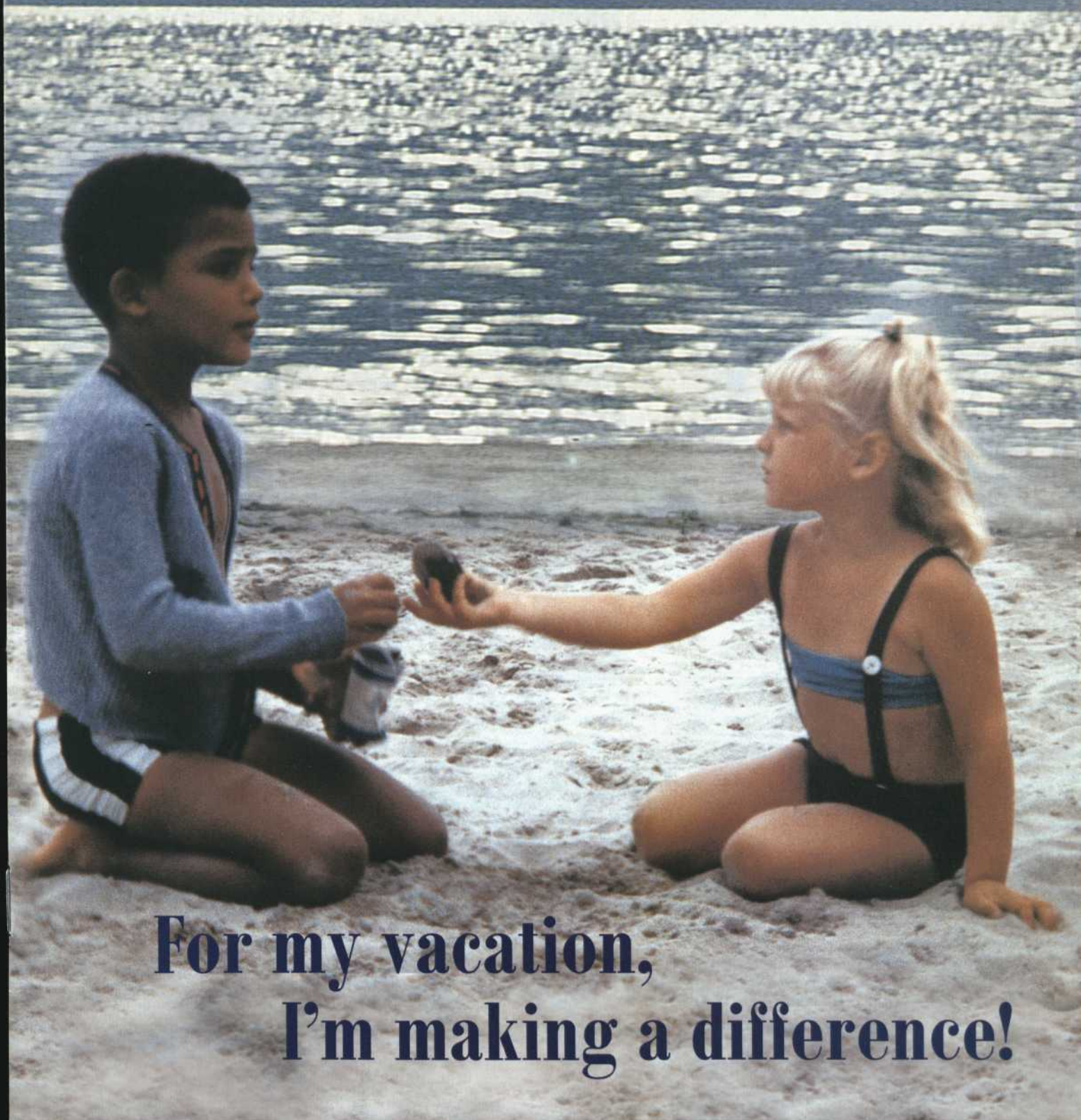


MIC Mission News

The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

JULY – AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2005



**For my vacation,
I'm making a difference!**

Missionary Prayer Intentions

AUGUST

May their studies in the Eternal City
be a time of spiritual enrichment
for students from mission
Churches in Rome.

SEPTEMBER

May young Churches proclaim the
Christian message so it may
penetrate and enrich all
local cultures.

Publisher's Note

Whoa! Check it out!

Continuing in the revitalization
of *MIC Mission News*, the usual
"calendar-issue" has been
turned into the present maga-
zine. We hope you will enjoy it.

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MIC Mission News

since 1923

Mission magazine published
by the Missionary Sisters
of the Immaculate Conception

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adoptive brother.

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Holidays... out of the ordinary

Lovely and restful holidays! May we enjoy several good weeks, listening to our heart, carving ourselves a few moments of self-communion and deep breathing to recoup ourselves in the folds of these days of grace!

Some of us will retire in the calm of wilderness to meditate or to take stock of things. Others, fond of travel, will leave to discover people or places of interest or to marvel at the world's vast beauty. Families will take advantage of the opportunity to get closer together and to bond with each other.

However, not everyone has access to holiday time and to travel for various reasons, be they family, work, finances, etc. As writer Marie Rouanet suggests, *why not spend the summer where we live and enjoy the little day-to-day things that we only see when we stay put? To make a feast, to celebrate daily life — what a fantastic plan for vacation! Where is there to go, but where we are and where we yet have to go, really?*

In all this, God, present in the innermost recesses of ourselves, calls us


to turn towards Him. Let us not put Him on holidays! Wherever we go, He is always with us.

We sometimes have trouble in making the connection between the demands life imposes and the more interior questions that go through us. *Whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it* (Mt 16:25). That's Christ's answer!

He who gives oneself is regenerated.

**The time of
the holidays,
free time to love:
love oneself and
love the others.**

This issue's theme section presents people who choose to live their holidays differently, some traveling in a way that truly serves the meeting of peoples and persons, others becoming involved here, at home. No need for brilliant feats, but a true and concrete desire of making a difference in our own life and in that of others. Like France's famed l'Abbé Pierre says: *To love is to "serve first" those who suffer the most in whom God's image is profaned.*



Marie-Eve Homier
meredactrice@pressemic.org

Dear Readers:

This column belongs to you. Share your impressions with us or respond to the questions asked at the end of some of the articles in order to further our reflection. Make yourselves heard!

MIC Mission News does not publish unsigned letters. We reserve the right to abridge letters.

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Francine Paquette, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu

Bravo for "Missionary Humour!" It is the first page that I enjoy. I particularly appreciated "The Passion of the Students." I had seen brief stories on the TV news about them. Thanks to the article, I grasped the motivations of these theology students better and I now have a different view of this enlightening activity. I totally agree about the importance of the grandparents! My first memories of faith are connected to my maternal grandmother. She never said much, but her actions had meaning. *(In response to the letter of Diane Lauzon, Saint-Jérôme)* the M.I.C. have a missionary vocation. The women who wanted to devote themselves to God and to educate children entered the C.N.D. Those who wanted to be devoted to God by taking care of the others entered the Grey Nuns. And so on for each community. All the women who entered the M.I.C. committed to follow Délia Tétreault and transmit her vision of the world. That does not prevent them from working in Quebec. However, their first vocation is the mission abroad.

Jocelyne Lambert, Mont-Laurier

(In response to the letter of Diane Lauzon, Saint-Jérôme) Continue to shine a light on poverty and poor barren countries! For fifteen years, I have had an organic garden market and share all of the profit with the poorest of the poor, especially in Haiti, Honduras and Guatemala. Here, in Canada, we have trouble appreciating what we have, for example social measures that the poor do not have in the south. In a number of countries, millions of children suffer from malnutrition and many old people die of hunger. I was a witness to this last November in a parish close to Port-de-Paix in Haiti.

Rita Caron, Saint-Charles-Borromée

As long as devotion will be spread all over the world by the beneficial action of the members of your Community and other charismatic organizations, there is hope for better days.

Charlotte Gosselin, Duclos

I prepared to put your magazine aside while saying to myself: "I will read it later when I have the time... and maybe I will stop subscribing to it also. I receive other religious magazines; that's enough." But then I began to read and I could not stop. The articles touch me, make me question, make me do better. Thank you! No question about stopping my subscription!

Captain Erl Roach, Mississauga

Your quarterly magazines are very informative, and the news therein inspires my spirit. Congratulations to the editorial staff for their professional efforts!

Eucharist and Evangelisation

Jean-Yves Garneau,
Blessed Sacrament Father,
is a specialist in the theology of the Eucharist

The Year of the Eucharist that has just been completed invites us to reflect on the ties that exist between the Eucharist and evangelization.



The Eucharist is the source and summit of all evangelization

To evangelize, wrote Madeleine Delbr  l, is "to say to people who do not know him, who Christ is, what he said, and what he did, so that they know him⁽¹⁾". If we stick to this definition, we might think that it is not part of the Eucharist to evangelize since it is celebrated in the presence of people who already know Christ and believe in him.

If, however, we think about the masses over which John Paul II presided, that television carried throughout the world, didn't they contain a clearly evangelical dimension? And if it is true of those Eucharists, is it not, in a more modest way, also true of those that take place in the parish during a marriage or funeral? Can't they be evangelists to people who attend church only seldom or never?

That is, it is better to seize upon whatever relations exist between the Eucharist and evangelization, and is what is referred to in a statement of Vatican Council II. "The Eucharist," wrote the council, is "the source and summit of all evangelization⁽²⁾". These words take on their full meaning when they are understood in the light of the existence of Jesus, model evangelist for all those who become his disciples.

Jesus the Evangelist

No one can doubt the fact that Jesus evangelized. That he did it with his whole being throughout his whole life, some may doubt perhaps, possibly saying that during what we call his "hidden life," he was not an evangelist in the usual sense that we give to that word. I respectfully submit that by his very presence in the world – even though the world was still unaware – Jesus was already the Way, the Truth and the Life. Already, he was the Good News that would one day be proclaimed throughout the world. In his hidden life and through his hidden life, we might say, Jesus was already an evangelist like those who would later become his followers; Th  r  se de Lisieux, who was declared "patron of the missions" even though she never left her Carmel, or Charles de Foucauld who, having lived in the desert for so many years, never converted a single Tuareg.

Then came the day when Jesus left to become the itinerant evangelist whom the Gospels describe. Everything, then, during what we call his "public life," was directed towards evangelization: his prayer, his actions, his words. The words of Paul come to me, which I readily apply to Jesus the

¹ Madeleine DELBR  L, *Nous autres, gens des rues*, Livre de vie, 1971, p. 262.

² Decree Minister and the life of priests, No. 5

evangelist: "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)...do it so that the Gospel is proclaimed!

It should be recognized, however, that never was Jesus any more or better an evangelist than when, in those last moments of his life, he broke the bread and extended his arms on the cross.

Nothing manages to proclaim the Gospel of God, who loves us and saves us, better than the Last Supper and the Cross. The few words that Jesus pronounced on the evening of his last meal and on the cross, summarize, reveal and bring up to date the whole Gospel, all that the evangelists have to proclaim until the end of time. "This is my body given for you" (Luke 22:19). "This is my blood, the blood of the Covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28). "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34). "Today, you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

These few words, accompanied by a few gestures - the breaking of bread, the shared cup, arms spread wide on the cross - say it all and achieve it all. God's love is fully expressed, sin is swept away, new life is given, the world of darkness is pushed back, and the kingdom of light is made present. We are at the summit of evangelization. We are also with the source.

The great evangelist and apostle Paul quickly understood, when he wrote: "We proclaim Christ cruci-

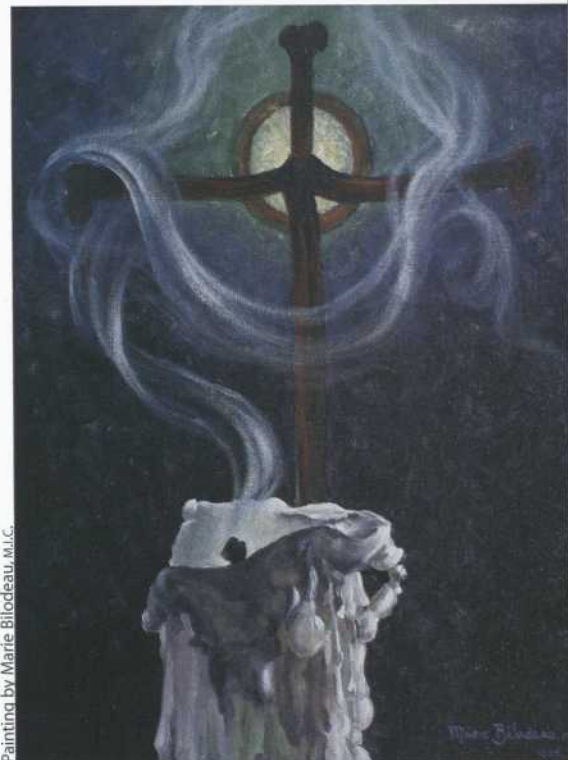
fied [...], power of God and wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24-25). The Church also understands, and never sets out to evangelize without first celebrating the Last Supper, and, after having evangelized, always returns to the Last Supper.

The Evangelizing Church

The Eucharist is the source of evangelization in the sense that every baptized person hears in it the Word, which is to be proclaimed from the rooftops⁽³⁾, and is nourishing. This Word is already the flesh of Christ. How can the Church or any evangelist proclaim the Gospel without the Word, the flesh of Christ, first being planted in their own flesh?

The Eucharist is also a source of evangelization in the sense that in it, any evangelist is closely united to the evangelizing Christ when he partakes of the mystery of the consecrated bread and wine. "My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him" (John 6:55-56). How can the Church and any evangelist proclaim and carry Christ to the world if they do not carry him within them?

Let us think again about Paul. "I have been crucified with Christ," he writes, "I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Here he is ready to go evangelize. Here he is ready to declare: "[To proclaim the Gospel], is an obligation that has been imposed on me (1 Corinthians 9:16). Here is where the Word leads: the bread and the wine of the Eucharist.



Painting by Marie Billoreau, M.C.

... it is no longer I who live,
but it is Christ who lives in me.

We realize that the words that end the celebration - "Go, in the peace of Christ" - should be looked at next to those that end Matthew's gospel. They should be understood as sending on a mission: "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations!" (Matthew 28:19)

Quickly let us note, while finishing, that the Eucharist, which is the source of Evangelization, is also the summit, because the evangelized are gathered to meet regularly to celebrate the God who saves them, the Christ who involves them in his Easter and the Spirit who every day makes them live the new life promised to believers. The Eucharist is the utmost place where that is done. ☀

³ Ref. Matthew 10:27: "What I am telling you in the dark you must repeat in broad daylight, and what you have heard in private you must announce from the housetops."

A Comforting Visit



Huguette Turcotte, M.I.C.

Reiko Yamada and Agathe Bolduc, M.I.C.

The fruits of education are a product of patience coloured by affection. A former pupil of some MIC's in Koriyama in Japan gave some proof of this to them.

Little Reiko Yamada was a very gifted pupil, who gave herself body and soul to her studies and all the activities of the Saint-François-Xavier school. She maintained good relations with her teachers and her friends.

Born to older parents, she suffered from being over-protected by her mother who almost suffocated her. After becoming a teenager, she ran away several times. Alerted by the mother, her teachers had to look for her in the "kisaten" (small coffees where the young people gather) to bring her back home, or to keep her overnight when she was too upset. In addition to the counselor at school, the mother consulted with Agathe Bolduc, M.I.C., catechist for adults. This mother was incorrigible, always worried!

Thanks to the attention that was given to her and to the good advice given to her mother, Reiko was able to continue her studies. In Tokyo, she stayed for a while at our Student Residence. For her studies in medicine, she had to rent an apartment. Even still, the concern of the mother had no end! Thérèse Renaud, M.I.C., principal when Reiko was with the primary school, devoted a lot of time to explain to her that it had to be this way; her daughter was serious and she was to make her own way.

At twenty-six years old, Reiko has now graduated in medicine from Showa Women's University. (The slogan of this educational institution - "Be light for the world, Cultivate Love, Understanding and Harmony" - reflects its academic philosophy which desires that a true education is not made up only of intellectual growth but also of ethical values and personal and physical wellbeing.) Today, Reiko continues to improve in surgery where she seems to excel: she is very sharp, clear-sighted and has an extraordinary manual dexterity! We are very proud!

Last winter, she came to our house in Laval to express her gratitude to us. She brought a large bag of rice and a lot of Japanese food, because she knew that we would like that. In the dining room, we saw her running between the microwaves and the small electric stove to prepare dinner for a dozen former missionaries to Japan. During the day and the evening, it was beautiful to see her with Sister Agathe, speaking to her patiently and affectionately in her one good ear. She listened to it all while knitting a scarf for her, which she finished the night before her departure.

Reiko returned to Japan two days later. She had only a little time to shop and to visit Montreal, but that was not her goal. She came to express her gratitude. She traveled alone, concealing her plan from her parents, to be free to express her recognition in her own way. Not with gifts, but by giving herself. That we greatly appreciated.

It should be noted that Reiko's parents became generous friends of Sister Agathe and the MIC's. Three years ago, proud of their daughter, they came from Japan to thank us for consideration that the MIC's and the teachers at the school gave to the mom and her daughter.

This story of love and recognition will remain engraved forever in our missionaries' hearts! ♥

Louisa Nicole, M.I.C.

Director of Saint-François-Xavier School in Koriyama,
where Reiko went to high school

- **My Solidarity Holidays!**
- **To Live as God's Children**
- **Putting a Smile on their Faces**
- **Their Happiness is my Joy**
- **A Summer for the Common Good**

My Solidarity Holidays!



Michèle Daneau

One of the musketeers becomes painter of the day in Peru!

Michèle Daneau, a training advisor specialized in community development, spent three weeks in Bolivia in 2004 with her husband, a school board deputy director-general, and another couple: she being an agronomist and he, a physicist. It was the first time Michèle left on a vacation to take part in a solidarity project, the creation of a day-care centre and a women's centre in a village.



Michèle Daneau

Houses of mining families in Potosí

Interview with Michèle Daneau

There were two different organizations that welcomed them. One of them sponsored a number of aid programmes for "campesinos" (peasants) whom they could visit. *We lived with Bolivians, ate with them, talked with them. What a privileged contact! It allowed us to get to know these people, their vision of the world, their point of view on life. It's a source of information other than the mainstream media and that allows for more solidarity.*

Quite aware that in the few weeks they were there, their input to the project would be very limited, they carried no foolish illusions. They went there out of solidarity, not as "experts". Their tasks amounted to various odd jobs, but necessary and useful.

Michèle had already been in Peru twenty-five years before. Therefore, she did not experience an overwhelming culture shock but she was struck by how little things had changed. *It might even be worse... Chronic poverty and misery are very troubling.*

Michèle and her party allowed themselves several excursions, including to the infamous silver mines in Potosí, at an altitude of about 4000m. Oxygen is scarce... and yet crews of miners go down to extract as much ore as possible. *I had never seen such appalling work conditions. Every day people die; life expectancy does not exceed 43 years old. It was an extremely instructive visit... and disturbing!*

These holidays have had an impact on their life. The whole family now feels called upon by the question of poverty. *Our rich Northern society's collective choices create and maintain the misery in the South. It's urgent that we commit ourselves! Our family situation does not allow us to work abroad for many years. Our four children are aged between 14 and 24 years old and the oldest's trisomy requires special care. Therefore, I have found a new job... in international solidarity!*

As soon as they returned home, they contacted many organisations to continue the support of the Bolivians they had met. Moreover, at Potosí they made connections with a young linguist who had initially gone there for a study project and decided to stay. She is attempting to establish a school for the miners' children, a project to which Michèle and her friends wish to commit even though it is not yet clear what their contribution will be.

I never felt comfortable traveling in countries where tourism exploits people. Becoming involved in a solidarity project is a good compromise that lets you discover a country, its inhabitants, its culture without exploiting those that we come to meet.



Michèle Daneau

The proud owner of a modest pork-breeding farm, a group project supported by a local NGO. The participating families gain from both increased protein in their diet and a financial gain from the sale of the piglets.

To Live as God's Children



Pinochas Team

"We cannot accomplish great things, only small ones with a great love."

Mother Teresa

Anna Tran, an early childhood educator, participated in July 2004 in the humanitarian project Pinocho Mexico in collaboration with the Sisters of St. Marcellina. Made up of eight lay women aged between 24 and 35, the team was involved for three weeks with families and children from poverty-stricken areas in Mexico City and in a suburb of Querétaro City.



Marie-Anne Lejeune

By Anna Tran

What joy it was for me to be invited to join a humanitarian project! I have been dreaming since I was a child of missions abroad, of going away with others to give ourselves in the service of our neighbours like the Lord has taught us! *Whenever you did this for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!* (Mt 25:40)

I deeply enjoyed our work with the children in Querétaro. Despite our preparation, I was confronted the moment we arrived with a new reality: a different culture, a foreign language, the tropical climate, living as a group in close quarters where everyone is called to leave their own comfort for the benefit of the others. I was already anticipating an experience filled with gifts from God; it was amazing and intense. One day at a time. There were powerful moments, at once active and fruitful in meeting people, then tender, silent and interior...

Rounding up children in the alleys, animating them through song, dance, sketches, active games, art and crafts; catechesis, celebrations, meetings, field trips, cooking, cleaning... Everything was pleasant and constant learning. All of us were devoted, every one of the Québécois participants, the Sisters and the twenty or so Mexican youths, our partners in this project. We truly experienced fraternal life in community... with all its demands and pleasures. We were one big family, one Body. I believe the Holy Spirit supported us along these weeks and continues to guide us by creating unity between us.

Through this precious experience, we grew in Love and opened up to the world. Learning to know ourselves better, getting to know others and interactions with them, respecting our similarities and our differences. I have learned so much in the company of my sisters and brothers in Christ!

I saw poverty there... Often times, drinkable water is rationed, hygiene is imperfect, clothes are limited. The conditions remain unstable. But how simple, how enthusiastic, how affectionate were the look and the heart of these people, the little ones and the grown ones! Even though I speak almost no Spanish, I felt good among these children. I discovered a warm people, rich in their culture and their faith. What a fascinating and enriching stay it was!

I was no more than a grain of sand in the immense task still to be accomplished. Yet I realise that my life is precious in God's eyes and that He likes to use me in His marvellous work of Love and Peace! In the little that I contributed, I invested all my heart. The moved and smiling faces of the children and their parents spoke worlds of gratefulness for our presence and our friendship.

However, I also realise that we can be missionaries everywhere... and most of all at home! My frail health would not tolerate an entire lifetime working in these conditions. The project in Mexico was a confirmation for me that my place is here, in Quebec, in my present work and with my already existing commitments. Still, I hope to repeat this humanitarian experience... God willing!

I wish to develop a more refined conscience about the things and events in my life because I now see my egoism and the luxury I live in. Instead, I want to live detached, to put my priorities in the right place so I can enjoy a greater freedom. Is that not living as a child of God?

Putting a Smile on their Faces

Interview with Joanne Éthier



Joanne as she distributes toothbrushes in a village in Guatemala.

Joanne Éthier, dentist, has always organized her annual leave in the fashion of a "dentist of the world". Generous with her professional expertise, her solidarity projects have carried her all over Quebec... and the Americas.



In a makeshift clinic in Guatemala, Joanne treats patients with her head lamp because, as always, there is not electricity.

Continue working... while on vacation? Is that not exhausting? Not for Joanne Éthier! *I never wanted holidays at the beach.* After her residency in dentistry, she spent one year in New York's Queens, renowned for its poverty. Once back in Montreal, she devoted herself to teaching and to treating the children under the Director of Youth Protection (DYP), her only clients to this day. Although it is not lucrative, this professional life that she created for herself entitles her to eight weeks of paid annual vacation... which she spends as a dentist for populations in need.

Thus she goes three times a year either to the Inuit native reserves of the Far North, either in Basse-Côte-Nord in the small villages, very pretty in summer, where the few existing dental clinics have no dentists to run them except those who, like Joanne, pass by occasionally. *These people are very grateful; they treat me like a queen!* Undaunted, she has even obtained a pilot licence to reach out more easily to these populations.

From time to time, Joanne also spends several weeks in Honduras and Guatemala, through the mediation of NGOs. Living and working conditions are difficult and the partnership with the NGOs often proves deceiving... *but what an amazing experience! At the end of the day, you feel the good Lord is so close because you truly have the feeling that you accomplished something. Instead of giving away money or sponsoring a child from a distance, I much rather do it myself.* Obligated to put up the money herself for her assistance trips, she brings everything with her, even her own equipment and treating material which, for that matter, she leaves behind in the end. *More often than not, resourcefulness is the prevailing way over there... You need to plan ahead for everything.*

The greater part of her work concerns public health: for example, teaching children that toothbrushes are not meant to scrub floors! She dreams of recruiting and training young peasant girls and developing mobile teams that would dispense locally dental health education. Sadly, Joanne lacks funding and the corruption problem complicates her projects.

What does she get out of all her effort? *To see the faces of those people who come in with a mouth full of cavities... and leave with beaming smiles, what an experience! I feel great. I feel closer to God every time I come back from one of these expeditions.*

To keep holding on in the face of so much suffering is not easy. *It's hard to see human misery. In the first months, I cried a lot. You get used to it... What I do over there is not so different than what I do here in Montreal. After some time abroad, I look forward to being back with my young patients again.*

When she talks of her commitments, Joanne beams. She created for herself a life that fulfills her: a mix between an enriching life of adventure, a profession that allows her to make a difference in people's lives, a partner in life and his two daughters. *What a beautiful way of giving and of giving oneself!*

Their Happiness

Interview with Samia Saouaf



Bruno Roy

Samia Saouaf, a young nurse in her twenties, has coordinated the Jesus Cool Weekend since 2004, an ecumenical annual retreat for young Christians and families. Held on the weekend of Quebec's national holiday at the Mary-Queen-of-Hearts sanctuary in Chertsey, the Jesus Cool offers its 150 participants conferences, workshops, prayer times and communal life. A time to return to the source, to meet new faces and to celebrate under the Lord's sign!



Bruno Roy

Samia and Chantal, a fellow organizer

Born on the wings of World Youth Day 2002 in Toronto on the initiative of a young Christian group in Montreal, the *Jesus Cool* is intended to be like a mini-WYD, a meeting place for youth who share common values and beliefs. *The WYD is a rendezvous for the planet's youth to celebrate the Gospel and their faith. Yet we must not passively wait for these gatherings to express our joy! It is important that we create opportunities for young Christians to meet. These gatherings stimulate them to live their faith and to reach out to one another, welcoming each person in his or her uniqueness. For young people to realize that they are not alone in their faith inspires them with the courage to continue. The Jesus Cool also aims to nurture in youth the missionary spirit so that they become involved in their Church and in the world when they leave.*

Of course, an event of such scope takes time to organize! Planning begins five months prior. During the last week, the Organizing Committee works twice as hard so that everything is ready for D-Day.

Working full time as a nurse, Samia arranges her work schedule according to her commitment. *In my opinion, events like this one can be lived either as pilgrim or organizer, but there comes a day where every participant is called to join the second group. When I was invited to, I knew my turn had come and I happily threw myself into the adventure.* She devotes 2 weeks of her annual leave: one, 3 months before the *Jesus Cool* to request food companies' assistance in feeding the 150 participants for 4 days, and the other, in the week before the event to make sure that everything is in order and to solve last minute emergencies.

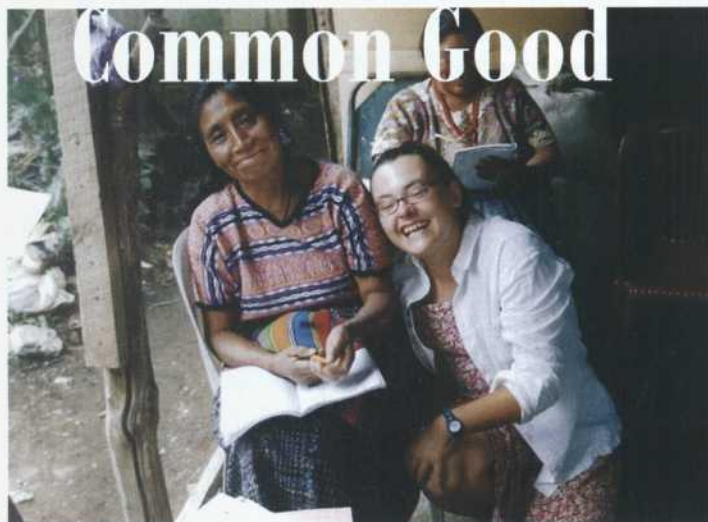
Of course, her function as coordinator has her running here and there during the entire event, which limits her participating in the activities and discussions between youth. *That's part of the responsibility I agreed to when I accepted this job.* Her reward? The youths' beaming smiles during the event, which she reads as a sign of their satisfaction and happiness at being there. *My greatest joy is when they tell me their questions were answered and they go away with thousands more!*

These kinds of experiences allow us to know ourselves better. *I discovered that I love coordinating big events! I like teamwork, sharing new ideas and seeing all these young people rally around one single person, Christ. Since I was successful twice with the Jesus Cool, I wanted to go a step further...*

When the world's attention was drawn to the tsunami in South-East Asia, a terrible famine was beginning in Niger. Sadly though, media talked about it so little that it has remained unknown. The Montreal headquarters of *Pain de Vie* ("Bread of Life"), a "new community" present in 70 countries including Niger, took the initiative to fill a container of essential foodstuffs and non-perishable staples that they will distribute locally themselves. Guess who's one of this project's coordinators?

A Summer for the

Common Good



Catherine Foisy during a previous "mission":
an international solidarity project for Native women in Guatemala.

Catherine Foisy, a candidate for a Masters in political science at UQAM, exchanged a long vacation and a summer job for a social justice project: coordinating a "tour" throughout the province for a political movement whose commitment to common good she shares.



Yves Demers Paris

By Catherine Foisy

In my understanding of my Christian faith, the Gospel message has two dimensions: a personal relationship with God through the person of Christ and... a responsibility towards the community. I feel the promised Kingdom is to be built, here and now. I believe that, despite my human limitations, I have something to give through various means: social, political, artistic or other.

Of course, Christ's message is not a political program! Quite the contrary actually, it goes far beyond! But when I discovered that through politics, societies draw in collective means to build a future for themselves and to give themselves direction, I said to myself... why not that of the common good and of social justice?

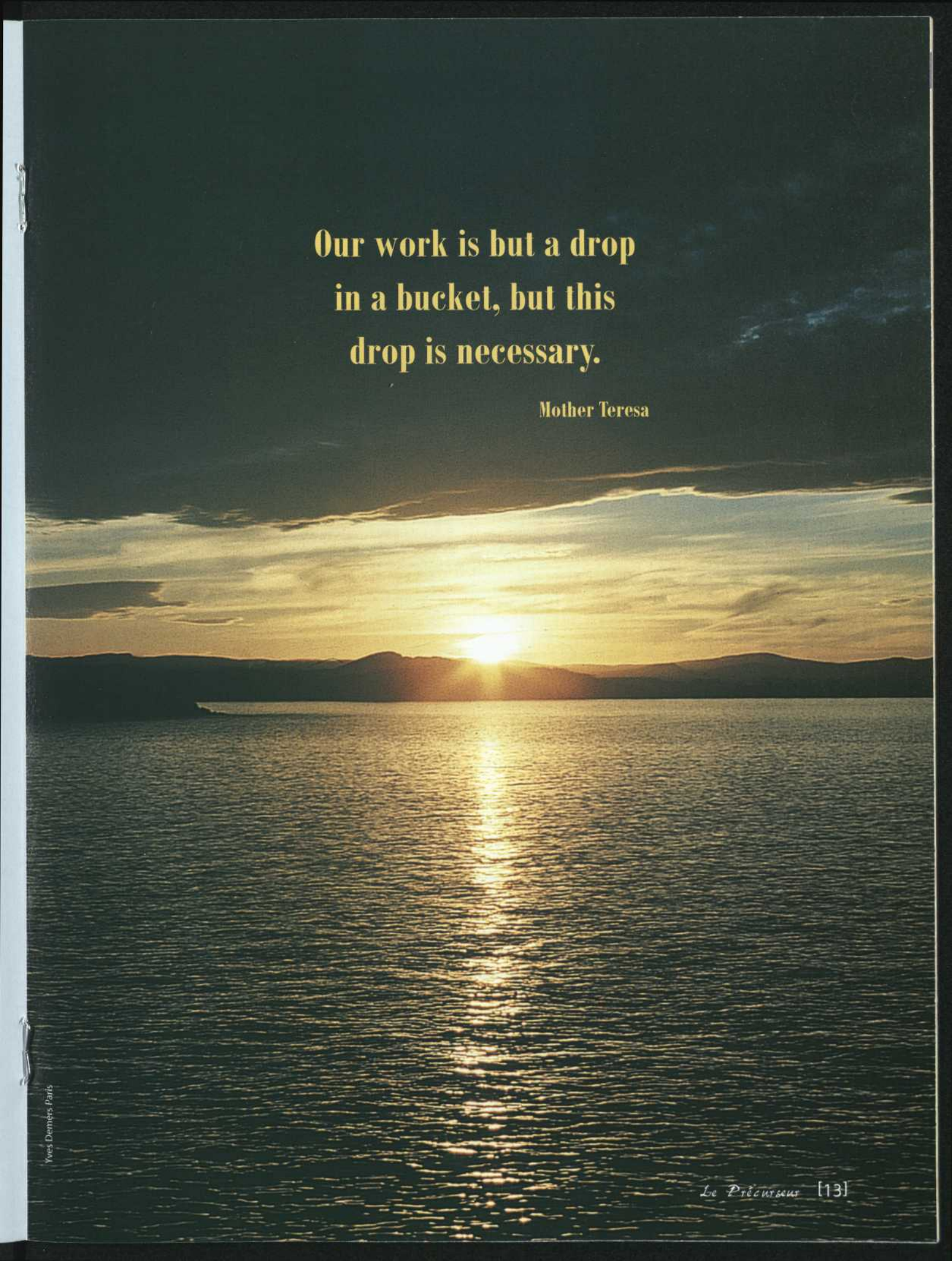
One day, my cegep hosted a conference by Françoise David, a socially committed woman for a number of years. Her invitation to solidarity in a movement of local participative democracy resounded in me so powerfully that I wanted to be involved in it... I was far from suspecting the adventure I was about to dive into the following year!

Along with the Initiatory Collective of *D'abord solidaires* ("First, We Stand Together"), we designed an action plan to build a new political alternative focussed on the common good, and a Tour throughout the province during the summer 2004 to take the population's pulse and to propose our social project: a socially responsible and fair state. Based in Montreal, the Tour's Coordination Committee, of which I was part, envisioned events throughout the province and invited key people in every region to coordinate and take part in them. As the only coordinator in charge of the Tour during four weeks in July and August, I managed communications with the media, local and regional teams, questions from citizens interested in knowing more about the movement, and the Tour's members.

I liked the fact that this Tour had an open ear so that *everyone* could have a say in the construction of our social project. Moreover, I was right in the middle of the action! Finally things were coming together.

What a summer! What an experience! I had coordinated modest projects before; this time I had to dive in the major leagues. I discovered that I was not alone in holding my ideals. I felt that, despite our disparate views, we were coming together with the same desire of humanity born and raised here, where we live. I would dare say we were Church. I often had spiritual discussions with many people involved in this area in the name of their faith.

The two keys to my shining summer: being present to people and listening to them, being at their service. Is that not one of the many invitations of our God who has come to walk amongst us?



**Our work is but a drop
in a bucket, but this
drop is necessary.**

Mother Teresa

The Church in China: faith and hope

Huguette Chapdelaine, M.I.C.

Huguette Chapdelaine, m.i.c., has worked to integrate psychology and spirituality for young Chinese religious in China. Her previous work in Taiwan had prepared her for this mission.



Huguette Chapdelaine, M.I.C.

A group of participants with Huguette Chapdelaine, M.I.C.

Have you ever been hungry? Thirsty? Not for bread or water... but for growth, enlightenment... and not to have anything to quench this thirst! Starved of spiritual food and to have only some crumbs dried by 50 years of hiding... In the Church of China, I was a witness to this desire and hunger to learn, the need to acquire more autonomy: to be able to choose, dialogue, accept, refuse freely, to affirm themselves: in short, to be women!

To be born or reborn

After 35 years of mission in Taiwan, I had said good-bye to the Chinese people overseas. But there I was,

invited to Beijing, to a National Seminar where 38 young religious from 18 developing or re-emergent congregations would experience a month of personal and spiritual formation. With these young people who already held positions of authority, we explored personal, community, church-based and spiritual courses, through activities, prayers, individual and collective meetings.

The religious in China

The religious are divided into two groups. The first includes the young women who joined the ranks of previously existing congregations, which although dis-

persed, remained in China following the advent of the new political system. Together until their retirement age, these elderly sisters witness through their life of prayer and service. There are Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary, Daughters of Charity, Little Sisters of Sainte-Therese (founded of the Father Vincent Lebbe), Holy Family Sisters and some others. The second group includes the congregations established directly by the bishops in recent years. Whether they belong to the first or the second group, all the congregations are under the authority and the exclusive competence of the bishops.

A religious vacuum

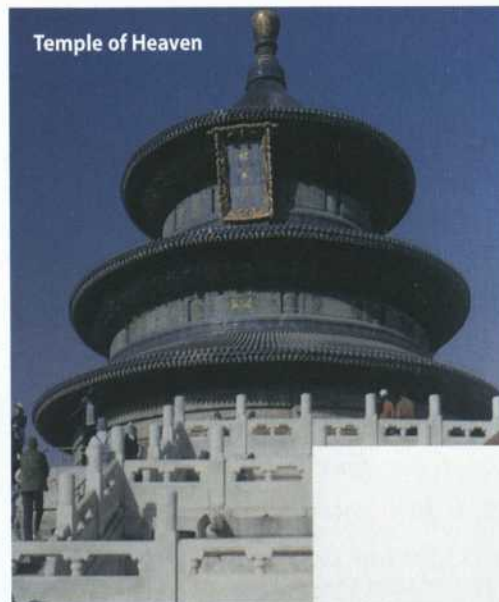
The young religious of both groups are of Christian stock; however, they are drawn from 50 years of a religious vacuum due to the communist policy. The faith, nurtured underground in their families, comes together now, more beautifully: it is a source of hope for those who wish to know the Christian religion better and to belong to it openly. At the time of this training course, these young Major Superiors had a lot to discover in themselves: their interpersonal relations between woman/ man/ priest/ religious/ bishop/ authority/ society... There is only God, our tender and loving Father, to sustain these hearts eager to live a religious life totally committed to following Christ in pastoral and social service.

Inadequate basic training

In spite of their desires and efforts, the bishops, most of them elderly, are challenged by many difficulties incorporating these women devoted to living in community. Because of their initial lack of training, rules of life and particular orientation, certain young women are sent by their bishop to other communities, already well established, to be initiated into the religious life. After one or two years, they return, two from here, two from there, and are then entrusted with the mission of founding a new congregation.

I saw opened hearts...

Traditional communities stress formation and experience. It is unimaginable to establish that in so little time! Faced with certain gaps of formation, several religious congregations call upon resource persons from elsewhere. As with any service, the person who gives, receives more. In



Temple of Heaven

Huguette Chapdelaine, M.C.

Beijing, I saw opened hearts, nourished spirits, souls filled to the top with giving and receiving forgiveness. I met dedicated women, joyfully taking the road of their respective mission again to the four corners of immense China. I was touched by their devotion at the side of the sick, of the AIDS patients... all the while ensuring the doctrinal formation of the young sisters. And I noted their courage to face the innumerable difficulties that await them.

If my contribution could so much as slightly alleviate the spiritual hunger and the thirst for these religious, I return from there grateful to God. And... I often think of the sisters of China: they have an urgent need for our sincere prayer to God that they thrive in His service. At the request of the Church of Hong Kong, we have to support the bishops, the priests, the nuns, the seminarians and the faithful in this delicate period where the "leadership" passes from the old people to the younger generations. And over all, we have to help the Church of China to face the challenges of the modern and secularized world.



Chapel of the National Seminary at Beijing, built on the model of the Temple of Heaven where in another time, the emperor came to pray every year.

The formation continues

Within the framework of a continuous training plan which they have the courage to continue despite the difficulties, 37 more young Chinese nuns will experience, in September 2005, a similar psycho-spiritual integration at the Catholic Center of formation for religious in Taiyuan, in the province of Shanxi, about 500 km to the south-west of Beijing. I will again form part of the formation team. If pain and hope can coexist, I would say that what I feel after this short but very intense experiment with Beijing is very good! †

Supported by the organization Amitié-Chine ("Friendship-China"), Sr. Huguette can be reached at:

hchapdelaine@yahoo.com

Anti-drug Rondas in Peru

Born in Peru, Ana Alvarado, m.i.c., now works in Japan. She tells us about her family, the dangers they face daily and their courage in the face of adversity. She asks for our prayers.

My uncle was killed in his home last December. It's a long story that began years ago. My neighborhood was infested with drug dealers, and clients would come around, buying and using drugs in front of everybody, even children. In this environment, coupled with extreme poverty, some children also became drug dealers, and got used to easy money. Poverty prevents children from finishing school. Even in elementary school they have to work, selling candies, ice cream, pop corn, etc. They want to work to help their parents.



In July, Peru celebrates its Independence Day, usually with military parades. In my neighbourhood, they decided to wear a white cap as a sign of peace.

One day - I think it was in 1988, I was 17 years old - my father asked one of the clients not to use drugs in front of the children. The guy hit him right in the head. From then on, my family started *Las Rondas*, which means "patrols," every night from 9 P.M. to 6 A.M. and we did not let the clients come into our neighborhood. After a week, our neighbors joined in.

Many months later, we finally succeeded, so the *Rondas* stopped... but the dealers and clients came back. So we also resumed our night patrols. This time, we asked for the police's help. They supported us in the beginning, but soon let themselves be tempted by the dealers' money. Corruption is everywhere. Undeterred, we persevered with our *Rondas* for many years. Members of my family always were team leaders. Things were going well... until 2 years ago.

With the help of a TV program, the police placed small, hidden cameras around the neighborhood so they could uncover the drug dealers and identify their head. After the cameras had operated for one full week, seemingly unnoticed, and the police had collected their data, they raided the neighborhood. Nearly 20 police cars kept watch over all entrances and exits, so no one could escape. That day, many



Our mayor (middle) and his wife surrounded by several *Las Rondas* team leaders. In a red suit, my aunt Florencia, head of the team leaders. Next to her is my uncle (red and white ribbon) who was killed. His wife faces him (red blouse and black jacket).

drug dealers were sent to prison (where they still are). The events were reported on TV the following Sunday; and the whole country learned about what our neighborhood had achieved. The City Hall and the police promised to support us, so we continued the *Rondas*. Everybody was happy because the place was quiet and safe for the children to play outdoors.

But one night, in the middle of a *Ronda*, four men got out of a car and shot several of the patrollers. One woman still cannot walk because she was shot in the leg. Many received threatening phonecalls from people representing the dealers, demanding that they stop the *Rondas*. They did not. My aunt, who is also team leader, had to change her telephone number because the calls were terrible.

Finally, last December one of my uncles who was at the head of *Las Rondas* was killed. After that, nobody wanted to be the leader, so one of my aunts took it on. I know they are very courageous, yet I worry for them. That is why I ask your prayers. 🙏

Ana Alvarado, M.I.C.

alvaradoani@hotmail.com



Pilgrims... or Missionaries?

To you, my dear sister, my beloved brother,

For several months, our group of World Youth Day pilgrims has been visiting the parishes of our diocese. It has regularly produced some very beautiful things!

The idea came to us to prepare small cards where the parishioners could entrust us with their prayer intentions. While bringing them with us to Cologne, we live the pilgrimage all together, like one community, one Christian family. When we return, and tell about our experiences, we will be a missionary breath within our local Church. It is also one of the major goals of the WYD, because the future of our Church, is us. Therefore, we are at the same time pilgrims and missionaries.

People generously answer our invitation... even the children. It is extraordinary! We weave a fabric of ties with parish groups that begin to pray for us and with us! Don't we form one? A great whole, the one mystical body of Christ?

A Christian alone, is not a Christian. Likewise for us! WYD pilgrims are not soloists! The WYD gives fruit in abundance... when we are completely involved with it and when we share it with others: between us, pilgrims, and with believers in our midst - our immediate Christian family.

In the beginning, we did not know that to witness would be so beneficial! We - we are already on our pilgrimage (the great event in Cologne isn't until August) and the groups that welcome us receive a breath of fresh air... and a sign of hope. God will be able to reap what we sow. Isn't our vocation as believers a call to serve?

By taking this step, we say to each person, to each Christian community:
"You matter to me, I am concerned about you, you are my brother, my sister in Christ; that is why your prayers to our Lord matter to me; if you entrust them to me, I will carry them for you on the pilgrimage."

That's so powerful!

And totally Christian!

But my brother, my sister...
the mission, it doesn't end there!
It is not hello and goodbye.
It is throughout life, each day,
with each person that we meet.
All baptized persons are invited to
answer the call of the Spirit... each
one with his or her own uniqueness and
particular charism.

The harvest is abundant and the workers,
very few. We have whole cities to light!
Let us be light for the world!

Your sister,

Mary,
WYD pilgrim

The young people ask us to pray particularly for:

- To increase the love of ourselves and of others
- To discover the good qualities in others
- For peace and justice in the world

Intentions requested by the adults:

- Pray with us for peace between people... at work... in our families... in our hearts...
- Prayers, please... I am autistic and I do not speak. I know that God is able to heal me in the name of his son Jesus if that is his will.
- Pray for the multi-handicapped who cannot say how much they suffer.
- Lord, receive my profound desire to find a husband and to raise a Christian family
- That by his Word and his mercy, God will help me to take the right way...
- Ask Jesus to make peace with Candid, before it's too late. Thank you.
- Thanksgiving for our 40 years of marriage. Thank you!

MIC's at t

Hundreds of thousands of youth will gather in Cologne, Germany groups of pilgrims from Montreal. How were these projects

Ida Brochu

"A journey unlike any other"

"A part of Montreal's pastoral community for over ten years, I worked in my parish preparing a group of young people for the WYD in Toronto. It was a very rich experience! So we decided to get involved again for the WYD 2005. We worked at increasing communion between the elders in faith and the younger ones, to bring these two generations closer together. We then joined other people in Montreal-North who were also interested in WYD. This is how *Vision 2005*, our group of WYD pilgrims, came to be.

To help finance the pilgrimage, we created a project: selling small green plants! However, buying a cutting was mostly meant to encourage prayer and to make concrete gestures to bring Jesus Christ to the youth. As of now, more than 700 families are "growing" the WYD plant! For that matter, we have been told of marvellous transformations...

This journey is unlike any other trip. Its first destination is to lead to God and to open the youth's hearts to a life of love and giving."

Patsy Morency

"To go and meet He who has beckoned us first"

"It's the first time I'll be taking part in a WYD! Thanks to my pastoral commitment in the united parishes of Côte-des-Neiges and Mont-Royal, in Montreal. What a beautiful gift from the Lord to get to know so many young people from here and elsewhere on their way "to come and adore" Christ, to meet He who has beckoned us first! Once back home, we will be able to commit more and better in His name... because we will have acknowledged and celebrated Him.

We have been preparing spiritually and financially for a whole year now. The reflection themes proposed by the diocese supported our preparation as individuals and as a group of 23 young pilgrims. We also organised a super hockey game between *The Legends*, a team of veteran players of the National Hockey League, and *The Good Devils*, a team of seminary students and young priests of the Montreal diocese. Guess who won... But the evening was a success! And the hockey fans met the stars that had them dreaming as children..."

Jacqueline Brage

"Faith, love and universality... the youth's way!"

"Past WYD pilgrims' testimony, their personal transformation and their commitment (liturgy, catechesis, etc.) raised in me a strong interest to collaborate in such a project. The WYD is an amazing experience of faith, love and universality lived in the way the youth approaches these ways of being. It is a powerful moment of fraternity and solidarity that invites us to go further in our spiritual process. With a joy-filled heart, one comes back from the WYD with a deep desire to share the experience lived abroad.

We devoted a year to the training of the future pilgrims, relying on themes like *What does a pilgrimage mean?* and on the animation tool *Finding God On My Way*, a manual well suited to the young people's needs. Our group also experienced two spiritual retreats together, which the pilgrims highly appreciated. Meeting Jesus in silence and prayer had them grow in Love and Gratefulness.

We financed our travel through a wide range of activities. This preparatory year's sacrifices and sufferings were not in vain. We thank the Lord for these efforts and blessings that have allowed us to reach our goal."



Photo MIC



Photo MIC



Photo MIC

the WYD!

next August for the XXth WYD. Four MIC's will be accompanying born? How have they prepared for the big adventure?

Adrienne Guay

"Who will accompany Vincent?"

"I take part in *Foi et Lumière* ("Faith and Light"), a group of intellectually disabled people, of friends and of family. One day, Vincent voices a surprising wish: *I want to see the Pope!* What can we do? There would be the WYD, but who will accompany him? Nadine, a 23 year old student, friend and volunteer member of *Foi et Lumière*, joined me in taking on the challenge to help Vincent make his dream come true, despite his handicap!

We have been making progress with the group for more than a year already. We try to live the Gospel together, which helps us afterwards in daily life. Also, the Montreal diocese suggests a personal process: to review and assess our own motivations, our aspirations, our desires, our self-knowledge, and to look for the possible option for God.

Transformations then occur thanks to a well-fed faith and to overcoming difficulties. These are beautiful opportunities for growth with a fulfilling Presence!

To raise funds for the trip, we take part together in sales, lotteries, bingos, and activities of all kind. These are experienced with the simplicity, perseverance and collaboration of our respective milieus."



Photo MIC

Missionary Humour

Do you know Jesus?

A missionary had just arrived in Africa. Across the street, there was a construction site. Each day at noon, the workmen would leave to eat on the side of the street. The sister observes them each day and thinks to herself that it would be a good idea to announce the Good News to them. One fine morning, she prepares a nice lunch, crosses the street and sits with the workmen. She asks them, "Do you know Jesus?" One of them answers her, "One moment." He turns to another group of workmen who are eating a little further and shouts, "Where is Jesus? His wife is here with his lunch!"

Tit for Tat

In Africa, the missionaries often live in a wilderness environment where the monkeys abound. They laugh at them through their nose, imitate them and some young monkeys follow them everywhere. Exasperated to see these animals looting her garden, a Canadian religious throws an object at a monkey caught in the act of stealing and eating the corn. In anger, this guy returns fire with a chewed-up ear!

Pious Primates

Some nuns like to recite their rosaries while walking and praying out loud... A very curious behavior for the monkeys! For them, the key to "understanding" is by "imitating": so, one sees them sauntering along, with their tails rolled around their arms, making little grunting sounds.

The sprinkled sprinkler!

In Africa, a missionary carefully maintains her garden... where a half-dozen monkeys have decided to take up residence. But these boarders are voracious! One day when they were eating away, attacking a pumpkin, she grabs the watering hose and sprays them abundantly. Right away, they take refuge in a tree... and "naturally" return the courtesy of watering on her!



Over 80 Associates from Saint-Jean, Granby, Quebec City, Joliette, Montreal and Laval!

Magnificat! A branch of MIC-ASMIC is 25 years old! The same sap of love and thanksgiving flows through it and its ramifications now reach 13 countries.

Last June 11, the Associates of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate-Conception (ASMIC) met in Laval to celebrate and enjoy the recognition of the 25th anniversary of their foundation.

The life of the Associates is closely related to the charism and spirituality of the Institute. Bequeathed by the founder Délia Tétreault, a visionary guided by the Holy Spirit, this spirituality invites us to live in thanksgiving, recognizing the One who, in unconditional love, gave us everything. *The gratefulness so fills your life, it overflows with it (...) and as a testimony to our gratitude, we make Him known and loved by all people!* Missionaries in their own way, the ASMIC engage in various areas of activity: parish catechesis, education, social service, health, social justice, etc.

All lay people, the ASMIC sometimes work in pairs. Thérèse and Gerard Bouchard became one of first ASMIC couples: they were attracted to this thanksgiving lifestyle. *That puts joy in one's*

heart! exclaims Thérèse who, to give to the world a share of this joy, decided to become a professional... clown! For her, this spirituality means to *welcome things as they happen because they come from God, and to say thank you. While seeking to give thanks, one*



Planting an oak to mark 25 years

Celebrating 25 years!

often transforms adversity into beauty and joy. Life comes from inside; let us not waste time with the superficial!

For her part, Anna, originally from the Philippines, counts herself among the first Associates in the anglophone section. Today, the feeling of membership, well established in this group, is very much a part of her: *I feel I belong to the group.*



Jocelyne Dallaire (left), the ASMIC Association's initiator, receives a commemorative plaque from their representative Viviane Perreault.

In the light of the charism of Délia Tétreault, Helen considers that she has the mission of giving thanks each day. *I have 95 employees to train in the field of the cosmetics. I share my faith with work. My colleagues notice that I am always smiling. I say to them that my joy comes from each day being for me a thanksgiving day. At an ASMIC meeting, a lecturer invited us to let Jesus live in us in a way so that others discovers Him. Here is what a life lived in thanksgiving gives: God glowing in us!*

Marie-Eve Homier

Likoma, island of the sun

Hello everyone!

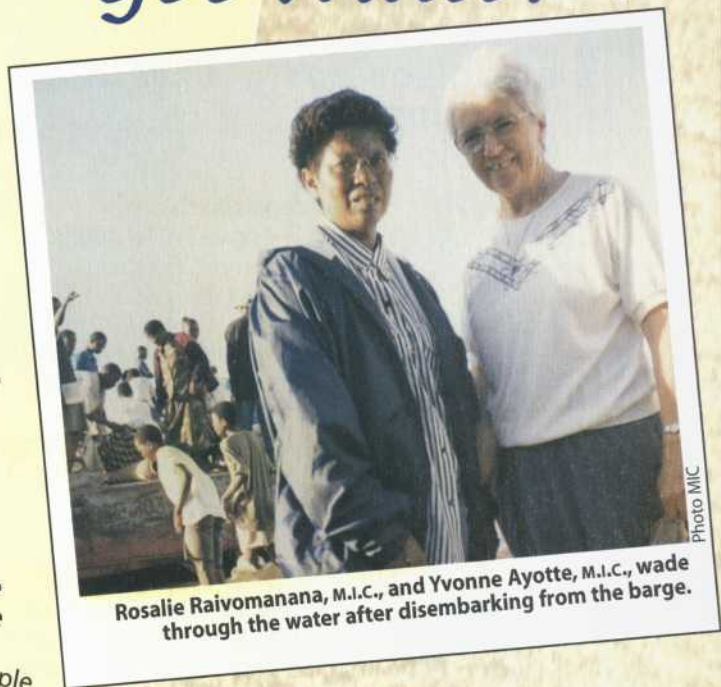
I'm sending a quick note from Africa to tell you how one of my sweetest wishes came about: to visit the young Catholic students of the island of Likoma. Leaving Nkhata Bay with Rosalie Raivomanana, M.I.C. from Madagascar, we arrived at Likoma Secondary School, the only secondary school on the island where 11 000 people are sustained by fishing. At this school, the director welcomes us cordially and his group of Catholic students is presented to us. After a few meetings, we make plans with these young people for a celebration of the Word with communion for the Catholics on the island. Proud to be able to share the Word of God, 11 of them are particularly committed there. During our stay, other young people join the Young Catholic Students (YCS).

Returning home on the boat, full of great joy at what we have just experienced, we admire the beauty of the marvellous lake Malawi and its rocky shore. In the evening, the moon creates thousands of stars on the water... And I wonder how many people are brought together by these young people, the "salt of the earth and light of the world". In the peace of the evening, I give thanks to the Lord for the Faith, the Life that these baptized persons want to share on their island of the sun.

Very happy with this meeting with young people,

Yvonne Ayotte, M.I.C.

You've Got Mail!



Rosalie Raivomanana, M.I.C., and Yvonne Ayotte, M.I.C., wade through the water after disembarking from the barge.

Greetings from Hong Kong

My dear friends,

It is with joy that I greet you from Hong Kong where I am beginning my 25th year of missionary life.

Presently, I am the Executive Secretary in the Bishop's Office entrusted with its full administration, the animation of personnel, the day-to-day routine as well as the financial and physical management of the office. Likewise, I collaborate with the Tribunal judges helping divorced people with their cases. It is an overwhelming experience of acceptance and trust to work closely with the bishops and priests.

I also act as the spiritual director of the Walk to Emmaus Team, an ecumenical spiritual renewal program composed of women of diverse cultures. Its aim is to develop Christian disciples and leaders. Besides this I minister to the Bukas Loob sa Diyos Community composed of Filipino professionals who meet regularly for Bible sharing. God has sent me to shepherd this group yet they are the ones leading me to prayer and worship. It gives special meaning to my MIC spirituality – praise and recognition of God's hand in my life's journey.

Mission here has not been without difficulties and challenges but I am very happy to be in Hong Kong to share our charism of thanksgiving.

A happy missionary from the Philippines,

Emilia Marcelo, M.I.C.



Emilia Marcelo, M.I.C., prepares her files.

Dawn of a New Life

May you devoted servants of God leave with joy!
Cheerfully rejoin the Beloved.
He awaits you.



Cécile Legault, M.I.C.

Sr. Marie-Cécilia (1916-2005)
Ville St-Laurent, Quebec
Mission: Canada, Cuba

Sr. Cécile's priority was to raise awareness about the missionary aspect here and elsewhere.



Gemma Bédard, M.I.C.

Sr. Marie-Immaculata (1917-2005)
St-Charles-Borromée, Quebec
Mission: Canada

With her warm and unconditional welcome, Sr. Gemma inspired peacefulness, joy and serenity.



Cécile Savard-Lalancette, M.I.C.

Sr. Étienne-de-Hongrie (1939-2005)
Notre-Dame-de-la-Doré, Quebec
Mission: Canada, Zambia

Through her sense of analysis and her humorous realism, Sr. Cécile left us with extremely interesting ways for the future.



Fleur-Ange L'Heureux, M.I.C.

Sr. Marguerite-de-l'Enfant-Jésus (1919-2005)
Montreal, Quebec
Mission: Canada, Cuba, Chile, Bolivia

A much appreciated collaborator at the Missionary Press, Sr. Fleur-Ange knew how to admire and enjoy beautiful things.



Bernadette Dumas, M.I.C.

Sr. Bernadette-de-France (1911-2005)
St-Anselme, Quebec
Mission: Canada, Malawi

Sr. Bernadette's main mission and greatest pride was to support a budding African community: the Rosarian Sisters.



Ida Carrière, M.I.C.

Sr. Gabriel-de-l'Annonciation (1907-2005)
Hammond, Ontario
Mission: Canada, Philippines, U.S.A

Following Mary's example, Sr. Ida generously and joyfully gave herself in several countries, going and meeting others.



Diana Chainé, M.I.C.

Sr. Saint-Eugène (1908-2005)
St-Paul-de-Chester, Quebec
Mission: Canada, China, Japan, Philippines

A dynamic, enterprising, apostle, Sr. Diana was a missionary with a contagious laughter and a big heart.



Clairette Ouellette, M.I.C.

Sr. Claire-de-l'Immaculée (1934-2005)
Montréal, Canada
Mission: Canada, Taiwan

Treasurer and nurse, Sr. Clairette had a good mind for managing goods and a loving approach to people.

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GENERALATE and MISSION PROCURE

121 Maplewood Avenue
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H3L 2M7 Tel.: (514) 384-4624
E-mail: provmic@videotron.ca

MISSION ANIMATION CENTRE

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Magnificat to the God of Dawn

*My being proclaims the wonders of light
as it slowly penetrates the ebbing darkness.*

*And my spirit bows to the beauty of the One
who gives life to all that has existence*

*Oh, vibrant green stems of life sing out
your praise to the Heart who draws you forth*

*Bird songs rejoicing in the breath of dawn,
warble your joy in view of the morning star*

*Dew drops radiant upon the wetness of grass
give glory to the Wise Creator who sustains you*

*Flower gardens, rushing streams, silent deserts,
sing, sing, for the Dancer who rejoices in your midst*

*Peoples of the planet, creatures of the universe,
play before the Enlivener who delights in you*

*And my soul, my soul, rise up and greet this day
with gratitude, in a stance of humble remembering*

*For all I am, and all I am called to be, is held
in the hands of a Creator who daily loves me into life.*

Joyce Rupp