

MIC MISSION NEWS

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To sow seeds of joy and hope

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CHILE
DIALOGUE ON
THE ISLAND OF
CHILÓÉ

IN FOCUS

*DIALOGUE
— A Channel
to Peace*



MISSIONARY PRAYER INTENTIONS - 2014

OCTOBER

We pray that the World Mission Day may rekindle, in every believer, zeal for carrying the Gospel everywhere in the world.

NOVEMBER

For all the young seminarians and religious, that they may have wise and well formed mentors.

DECEMBER

For all parents, that they may be true evangelizers passing-on to their children the precious gift of faith.

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

Preparing for Dialogue

Kozé sa-a mandé chita. The street corner is not the best place to dialogue; we need to prepare our hearts and be ready to welcome the other person with dignity as did the Little Prince of St Exupéry. The Haitians understand this very well. As soon as a conversation (*kozé*) becomes serious, they invite the person to sit down (*chita*).

To sit, to settle down in order to prepare the mind is important. We do not dialogue when our spirit is filled with emotions; it is of greatest importance to take the necessary time to calm down, to become inwardly silent in order to listen and understand the other person. Dialogue—a space where humanity meets, a space where open reception and mutual confidence exist.

It is good to ask yourself whether or not you have the capacity to be close to another person. Do you understand her joy as well as her sorrow? How comforting it is to be understood.

Jesus sat at the edge of the well and openly dialogued with the Samaritan woman. He took time to begin a conversation before questioning her personal life.

Doesn't Pope Francis set before us a beautiful example of dialogue? He welcomes everyone—children, adults, the disabled, the poor, the high ranking officials; his openness reveals that the Church is for all, it is everyone's house.

Soon, Christmas will remind us that God's love is for all humanity. He becomes one of us in order to dialogue with us and to reveal His motherly and fatherly love. Jesus enters in the space where humanity meets.

In this issue, the articles speak about the love that is needed to enter into a dialogue. May the content of these articles be an inspiration to all who have the art of communicating at heart.

If you like reading our mission magazine why not communicate its content to others, why not begin a dialogue with people around you? Enclosed is a promotion coupon highlighting the 95th anniversary of *Le Précurseur/MIC Mission News*; we thus invite you to consider renewing your subscription for three years.

To you all, our heartfelt "THANK YOU" and we wish you Peace, Health and Happiness throughout the coming year 2015.

Maria-Paule Sanficon, m.i.c.

DÉLIA'S COLUMN

Let us hear Mother Délia telling us how she wishes all meetings/dialogue to proceed:

In all circumstances, you must be discreet, be tactful and reserved. (April 6, 1923)

Look at Mary and ask yourselves what she would have done in this or that situation where you find yourselves. (April 19, 1915)

With what respect and tenderness you must surround the needy person. (November 1, 1925)

Let us respect the opinion of others in their choices... Charity in our conversations is the virtue that must be above all others... (June 26, 1926)

In all encounters, may charity be in your thoughts excusing your neighbor; may charity be in your speech to help you be indulgent, kind, loving towards everyone; may charity be in your actions, it will lead you to serve others selflessly. (March 6, 1928)

One of our first duties is to support each other tenderly, peacefully, lovingly... (February 18, 1929)

That God be in your midst, great consideration for each other, fraternal attention, and cordiality are all required from each one of you. (December 13, 1930)

It is not to be expected that Sr. (X) and Sr. (Y) think the same way, and it is not necessary that they do, as long as they are amiable and charitable for one another that is sufficient... (April 18, 1931)

We must pray the Holy Spirit that He enlightens you so that in all circumstances you may act with discernment, firmness and gentleness. (August 24, 1933)

**FOR ALL FAVORS
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LOVE IS DIALOGUE

Initiating dialogue at birth— isn't it a beautiful way to convey that the caregiver has something good and wonderful to say?



By André Gadbois

Nine months in the mother's womb gives mother and baby time to relate. Bonding takes place; then comes the day when this tiny baby sees the light, hears the sounds of soft voices and feels the comfort of warm hands. Out of the inner comfort zone, images, colors, shapes and words become clearer; with time the child grows, develops and learns to express feelings, to speak and to dialogue. Nurturing is vital at this stage—it is a secret ingredient that enables children to develop properly and to eventually have self-confidence in a changing world. Somewhat like the young nation that had to learn to dialogue to find its place and arrive at the Promised Land

(ref. book of Exodus), so must a child learn to interact and to dialogue.

Before speaking with words, the newborn infant's world is made up of faces, food, fondling, songs, perfumes, tender care... few words but many expressions of "*I love you*". Many persons will take the initiative of dialoguing with the child so as to bring about confidence, joy, reassurance and well-being. With time, the child will develop and find comfort in the new family environment to the point of expressing himself in words. How often we hear parents say, *my God, he does not stop talking* or, *she is a real chatter box!*

Unfortunately, after leaving the comfort of their mother's womb, not all newborn infants find a hospitable environment. Often there are no warm hands to cuddle the little one, there are no loving words whispered in the baby's ears, there are no hugs or kisses. There is no one to reassure and to tell the baby, *life will be beautiful because we will always be there for you*. Since the human being is essentially relational, we are meant to communicate, to dialogue. The children who will be deprived from a nurturing environment at this early stage in life will consequently suffer from isolation, which could lead becoming introverted and the true image of who they truly are could be blurred.

He was close to
every person He met
on the way. ~

I HAVE CARVED YOU ON THE PALMS OF MY HANDS

In the book of Genesis, God said, *"Let us make man in our image, in our likeness..."* So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, *"Be fruitful and increase in number..."* God saw all that he had made, and it was very good (Ge 1: 26.31). In the book of the prophet Isaiah (49:16) the author expresses God's words saying, *"See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands..."* Jesus, the Word of God, reminds us that each one of us is precious and what we do or not do to help our neighbor is as if it is to God Himself that we do or not do.

As in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10: 25.37) a noble deed speaks for itself; it can tear down barriers and give back a person's dignity. Jesus' last cry on the cross carries a clear message: without condemning,

without despising, He said, *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"* (Lk 23.34). Until the very end, Jesus maintains the dialogue with His Father and begs humanity to stop the exclusions, to stop marginalizing people, to stop systems that promote inequalities and suffering. Francis, the Bishop of Rome recently wrote a phrase to make explicit the cry of Jesus—*To dialogue means to believe that the 'other' has something worthwhile to say, and to entertain his or her point of view and perspective.*¹ Jesus opened up a dialogue with Zaccheus, with the rich young man, with the Samaritan at the well... Never did the Prophet of Nazareth try to manipulate anyone; He protected the most vulnerable and reached out to the one in need; He was close to every person He met on the way.

Dialogue can save life: this is the case when open hands receive a newborn baby; when an audacious Samaritan begins a dialogue with the person who is about to jump off the bridge; when a driver stops by the road to rescue and encourage a cyclist who has fallen in the ditch; when a friend gives time to someone who is suffering. Dialogue can help orient someone who is in the dark; it can mend wounds and bring reconciliation; it can reveal the true grandeur of a person or of a nation. Authentic dialogue is comforting, reassuring and works for peace.

The mission of the Church is to be like Jesus; she must take the first step, she must initiate the dialogue with those who are *weary and burdened* (Mt 11:28) by the many demands of our societies. *Love (dialogue) is patient and kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love (dialogue) does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres* (1 Cor. 13.4). Thank you to Saint Paul who wrote to the Corinthians, he has inspired me. ~

¹ Message of Pope Francis for the 48th World Communications Day – June 1, 2014



Small Cell Church

By Rita Ostiguy, M.I.C.

During my many years in Huancarani, a small village in the Bolivian Andes, I saw the presence of the Risen One in the numerous words and deeds manifested by the people who shared their talents and respectfully served one another. I saw the reality of a small Kingdom taking shape in humility, serenity and love.

It's in a community setting that we learn to share our inner giftedness...



COMING BACK HOME

Before taking the road back to Quebec, I was told that once there I would find a “sad Church” where the young generations had thrown “everything overboard”.

When I arrived, I had the opportunity to attend various activities: weddings, anniversaries, funerals, organized trips; I was touched by the surprising and rapid transformation that was actually taking place in the local Church of Quebec. There are changes that could be frightening if we did not perceive the strength of God's Spirit in this new and silent Church which is taking root. In fact, I repeatedly noticed that people have strong convictions according to values that could be formulated in line with the Gospel teaching *love one another*. Many are seeking the Lord who is waiting for them in a world that is in process of transformation. A good number of people are taking courses in theology so as to deepen their faith and express it in the way they live their daily lives. There is a growing desire to know the Gospel. People have become more conscious and

critical as to what is being done and said. There is a certain search for spirituality and mysticism. Are these not signs revealing the Spirit of God is at work?

A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

One day, Justine who is 29 asked me to help her and her husband prepare their hearts for their child's baptism and then she asked, *When we will be ready, where will we have our child baptized?* Rightly so, Justine and Steeve were looking for a group where *God's children* come together to learn how to live as baptized Christians. It's in a community setting that we learn to share our inner giftedness and can build a Church where no one is without love.

Upon this request, I had the idea of inviting two other couples along with the Godparents in order to prepare them all for the baptism of their infants. In the near future, these three newly baptized children will be able to witness the Living Presence through the faith-filled persons surrounding them.

TOGETHER—BECOMING AWARE

Contemplating the infant before us, we admire his eyes that sees all the colors, the ears that hear all the sounds, the nose that smells the perfumes, his smile that gives joy, his arms and legs that move about to reach what he wants. What a marvel! And there is more—*In giving him life, the Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life* (Gn 2:7).

God created him in His own image (Gen 1:27). *He made him a little less than the heavenly beings* (Ps 8:6). *This child is precious and honored in His sight* (Is 43:4). And this child is unique endowed with a mission

that is proper to him. This is who we are! *What dignity*, exclaimed Amélie, *we are not always who we truly are, that's for sure!*

GOD'S BREATH IN US

The Breath of Love that is in each one of us knows only Love and will communicate Love if it is allowed to do so; it germinates and grows only in community. That is why we want to form a small cell Church where together we experiment the Christian Love circulating among us reaching out to all the members without excluding anyone. We are one body, the Body of the One who dwells in us.

WHAT IS OUR MISSION?

To become who we truly are. In his song, the French Canadian songwriter, Robert Lebel, invites us to make visible the One who dwells in our hearts through our good actions, caring words and attitudes. We are His unique presence among our brothers and sisters. He needs our hands to touch and serve them, our eyes to introduce His gaze upon their hearts, our word to console the afflicted, our feet to go where they are, our affection to dress the wounds of the injured, our presence to comfort the lonely. *I have a desire to participate in building such a fraternity, but I feel very small*, exclaimed Jonathan. Drawing from the well of gifts with which we were blessed and given gratuitously, we will be able to sow and reap the Love which Jesus Christ wants to offer to His own. The children who will grow within a loving cell Church, will register everything they see—they will thus become their own true self. Through us, the baptized, the Kingdom of God is built.

SOURCES OF PERSEVERANCE

To nourish our lives we want to meet the One who lives in us; we want to celebrate the Eucharist when we feel the need

to recall that we are the Body of Christ; we want to hear the Gospel message that will guide us on the straight path. For example, what does Jesus tell us when He invited Zaccheus to come down from his tree, for an intimate encounter with Him, the Lord? (Lk 19:1.10). A member of the group recognizes that Jesus wants to meet us and wants to manifest His Love that we may be steadfast. A proposal was made—from time to time read the Gospel to discover the personal message it has for me and to experience its dynamism.

PHOTOS:

Couples preparing for the Baptism of their children with Rita Ostiguy, M.I.C. (center)

Photos Credit:

M.-P. Sanfaçon, M.I.C.



When we will celebrate the Baptism of the three infants, the God given gifts and virtues, invisible to the human eyes, will be understood through the visible, tangible signs used in the sacrament. We will marvel before the greatness of our “being” and we will give thanks for our life.

Is this a “sad Church” or a Church full of hope? ∞



By Émilien Roscanu

DIALOGUE, an Essential Exchange

To dialogue is easier said than done. The obstacles are numerous, but so are the occasions. What winning conditions are necessary to succeed in an exchange of ideas, of emotions and of knowledge? How to ensure the dialogue is sincere?



Before anything else, dialogue must be sincere. Both parties must prove that they have an open spirit, that they are indulgent, that they accept differences and are willing to concentrate on that which unites. Equally important is altruism and empathy towards the other. To turn a deaf ear on what the other is saying must be avoided. Whether in the political or international arena, or simply how we interact at work, hypocrisy and pretentiousness are serious hindrances to dialogue. Many wars and world-wide conflicts endure because of a lack of willingness to dialogue in all transparency, openness, honesty. False and senseless exchanges cannot help humanity

grow in harmony and peace. In their 1964 hit song *The Sound of Silence*, Simon and Garfunkel wrote and sang—*People talking without speaking, people hearing without listening*. A precise summary of individuals who come together with set minds, pretending they are listening to what the other has to say but are unwilling to budge from their position or personal point of view. Dialogue is a bi-directional exchange; for it to be successful both parties have to truly listen, really hear what the other has to say, sincerity and openness are essential elements.

AN INSPIRING PERSON

Myanmar's pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi is an outstanding example of a leader who, under the military junta, endured nearly nineteen years of house arrest and imprisonment with grace and courage. Throughout her life she has advocated dialogue and non-violence. Burma's general election in 1990 gave her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), more than 80% of the parliamentary seats but the results were ignored by the military government. In 1991, Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Throughout the years, she tried to dialogue with the authorities exhibiting sincere reconciliation and openness. Her determination and perseverance in the pursuit of dialogue and non-violence not only brought about her liberation but with time has led the regime to gradually become more open and liberal. Aung San Suu Kyi

could have given up, she could have chosen demagoguery or hypocrisy, but she rejected being such a person. Today, she continues fighting for openness and compassion, acts as mediator, motivates dialogue between her people and the military in power. We must learn and be inspired from this great lady, as well as from all other people who pursue a policy of open communication.

TRUSTING THE OTHER

We cannot dialogue if we do not trust the other person. Mutual trust is of prime importance. When a breach of confidence has occurred, it becomes very difficult for the two parties to establish a sincere and constructive dialogue.

These past years, numerous scandals have tainted the political world and have contributed to the low level of confidence and declining trust in government. It almost seems like a vicious circle which will be difficult to break. The citizens have lost confidence and have become cynical. The deciders of political systems seem to keep aloof from the peoples' real needs, thus the growing cynicism takes root. The only way this circle can be broken is to bring politics closer to its citizens, to promote citizen participation, encourage a transparent dialogue between citizens and representatives, to place in the forefront the public's interests rather than the private interests of friends or that of the best bidder. If the political representatives were involved in the

field to be better informed of the peoples' needs, to grasp their understanding on various issues, to hear their comments, then the citizens and their representatives would be united and politics would improve its image. By being sincere in their intentions, and equally attentive in listening to what the citizens are saying, the political world would truly meet its first obligation—to be the echo of the citizens' voice.

PHOTO:

1991 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Aung San Suu Kyi at a press conference in Berlin, April 12, 2014

Photo Credit: 360b/Shutterstock

To dialogue is to meet each other
and to be open. ~

Besides, the same goes for all other sectors of society. Pope Francis is a perfect example of a leader who promotes dialogue. His actions reveal that he is close to people and he hears their message. Through his determination and openness the Pope rallies crowds and in particular the youth which sometimes feels relegated to second place. It is from this type of dialogue which is honest, wholesome and open that societies, communities and individuals will grow in becoming more human.

To dialogue is to meet each other and to be open. Openness and mutual trust are favorable elements conducive to a true, unique conversation. Listening and really hearing what the other has to say are equally important and are at the heart of a true dialogue—a dialogue that generates hope and peace. ~



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ON THE WAY TO DIALOGUE

In a few weeks we will celebrate Christmas, the Feast of God in our midst. We will be reminded that Life, Peace and Light reveal a Presence we can come to with joy and trust. Jesus became one of us; He is in our hearts and He invites us to dialogue with Him.

The Advent Season offers us privileged moments to learn more about Jesus and to discover Him deep within our hearts—a place where dialogue imbued of happiness, presence and love can be established.

*Will we be able to capture those moments of grace?
Will others benefit from those moments as well?*

Lend a listening ear, hear His whisper in your heart; begin a conversation with the One who ardently desires to have your attention. God in our midst, in our hearts, invites each one of us to be with Him all along the year 2015. Taking time to dialogue with Him and with friends can be most beneficial.

From year to year, we have had the opportunity of speaking with you by way of correspondence, phone calls, or at various meetings, and via our mission magazine. We have had the joy of transmitting the Word of God and His Love while sharing with you some facts of life.

Not only did you receive us graciously but you have generously supported us in our missionary endeavors. For your warmhearted welcome, the personnel of the MIC Missionary Press – MIC Mission News/Le Précurseur expresses its most sincere gratitude.

ON THE WAY TO DIALOGUE leading us to Christmas, a most privileged time of the year, we wish you a Holy Season filled with Jesus' Life, Peace and Light.

Marie-Hélène Roy, M.I.C.



Dialogue – a Channel to Peace



Conflicts between Israel and Palestine still need to be resolved. With our Pope Francis let us pray for a lasting peace capable of transforming the Middle East and the world into a more humane place for all.

A HISTORIC PRAYER MEETING AT THE VATICAN

On June 8, 2014, Pope Francis performed a historic and unprecedented gesture. Though no immediate fruition is expected to revive the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, the prayer meeting which took place at the Vatican with Shimon Peres, Mahmoud Abbas and our Pope Francis was a courageous initiative.

Pope Francis, who is growing in popularity, received the presidents of Israel and Palestine along with the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew, in the stunning gardens of the small State.

We do not pray together, we meet to pray.

Well aware of the high tensions between Palestinians and Israelis the Pope expressed his wish: *Prayer can do everything. Let's use it to bring peace to the Middle East and around the world.*

Cf. Middle East: Historical Prayer at the Vatican

Dialogue on the Island of Chiloé

When hearts and hands meet, a profound evangelical dialogue can be established. Sr. Monique Larouche lived this passionate adventure as a missionary in Latin America; she shares her joy with us.



By Monique Larouche,
M.I.C.

DIALOGUE LEADS TO COMMITMENT!

Dialogue—“a channel to peace” has its requirements. It is not any kind of dialogue that can become a channel to peace. A dialogue must reach the other at heart level, otherwise it risks remaining a simple exchange of words and of ideas without necessarily leading to action and to change.

This brings me to share with you an experience that I lived in Chile where I worked for twelve years. When I arrived at Ancud, on the Island of Chiloé where I had been stationed for the last five years, I was offered many assignments; when it was proposed that I work at *Hogar de Cristo* (*Home of Christ*), I felt attracted. I was asked to function as chaplain at this center. What a challenge! The first meeting was with the directress who graciously and confidently welcomed me. For such a long time I had this dream in my heart and it was about to come true: to welcome the less fortunate, to look after the deprived, to reach out to the street people, collaborate in offering them a place where they can live with dignity, where they can be heard, appreciated and loved—my dream was taking shape.

FRUITS OF A COMMITMENT

During my years in Santiago, the Capital, I discovered that *Hogar de Cristo* existed in almost every city of the country. The founder, a Chilean Jesuit, was Father Alberto Hurtado (1901-1952) who was canonized on October 23, 2005. He came from one of the families who, at the beginning of the century, owned the majority of

the farm lands. Orphaned at the age of four, he knew what it meant to be economically dependent because his mother, a victim of fraud, had lost her property. Consequently, she with Alberto and her younger son had to live with relatives who gave her security but treated her as their servant. Later, Alberto went to law school; passionate as he was about social problems, the subject of his thesis was: the exploitation of workers. After defending his mother's cause and assuring her of the security she deserved, he entered the Society of Jesus in 1923. Later, in 1941 he published his most famous book, *Is Chile a Catholic Country?* In his milieu, both religious and lay population were shocked by the content. As professor at the Catholic University of Santiago he soon touched the hearts of many, the young as well as older adults. With fiery zeal but with much respect, he publicized the social teaching of the



Popes, raised awareness among the ruling classes, reawakened the faith and hope of the working classes. He took action for the poor. At night, he went with a group of students to gather the

street children, the homeless wanderers—he offered them a roof, a bed, a hot meal and above all friendship.

Despite many setbacks from those in power, he nevertheless touched the hearts of people. A campaign was launched, dona-

tions multiplied! On December 21, 1944, in Santiago, the first stone of the *Hogar de Cristo* building was laid. We gathered the fruits of a dialogue—the channel to peace and to a more humane society. This dialogue continued and expanded throughout the country even after the early death of Father Alberto in 1952.

A CHALLENGE I ENDORSED

During my first visit at *Hogar de Cristo* I discovered that approximately twenty persons lived there permanently; they bonded like a small family. Among them were some

A WHOLE POPULATION IS COMMITTED

All the *Hogar de Cristo* centers must support themselves. Every day, merchants would bring their surplus of fruits and vegetables to the center; custom officers would also bring whatever they seized at check points; this assured us of a certain amount of food for the meals. However, this was not enough and we had to engage in a dialogue with the local families. The volunteers decided to organize some activities that would awaken people's attention to our needs. For me, it was an amazing experience; welcoming so many gener-

PHOTOS:

¹ Fr. Alberto Hurtado

² Some volunteers

³ Food drive and volunteers

⁴ Beneficiaries at

Hogar de Cristo

Photos Credit ²⁻³⁻⁴: MIC



abandoned elderly women and men, there were young people with incurable illnesses, there were country people who had no place to live. Others were there while searching for work, there were the itinerants who came for a hot meal, clothing, and a bed for the night. There was a stable and experienced staff who received a salary. There were also many volunteers; every day young people and adults came together to serve. I was part of that group. The ones who came to *Hogar de Cristo* needed to be heard, needed to be acknowledged and loved. I heard so many heartbreaking stories, but I also discovered the very best in the hearts of those abandoned individuals who suffered so much because of their families or relatives. In the midst of their misery they found the power to forgive and now they were able to give to others what they had lacked the most.

ous people and taking part in the young people's creative program was most rewarding. Once a year, we would organize a non-perishable food drive; families from all over the city responded willingly. Rain or shine, the collection took place; with joy and solidarity people responded generously even beyond our expectations.

In 2008 when I had to leave Chile permanently for a mission in Quebec, my friends at *Hogar de Cristo* gave me a voluminous notebook of photos. With great joy I received scores of photos of those people I loved so much. Enclosed was a fraternal message describing the best moments we had lived together. This was the fruit of a dialogue which became a channel of fraternal love and of sharing tinted with the hope of a more humane and just world. ~

A dialogue must reach the other
at heart level...



Dialogue Can Be Therapeutic

Every person has a special place to meet with a friend and dialogue. It can be on a veranda, a terrace, in a garden... Without an agenda, without a schedule, we are simply in the presence of each other and time is on our side.



By Léonie Therrien, M.I.C.

What do we talk about? Depending on our age, we speak about our projects, our children, our future. The Canadian writer, Camille Andréa, composed a song entitled—*On the Porch*. A married couple expresses the fun they had when as youngsters they sat on the porch, on fine summer evenings, talking about what they liked and their dreams of the future. The years went by and with a watchful eye they saw their son and daughter whose turn it was to sit on the porch with their friends talking and joking. The couple, now old, did not complain because as they continued rocking they reminisced about the good old times. Is this not a way of gathering the fruits of dialoguing and at the same time eliminating the sadness of solitude?

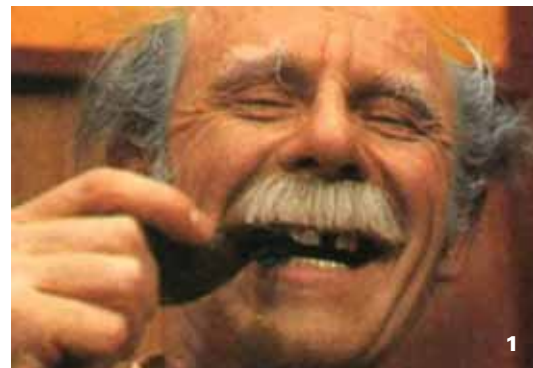
half of my life; I know I am on the other side of the peak and I have more years behind me than before me. So, I quietly tamed the idea of death. It became my daily companion and I looked at it from every angle to the point that I no longer fear it...or almost. Instead, death inspires me thoughts of joy. It seems like death taught me to live. I have come to believe that the real death is not in dying, but it is to lose the reason for living. And soon, when it will be my turn to get behind the stars and cross to the other side of the mystery, then I will know for what reason I was living. Not before."

A dialogue which liberates,
gives zest to life. ~

TAMING THE UNKNOWN

Is it possible to speak with one's self without being labeled as having hallucinations? I like to think of Doris Lussier, a scholar, writer, comedian best known as "Father Gédéon" on television. Dialoguing within himself with the one who sooner or later would come to fetch him, he wrote *The Tomb Is a Cradle*. For him, death was only a prelude to eternal life and he stated, *"If birth is a painful way to achieve happiness in life, then why wouldn't dying be a painful way to become happy?"*

Lussier's dialogue within himself, combined with deep reflection, opened him to hope for the future. *"I have lived more than*



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TAKE TIME

How consoling it can be to speak with someone whose presence is inspiring and radiates joy. When certain realities hit hard, capturing the sense of it all can be almost impossible; however, dialoguing can be helpful. Take time to sit quietly by the seaside or a lake, take a walk in the forest, climb a mountain, enter a church or chapel, and then simply *listen to silence*. Gradually, the soul becomes pacified and the issue at stake takes on another dimension which is lighter and brighter.

¹ ANGE, Daniel – *The Embrace of Fire* (French: *L'étreinte de feu*)
Éd. Desclée de Brower, 1980

PHOTOS:

¹ Doris Lussier—"Father Gédéon"

² Stained-glass window

Photo Credit: Nancy Bauer /
Shutterstock.com

WE ARE THE SUBJECT OF DIALOGUE

Even within the heart of the Holy Trinity there was, one day, a dialogue about us. Our God, being a God of Love, could not resist coming to earth to establish a dialogue with each one of us. In his book, *The Embrace of Fire*,¹ the author Daniel Ange, depicts Andrei Rublev's icon of the Trinity — Father, Son and Spirit. At the heart of the Trinity is the eternal dialogue of love, it revolves around you and me, around all those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life (Ap 21:27). The Trinity sitting around a table portrays the eternal communion, sharing infinite life and tenderness. After the *Fall of Man* (Gen 3:1.23) the Father asked the question: How can our love be known? The Son, being the Word, agreed to be the Savior. I will go and speak to the people; and the Word became flesh in the womb of Mary of Nazareth. It was the first Christmas. The Word turned to the Spirit for guidance; Jesus Christ was taught by the Spirit who rested upon Him. The Spirit of God was the Source of His wisdom in the days of His flesh (Is 11:2.3). He was anointed and fitted for service by the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38). The eternal dialogue of love brought forth fruits; the adventure of Jesus, the Savior, continues until the end of times. God's initial love relationship with you, with me, with each person and with all of humanity has been restored. Dialoguing within himself the psalmist understood very well God's tenderness, "*What is man that you are mindful of him...*" (Ps. 8:4).

A GIFT FOR THE COMING YEAR

For the year 2015, perhaps it would be well to wish each other the gift of knowing the joy of a true dialogue—a dialogue which liberates, gives zest to life because harmony has been regenerated. Taking time alone, as a couple, as a family to take a step back, reflect and look ahead with hope; to take stock of your daily living with the God who saves, Emmanuel, who gives meaning to life. May a therapeutic dialogue be for all of us a Blessing. ☺



Woman of God

Communicative and attentive, Sr. Lucille loves reaching out to others. For many years she was a missionary in Africa and now in Quebec, Canada, she is particularly interested in the newly arrived immigrants. One day, she was surprised by the comment of a Muslim lady; here she tells us how she approaches the newcomers.



By Lucille LaSalle, M.I.C.

AN INTERFAITH ENCOUNTER

Not so long ago, as I was walking out of the PROMIS¹ Center, three Muslim professionals greeted me and asked me if I were a nun. Upon hearing my positive reply, one of the ladies asked me what that meant besides not having my own little family. After briefly explaining what consecrated life is all about, a second lady asked, *“How come in our religion we do not have this kind of commitment?”* Of course, they were the only ones who could answer that question; but one of the ladies confided that she would have loved this kind of life for herself. However, at the age of twenty or twenty-five would she have been ready to leave behind all that she cherished to follow a very special calling—that of religious life? An immediate and honest *“no”* was expressed. As I continued speaking about my religious vocation, the three women looked at each other and then exclaimed, *“You are a woman of God; you are a mystic!”* What a statement! They took me by surprise. To establish a true dialogue, three conditions are important and required: empathy,

openness and respect while at the same time remaining true to one’s self.

EMPATHY

Recently, I visited a family who had just welcomed the grandmother from Algeria. The elderly lady, who was sitting “Gandhi style” could not speak French nor English. I sat near her on the sofa; she looked at me and took my hand, caressing my arm all the while her daughter-in-law and I kept the conversation going. Some days later, I received a phone call from the young wife who said that her mother-in-law was delighted with my visit and that she felt she had some affinity with me. Even silence has its own language.

OPENNESS

When I was in Zambia, a large country where many businesses are operated by Hindus of the Muslim faith, I always showed much interest in their customs, culture, religion and differences. One day, I was invited to the wedding of a young man whose father was a prominent business person. The important day came and I accepted to be among the guests. After many greetings, we entered the mosque and to my surprise I was the only woman in the assembly... according to their custom, the bride remained at home. After the prayers and heartfelt admonition we followed the spouse to the bride’s house; it is here that the ring is slipped on the finger of the beloved. Then the wedding begins, the women are in one room, the men are in the other.

At the end of the day, the family thanked me wholeheartedly because I had taken part in this happy event. As for me, I was delighted to have lived such an experience; it opened my heart to a world so different from ours.

RESPECT

Last winter, an African lady who had arrived in Canada just a few months ago invited me to the Sunday mass at her parish in Côte des Neiges. It was a freezing February Sunday, the buses were rare and waiting time was long. However, I knew that if I went the little family would be most happy. To my big surprise, the children were alone waiting for me while the mother was in the choir loft. After communion, she sang a solo; what an amazing achievement this was for the young mother. Everyone was so proud and happy that I was present to hear her beautiful voice. Do you not think that an act of goodwill, full of love and respect could be worth more than a precious gift?

In recent decades, Quebec has seen a growing population of immigrants. Happy are those who wish to see the day when all of us will form one big united family. *Amen! Alleluia!* ☪

¹ PROMIS: a non-profit organization that promotes the integration of immigrants and refugees into the Quebec society.

PHOTO: French class at PROMIS
Photo Credit: MIC

To SOW is to LOVE

The theme of this year's World Mission Sunday was taken from the Parable of the Sower (Mk 4:1.20). It was an occasion for all Catholics to reconsider the primary mission Christ gave to His disciples when He said to them, "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples" (Mt 28:19)

THE "AD GENTES MISSIO"

Even in a context of poverty and restructuration, the local Church cannot close its doors to the Lord's mandate as well as to the "ad gentes mission"— *Make the tent you live in larger... do not hold back* (Isa 54:2). To broaden one's horizons and leave behind our own boundaries, with the purpose of proclaiming and sowing the Word of God, suggests openness to others. It proposes an interior movement 'ad intra' and an exterior movement, "ad extra" in order to inhabit a different space, either geographical or social. To *not hold back* implies a cultural shift that creates a new way to do things and to experience communion.

Our mission is to become missionary disciples on a permanent mission and also to be humble sowers of the Word of God in order to love as Jesus did. This mission involves communicating with other worlds, cultures and peoples; it also implies to accompany them in building a better world. Thus, the "ad gentes missio" is mainly the work of a sower *who went out to sow grain* and proclaim the Good News. In our context of indifference and atheism, the "ad gentes missio" which requires the contemplation of the actual world and prayer, emphasizes this permanent mission at the heart of the world—disciples sent towards our poorest brothers and sisters in order to proclaim and experience the Word of God.

A MAN WENT OUT TO SOW GRAIN

This parable focuses on the one who listens and hears the word resonate within his heart. He is the soil that receives the grain. The grain being the Gospel, we are questioned about how we welcome it in our lives. This parable makes us see God's heart. What are the obstacles that prevent me from listening?

In order to proclaim the Gospel, we must "go out" like the sower and walk on the world's paths. It is the action of sowing that will open new paths to the Gospel, enliven God's gifts that we have within us and grant the one who "listens" to become a witness and a missionary disciple of the Word of God, without expecting anything in return except the grace of love that gives life. In this way, God does His work. The Word takes root and bears fruit, "*some had thirty grains, others sixty, and others one hundred*". It is a parable of hope and life. It states the faith and hope in God's love that acts in silence with the purpose of growing new life. It is a parable that talks to the most vulnerable people of our world.

"The sower went out to sow and to love." Lord, help me become a fertile soil. To sow is to love! 🌱

(extract from the World Mission Sunday Theme presentation)

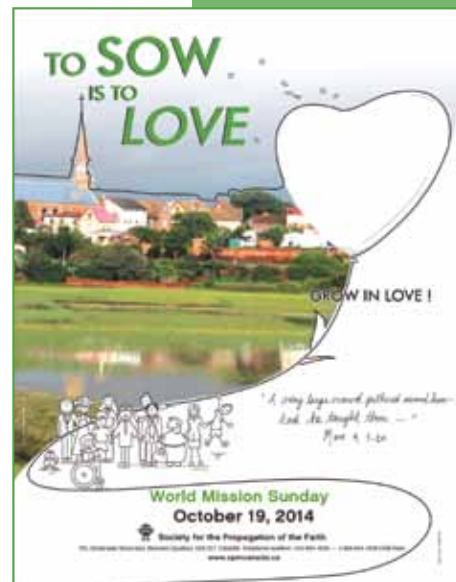


Photo: Fr. André Gagnon, S.J. / Graphic Design: Ginette Côté





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A DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR

In 1954, a new project was taking shape in Hong Kong: the foundation of Good Hope School (GHS). The author took part in the festivities highlighting the School's 60th Anniversary; with enthusiasm and hope Sr. Michelle tells us about the Jubilee Celebrations.



By Michelle Payette, M.I.C.

Though its beginnings were very humble, *Good Hope School* has become one of the most reputable schools of Hong Kong. Almost 3,500 students from kindergarten, primary and secondary levels arrive daily at the school complex. Here the youngsters receive not only an academic education but an integral formation of the whole person thus training them to become tomorrow's leaders.

Recalling the beginnings and work realized throughout the years is a positive strength which encourages us to continue maintaining the vision of our predecessors. Our Venerable Foundress, Délia Téreault once wrote: *Through education we are called to include moral and character development; moral virtues are to be taught.*¹

As our predecessors have done before us, we have continued striving, up to this very day, to instill in our students the essential values which *Good Hope School* stands for: love, hope, joy and thanksgiving.

THE OPENING CELEBRATION

The Diamond Jubilee celebrations began under the banner—*For what has been, THANKS! For what will be, YES!*

A Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium. More than three thousand people were gathered: students, teaching staff, administration and maintenance staff, parents, alumni, well-wishers were all united in one spirit in the presence of His Eminence, Cardinal John Tong who celebrated the Eucharist. There were many uplifting and touching moments but all will remember the shared homily between the celebrant and the six students' representatives. How could we not be moved upon seeing the Patriarch of the Church sitting in the middle of these young people to sincerely and simply speak to them about his personal life experience and his faith journey. For the assembly, who for the most part were non believers, the dialogue was truly a channel through which the message of Christ was made accessible.

It just so happened that at the time the celebrations began, MIC Sisters from Africa were in Hong Kong. With joy, they took part in the liturgy with drums, dances and a Thanksgiving song. Such a performance opened our hearts to the world, to the universal aspect of Church.

WALKATHON

Among many other activities, the walkathon was an event that involved the whole student body, from kindergarten to secondary level. In the opening ceremony, a 15-foot long banner was unveiled; it illustrated how from a single dream *Good Hope School* had evolved into a priceless, invaluable institution on Kowloon's verdant slope. At one point, the walkathon had to slow down the pace and take another route better adapted for the little ones who were from three to five years of age. Game booths and food counters had been set up for all to enjoy at the end of this event.

STILL TO COME...

A musical play entitled *Alice in Wonderland* is actually underway; it will be the joy and pride of everyone. After a year of rehearsals, designing and sewing costumes, planning and mounting the decors, the play will surely be one of the key moments of the Jubilee Year. The choice of this play will underline the value of training programs in vocal music, dance and acting offered to the students. More than three hundred students are directly involved in this artistic adventure which is on its way to success.

A symposium on education having the theme *Forming Feminine Leaders of Tomorrow* will gather many professionals even some from surrounding regions. Representatives from the Office of Education, psychologists, school directors, university professors as well as clergy members and religious members will be invited to participate. The workshops will include a variety of questions such as—*What kind of feminine leaders are we preparing? How to respond to their aspirations?* The symposium will draw the attention of many because of its interesting futuristic approach.



¹ Letter to Sr. Marguerite-Marie, Canton, China – July 7, 1929

PHOTOS:

¹ The school in its progressive stages

² Cardinal Tong and Sr. Pauline Yuen, M.I.C. — Directress of Good Hope School

Photos Credit: E. Tabudlong, M.I.C.

BEYOND FRONTIERS

These past years, the *Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception* have taken the initiative to sensitize the students and the personnel to the great needs of populations who are deprived of the basic necessities. The fact that quite a few MIC Sisters from Hong Kong were sent for mission work in Africa, particularly in Malawi, they launched a project to help the youngsters of that area. The goal of this project was twofold: to sensitize the students as to how schools develop slowly in certain parts of the world and invite them to support the MIC commitments in poorer countries.

On this 60th Diamond Jubilee Year, a delegation of teachers and students will have the chance to fly to Malawi and participate in an intercultural exchange with Malawians. Upon their return, the members of the delegation will share their experiences with the student body thus expanding the knowledge of Good Hoppers to another cultural reality.

OVER THE YEARS

Throughout the Diamond Jubilee Year 2014-2015, our students will once again witness the ties that are developed over the years in a school setting; they will be aware that good communication, with all its implications, builds ties that become channels to Joy, Hope, Love and Thanksgiving. ☺



WHAT DRIVES A DYNAMIC ALUMNA

By Lizzie Der
– 4th from left

I have a long relationship with Good Hope School, almost as long as I've known my parents. I started in Grade 1 at Good Hope School, when English Primary school was conducted in the convent house in Kowloon Tong area. When we reached Grade 3, the English Primary school was relocated to Clear Water Bay Road where a new campus was built, further up from the chapel and the older campus called Mount Good Hope. Our campus was beautiful, quiet and very exclusively located alongside a steep climb on Clear Water Bay Road.

Years flew by... and by the time the Secondary School Certificate Exams were over, I found that I was leaving the only school I had known. There was a sense of joy to have graduated but there was also a deep sense of loss.

LOOKING AHEAD

After I graduated from University in the U.S., my next natural move was to obtain immigration papers to Canada to join my family. Upon arriving in Toronto, I looked up the first people I knew. They were my Good Hope School (GHS) high school classmates, Julia and Grace. Through

them I found other classmates and thought to myself – wouldn't it be nice if we had an alumna gathering every now and then. That idea planted the first seed that was to flourish in the years to come.

Right around the period of 1982-1986, there was a large influx of immigrants from Hong Kong to Canada. Our big sisters Paula Cheung, Navens Tse, Alice Tong and a few others were new immigrants with young children. These ladies had a strong sense of loyalty to our 'alma mater'; their affiliation with Good Hope School and Past Student Association (PSA) was solid. By 1985, we had a social group of Good Hoppers who frequently gathered at Navens' home simply to enjoy delicious meals and to play games. It wasn't until Sr. Mary Olga Lam, M.I.C. who visited Toronto in 1986 that we were encouraged to formalize the organization.

A NEW ORIENTATION

We registered GHS/PSA Toronto Chapter formally in 1986. Navens Tse was our first Chair. We set up a committee and each member had a task, a responsibility to fulfill, keeping in mind the PSA's

best interests. Our first Annual General Meeting (AGM) was quite a success. By word of mouth, over 100 past students were recruited which allowed us to compile a good data base of contact information. Back then, there were no group distribution of E-mail or Evite like today; therefore, each event took many phone calls to finalize, not to mention the blunt rejections or indecisiveness by many.

We were creative with activities that fit the four seasons of our locale. We would start off the year with a Chinese New Year dinner. Then there was the Spring AGM. Our children were much younger then, so the Summer picnic was very popular. BBQ and delicious homemade specials were served and fun games captured the attention of our children. When Christmas came around, there was a lunch or dinner with presents for the kids as well.

GROWING INVOLVEMENT

Throughout the years, we have hosted the GHS choir visit from Hong Kong, liaised with the establishment of Vancouver GHS PSA, attended home school 40th and 50th anniversaries, and hosted corresponding celebrations in Toronto. On a larger scale GHS/PSA was also a member of the Joint Catholic School alumnus family in Toronto taking on major roles in organized events as co-chairs, treasurers and Masters of Ceremony over the span of 25 years. We also hosted 7 golf tournaments with over 100 golfers from the Joint School community.

As our children grew into adults, so did GHS PSA, Toronto. Our core members are gradually retiring from their work life. We now have regular Karaoke and dinner parties, AGM, garage sale, travels by cruise or land, casual lunches and just like old times, we enjoy the company and love of the sisterhood.

REMEMBERING OUR MIC TEACHERS

We often visit the retired MIC Sisters in Quebec. We raised funds for their needs and have helped in every way when major

projects were launched. We are all thankful to the retired sisters who, in faith, have given their whole religious life and career to educate girls like us around the world. Through their hard work they have contributed in shaping responsible individuals, many of whom hold Christianity and the love of Christ close to their own families.

TRUE SISTERHOOD

The strong bond of the Toronto Chapter PSA has flourished into lasting friendships and sisterhood. When we are not planning for any activities, we meet often just to enjoy the company. I have come to realize that Good Hoppers share strong moral characteristics like independence, integrity, creativity, hardworking and humility—the core spirit of a Good Hoper and we are proud of it.

I thank our Lord for His great love and for His wisdom in sending these selfless MIC missionaries to Hong Kong. ~

I just turned 60 years old; the spirit of Good Hope School has been with me for 55 years. I thank our Lord for His great love and for His wisdom in calling these selfless MIC missionaries who went to Hong Kong 60 years ago. They started the tiny all girls' school that has matured into one of the finest and most desirable private schools of the region. As one of the founders of the Toronto Chapter PSA, I encourage all graduates living in all parts of the world to continue with the spirit of Good Hope, to mentor the young, to spread the good news of our Lord's love and to maintain sisterhood with other Good Hoppers. I would like to express special thanks to my mentors who are true to the spirit of Good Hope sisterhood: Paula Cheung, Jane Yung and Navens Tse. ~

PHOTO:

Good Hope School

Past Student Association

Photo Credit: MIC

The Lord carries His lambs close to His Heart. (Is. 40:11)



Paulette Côté, M.I.C. (Sr. Saint Richard) 1927-2014 – Quebec

She was very tiny: everybody wanted to hold her! relates her sister Suzanne, C.N.D. But, Paulette grew up... and the family's affection prepared her for the love adventure that would be hers when she opted for the religious missionary life. In 1947 she was welcomed at our Novitiate. As mission animator, she first travelled the roads of Quebec and then went on to Haiti, Peru, Chile and Bolivia. With joy she devoted herself in various missionary works, helping the neediest. Prayer, solitude, illness prepared Sr. Paulette for the ultimate journey to which she was called on April twenty-three.

Gemma Ouellet, M.I.C. (Sr. Saint Épiphanie) 1919-2014 – Saint-Épiphanie, Quebec

Evangelization was Sr. Gemma's greatest priority. A dedicated missionary, she lived her life in the manner of Jesus, *"My life, no one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord"* (Jn 10:18). In 1941, she entered our Novitiate and in 1955, Sr. Gemma was assigned to Zambia, Africa where she studied Chichewa. Blessed with many talents she reached out—promoting women's rights, animating parish groups, working with the most deprived. One of her greatest joys was in training the future catechists and their spouses at the Chikungu Center, a priority of the Zambian Church. Upon her return to Quebec, she remained 'willing to serve' in sickness and in good health. Thank you, Sr. Gemma.



Marie-Jeanne Alix, M.I.C. (Sr. Marie-Ange) 1920-2014 – L'Ange-Gardien, Quebec

She did not calculate her time and sometimes her energy felt the blow. Sister Marie-Jeanne was all heart and all ears when people, who saw Jesus in her, came by her side to seek guidance. In 1941, she entered our Novitiate; robustly healthy she was actively involved in a variety of works in Quebec as well as in Haiti where she spent ten years of her life. Upon returning to her homeland, she began visiting the elderly who were house-bound. She became known as an encouraging Gospel oriented counselor. Sr. Marie-Jeanne, don't forget: a telephone line links heaven and earth!

Alicia Posadas, M.I.C. (Sr. Théodora-Marie) 1932-2014 – Quezon City, Manila, Philippines

Motivated by our spirituality of Thanksgiving, Sr. Alicia entered our Institute in 1956. To fulfill her missionary charism, she took up studies in religious science in Manila, in Rome and in Ottawa. After completing her degree, she worked as catechist, as directress of the Scholastics, and as teacher at the Institute of Religious Formation. Upon request, she also gave conferences. Her mission 'ad extra' was in Bolivia and Peru. Sister Alicia will be remembered for her simple life style, her compassionate heart, her generous response to all who needed her help, even endorsing responsibilities at the authority level. Now in the Father's House, thank you Sister for remembering us.





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A LITTLE KINDNESS

*SOMEONE listens, someone shares,
Someone hears and someone cares,
Someone says a kindly word,
And joy and hope are gently revived.*

*Someone is in need of you,
Needs a cheerful line or two,
Be the one to light their day,
Sending happiness their way.*

*Someone needs a friendly smile,
Just to make their day worthwhile,
Show a little kindness too,
And kindness will return to you.*

Iris Hesselden

*The Friendship Book of Francis Gay
D.C. Thomson & Co. Ltd., 2006*

