

MIC

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MISSION NEWS

To sow seeds of joy and hope

Since 1923

CANADA

THE INDIGNANT YOUNG ADULTS

BRAZIL

DID YOU SAY- "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"?

IN FOCUS:

THE CRY OF THE RESENTFUL



MISSIONARY PRAYER INTENTIONS - 2012

APRIL

We pray that the risen Christ may be a sign of hope for the men and women of the African continent.

MAY

We pray that Mary, Queen of the World and Star of Evangelization, may accompany all missionaries in proclaiming her Son Jesus.

JUNE

We pray that Christians in Europe may rediscover their true identity and participate with greater enthusiasm in the proclamation of the Gospel.

MASSES FOR READERS' INTENTIONS OFFERED IN THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES:

January: *Canada*

February: *Cuba*

March: *Philippines*

April: *Haiti*

May: *Canada*

June: *Bolivia*

July: *Malawi and Zambia*

August: *Hong Kong and Taiwan*

September: *Madagascar*

October: *Peru*

November: *Japan*

December: *Canada*



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EDITORIAL

THE MESSAGE

Do we need to scream in order to be heard? The Lord tells us: *He who has ears to hear, let him hear* (Mt. 11:15). We can wonder if His message has been heard... So many times, when I was in Haiti, I heard the people protesting against the government's way of ruling the country. Notwithstanding the demonstrations, nothing changed. Is this not what we are currently experiencing world-wide? The nations have a message, but it is not heard. We must ask, why?

In Haiti, I would go to the poorest areas to listen to the people, to give them comfort, and with limited resources come to their rescue. I felt submerged by the misery that was all around me. One day, a young child of approximately 4 or 5 years of age came to me. It was obvious that he was suffering from malnutrition: his reddish hair, his swollen body, his little puffed up feet. His enlarged pleading eyes spoke louder than words. However, he said: *I am sick, do something for me*. My heart ached with compassion. I understood the message of this child; I was deeply touched by his condition because I knew very well the milieu he was from. I did all I could to help him.

I think that high ranking individuals do not see, they do not hear, because they are in an ivory tower which they are reluctant to leave behind. They cannot hear the cry of the indignant citizens; they do not live their struggles, nor do they live their life conditions. Inflation does not touch them, but for those who have difficulty making ends meet there are many worries about tomorrow.

Unfortunately, the day when world-wide masses will wake up, it will be too late. How many will already have died because of injustices, lack of sharing and understanding? Social inequalities provoke revolutions somewhat like the Arab springtime; they trigger wake-up calls as seen in Africa and other countries around the globe.

This edition offers you some points to reflect upon in regards to the indignant ones of our world; the movement goes well beyond Occupy Wall Street. It is a cry of desperation that should touch us and lead us to understand clearly the Lord's message: *Love one another* (Jn 13:34,35).

Marie-Paul Sanjean, m.s.j.c.

DÉLIA'S COLUMN

When someone was treated unjustly, Mother Délia took the matter at heart.

Your letter moved me deeply. I am sad to hear that the hard working farmers of Lac Saint-Jean continue being treated unjustly. Since your visit, last December, we have not ceased praying the Lord for the triumph of the cause you recommended to our prayers. Though it seems to be a hopeless case, we will continue to pray with greater fervor and ask for this special grace from the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph; may they intercede for us. My sympathy goes out to all those poor families who are being ransacked and to you, Father, I offer you my best wishes. (March 29, 1930)

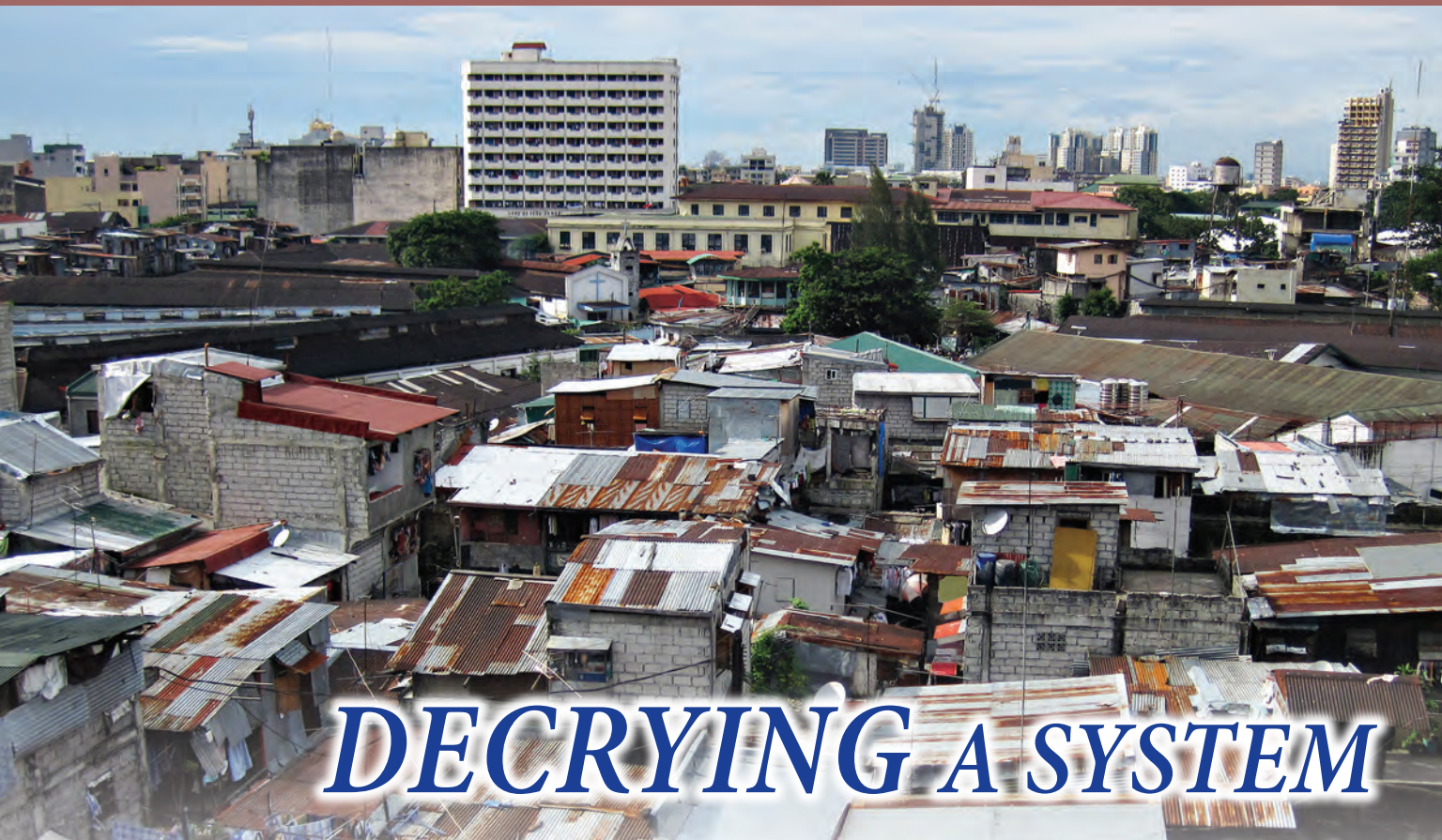
A desire for justice

I have but one wish and that is to know the truth so that I may act justly. You must know that if I am misinformed, I risk being unjust without wanting it or knowing that I am. The fear of not being just is my greatest worry. (1922)

In any case, let us be ready for combat and encourage one another as we know we are in the pursuit of truth and justice. (November 3, 1924)

I do not doubt that you keep a close watch of the accounting—it is a job that demands much attention. Mistakes can easily slip by and without wanting it there could be a lack of justice towards either the hospital or the community. (April 28, 1925) ☺

Cause Délia-Tétreault
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DECRYING A SYSTEM

A system that is powerful can maintain the inequalities that exist on our planet. A system which lulls consciences, gives away like a sugar daddy, silences the watchers, spurns human dignity, is one percent of the population controlling thirty-nine percent of the global wealth. This kind of system crucified the Prophet of Nazareth... and it continues its task.



André Gadbois

I was holding in my arms my two months old granddaughter, Beatrice. I was babysitting her at her house and I was feeding her the milk which had been prepared by the mother. She seemed to be sucking very well from the bottle when suddenly she began screaming, crying and wriggling her little body. I tried to recall how I managed when I babysat her sister Florence who is now four years old. I thought I knew how to handle the crisis, but to my surprise I didn't know what to do to pacify Beatrice's rage. Her cry was one of distress... and it was relentless. I tried to rock her, but her fits of anger, her alarming cry continued. I walked with her in my arms, wrapped her well in her favorite blanket, I sang her a lullaby: she cried out her distress even louder! I looked for the phone and I called her mother on

her cell phone. I asked my daughter, *what should I do?* With assurance, she told me: *Daddy, don't worry! She is hungry! –But you told me 2 ounces! –Yes, it's true, but she knows what she wants. Give her another 2 ounces, you will find it in the freezer, warm it up and call me if it doesn't work.* Sure enough, I didn't need to call her back; once satisfied, little Beatrice finally went to sleep smiling...smiling? Well, let's say that I am exaggerating... but sometimes to express our thanks we exaggerate a bit.

Beatrice's horrifying screams made me shiver and also feel in my own flesh the cry of desperation, of anger, of rage of those who are hungry, tortured, victimized, imprisoned, separated from their loved ones; of those whose land is taken away from them, whose human dignity is trampled upon, the dignity which has been

A system that gives no indication that human development is better off.



sown deeply within each individual by the Creator who is Love. The extreme distress of Beatrice finally ended because someone HEARD her screams and SAW her disarray. She was rescued and freed from her temporary lack of dignity because, without wasting time, someone provided the MEANS to fulfill her need. Someone cared and reached out with love, like the One who cared and reached out in Galilee proposing the Way that would lead to a most fulfilling Life.

LIKE AN ANIMATED CARTOON

Joan Deas, 25 years of age, is a researcher in International Relations at the Raoul-Dandurand Chair in Strategic and Diplomatic Studies at UQAM. Last December, she decided to take part in the “Occupy Montreal” movement. For two weeks she slept in tents at Victoria Square, renamed for the occasion “People’s Square”, located in the heart of the business district of Montreal. Every morning she went to work as usual; at the end of the day she returned to the camp where four hundred participants assembled. Her statement read: *The system is like the cartoon character that continues to run straight ahead without realizing that he has passed the edge of the cliff and that there is only thin air under his feet.*¹ This system focuses on progress for humanity; however, because the concentration of massive wealth is in the hands of an elite few, it does not consider the human development for the ninety-nine percent obliged to perform as within a vacuum. This carcinogenic system succeeds in deadening human pain for a time, for disguising the violence of its strategy and for burying the cries of distress of those who fall into the abyss.

*The Roman Empire was home to some 70 million people. During its zenith power, it is estimated that 1.5% of the wealthiest enjoyed 20% of the total wealth of the empire. Therefore, on the one hand there was the fabulous Rome, on the other hand there was the struggling Rome. The meager revenues of the majority of its population barely covered the day-to-day needs, and there was no hope to prosper.*² The emperor

knew how to hypnotize his subjects, he gave them bread to eat and games to play. It is from within this context, this kind of system that the Prophet of Nazareth showed indignation: He HEARD the distress of his people who were oppressed and looked down upon. He chose and decided to liberate them. He proposed the MEANS that would prevent them from falling into the chasm; He offered them a WAY to reclaim their dignity as creatures loved by God. According to me, the key tool to counteract the power game of a system that counts on its pawns to impose its laws and garner its profits, is a gentle, audacious solidarity that comes together to denounce the injustices. A good illustration: the trial of the Prophet of Nazareth before Pilate, Herod and the pawns.

A SAD SOLIDARITY

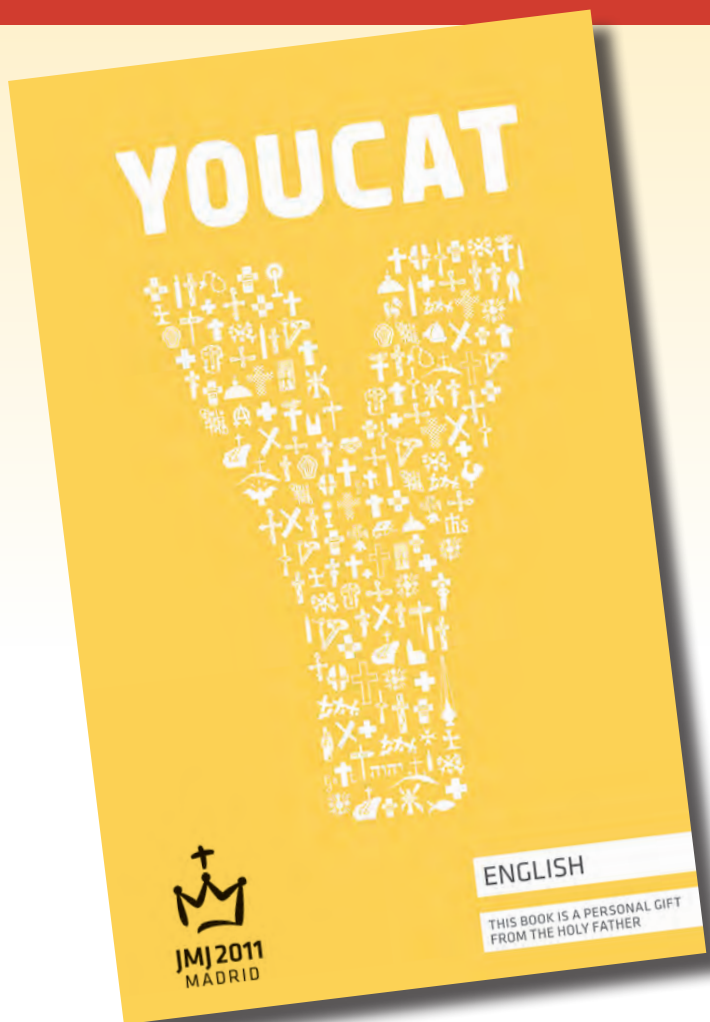
The screaming cry of Beatrice was due to a lack of communication, a lack of experience: the **system** had nothing to do with it. Quickly, the cry of distress was heard, taken care of and relieved. However, the cries of those who hunger, who are tortured, assaulted, mistreated, ignored, are heard without being taken care of or relieved—the victims are neglected, left to themselves. But the **system** has the means to distract, to divide, to distribute some goodies to those people who are willing to help the victims...and apparently, with time, the order seems to be restored—the order of inequality. The benefactors with their white collars and ties are applauded, and the cries of the outraged are relieved, soothed...until the next great protest. The 1% has not progressed, the divided 99% has not regressed. Solidarity being torn apart returns home experiencing sadness, somewhat like on a certain Friday, on Mount Golgotha. However, my faith tells me that on the third day... and I continue to believe because small signs which appear here and there reveal that He is among us and alive. 

¹ Le Devoir, December 31, 2011, p. A1 (text of Eric Desrosiers)

² Le Devoir, December 31, 2011, p. A6 (text of Stéphane Baillargeon)

YOUCAT - THE NEW YOUTH CATECHISM

Robert Lalonde¹



¹ Robert Lalonde, Head of Information, ACN (Aid to the Church in Need) Canada, Inc.

² ACN (Aid to the Church in Need) is an international Catholic association which has as mandate the fraternal charity toward greatly suffering and needy local churches. Founded in 1947 by Fr. Werenfried, ACN offers spiritual and material help to the Church in need in over 137 countries. (to know more: www.acn-aed-ca.org)

The 700,000 copies of the new Youth Catechism – YOUCAT (**YOUth-CATechism**) – represents one of the biggest print orders in the world today. This book of 300 pages was distributed to 700,000 participants at the **World Youth Days (WYD)** which took place in Madrid, from the 16th to the 21st August, 2011. On its striking yellow cover we find the mention: *This book is a personal gift from the Holy Father.* The book is available in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Polish and Portuguese.

A PERSONAL GIFT FROM THE POPE

In the prologue, Pope Benedict XVI says clearly: *The youth of today is not as superficial as it is accused of being. Young people want to know what life truly consists of; all the while forewarning: this supplement to the Catechism does not flatter you; it does not offer easy solutions; it calls for a new life on your part.*

This speaks of how deeply Pope Benedict XVI holds young people in his heart and asks them to be solidly attached

to the Faith: *Study the Catechism! This is my heartfelt wish. Study the Catechism with passion and perseverance! Sacrifice your time for it! Study it in the silence of your room, read it together, form groups and study networks, exchange ideas on the Internet...*

The Holy Father believes that knowledge of the Faith, as well as the transmission of such, are the responsibility of every young person. He also urges them to consistently question the important life issues in his introduction wherein a passage reads as a sort of “Magna Carta” of the New Evangelization: *In any case remain in dialogue on your Faith! You must know what you believe; you must know your Faith with the same precision with which a specialist in information technology knows the working system of a computer; you must know it as a musician knows his piece.*

Moreover, it incites youth to become more deeply rooted in their Faith than their parent’s generation in order to resist with force and determination the challenges and temptations of modern times. **YOUCAT** is thus openly sending out a

challenge to its readers because, as Pope Benedict emphasizes: *...this book is fascinating because it speaks to us of our very destiny, and that is why it concerns each one of us very closely.*

THE ROLE OF ACN²

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is assuming a great part of the printing cost for this edition destined for **World Youth Days**. It is a project that combines two fundamental elements of ACN's work: a concentration on pastoral initiatives with

priority on salvation and the transmission of the Faith, with our deep identification of papal wishes.

In addition, this project encourages you to fan the flickering flame of Faith, much threatened by western opulence. In supporting **YOUCAT**, you keep the flame alight as the harsh cold winds from the icy deserts of religious indifference gust over, especially across the Western World.

Here are some testimonials of young people who have attended past **World Youth Days**. ☺



Living solidarity,
Charity in action

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED
IS AN INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHARITY
OF PONTIFICAL RIGHT

RAPHAËLE AUTRIC
(28), who works for
ACN in France.

 “Handing on the faith is also an act of solidarity with all mankind.” That’s what it says in YOUCAT, Article 332, and that’s why ‘Aid to the Church in Need’ has helped to fund this gift edition.

MARIA SCHECKENBACH
(27), who works
at ACN’s interna-
tional headquarters
in Königstein/Taunus,
Germany.

 “I came across this phrase in YOUCAT, it says that “No genuine Christian leaves the transmission of the faith exclusively to specialists (teachers, pastors, missionaries). We are Christ for others. This means that every genuine Christian would like God to come to other people, too.” This passage has helped to strengthen me in my commitment to a charity that is helping to spread the Faith.

MACKENSON MEDARD
(24), from Port-au-
Prince in Haiti.

 On behalf of all the young people of the Haitian delegation at the WYD I want to thank everyone at ACN for always standing by us. You were there to help us when the earthquake struck, and you are there again to help the Haitian Church to respond to the Pope’s appeal to come to the WYD. It is wonderful to be able to share our Faith with so many young people from all over the world here in Madrid.



 I have learnt a great deal from ACN, both personally and professionally. I recall with great affection how a senior staff member once said that what we are doing here is helping those who Jesus spoke of in the Beatitudes – the poor, those who mourn, those who hunger and thirst after justice, those reviled and abused in his name. That is undoubtedly one reason why the work of ACN is so worthwhile.

GABRIEL LÓPEZ NIETO (23), from Madrid, Spain.



 It is thanks to the generosity of ACN that many young people like me are able to take part in the World Youth Day and share, together with thousands of our brothers and sisters and with Pope Benedict XVI, in the message that Christ is seeking to bring to future generations, to love one another!”

LUIS BRACA MONTILLA (21), from Merida, in Venezuela.

 We live in a world where man thinks he can achieve anything. God has been declared dead – with unforeseen consequences. Human dignity is trampled on and the sense of community is shrinking. That’s why it is so important to support a pastoral outreach that leads people back to God – and to their fellow men as well.

RAFAEL D’AQUI (29), from Brazil, who works at ACN’s international headquarters in Königstein/Taunus, Germany.

 Aid to the Church in Need gives Catholics a voice to actively pursue their beliefs. This voice is very necessary, as today religious freedom is an increasingly threatened human right. Those who help to protect this human right contribute to peace and harmony throughout the world. This is what binds ACN and its thousands of benefactors and project partners throughout the world in prayer and solidarity.

FRANCES GILMARTIN (24), who works in the UK office of ACN.

Cont. next page





THE INDIGNANT YOUNG ADULTS

What is the youth's opinion on the international social and economic situation of our time? What makes them cry-out their indignation?



Véronique Martel

¹ The surnames have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals.

When I think of the term “the cry of the indignant” I think of the movement *Occupy Wall Street* and its ebbing. We have all heard about the hundreds of people who, in protest, settled in the street for many days denouncing the social and economic situation of our time. Though the event received abundant media coverage, the attitude of our political leaders confirmed that the movement was not so important. Before this seeming failure, I felt perturbed, disappointed and powerless. I felt my spirit drifting toward an excessive pessimism. I wondered if I were the only one feeling that way. What did other young adults of my age think about the regional and international situation? Curious and wanting to discover what my peers thought about this issue, I decided to meet

five of my friends around a coffee table; I wanted them to tell me honestly what they thought. Accepted the invitation: Dali¹ and Lara, two students in political science, age 21; Francis, a student in marketing, age 22; Sarah, a student in literature, age 23; and José, a student in accounting, age 22. We all met on a Monday afternoon.

The first thing we noticed is that we all felt the same pessimism because world wide the situation is discouraging and disappointing. It seems that the problems are ossified in time and positive solutions are not in the horizon. Sarah agreed with me, and there is a cause, it is tangible but we lack pugnacity. On this point, Lara disagreed; she believes that today's youth has the guts and courage, but the support needed is lacking. *The indignant*

ones were never really heard because the media was never on their side. Everybody tries to discourage us, no one is on our side. Francis agreed with Lara. He gave as example the students' strike which took place in Montreal last autumn. Thousands of post-secondary students assembled to protest against the tuition hike. *The media wrote that we were spoiled kids and that we had no reason to protest. What they did not understand is that we demonstrated not only for the increase in tuition but for the principle. If education becomes too expensive, we claim that a university education will become unaffordable for many.* Francis is right. If post-secondary tuition fees are raised, less students will be able to enrol. The government affirms that students who reach a higher education will in the long run be able to reimburse their debts because they will have good paying jobs. But if fewer have access to a university degree, there will be less people to take over those good paying jobs. It becomes a vicious cycle.

BOOKS AND IPHONES

I remember very well the newscasts Francis is referring to. They depicted the students as uncontrollable consumers. A journalist even went to meet some young people who were buying at an Apple store on Saint-Catherine street. He asked them why they were spending their money on electronic gadgets instead of paying for their own studies. It is to be noted that the journalist interviewed adolescents who were not yet university age. These young people had nothing to do with the protests against the tuition hike. The same journalist then presented a fact sheet showing the annual expenses of students. According to him, post-secondary students travel many times in a year, they all live at home with their parents therefore have no food and lodging expenses. Generalizing as such, this journalist as well as other media who reported on the event were bias and did not search to understand what deeply motivated the students to manifest.

My five friends believe that the media could have helped the students if they had taken time to understand them rather than depicting a negative portrait of the youth: *The medias and the government believe in money and not in the human being* explained José, *and that is why we are going nowhere.* Lara, Dali, Sarah, José and Francis were unanimous in saying that the object of their indignation is because our contemporary western society is too individualistic and too capitalistic. I therefore asked them a question: *And where is the faith in all this?* The conversation that was

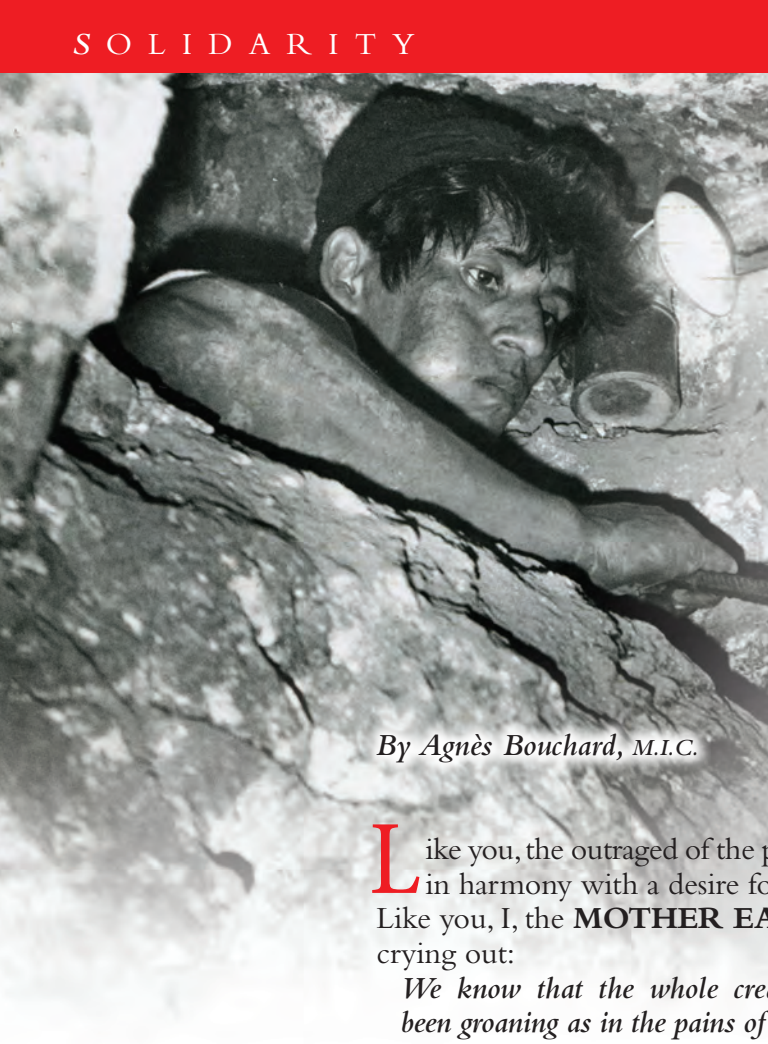
¹ Photo Credit: L. Gagné, M.I.C.

It seems that the problems
are ossified in time.



already well animated became inflamed with opinions. The five students began talking all at once; they became loud. They were not quarrelling and they were not angry, but rather emotional and passionate about the subject. Though they did underline that state and church functions should remain separate, they all agreed to say that spirituality and the faith are absent in our contemporary western society. Only faith and spirituality could defeat capitalism, individualism, the controlling role of the media and the government's indifference. Francis then affirmed that all our interpersonal relations should be faith based, while Dali and Lara agreed in saying that religion should promote sharing with others and that faith transforms us in being more human. 🌱





The CRY of Mother Earth

By Agnès Bouchard, M.I.C.

Like you, the outraged of the planet, I am in harmony with a desire for justice! Like you, I, the **MOTHER EARTH**, am crying out:

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (Ro 8.22)

Yes, I am outraged when I see my forests being destroyed. The greed and destructive practices of large forestry companies provoke climate change and create humanitarian crisis.

IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Every day, mining corporations extract from my bowels millions of tons of minerals. After taking the very best out of me, the land becomes degraded; the waste from the mines goes into the water and land; it affects animals and humans alike. I become resentful when I witness millions of workers threatened in more ways than one. For the large mining enterprise, this is not a matter of concern, their goal is capital gain. When I see great wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, I become furious! Yet, I did dream:

Let grain abound throughout the land; on the tops of the hills may it sway. Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon; let it thrive like the grass of the fields. The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with wheat. (Ps 72:16; Ps 65.13)

TESTIMONIES:

My name is Victor. I worked in a mine at an altitude of 4,000 meters. To survive I chewed “coca” because the mining company rationed us, we had a minimum food supply. Never were we provided with milk that could have offset the dust that entered our lungs.

One day, I was diagnosed with silicosis and tuberculosis. They gave me a little supply of medication and told me: *Go back home to Oquebamba*, my native village. Since then I have been spitting out my lungs.

Pachamama! I am good for nothing. I have received no compensation that could have helped me get some basic medical treatment; I have nothing to help my family. Yet, Lord, the blood of the poor has a price to your eyes.

You have come Lord that we may have life and have it to the full. (Jn 10:10-par.)

My name is Miriam. I am among the outraged of ‘Occupy Montreal’.

During my two months at Victoria Square, I kept looking up at the tall commercial buildings that surrounded us. I knew very well that, in silence, people there were planning the economy taking care to protect themselves as well as protecting their great companies. I thought: Know that your indifference and your cold heartedness will one day end, because the markets will not always be the ones to decide.

The words that sustain me in this battle:

God has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. (Lk 1: 52.54) 

Bolivian working in the mine.
Photo Credit: A. Bouchard, M.I.C.

DID YOU SAY: "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"?

Crisis occur one after the other: economical, ecological, social, political and financial. Many countries are affected and there are no long term solutions.

RIO + 20—AN IMPORTANT MEETING

The United Nations is organizing a meeting for next June. It will be known as: Rio+20. In 1992, world leaders came together to Rio de Janeiro for what was popularly known as the "Earth Summit". At that time, the media greatly publicized the event and the notion of sustainable development was launched. The on-going implementation now needs to be assessed; furthermore, looking into new perspectives is absolutely necessary because the ecological crisis is no longer before us, unfortunately we are undergoing its disastrous consequences to the point of no return.

The Civil Society—an aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions including religious communities and Churches, adamantly warn governments to beware of a North-South economic development which aims at higher profits. This kind of race often ignores the rights of the individual and the needs of the poor.

Many Church groups and organizations as well as religious communities are sensitizing their members to the issues of Rio+20 and that which is at stake. The human being must be at the heart of a sustainable development as opposed to the interests of large companies, of the financial world, or of governments. The above groups and organizations affirm that without environmental harmony with all living beings and nature, there can be no healthy productive life. Many wish that the rights of the individual and the protection of natural resources be recognized as a fact that goes hand in hand. Actually, the earth is our unique abode; to destroy it, to neglect it, to overexploit it, to squeeze it like a lemon, will lead us to our own destruction. The wisdom of the natives teaches us that each decision should be taken in light of its impact for the next seven generations. Have we forgotten their wisdom? Sustainable and equitable development is our future path. The following five steps should be taken and encouraged:



Renaude Grégoire

1. SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Financially support urban agriculture, protect and restore the environment, help find solutions to limit energy guzzling in lighting and water use, promote collective laundries that are ecological, provide financial aid to centers defending the human rights. The solutions are many but little media coverage is given. Whether in Western Canada or in Montreal, different religious communities invest some money to help young people on a farm grow ecological produce which is then brought to the local market. Is it logic that heads of lettuce grown ecologically are being transported thousands of kilometres away (thus polluting the air) to finally arrive on our dinner plate? In a shanty town of the Philippines, people fill discarded plastic bottles with water and a few drops of chloride to create a bright light that is equivalent to 60 watts. They need no petrol, no gas, no electricity, no coal or nuclear energy. This idea was initiated in a region of Brazil where the population had to put up with frequent electric shortages.

2. CHANGE OUR HABITS AND SWITCH TO RENEWABLE ENERGY

Religious communities are exploring new ecological ways to convert their buildings, thus demanding less energy. They recycle and creatively reuse papers and plastics.

Thus, in Quebec, a religious community has modified the heating system of its mother house; it now uses geothermal heat which is generated and stored in the Earth. Instead of constructing new dams or nuclear plants, it is possible to utilise geothermal science or wind turbines. Did you know that the priests of the Minor Seminary in Quebec allowed a wind turbine farm to be constructed at Côte-de-Beaupré?

Rooftop gardening is also gaining in popularity; this type of gardening is found particularly in urban environments. It supports urban food production, it promotes individual, community, and cultural diversity.

3. INTERVENE PUBLICLY

Without hesitation, some religious communities have united to approach and establish a dialogue with mining companies, oil and gas industries, pharmaceuticals and transportation companies making sure that their policies and practices are within the sustainable development framework and respect human rights. In 2004, in Quebec, groups of religious communities made the headlines as they publicly opposed the Suroit Project which consisted in building a new combined cycle gas turbine plant. This project was not within the sustainable development framework, it had to be denounced. In 2010, they criticized and issued their position on the exploitation of shale gas. Knowing that this kind of exploitation, this kind of extraction causes environmental problems related to ecological damages, they demanded that companies be accountable and give the public a clear picture of their findings.

4. AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Governments have assumed responsibility to advance and strengthen the pillars of sustainable development, economic and social development, environmental protection and human rights issues. More than forty religious and missionary communities are recognized organizations within the United Nations. Through their participation, they call upon governments to be mindful of their commitments pertaining to sustainable development; they speak with worldwide representatives; they present petitions requesting that certain rights be considered and acted upon. Example: UNANIMA International—a coalition of religious congregations committed to work for peace and human dignity in response to the needs of the world population, presented at the United Nations a petition demanding that clean water be accessible to every human being and that all countries should beware of polluting the waters. And there is much more!

¹ Forest, Lower St. Lawrence

²⁻³ Ecological farms

Photos Credit: R. Grégoire

5. SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE VOICELESS

At the United Nations, ministers, government officials, civil servants, experts often present their topic of interest at the General Assembly or at important meetings. One of the strategies the religious communities come up with is giving a voice to the voiceless: people whose environment is being exploited, whose homes are torn down for mining purposes, where deforestation, soil erosion, polluted waters, parched soil is sterile due to climate change, these problems are among the causes of environmental degradation and they need to be addressed. People who struggle day after day and have to live with these problems need to be heard.

RELIGIOUS AND MISSIONARY COMMUNITIES AT THE UNITED NATIONS!

Why do these communities choose to be present at the United Nations? With the globalization expansion across the world and the interdependence among nations, we are connected to the point that whatever happens in one area of the planet has repercussions right here at home, in our own country and vice versa. Thus, the United Nations Organization is the only place where 193 countries sit around the same table; it is the only permanent place where dialogue and negotiations can take place. Though it has its limits, this organization is the place where the member states must give to the international community an account of the progress made regarding their commitment to protecting human rights, as they had so pledged to do so.

WHAT TO EXPECT OF RIO+20?

Governments who will come together in June must absolutely send a message of hope to all of humanity. Farmers from state members and thousands of other people will be at Rio to offer their solutions and visions for the future. Will governments hear the message? 🌱



STOP!

IT'S ENOUGH!

The "Vancouver rape relief" group which works for the elimination of violence against women has a center to shelter battered women, no matter their sexual orientation. The group's goal is to stop all human trafficking, especially that of women and children. Last November, a manifestation was held in Vancouver as well as in all the large cities of Canada and the United States.



Claudette
Bouchard, M.I.C.

Have you ever considered the magnitude of human trafficking worldwide? It is the modern-day slavery and it affects most countries and every continent; it is today's worst humanitarian crises. Adults and children are bought, sold and smuggled. The victims are trapped in lives of misery, often beaten, starved, forced to work as prostitutes, or to take laborious jobs with little or no pay; they are exploited in every possible way.

ALARMING FIGURES

Millions of men, women and children are trafficked across borders around the world and within countries for forced labor. Since human trafficking is hidden and illegal, statistics do not exactly cover the overall extent of the problem. However, an estimated 1.2 million children are being trafficked each year¹; at least 12.3 million people are victims of forced labor worldwide. Of these 2.4

million are as a result of human trafficking². According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) the most common form of human trafficking (79%) is sexual exploitation and the victims are predominantly women and girls.³

CAUSES AND PITFALLS

What are the contributing factors that make individuals vulnerable to trafficking? Poverty, unemployment, family financial problems, political instability, lack of education, gender discrimination and homelessness are some of the reasons.

One might wonder how individuals who are at risk may be caught within the network. Traffickers are cunning and use various techniques: coercion, kidnapping, drugging, deceptive ads or propaganda misleading people to believe that they will be migrating for legitimate jobs, promising big profits to poor families who will sell

their children. Author Joel Bakan, reveals in his latest book the astonishingly callous and widespread exploitation of children by profit-seeking corporations and society's shameful failure to protect them. The book shows how corporations pump billions of dollars into rendering parents and governments powerless to shield children from a relentless commercial assault designed solely to exploit their needs and vulnerabilities.⁴

CALLED INTO QUESTION

More than ever, voices of the indignant ones are being heard challenging our societies obsessed with profit and greed. People are confronting the questions whether societies should be organized for the benefit of the whole population or for the wealthy elites. This question is being expressed most sharply in protests and there is a call to action, to shut down corporations.

HARMFUL INFLUENCES

All human rights issues are a concern to missionaries who have at heart the dignity and the well being of all peoples. Many Congregations of religious women have joined the Salvatorian Sisters in their stand against the tragedy of human trafficking and slavery. In their November 2011 Newsletter⁵ referring to a book: *Big Porn Inc.* it is said: *The unprecedented mainstreaming of the global pornography industry is transforming the sexual politics of intimate and public life, popularizing new forms of hardcore misogyny, and strongly contributing to the sexualization of children. Yet challenges to the pornography industry continue to be dismissed as 'uncool', 'anti-sex' and 'moral panic'.*

BE INFORMED AND ACT

The indignant movement, a peaceful uprising of a population, is revolutionizing the political as well as the individual consciousness. Voices are heard, tents are set up in all corners of the planet. Behind it all there is an ideal: break down the

world of darkness, let the dawning Light shine through on all of humanity, crowning it with its peace, justice, freedom, security, equality and solidarity. In many cities around the globe, we find organized groups of committed people who speak out and act on behalf of those who are voiceless, exploited, silenced, battered, tortured, enslaved. These committed people are saying: *Stop—it's enough!* How about joining them in whatever capacity is ours; how about being better informed about the root causes of such grievous injustice and about the fate of those children, young women and adults who have been lured and trapped in this inhuman nightmare web. Then, perhaps we will be inspired to take action with the hope and determination of eradicating this social evil. ∞

¹ UNICEF, Child Trafficking Information Sheet - April 2007

² International Labour Organisation, 2005 (A global alliance against forced labor)

³ BAKAN, Joel, *Childhood Under Siege*, Penguin Group 2011

⁴ UNODC Report on Trafficking, 2012

⁵ Stop Trafficking Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter or www.StopEnslavement.org





THE INDIGNANT— AN AMBIGUOUS LABEL

Is “The Indignant” actually a good term to define those who peacefully try to awaken peoples’ consciousness to the reality that there is an imbalance in our society? At a rally which took place at Victoria Square in Montreal, Sr. Louisa Nicole met Guillaume, a young music therapist; he responds to this question.



Guillaume
Duchesneau

*Guillaume Duchesneau is a musician. He has a baccalaureate in music-therapy and also works with sound healing consisting of Tibetan bowls and planetary gongs. Sometimes his heart tells him to be a militant, so he goes.
gdmessagesonore@gmail.com*

FOR A REAL CHANGE

It was on a Saturday morning at Square Victoria. People had gathered there for more than a month and we had decided to organize a time for meditation asking for peace—inner peace and outer peace.

Some of us already had that experience during some general assemblies. We shared our convictions with each other—knowing very well that change must first come from within the heart. We wanted to demonstrate our support to the movement whose wish was to bring changes for a better world, a better future. It is in this spirit that we invited our respective circle of friends and militants to join us in demonstrating in silence.

To my surprise, more than seventy people responded to the call, and I was astonished to see that the great majority had a respectable age, their white or gray hair revealed their maturity. We explained

briefly to the new-comers the reason why we were present at Victoria Square; we then symbolically lined up and sent our best energy to the whole encampment, to the inhabitants and around the planet.

At the end of this silent movement, a lady came over and spoke to me. She told me she was from Laval, that she lived in a convent and then asked me if I would accept writing an article for a publication on the theme “*indignation*”.

I said to myself: well, why not—after all, information is the sinews of war. Many times, we noticed that the media did not report the real reasons behind our rally. However, there was a problem: the term “indignant” did not depict me well. I had never used that word before, and I still believe it’s a label that can be harmful to the movement.

THE POWER OF A WORD

By applying an ambiguous label to a group of people, we lose depth and human perspective. For the thousands of people who walk the streets because they are conscious of the economic, political, ecological and social imbalance, it becomes imperative that the system must change. Suddenly for many others these thousands of demonstrators are but a bunch of indignant ones.

I personally believe the term 'indignant' to be simplistic. For those who are not well informed, for those who do not receive the right information, they cannot be aware of the sincere efforts of thousands of people who try to peacefully bring about change. We cannot remain at the level of the 'outraged' or 'indignant', but rather we must establish on both a small and on a large scale, concrete solutions that will improve our everyday life and that of our society at large. I must say that I did meet people who seemed perfectly at ease with the term 'indignant' and I respect their point of view.

WHAT ABOUT MY PEACE IN ALL THIS?

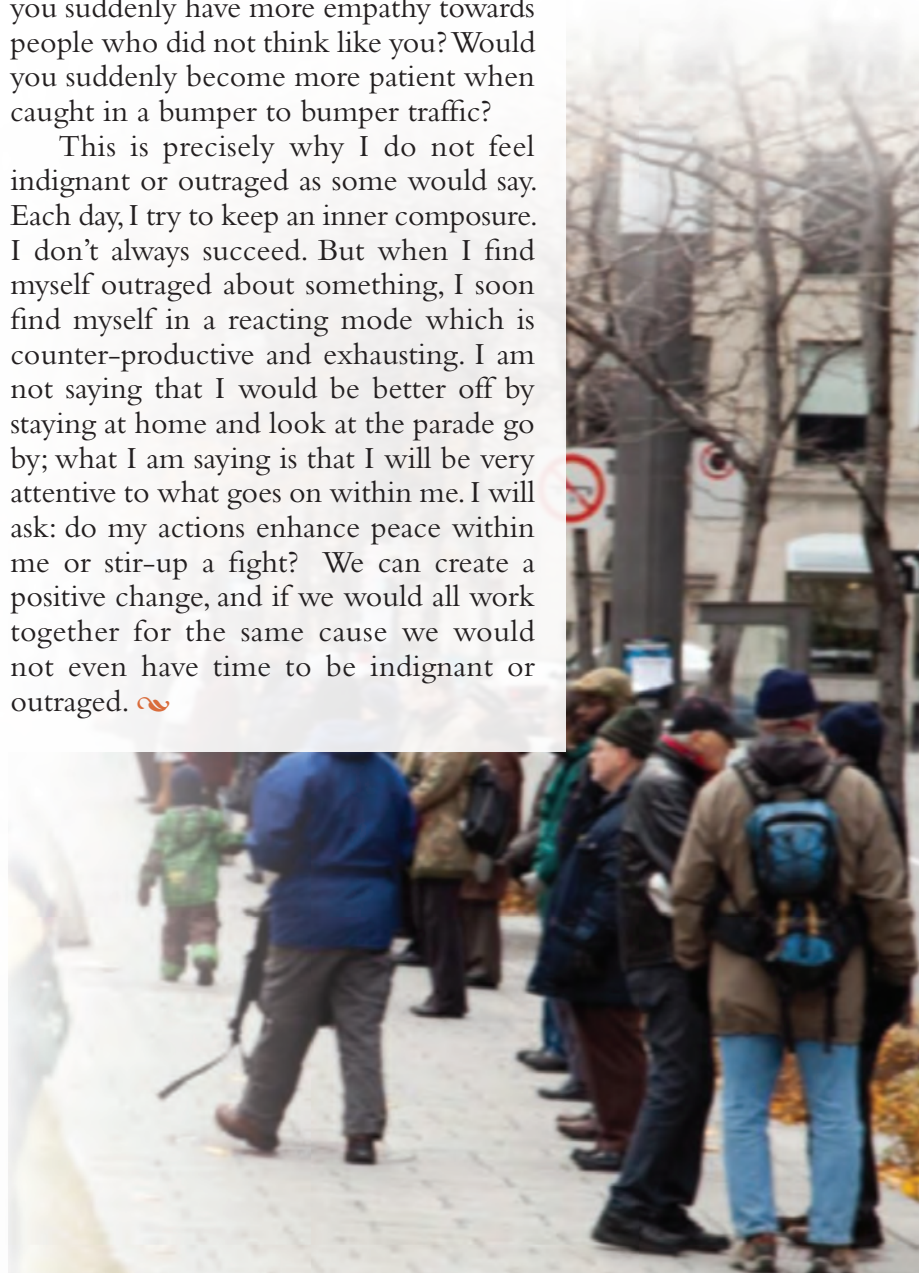
I firmly believe that change must come from within. However, the question is: how to combine the desire for inner peace with the desire to react as a citizen upon seeing the disastrous decisions taken by the elite? Yes, the desire and need to react is strong, very strong. But this desire is often the cause of greater imbalance demonstrated in citizen movements. Often times, our ways of reacting to injustices lead us to a physical and mental state of mind that is disproportionate and drives us away from the well-being of inner peace and the wise discerning heart. I do not see the reason why we should fight for more justice and equity if at the end our actions do not offer us more peace and well being. Personally, I will not wait for the world to be more perfect in order to attain that inner peace which should be a priority over all else.

Another question I ask myself. If, tomorrow morning, all bankers would publicly excuse themselves for their wrong-doings, their unjust ways of dealing

with people, if they would give back the money to those they have swindled, or to go even further, if all the world presidents would unite and commit themselves to destroy all the firearms that are in their possessions and choose to provide food for all the inhabitants of the world...do you think that your indignation would be resolved, do you think you would be any happier? Yes, most probably, for a certain time; but would these external transformations guarantee you the fullness of an inner life? Do you really think that suddenly you would stop judging, that you would not find other reasons to feel indignant? Would you suddenly have more empathy towards people who did not think like you? Would you suddenly become more patient when caught in a bumper to bumper traffic?

This is precisely why I do not feel indignant or outraged as some would say. Each day, I try to keep an inner composure. I don't always succeed. But when I find myself outraged about something, I soon find myself in a reacting mode which is counter-productive and exhausting. I am not saying that I would be better off by staying at home and look at the parade go by; what I am saying is that I will be very attentive to what goes on within me. I will ask: do my actions enhance peace within me or stir-up a fight? We can create a positive change, and if we would all work together for the same cause we would not even have time to be indignant or outraged. 🌀

^{1,2} Photos Credit: Marc Aristide



Between Dreams and Realities



Last November, Sr. Suzanne Labelle and Sr. Thérèse Lebeau were on a mission promotion tour, south of New Jersey in the United States. The author of this article gives us a glimpse of their visit and some points for reflection.

By Suzanne Labelle, M.I.C.

¹ "Awakened in the Spirit"
Youth Group, Bridgeton, N.J.
Photo Credit: MIC

WHAT ARE THE DREAMS OF TODAY'S YOUTH, WHETHER THEY ARE INDIGNANT OR NOT?

You might tell me that I am far from being young enough to be discussing such a subject. Well, so be it! However, no matter our age, we can all come across young people, listen to them, speak with them of their dreams and of ours, dreams of yesteryears or of the future. And, if we dare, we can even propose new dreams that could perhaps respond to their aspirations.

The indignant ones, or the outraged as we might call them, are those who feel they are being treated unjustly; they dream of a better world where there would be greater justice particularly in the world of business and economy. The wealthy look forward to a brilliant future while the less fortunate hope, if possible, to improve their situation.

I wish my parents would reconcile. – If only my grandmother could be healed... –I hope to finish my studies. –I want to find some work. –I wish there would be no more war, no more children suffering from hunger. –Will we ever respect and rescue the planet earth on time? –I hope to succeed... in electronics... in the art field... in sports...

in human science. –I would like to become an astronaut... an ecologist... a teacher... an electro-physiocardiolgologist. –I would like to be accepted in the troupe of the Cirque du Soleil... to play with the symphony orchestra... to succeed in oceanography. –I would like to become a businessman... a literary woman... a mechanic... an esthetician. –I also want to become a good father for my family, a loving mother without having to sacrifice my career...

These are the kinds of dreams young people will confide to us when they feel they are in good company. To become a priest – a religious – a missionary? If any of them are thinking about it, they are most discreet and they keep silence.

Last November, Sr. Thérèse Lebeau and I met a large number of young people who nurture great ideals. In Atlantic City, there were over one hundred fifty students gathered on a Saturday for their religious education courses: a large number were South Americans, there were also immigrants from other cultures as well as students from the United States. Another group we met at Bridgeton: forty young workers between the ages of seventeen to thirty years; they had recently arrived from

Mexico and Guatemala. At Carneys Point, high school students from various ethnic groups were gathered around their pastoral animator who was not much older than they were.

These young people are supported by adults who believe in their cause; with joy the latter dedicate their week-ends and free time to collaborate in the human and Christian formation of the youth. Girls and boys seemed happy to come together to share their common interests. We admired the dedication of the pastoral agents, of the religious and priests whose priority is youth ministry—a ministry that is very well established.

Among the many adults we encountered, we met a couple from Peru who sensitize the young people to the problems of the developing countries (Third World); we met an American whose background is Irish, she is the organist at the parish and has begun learning Spanish so as to direct the choir in this language; two Filipino teachers give their time to the newly arrived immigrants. Our host—a former student of the MIC Sisters from Colon, Cuba, is totally and admirably dedicated to the Cause of Délia Tétreault; for years she has been actively involved in promoting her sainthood.

We spoke with many parishioners who journey with the youth; adults whose dreams have already come true, who take pride in being Catholics, and who are convinced of their fidelity to the Church. All were most welcoming and realized where we came from. We spoke to them about the dream Délia Tétreault had as a child and how she wanted to share with all the children and adults of the world the joy of knowing that they are loved by God. She who had seen in a prophetic dream ears of wheat change into heads of children, somehow knew that these represented all those who had never heard of Jesus Christ.

FROM DREAM TO REALITY

In groups we reflected upon Délia's prophetic dream. An outcome of the dream was the founding of the first religious missionary institute in North



America, namely the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and indirectly to the establishment of a Foreign Missions Seminary in Quebec. We stressed the fact that thanks to this dream, hundreds of your adults were able to fulfill their aspirations, and even Sr. Thérèse as an educator in Peru and myself as a doctor in Bolivia.

Some young people asked: *How did you hear the call? If our parents are not practicing Christians, if they do not have the faith, can we foresee a possibility of committing ourselves, at least temporarily, to those who do not know the Good News? Could we even go as far as giving our life to the Lord?*

Of course, all of us who are disciples of Jesus Christ are called to respond to His invitation: *Go and make disciples of all nations* (Mt 28:19). No need for all to make an exclusive or definitive choice. You can and must be a missionary in your own milieu, to share the faith with others, not so much with words but by the way you live the Christian values at all times.

Then, if the voice of the Lord is heard, you can consider as vocation to be a lay missionary, a pastoral agent, or to definitively consecrate your life to God as a priest, as a nun, either here in your own country or abroad. Why not?

It would be well if adults, who have found their way in life, would remind young people that God could be calling them and present them the above possibilities as a choice in their life orientation, even though this special path is not a favorite nowadays. As for the young people, may they be given the opportunity to reflect, ponder, dream and to finally find their happiness in following the Holy Spirit's inspirations. ☪

² Emily Veal, group member displaying on her key holder the image and relic of Venerable Délia Tétreault.

³ (l. to r.) Sr. Thérèse, Sr. Suzanne and Mrs. Amanda Fernandez.

Photos Credit: MIC

Taking Up The Challenges

A missionary in Malawi and Zambia for the past forty years, Sr. Huguette has had the privilege of working with the African people, supporting them in their struggles against poverty, sickness, AIDS and social justice issues. Recently named to be Provincial Superior, Sr. Huguette will continue being sensitive to their cause while taking up the challenges of her new function.

By Huguette Ostiguy, M.I.C.

I arrived in Africa in 1973. Gradually I learned and journeyed with the Africans; I became close to their way of life and adapted to their culture. With time, I discovered their many difficulties and their sufferings. I heard their cry for justice; these people had dreams and aspired for a better life. I therefore offered to help them in various fields hoping that the little seed I would plant would one day become a tree.

TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

After a time of observation and dialogue with the local people of Chikungu, Zambia, I soon discovered that young women had nothing to look forward to. For a brighter future they needed to learn a trade that would eventually guarantee an income. I offered them a variety of options: I taught them cooking, sewing, knitting and also gardening. The girls learned to cultivate fruits and vegetables which were meant for home and family consumption but it also generated an income to meet other needs such as buying fish, maize, bread, soap. Chicken farming was also popular along with pottery, a craftwork that was practical and could easily be sold at the market place. After working five years in this field, I was assigned to Marymount Secondary School in Mzuzu, Malawi. As

we often say: educating a young woman is to build a nation. This proved to be true because many of Marymount's alumnae are now in leadership positions throughout the country. During my ten years there, I was involved mainly in assisting the young women who needed help in various areas of their lives, such as decision making, planning the future, or simply to deal with the daily challenges that came up.

PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In each stage of the psychosocial development—from infancy to late adulthood—the person confronts and hopefully masters new challenges. It is through this medium that my contribution to sustainable development took shape.

The pandemic of HIV and AIDS brought HIV testing and counseling to the forefront in Malawi. However, psychosocial counseling was unknown to the population. The Brothers of St. John of God Community Services in Mzuzu have an establishment where they provide mental health services, rehabilitation programs for disabled adults and children, drop-in center for vulnerable children found on the street, a college of health services where training in psychiatry is offered to clinical officers, nurses, and professional counselors. It is here that for the past fifteen years I have been involved in promoting the importance of psychosocial development.

The economic, social, environmental, spiritual aspects of life are based on the psychosocial and spiritual maturity of persons. To religious men and women as well as to lay people, sessions are being offered in the realm of self-knowledge and also in counseling. Building the future depends on well-rounded individuals.

¹ Sr. Huguette (left) with future leaders.

Photo Credit: MIC





Since the opening of its college in 2003, more than one hundred forty Malawians have graduated from St. John of God's College--Health Science Department. These well prepared adults are now working in different fields: helping HIV and AIDS patients, offering psychosocial support to orphans, treating trauma victims, counseling young people and family members.

QUALITY EDUCATION FOR THE YOUTH

Over the years, parents have strongly manifested the desire to give their children the very best in education. They know that a child who attends a Kindergarten program will learn early literacy and numeracy, will develop new skills while practicing familiar ones, will receive basic hygiene guidance, and will be prepared for the next step—grade 1.

Aware of the parents' wishes, we have responded. With our younger African MIC Sisters we have opened kindergartens in most of our missions, providing 'Love, Care, Education', contributing to the physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual development of the young ones. Some orphans and poorer children are also welcome and given a chance to benefit from this solid foundation. Our futuristic outlook is leading us to take up the challenges: At Mzuzu, Malawi, we are currently transforming the building of a former convent into a primary school; eventually, we will be building a secondary school for girls near Mzimba, Malawi. The education of a young girl is indeed the corner stone of a sustainable development in so many ways.

CHALLENGES OF DAILY LIFE IN MALAWI

For years, the Malawian people have encountered struggles: they had to fight for their independence, strive for democ-



racy, equality and justice. Despite their many efforts, the battle is not won yet as the country is experiencing corruption, poverty, inequality and people lack the basic necessities. The cost of living has risen tremendously and this has become an added burden. As for the MIC Community, we have to find ways of being self-sufficient. This is done by raising our own chickens and layers, a Holstein cow supplies us with the milk needed, a biological garden provides us with fruits and vegetables. When the harvest is plenty some of the produce is sold on the market place. We join the Malawian population who strive to improve their well being and we try to set an example for the future generation.

FORMATION OF LAY AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

With time, the Church of Malawi has grown and progressed admirably; there is ground for wonderment and deep gratitude. When missionaries return to their homeland after many years of dedication, we sometimes lament their departure; however, we must keep in mind that the Church of Malawi has become a *Malawian Church* run by Malawian bishops. The parishes and institutions are managed by Malawian priests and local parish councils, schools and health care centers are run by local religious women and men. At all levels of government and non-government organizations there are committed Christian men and women who deal with the many challenges of their developing country. The work of the missionaries from abroad, including my humble contribution to the Mission of the Church in Malawi has produced fruits and today we gladly see the harvest. Building today for a better tomorrow has been for me a wonderful life experience with the people of Zambia and Malawi, Africa. 🌿

^{2,3} Training sessions
Photos Credit: MIC

Dawn Of A New Life

Partings here on earth are a promise of meeting again for all eternity. — Délia Tétreault



Jeannette Dufresne, M.I.C. - (Sr. Sainte-Olive) (1913-2011), Ste-Agathe-des-Monts, Quebec

Sr. Jeannette completed her studies at Mont-Laurier's Teacher Training College. She entered our novitiate at Pont-Viau at the age of twenty-three. As of 1944, her life unfolded in Haiti where she always endorsed large responsibilities. From 1961-1967 she accepted the difficult task of directing the Association of the Sisters of Notre-Dame d'Haiti. Upon her return to the MIC Community, she relentlessly continued to assume many responsibilities in Haiti where she served fifty-three years. As Sister Jeannette's health began failing, she came back to Canada in 1997. Her whole life was one of dedication, generosity, patience, goodness. She will be missed by all of us who have known her.



Thérèse Renaud, M.I.C. - (Sr. Saint Jerome) 1923-2011, Loretteville, Quebec

Thérèse had seven brothers and sisters. She entered the MIC Community in 1947; seven years later she was appointed to Japan. For a period of forty-seven years she devoted a good portion of her time to the Catholic School system. She greatly contributed to the reconstruction of Saint Francis Xavier High School in Koriyama. Talented in the field of administration, attentive and kind to everyone, appreciated by all, Sr. Thérèse was entrusted the service of authority in many of our establishments and she became the first MIC Provincial Superior in Japan. During the last phase of her life, her sibling, Sr. Yolande watched over her sister with great affection.



Lorette Goulet, M.I.C. - (Sr. Sainte-Sabine) 1912-2011 Saint-Gervais, Quebec

Lorette was born in a family of sixteen children. She joined the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception on August 8, 1931. Known to be a most human, endearing and open-minded person, Sr. Lorette radiated joy everywhere she went. Her first mission was in Cuba but then was transferred because of the Cuban revolution. She left for Chile, where the contrast in climate was anything but easy after living years under tropical climate. Nevertheless, her gardening skills proved to be successful and astonished the local farmers. Sr. Lorette's cheerfulness, sense of humour and wonderful smile won the hearts of all those with whom she lived and worked.

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ERRATUM

Winter Issue, January-March 2012

Article: Dare To Act! P. 13

COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE -
Instead of ICAM (Immaculate Conception Academy of Manila) it should be written: In 2005, former students from ICA (Immaculate Conception Academy in Greenhills) sponsored twenty-four home units...

In Difficult Times

Consoling God,
be source of serenity for me
when struggles and difficulties
threaten to overwhelm me.

God of hope,
assure me of your unconditional love
when I doubt myself
or question the worth of my life.

Compassionate God,
hold me to your heart
when I feel helpless
in the face of the world's pain.

Light-filled God,
keep me ever close to you
during those moments
when bleakness surrounds my life.

Comforting God,
shelter me under your wings
when I am engulfed in sadness
and overcome with distress.

God of peace,
you are the center of my life,
a strong refuge of peace
in the whirlwind of my pain.
I look to you for strength
and a constant assurance of hope.

Joyce Rupp

