

MIC MISSION NEWS

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To sow seeds of joy and hope

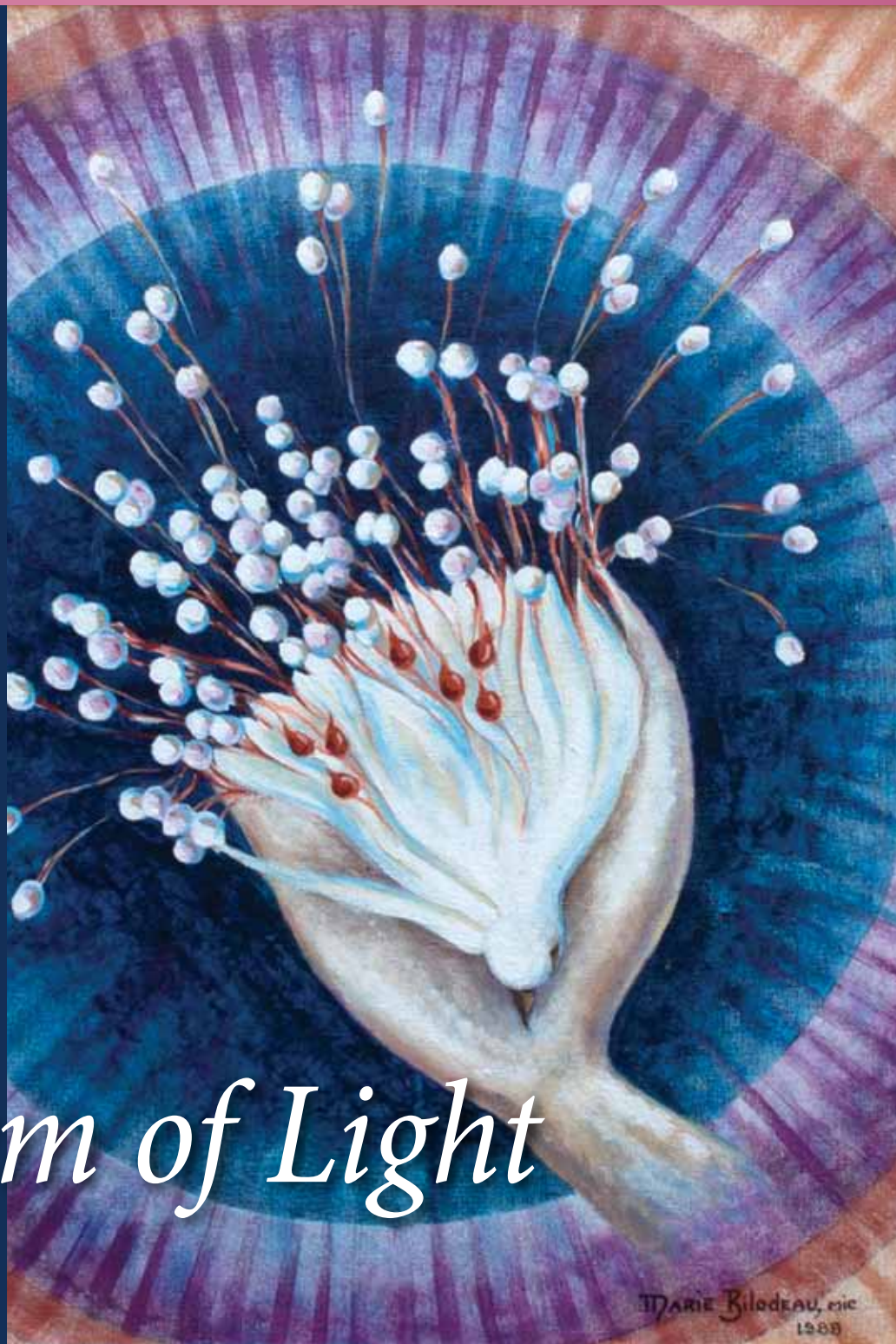
Since 1923

BOLIVIA
ON RADIO
WAVES

JAPAN
THIS LITTLE
LIGHT OF MINE

IN FOCUS

A Stream of Light



MARIE BILLODEAU, MIC
1988

PUBLICATION OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

MISSIONARY PRAYER INTENTIONS – 2015

JANUARY

We pray that those from diverse religious traditions and all people of good will may work together for peace.

FEBRUARY

We pray for all the prisoners, especially the young, that they may be able to rebuild lives of dignity.

MARCH

We pray for all those involved in scientific research that they may serve the well-being of the whole human person.

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

Shouts of Joy

God said, *Let there be light...* and there was joy in the world. In Haiti, I often experienced power outage. Everything would be immobilized. Gradually, people would light candles and life would resume. But when the electric light was restored, a joyful cry could be heard from all the small houses. Light is joy, it is life!

UNESCO proclaimed 2015 the *International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies*. There will be numerous commemorations highlighting major scientific events in the field of optics including the anniversary of the discovery of the laser and the use of fiber optic telecommunications. Undeniably, the achievements of light science and its applications have raised the quality of life worldwide.

This year, the MIC Sisters will have the occasion of commemorating two important events. We will be celebrating the 150th Anniversary of Délia Tétreault's birth, the Foundress of our Institute and the 95th Anniversary of our mission magazine *Le Précurseur/MIC Mission News*. Through her ingenuity and steadfastness Délia radiated Christ's message in many ways, one of which was via our mission magazine. What a luminous treasure, what an aurora that, for years, has been radiating joy and hope around the world.

The sun! The light! An everyday joy! Can we imagine a world without light? A little candle, no matter how small, brings life, comfort, it is a spark of hope.



In each person's heart, there is a bright little candle that gives meaning to one's life. It has to be well maintained otherwise if it dies out life becomes gloomy and sad. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles were sad and could not understand what had just happened. The Holy Spirit imbued them of His Light; all were transformed and they became messengers of the Good News. It is the same for us: let's open the door to our heart and let all sadness out; keep it wide open to allow the energizing Light of our Christian faith to come through.

We are children of the Light and our treasure is to be shared. Let us keep our bright little candle burning to sow joy and hope in our world which is so much in need. The articles in this issue present you with a message pertinent for our times

Marie-Paule Sanjean, m.i.c.

DÉLIA'S COLUMN

Where to look for the Light? Where can we find it? Mother Délia's letters reveal she knew where:

The Holy Table is the strength of our soul, the energy of our spirit, the bond of our faith, our hope, our salvation, our light and our life. (July 18, 1904)

It is at the foot of the Tabernacle that you should go to seek the light and help needed. (August 27, 1915)

We will do the best we can with the lights and lessons we have received from the past as well as from our experience. (November 24, 1917)

Pray with us the Holy Spirit to enlighten us of his lights that we may know and accomplish the Holy Will of God in everything. (May 24, 1918)

Through you the Holy Spirit gave us the lights we dearly need at the present time. (February 2, 1924)

Every morning, during communion, ask the lights from the Holy Spirit, the help of the Virgin and of our good Father Saint Joseph, then go well on your way in all confidence. (March 4, 1927)

You will not undertake anything important without asking the lights of the Holy Spirit. (July 17, 1927)

I ask our Immaculate Mother to enlighten you, to console you and to give you joy. (January 31, 1928)

Time and circumstances will surely provide the lights needed, gather the information and communicate it to us. (April 5, 1929)

May the Holy Spirit inspire you and kindle your hearts of His Divine Rays. (March 20, 1933)

**FOR ALL FAVORS
RECEIVED-OR-DESIRED**

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THE RADIANCE OF A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

I have the certitude that in each human being there is an inner dynamism that is waiting to be activated and liberated from the heavy weight of darkness.



By André Gadbois

For a period of four to five days I had been tormented by a troubling situation; it kept me awake at night. It was a decision which could lead to the break of a precious friendship. My sleep was agitated; I was restless, tossing and turning. It reminded me of the sleepless nights I had during my 'classical studies'; when it was time to prepare for final exams, I would toss and turn in bed until daybreak. Came morning, I would be exhausted!

My troubled mind was suddenly awakened around three in the morning; I had not experienced such a thing for years. Within me I could hear these words: *If you have something against your brother, go speak to him first...; if he refuses to listen, take one or two others along as witnesses; if he still refuses to listen, consult the community* (Mt 18:15-17). I couldn't help but smile; I went back to sleep 'in the fullness of light' and I woke up as radiant as the sunshine. It is as if my memory of this scripture passage helped me to hope and believe. Another way of saying that realities well rooted within me became alive and gave me a breath of hope. I am convinced that by scrutinizing the depth of the human experience we can come to demonstrate that at certain moments in life

¹ BAUM, GREGORY – *Fernand Dumont, a Sociologist becomes a Theologian (un sociologue se fait théologien)* Novalis 2014, P. 57

PHOTO:

Painting

Credit: Clive Watts / Shutterstock



*there is an encounter with the Infinite, though however unknowable this Infinite may be.*¹ In each one of us there exists an inner dynamism that questions the heart, making the person more creative and loving. It is the Infinite, the Eternal, the Benevolent, it is Yahweh, it is the Soul of the world... I like to name Him the Eternal Word, the Spirit of God, the Glorious Jesus, the Light.

Yes, the Light does dwell in us, in all of humanity. That is why the Prophet of Nazareth wished to open the eyes and understanding of his contemporaries not on a religious doctrine but on the meaning of life and the proper way of living life. He affirmed that some are blind but see and others have eyes but do not see. He also said to His disciples: *You are the Light of the World* (Mt 5:14.16). It was said of Him: *A smoldering wick He will not snuff out* (Mt 12:20). When sick children, heavily handicapped persons, miners working deep underground, firemen, athletes, extraordinary simple men and women dazzle us, they are **LIGHT**. When a man, a woman stand tall and strong in the midst of cowardice, they are **LIGHT**. They help us SEE without imposing whatever.

of Nazareth did not speak uniquely to the Jews of His religion.

Why despair when someone fails, is unsuccessful, is accused of a crime? Why refuse to believe that a person can be reborn, have a new beginning and get back on the right track? Why say that this Light is inaccessible for certain individuals who have erred? The Word of God wants to enlighten our understanding that we may stop thinking or speaking erroneously about others; why speak ill of the weak if not to appear better, dominate, or to be praised? God is all merciful, He knows the human weakness, it is in our DNA imposed by our finite nature.

THE GUIDING LIGHT

In our darkest nights, or in the shadows of night, the Light tries to point towards paths that would help us cross over from the unaccomplished to the accomplished, from the unconsciousness to consciousness, from ignorance to knowledge, from individualism to solidarity and from subjugation to freedom of spirit. Events that trouble our life are open doors to the Light that wishes to guide our discernment and decision making. Sometimes we hesitate to follow the Inner Inspiration... but the Eternal Word is patient and coerces no one. I think of the rich young man, of Zaccheus, the high priests, of Peter, of

Why despair when someone fails, or is unsuccessful?

THE BIBLE IS LIGHT

We read about many crisis situations in the Bible. We try to find answers to circumstances that hardly make sense. The biblical texts provide a rich diversity of examples which can be transposed within a new context and thus contain a new meaning. The Bible is **LIGHT**: to welcome the living Word is the way of being in touch with this inner dynamism which enlightens, inspires, and gives meaning to our search, our doubts, easing the ambiguities of life. As the Bible is not only destined for Christianity, likewise the Prophet

Judas... The Eternal Word does not count its victories or its trophies--It desires only to give Life abundantly. The Word which Lights our way is generous and inventive; it is up to us to be attentive to the present moment. The Word is humble and often uses us to enlighten other people. It is strange to say but often this Light is better appreciated in times of trouble, in the dark nights of the soul than when all is honky dory, when all is well. ☺

Rejoice! Shout for Joy!

By Évangéline Plamondon, M.I.C.

A BIT OF HISTORY

In 1659, François de Laval arrived as Apostolic Vicar in New France; some years later he was appointed the first Bishop of Quebec. The colony was sufficiently developed and structured as a civil and religious society to become a parochial institution. Approximately three thousand inhabitants had settled in the valley of Saint Lawrence; there was a Sovereign Council led by a governor. The Recollets, the Jesuits, the Augustinians, the Ursulines were already well established. The humble church *Notre-Dame-de-la Paix* (*Our*

Lady of Peace) had been erected in 1647 in Old Quebec's Upper Town. Msgr. François de Laval who was a great visionary deemed the foundations to be solid; therefore, the future was contemplated. Then, in 1664 *Notre-Dame-de-la Paix* was officially classified as a parish church in North America dedicated to Our Lady bearing the name: *The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary*.

Notre Dame de Québec (*Our Lady of Quebec*), as it is now named, was not only the first built in North America, but it was the first Catholic parish founded north of Mexico and the Spanish colonies; it therefore became the Mother Church of all the other Catholic parishes. During the time of the Conquest in 1759, Quebec's Diocese, the largest in the world, covered most of North America from Acadia to New Orleans. With the in-coming missionaries, parishes were progressively established in this vast territory. The story of *Notre Dame de Québec* is linked to the country's development as well as to the Canadian Church. Not to be forgotten is the 375th anniversary of the Augustinian Sisters and the Ursulines who, as courageous pioneers, arrived in Quebec in 1639.

FAMILY HISTORY

Celebrating a historical event often takes us back to our roots. In 2004, it was estimated that twenty-five million people in the United States and Canada were of French descent. A large percentage of that population had at least one of their ancestors recorded in the registry of *Notre Dame of Quebec Parish*. Numerous baptisms, marriages,

funerals, solemn events are registered in the official church documents found in the archives. Monsignor Gérard C. Lacroix, Archbishop of Quebec once said that to discover one's origins and family history is to open up the horizons and deepen our sense of belonging.

During 350 years, men and women from all walks of life came to their local parishes, listened to the Word of God, built families, religious communities, and a country. The Church can look up its genealogy and retrace its Faith ancestors. In 1663, Monsignor de Laval opened the Grand Séminaire in Quebec and placed it under the protection of the Holy Family. In 1665, he established the Brotherhood of the Holy Family and of the Holy Angels which still exists; thus, in this way he is the spiritual father of numerous Christian families.

A JUBILEE

We needed to celebrate such a history. Why not a Jubilee? Biblical tradition describes Jubilees as grace-filled years, celebrated every fifty years, but nowadays it is every twenty-five years. The 350th anniversary was an occasion to live a Jubilee Year. According to Msgr. Lacroix, this is a time to *ask the Lord to help us look at the past, the present and the future. The past, to purify it and assume it in a spirit of Thanksgiving; the present, to sanctify it by the Lord's presence in our midst; the future, to offer it with hope in the Good News for today's world.*

The program for the Jubilee Year was vast and rich in content. It had six themes: faith, family, patrimony, history, culture, legacies. Various



activities corresponded to the themes: concerts, exhibitions, publications, celebrations highlighting art treasures and spiritual resources unique to Quebec.

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY DOOR

To celebrate the 350th Anniversary of the foundation of Notre Dame de Quebec parish, an exceptional privilege was given as a gift from the Vatican—a Holy Door, the 7th in the world. On a side wall of the Basilica, an opening was drilled and a bronze Door, sculpted by Quebec artist Jules Lasalle, was installed. Sister H  l  ne Bastarache, s.c.i.m. pastoral agent of this parish explained that a Holy Door is like a pious object that reminds us of the Gospel, somewhat like the rosary or an icon. *I am the door; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.* (Jn 10:9) Small in size, the Door reminds us of the Lord who invites us to enter through the narrow door which opens and leads to a merciful Jesus. The Holy Door offers the Gospel Message in its pure sense. With His extended and open hands the Good Shepherd invites us to enter... a simple but meaningful gesture. A simple cross of light is reflected through the door and on the other side, we see Mary, the Mother of the Church. Stained glass windows, “pilgrims of light” overhanging the passageway leading to the Holy Door guide the seekers’ walk. The pilgrims who walked through the Holy Door experienced what it is like to be in communion on a holy site. Many began or ended their pilgrimage by touring historical buildings such as the convent of the Ursuline Sisters and their museum, the Augustinian Monastery, the Jesuit place, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, the Christian Brothers, the church Notre-Dame-des-Victoires.

By the end of December 2014, more than 300,000 people had crossed the Holy Door since its opening in December 2013.



With open arms, the Lord welcomed everyone: the pilgrims, tourists, believers, non-believers, the sick, the poor, the rich, the children. Throughout the summer months, twenty-seven tour guides and animators told the story of our sacred past. What more can be said! The success of the Jubilee Year was more than we ever expected.

THE ANTICIPATED SURPRISE

Last April, Pope Francis canonized Fran  ois de Laval and Marie de l’Incarnation¹. This was a joyful surprise which had been hoped for and welcomed with fervor for the Jubilee Year. These were two great heroes of the faith, two great missionaries who sowed the seed of faith in the land of New France.

May the theme song of this 350th Anniversary of Quebec continue inspiring all those who have experienced crossing the Holy Door.

*Jubilate, shout for joy,
The Lord opens His heart.
Jubilate, receive the faith.
Enter, do not fear!*

(Lyrics and music: Guillaume Boulay)



¹ A French Ursuline Nun who arrived in New France in 1639. She established the first school in the upper town of Quebec City as well as the Ursuline Monastery of Quebec which has been designated one of the National Historical Sites of Canada.

PHOTOS:

¹ Christ, the Good Shepherd, welcomes us.

² Stained glass window—‘Pilgrims of Light’
Photos Credit: A. Guay, M.I.C.



By Émilien Roscanu

PRISM AND LIGHT

We are in 2003. I am nine years old and in grade three. In the afternoon, the science course begins with an experiment in physics—decomposition of light by a prism. Three hundred thirty-four years earlier, little did Isaac Newton know how fascinated and captivated I would be by this phenomenon. How could a simple beam of white light, when passing through a prism of glass, be decomposed, converted into a spectrum of multi colored lights. When crude light goes through a catalyst it emerges enriched, emancipated so to say. Likewise, we too should serve as channels through which light can be seen and shared. Rays of multi colored lights reflecting hope, love, compassion and courage are needed more than ever.

BE A REFLECTION OF LIGHT

To emanate light, the fertile ground of our soul must be explored and the seed of light must be cultivated. However, it is easier said than done. So many stumbling blocks stand in our way. It's an everyday struggle to try to be a carrier of light. Some aggravations such as depression, stress and

suffering can hinder the process. These obstacles put us to the test but there are means to overcome them. Honesty with one's self and realizing one's deepest desires and capacities lead to light while hypocrisy, wearing a mask to hide reality, dishonesty in our rapport with others must cease if we want to be communicators of compassion, faith and love. Once the obstacles to light have been conquered, we can appreciate it in its entire splendor, even enrich it and radiate it all around us. The somber moments of our lives have a purpose; they help us discover the true value of joy and happiness. There is always light at the end of the tunnel, but we have to give the best of ourselves to reach it.

SURPASSING ONESELF

It is in our nature to want to push our limits, to exceed the normal limits of our capacities. It is our specificity as human beings: we keep searching for answers and we refuse failure thus resorting to zealous stubbornness. Courage can be manifested in various ways. The everyday struggle is one of them; for example, we can battle

against any obstacle that blocks our calling, our ideals, our objectives, and that in itself demands courage. We can also forget one's self in order to reach a goal; this kind of courage which is similar to sacrifice is a way to reflect the light. Great explorers like Jacques Cartier or Youri Gagarine, the first human to journey into outer space, were living examples of courage, ceaseless searching, risk taking. Our limitations are those we impose upon ourselves.

THE ULTIMATE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Though silence and solitude are beneficial in our lives we cannot remain forever in this state of stillness. Life goes on around us and we are called to be involved. However, piercing through the dark areas of our soul, allows the passage of light to illumine what was kept hidden and to appreciate the true values of life. Family, friends, and relationships are often taken for granted and to live in harmony with those around us is not an easy task. Such an achievement is the ultimate accomplishment, the reward at the end of the tunnel. It does demand sacrifice, but with courage and determination the passage of light, no matter how faint it

is, does glow through our being. We have everything to gain from creating a harmonious society, in having relationships that bring beauty to our lives somewhat like the passage of an aurora borealis in the dark sky of a polar night.

Today, I am still fascinated by Newton's discovery—to see a simple light transformed into multi colors as it goes through a prism. Of course, this experiment has been repeated time and time again so there is nothing exceptional about it anymore. However, it does make me think about the potential that exists in each one of us. We are able to overcome all obstacles that come our way; we are capable of courage and determination. We must let the light guide us, the light of joy, of love, of sharing, of optimism. By taking time to observe what is good, strong and inspiring in our world of today, we can be motivated and become catalysts of light, true messengers of the Good News. Like a prism that reflects so many beautiful colors, we too have an inner light which, if allowed, shines a thousand multicolored lights. ∞



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ROOTS OF THE PAST

By Marie-Paule Sanfaçon,
M.I.C.

The past is important. So many magnificent projects have taken place and with time have paved the way to newness. Ninety-five years ago, the joy of evangelizing was expressed in a terminology other than today's way of speaking; nonetheless, the message was loud and clear. This becomes obvious as we read through the many articles which were sent from the mission fields. Herein is a brief example.

Little Moui Kwai just received the emergency baptism. This child, approximately ten years of age, was brought from Canton by our Superior. Having had chickenpox she suffered from rickets and was also hunchback. The father had died, the mother had abandoned her. Neighbors brought her to Tong Shan where our Sisters took her in. For the Chinese personnel the child was considered a burden; we therefore thought of transferring her to Shek Lung. No sooner said than done because the Superior of Shek Lung was present when the case was discussed. Happy with her new addition, she placed the child on

her shoulders and carried her to Shek Lung. This child needed special treatment; the little lamb was entrusted to the care of a Sister nurse who looked after her with maternal love. Moui Kwai's health rapidly deteriorated; a solemn Baptism was performed by Father Deswazières and shortly after our precious one left for heaven. She also will remember the Canadian benefactors.

Along with these stories, photos were sometimes included. Our Foundress, Délia Tétreault encouraged her Sisters to take snapshots, her intention was twofold: to better illustrate the articles which appeared in *The Precursor* and to promote the missionary spirit in the hearts of all Quebecers. François Gloutnay, columnist, web editor and trainer, pointed out that photos taken back then are a treasure, a cultural heritage; he suggested we make use of them from time to time. The 95th Anniversary of our mission magazine is a perfect opportunity to present you one of these historical photos. 🍷

Canton, China – 1915
Marie Corinne Crevier, M.I.C.,
watching the children at playtime
Photo Credit: MIC Archives



A Stream of Light

DÉLIA — A Child of Light

All human life has its bright side and its dark side. When highlighting someone's anniversary, our joyful wishes express our appreciation of the one we are celebrating, and we mention some facets of the person's life that has most touched us.

This year, we are celebrating the 150th Birthday of Délia Tétreault, our Foundress. For us, her spiritual daughters, we consider the birth of this child as an aurora borealis; an amazing colorful light which appeared and transformed the lives of numerous young women and men. Indeed, her great missionary dream gave wings to the Canadian Church calling it forth to spread Christ's Love and His Message beyond the oceans.





By Marie-Paule Sanfaçon,
M.I.C.

UNDER A STARRY SKY

The story began in Marieval, a small village in Quebec. It was evening, on February 4, 1865 when a little blond girl opened her eyes to the world; but she was not alone, her twin brother was by her side. At a young age Délia learned the hard facts of life; her sibling passed away and some-time later her mother died, she was then only two and half years old. Through it all, Délia gradually discovered the deep secrets of her heart.

One day, (...) the three year old little girl was looking out the window and saw her uncle (foster father) working in the garden. Suddenly, Délia clapped her hands in innocent glee and called out, "Papa! Papa!" Her uncle, Mr. Alix turned at her call and abruptly replied, "I am not your papa..." She glanced up at him with a charming smile and joyfully retorted, "You don't know anything about that...Délia knows." Deeply moved, the uncle entered the house and clasped the child in a strong loving embrace; from that time onward, Mr. Alix cherished his adopted daughter with the love of a true father.¹

From that experience, Délia later understood the paternal love of God for all the children of the world. She would say, *"When I think that the Lord loves me divinely notwithstanding my limitations, I am the happiest person in the world."*² The Source of her spirituality of Thanksgiving stems from that moment and she wanted to share with the world this immeasurable joy of being loved by God. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Délia founded the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception on June 3, 1902; its specific mission—to *proclaim the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ to those who do not know it*. Some years later, she played a decisive role in the foundation of a Canadian Society of Missionary Priests. In contact with the Canadian Bishops, Délia insisted upon the importance of having a foreign mission seminary as an integral part of the Canadian Church.

UNDER THE ARTIST'S BRUSH

Daily and faithfully drawing from her inner Source, Délia courageously guided her little community. The foundation, a true artistic canvas on which appeared a million and one colors, soon reflected various cultures met and loved. The mission expanded and Délia became a woman of communication, an avant-garde in the use of media—the media of her time. Because of her fragile health, Délia will not experience the mission ad extra, but her missionary heart soon took the pen to write to her daughters who were working in remote mission countries. Her many letters reveal a Mother who encourages and supports her missionaries.

UNDER THE INSPIRATION

Délia had at heart to inform the families of her missionaries about the work their daughters were accomplishing in mission lands. She also had the desire to expand a missionary spirit throughout the Quebec population. With this in mind, she founded, in 1920, the mission magazine *Le Précurseur*; three years later the English version followed. The 95th Anniversary of *Le Précurseur* is being celebrated this year.



We cannot bypass this event. Indeed, for 95 years, the magazine has been an instrument through which the Word of God has been spread and it has inspired many young women and men in the choice of their vocation. In its early years, the production of the magazine was home-made. The Sisters installed their equipment in the basement of the Mother House and oper-

¹ Dreams of Soul Harvests
Come True, P. 7, 1960 edition

² MIC Chronicles-Quebec, 1927

³ THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL
No. 262

PHOTOS:

¹ Délia, 4 years old

² Clairette Ouellette, M.I.C.
Printing Press at the
Mother House

³ Délia, 12 years old

Photos Credit: MIC Archives

ated all the different steps of its conception: gathering information, composition, photography, typography, graphic design, printing, addressing, and mailing. All was done manually and with much love. So many young Sisters, while travelling the length and breadth of villages and cities to promote *Le Précurseur/The Precursor*, met with individuals and families; listening to their stories they were able to take part in their sufferings, their worries, their joys, offering them comforting words through the Word of God.

That mission, though on home ground, was part and parcel of the young Sisters religious formation. Today, with the modernization of Quebec's society, the format has changed considerably; however, the goal of the magazine has remained the same, "*To sow seeds of joy and hope*". How is that possible? When we share with our readers the many wonderful deeds and heroic gestures of people who live by the Word of God, their witnessing brings about hope and joy to the hearts of many. Through their experiences they provide the reader spiritual nourishment that gives courage to overcome obstacles and we, as publishers of the magazine, continue Délia's dream which is '*to sow happiness by the handful*'. When the faith has been rekindled, when confidence has been restored, it is possible to perceive that little light shining in our hearts and we are then prepared to continue life's journey.

UNDER THE RAY OF LIGHT

Venerable Délia also lived through tribulations. It was not always the way she was hoping. In difficult times she would share her leitmotiv with her Sisters; she would say, "*Courage!... Trust!... Let's keep on with that which is most necessary: our sanctification! Do not worry, live joyfully!... Take interest in God's great concerns and He will take care of yours.*" The renewal that is actually taking place today in our Church shatters some believers; however, to respond adequately to the faith that is expressed differently a certain adaptation is necessary. In his Apostolic Exhortation,



The Joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis states the reasons for a renewed missionary impulse—*What is needed is the ability to cultivate an interior space which can give a Christian meaning to commitment and activity.*³ Through faith examples as well as mission oriented messages, our magazine *Le Précurseur/MIC Mission News* strives to be a means of evangelization. Ecclesial issues and challenges are many. Attentive to the new paths which are opening before us, our publication offers its readers the precious heritage of a missionary spirituality of thanksgiving which our Foundress bequeathed to the Church. Though in a humble way, our participation in the elaboration of the Church's new projects helps us discover an energy that is transformed into rainbow colored lights, at times fluorescent, in a sky full of future promises. ∞

On Radio Waves

A woman of vision and of the Church, Sr. Guillemette contributed in improving the lives of many Quechuas women and men at Iquircollo, Cochabamba in Bolivia. With the help of the radio and the Institute of Rural Education, she was able to fulfill her dream.



By Gaétane Guillemette,
M.I.C.

¹ Cochabamba Department is one of the 9 component departments of Bolivia; it has an area of 55,631 Km²; population is 1,938,401 (census 2012)

PHOTOS:

¹ Transmitters of the "Light"

² The Hymnal in Quechua

Photos Credit: MIC

A long time ago, Jesus did claim *"I am the Light!"* Since then, so much has happened to sustain our faith, give reason to our hope, and give us the incredible chance of becoming transmitters of light, of auroras, and of dreams.

TRANSMITTERS OF LIGHT

The Gospel on radio waves was a dream I spoke about in our magazine *Le Précurseur*, (May-June 1976) and for the most part it came true. That dream became a ray of light and through radio waves vast numbers of people partook in the universal Church network. In the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Paul VI, which finalized the debate between evangelization and human advancement, we read, *...The Church has the duty to proclaim the liberation of millions of human beings, many of whom are her own children—the duty of assisting the birth of this liberation, of giving witness to it, of ensuring that it is complete. This is not foreign to evangelization.*

It was in this same optic that I conceived the realization of my dream. For me, human advancement and the evangelization of my Quechua brothers and sisters were always two facets of the same reality. All the expended efforts and means were intended to mold mature Christian adults who would become responsible for their faith and in turn be transmitters of the Light within the great universal Church network.

THE PROJECT TAKES SHAPE

We are in the year 1972 and I notice that there are very few missionaries to

cover such a large territory.¹ The climate is difficult and the roads to reach the remotest regions are scarce. Two questions come to my mind and heart: *Who will speak to these good and isolated people of Jesus Christ and His Message? How can the Good News of the Gospel be part of their daily lives?* From that intuition emerged an idea.

In existence since 1962, San Rafael radio station had a 1 kilowatt power transmission but it was insufficient to reach the mountain areas of Cochabamba. For a wider coverage, the carrier power had to be increased. The radio transmission apparatus was changed and then we were able to broadcast courses in catechesis and the Sunday liturgies.

With the collaboration of the seminarians and Sr. Solange Garneau, M.I.C. who played the guitar, the programs were transmitted in Spanish and Quechua. The tele-auxiliaries or catechists received their first training at l'IER (Institute of Rural Education) and then at the House of the Catechists (Casa Del Catequista). Their formation completed they were able to transmit the Good News and the liturgical celebrations by way of radio.

This far-reaching project was realized through the precious aid we received from various organizations such as Oxfam-Canada, CIDA (*Canadian International Development Agency*), EMI (*Entraide Missionnaire Internationale*). It was also made possible through the constant collaboration of my Congregation as well as the MIC Sisters such as Sr. Huguette Turcotte who was then secretary for the International Catholic Association for Radio and



Television in Brussels, Belgium. Multiple dream bearers and dedicated people helped us realize our Evangelization goal.

HYMNS ON AIR

Throughout his years of ministry, Father Alberto Guizada, Bolivian priest, had compiled many liturgical hymns in Quechua and a chanted Mass; this was a musical treasure which he feared would be lost. One day, as he spoke to Sr. Monique Bigras, M.I.C. about his concern, she took it to heart; her meditative soul akin to that of the Quechua people took Father's words seriously. Without delay she organized a singing contest throughout the rural areas, teaming up singers and musicians, and she searched for a space that could serve as recording studio. This new adventure could only be successful with the help of donors, the support of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and Msgr. Armanda Gutierrez, Bishop of Cochabamba. The latter had received a heritage which he donated for the realization of the project. Truly, that was Church in step with the Spirit.

Down the road, it became clear that a hymnal for congregational worship was necessary. Such a book would enrich and

enhance the Feasts broadcasted over the radio and could be used also by the catechists in rural parishes.

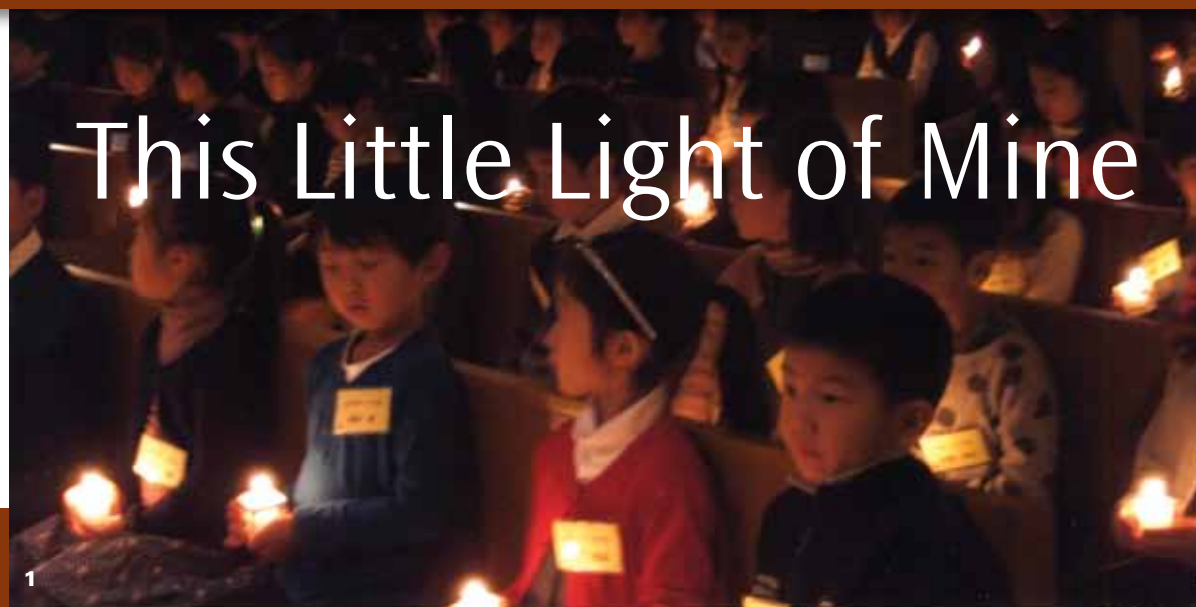
RADIATING ON A LARGER SCALE

To this day the hymnal is used in the Quechua regions of Bolivia: Cochabamba, Oruro, and Potosi. Transmitters of the Good News have multiplied and the 5th edition hymnal has a count of 50,000 copies.

In 2012, Radio San Rafael declared it no longer had adequate material to keep up with the digital technology. Thanks to the Jesuit Fathers, Radio Fides took over and it became the Catholic voice in Bolivia; they also took over the formation centers.

We rejoice greatly with the emergence of Radio Fides. The remotest regions which could not be reached because of the Andes mountain range can now receive the Good News of the Gospel; voices singing praise to the Lord can be heard by all in the language of their ancestors. Our hearts are most grateful and are united in prayer while singing: *K'anchachun, K'anchachun*—Let your Light shine! ☺





Children of all ages, youth choirs from around the world have sung and are still singing — *This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, this little light of mine..., let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.* This gospel children's song written by a pastor and music teacher Harry Dixon Loes has been around since 1920. There are over thirty distinct versions of the song and no matter who is singing it, this little light of mine keeps shining through time. But what little light are we talking about?

By Mrs. Nakagawa
& Mrs. Guckian¹

¹ Two teachers from the
Délia Study Group

² THE PRECURSOR, Vol. XXIV,
July-August 1960, P. 181

³ DELIA STUDY GROUP—in
reference to Délia Tétreault,
Foundress of the Missionary
Sisters of the Immaculate
Conception

⁴ ANECDOTE : Sr. Monique
Cloutier, M.I.C., former
missionary in Japan

There are many kinds of lights and the young Japanese children of Setagaya Seibo Kindergarten know that very well. There is one special kind of light they can identify with. Here is a story among many others which describes how one little boy discovered the unfailing light.

Masao had been enrolled in our Catholic kindergarten which offers a three year program. After the second year the parents decided to place him in a public school to follow the primary course of studies. Three days after being admitted he rushed home in a tempestuous mood. Swallowing his sobs, he explained his displeasure to his parents and grandparents: *I hate that old school, I do! I'm not going back anymore. We can't say any prayers or sing hymns; we're not allowed to visit Jesus; nobody knows anything about Maria Sama (Our Lady), not even the teacher! I want to go to a school like the one I went to last year, a school where everybody loves Jesus.* Deeply touched by the boy's request, the family agreed and the mother added: *I hope that our little 'king' Masao will draw us all after him to the Jesus his young heart loves so well.*²

GOD IN MY HEART

A child's spiritual request cannot be left unattended. Knowing that many children who attend the three year program at Setagaya Seibo Kindergarten are then enrolled in public schools, Sister Sachiko Hongo, M.I.C., who served many years as principal of our kindergarten, had the idea of beginning a religious education program for all the former kindergartners; she called it the *Delia Study Group*³. With six mothers and Sister Imelda Takahashi, M.I.C., the program took shape and from year to year the group of students increased. Now under the leadership of Sister Kesayo Sato, M.I.C., the enrolment counts 114 children and 11 staff members.

The *Delia Study Group* begins the year in May with a festival in honour of our Mother Mary. With gleeful delight the children love to sing and praise Mary; a beautiful way to begin a school year. At Christmas time there is a Candlelight service; this is a unique event for the children who hold their candles convinced that *this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.*



I want to go to a school [...] where everybody loves Jesus.

Bible lessons along with activities impact the truth of God's Word in creative, meaningful ways to the youngsters. A theme is developed, words are explained, the message of a story is often acted out. Along with the activities we incorporate both visual and auditory stimuli as well as hands-on creativity. Children love natural science—the wonders of creation open their eyes and hearts to awe and beauty. They learn to respect life, to respect others. Before winding up, Sister Kesayo questions the children about what they have learned, she has them speak about their feelings, or asks them to draw their reactions. What impact can the Word of God have in a child's heart? Some older students ask to be baptized in the faith. Others, in a concrete way, apply what they learn. One example: a sixth grade boy of our school was harassed by a younger student. His companions wanting to encourage him said: *You are much stronger than he is. You could easily punch him, revenge yourself.* But the lad replied: *No, I leave this up to God*⁴. In other words—*this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!*

THINKING OF OTHERS

At one point, Sister Kesayo suggested that we put into action what we learn from the Bible. After each monthly class, children bring home a "Today's Word Card"—a scripture quote that inspires them to think of others and help out in whatever way they can. As a group, Origami (art of paper folding) is taught and the end products are given as small gifts to the elderly in a nearby care home. For the occasion, children sing songs of friendship, love, life and the elderly sing with them, it is a happy hour. Some of the children who learned sign language make use of their knowledge thus inviting the hard of hearing to join in the singing. Children look forward to these visits because they know they bring joy to those who sometimes feel alone and are left with no friends. Without being aware these young people are actually saying through their gentle smiles and courteous manners *this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!* What a great lesson for all of us to learn. ☺



PHOTOS:

- ¹ A candlelight Christmas celebration
 - ² Children attending the Delia Study Group
 - ³ Kesayo Sato, M.I.C.
 - ⁴ Visiting the elderly
- Photos Credit: MIC*

Living the Mission Differently

What's new in Haiti? The University of Notre Dame d'Haiti opened a campus in the Diocese of Hinche. Hundreds of young people are registering to begin their professional training in the medical field. This is an exhilarating project. Sr. Lise who was in Quebec for a short while was invited to take part... she simply could not resist.

By Lise Tremblay, M.I.C.

Thirty six years have gone by since my first mission experience in Haiti. It was on January 15, 1978 that I began to realize my dream as a missionary. At the beginning I had to learn the language and the culture, and then I worked as a nurse throughout all those years.

At the hospital as well as in dispensaries I gave hours of medical care to numerous patients. Unexpectedly, a new calling came about for another mission, very different from what I had previously known. The Bishop of the Diocese of Hinche, in Haiti, Msgr. Simon Pierre Saint-Hillien, was seeking the collaboration of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception for a project concerning the training of future male and female nurses. Since October 21,

2012, the recent campus of the University of Notre Dame d'Haiti has been receiving more than one hundred young students wishing to acquire a professional training in the field of healthcare.

THE RIGHT TO OBTAIN KNOWLEDGE

At UDERS (*Diocesan Unit of Research, Education and Service*) there are two options available: the Faculty of Medical Biology and the School of Nursing. Many young adults take advantage of receiving such training in their own environment rather than having to migrate toward the Capital. It is their right to be able to receive knowledge without having to leave the family circle and the parents are most grateful to have such a chance. The Bishop's initiative is greatly appreciated by the families; it is a response to their long-awaited wish.

A few kilometers from the center of Hinche, in a quiet and enchanting setting, we are organizing the first phase of a work that is bound to expand; in a few years from now, other faculties will be added in response to the great population of youngsters and for the development of the area.

Sister Silfane Joseph, M.I.C. was mandated to the office of Director and myself as Coordinator of Studies at the Faculty of Nursing; we also give courses according to our time schedule. After numerous years of experience in the nursing field, time has come for us to transmit our knowledge and the love of our profession. Our col-



laborators are all Haitian professionals; we have nurses, doctors, pharmacists, engineers, priests and laity. All are competent and devoted to the cause. The program responds to the international norms.

The young people who enroll at our University come from different milieus, social classes, faith backgrounds and have received a 'classical education' in various local colleges.

AN INTEGRAL FORMATION

One of the main objectives at UDEHS of Hinche is to give an integral formation to the young adults—a professional, spiritual and human approach. The complementary and compulsory courses added to the professional formation are welcomed by the students. We want to transmit the human and Christian values. Doesn't God want the very best for all His children?

This Catholic Institution receives no State funding for the costs incurred. Examples: To have access to the mandatory internships in hospitals a large sum of money has to be paid. The premises are gradually developing thanks to generous donors and the help of certain local and international organizations. As in all beginnings, each member on the Leadership Team must agree to give services beyond their job description in order to ensure the successful progress of the Institute.

Thus, I feel I am a Light bearer in the midst of these students.

Up until now, the success reveals a promising future for the youngsters and the society. This past October 2014, we welcomed our third group of students. To obtain a License, the training lasts four years. Investing in this human capital is a way to live my ideal and sow seeds of the Good News; it is more than worthwhile, as I am responding to the needs of the

society and I am being of service. Training young men and women who aspire to become professionals in the medical field is for me most rewarding as I participate in the Mission of Jesus. Thus, I feel I am a Light bearer in the midst of these students while still learning the ABC of my new orientation.

A PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE

Currently, the second and third year students have internship duties three half days a week. The two main medical centers who welcome them contribute greatly to their practicum. Having an increasing number of students, other medical centers will soon also open their doors. The first year students will have the opportunity of beginning their practicum as of April 2015.

The courses are given six days a week. This favors the teachers who agree to give their precious time without undermining their work. Many of these professionals, who are in the region, want to take part in the unfolding success of this teaching establishment. They are all motivated and want to train qualified persons who will be able to go work for private or public firms or in various health care centers.

Even though the students have very little free time, a Gospel choir was begun in 2013. The young men and women of both Faculties have joined their natural talents; musicians and vocals come together to perform on various occasions. Amazing voices, which were unsuspected, are being discovered and heard.

When all is said, my experience has but one flavor, that of LIFE. With joy, I pursue my missionary journey convinced of the importance to sow by the handful and with all my heart that which I received. Through this new mandate, I concretely trust in the human person; every day, as the students strive to become what they are meant to be, I believe in their potential and in their dream of being the care takers of their suffering brothers and sisters. ☺



Students during their practicum
Photos Credit: L. Tremblay, M.I.C.

With Sister Lise, I wish to take part in the future of the young Haitians.

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Polly's Story

Mond'Ami is a Pontifical Association for French-speaking children in Canada. Its counterpart for English-speaking children is the *Missionary Childhood Association*. The goal of the Association is to raise missionary awareness in the hearts and minds of young people. Through various activities they bring their personal contribution. Prayer, friendship, material support are ways they can help children who live in poverty around the world.

One day, Délia Tétreault confided to her Sisters: *I remember that as a child I would look for occasions to hide in the attic at home, my purpose was to read all the Holy Childhood (now called the Missionary Childhood) and Propagation of the Faith journals which I had found in a crate.*

From that personal experience, Délia always placed great importance on awakening the children's interest on the subject of mission. Some MIC Sisters worked in close collaboration with the *Holy Childhood Association*. In Quebec, the name was eventually changed to **Mond'Ami** offering children a journal called Amigo Amisol. Today, their web site continues presenting an animation adapted to the young people's mission interests. A few extracts are presented here. To know more visit the French website at **www.mondami.ca** and for the English speaking youth, go to **www.hcakids.org** 🌈



Award Winner of the ACPC-Inter 2014

Émilien Roscanu, a youth columnist, who wrote a series of articles in our magazine *MIC Mission News* received the award winning prize of the ACPC-Inter 2014. Of interest were: "Modern Contemplation" (Summer 2013), "An Abundance of Trust" (Winter 2014), "BEING—Consciousness & Conscience" (Spring 2014). The following is a translation of his acceptance speech.

Good evening everyone.

First, allow me to thank the Canadian Association of Catholic Periodicals as well as its jury for considering my articles for this award winning prize. I equally take this opportunity to thank the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, particularly

the editorial team of Le Précurseur/MIC Mission News, without whom I could not have been an award winner tonight. For almost two years now, they have guided me in my reflections and in the editing of my articles. It is with joy and humility that I receive this prize which I consider as most precious; it proves that the voice of the younger generation is not only pertinent but above all it finds an attentive ear that hears its discourse. I am honored to receive such a distinction and I thank you with all my heart.

Émilien, we offer you our congratulations! The editorial team and personnel of the MIC Missionary Press 🌈

By Atsumi Ono, Koriyama
AsMIC Representative



Bonds Between the AsMIC

The annual AsMIC “Hearts Gathering” which takes place in Koriyama, Japan, is an opportunity for the members to develop a sense of belonging to a group that is spiritually oriented. Our faith is strengthened through sharing, praying and reaching out to others in a spirit of gratitude.

Last September the AsMIC group of Koriyama invited to their “Hearts Gathering” other MIC Associates from Tokyo, Saitama and Aizu Wakamatsu; thirty-three members were present. It was the first time that the four groups came together and though we never met before we felt we knew each other. And why was that? Our Christian vocation lived in a spirituality of Thanksgiving is our binding force. Upon seeing all the members happily coming together with a smile, I had a strong feeling that Mother Délia, Foundress of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, had invited us to this “Hearts Gathering”—and there was a reason.

Father Hirabayashi, s.J. a well-known speaker was to be our guide for the day. Father emphasized the importance of prayer in our daily life. When expressing our desires to God in form of petition, or of praise, or of gratitude, God who is LOVE always responds one way or the other and it is always for our own good. Father stressed that the MIC spirituality of Thanksgiving is special because it teaches us to be grateful to God for all that we have, to show our gratitude by humbly being of service to the needy, to be conscious of God’s presence in all human beings and to be united in harmony with them. For all who follow Jesus, this is the way to BE and to LIVE. Our desire to be with God and confide to Him actually comes from the Spirit of God.

After such an enriching day, it is my wish that whether our activities are done as AsMIC or are part of our daily life, we keep a spirit of thankfulness in our hearts and that the bonds between the AsMIC be strengthened as we keep on journeying together. ♡

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Eternally Happy in His Kingdom

There was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language. (Rev 7:9)



Lorraine Falareau, M.I.C.
(Sr. Marie-Lorraine)
1933-2014
Loretteville, Quebec

In 1960, Lorraine resigned from the diocesan YCW (Young Christian Workers Association) and from her office work in order to enter our Novitiate. With enthusiasm she expended her energy in accomplishing the many tasks that were asked of her; blessed with many talents, she was always ready to serve. Her main apostolate was in Bolivia and Peru where she also became the provincial secretary. Her profound faith and love of her MIC Sisters underlay her commitments. She left us very quickly and she will be missed. Sister Lorraine, THANK YOU for your dedication and faith-filled life.



Thérèse Beaulieu, M.I.C.
(Sr. Joseph Oscar)
1924-2014
St-Eusèbe, Quebec

Supported by her family, Thérèse entered the Novitiate at the age of eighteen. When young, she already aspired to be a nun. Her mother soon discerned her daughter's vocation; one day, upon her return from boarding school, she said to Thérèse: *You, the only thing that is missing is the veil*. Prematurely, the mother passed away and this trial left an impact on Thérèse. She courageously adapted to the demands of life, particularly that of the missionary life in the Philippines and in Quebec. Sister Thérèse's simplicity, joy, collaboration, humor, respect of others, characterized her interpersonal relationships and facilitated the responsibilities entrusted to her. Thank you, dear Sister!



Marthe Laporte, M.I.C.
(Sr. Saint Genevieve)
1916-2014
Saint-Norbert, Quebec

Even though a marriage proposal was in the horizon, Marthe decided to refuse in order to respond the Christ's calling who had seduced her heart. She entered our Novitiate in 1944. Blessed with many talents, Sister endorsed many challenges with courage and determination. She would easily switch from one responsibility to another, from domestic work to being provincial bursar in Zambia and Malawi as well as in Quebec. During the last years of her life she joyfully knitted at least two hundred scarves for the poor. Magnificat, Sr. Marthe for having shared with others your giftedness.



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*Lord, teach us how to hold the present
without being crushed by its challenges,
to seize the favorable moments
for sowing the seeds
that will enable life and love
to cross the boundaries of generations.*

*Teach us to hold the future
without fearing its coming,
without confining it to the trap
of catastrophic predictions or illusions,
without forcing destiny,
but by disposing ourselves
for the breath of the Spirit of life and love,
who continues to be offered to our world.*

*God of the past, of the present and of the future,
tell us how to hold in our hands
the sand of our lives in such a way
as to make them a piece of stained glass window
through which you will let your Light shine
and which you will hold together in your love.*

Amen.

Msgr. Bertrand Blanchet,
Bishop of Rimouski