

MIC MISSION NEWS

VOL. 53, Nº 4 | OCTOBER • NOVEMBER • DECEMBER 2026



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*100 Years
of an Undaunted Mission*

The Seeds of Tomorrow



PUBLICATION OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

MISSIONARY PRAYER INTENTIONS 2026

OCTOBER

For mental health ministry

— Let us pray that a mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

NOVEMBER

For the proper use of wealth

— Let us pray for the proper use of wealth, that, avoiding the temptations of selfishness, it may always be in the service of the common good and in solidarity with those who have less.

DECEMBER

For single-parent families

— Let us pray for families experiencing the absence of a mother or father, that they may find support and accompaniment in the Church, and help and strength in the Faith during difficult times.

Masses for readers' intentions offered in the following countries:

(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**

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The Gift of Self



The M.I.C. postulants from the Philippines. Photo: M.I.C.



Marie-Paule Sanfaçon, M.I.C.

Over time, contemplating nature reveals the greatness and love of the Creator, as the psalmist so beautifully sings when evoking God's faithfulness through the cycle of the seasons: *You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it.* In the Christian tradition, these bountiful fruits remind us of spiritual harvests, and more specifically, the gift of religious vocations. The Word of God is always at work when it is welcomed. It awakens a surge of love for Christ, who calls us to the total gift of self, in a free and sincere surrender.

RESPONDING TO THE CALL

Witnessing work done with love or hearing words filled with kindness and compassion toward the needy has often been the catalyst for many lives dedicated to service. Sometimes, the beauty of a simple gesture or a kind word is enough to awaken a deep desire to respond to Christ's invitation. The Lord never ceases to touch each and every one of us deeply, sowing in our hearts the desire to commit ourselves fully. Faced with this call, many young and not-so-young people have responded with an unreserved "YES."

THE SEEDS OF TOMORROW

The Holy Spirit is always at work and continues to call people to labour in the Lord's vineyard. This call resonates particularly strongly with the younger generation in Haiti and Madagascar. Elsewhere, in Europe, many priestly vocations are emerging on the horizon, while here baptisms are on the rise. In Quebec, the Quiet Revolution profoundly transformed the spiritual landscape. Despite these upheavals, many young people are open to prayer and to the inspiring figures of faith around them—sources of inspiration capable of fostering

self-giving. Little by little, sometimes in ways that are barely noticeable, they can allow a renewed sense of care for others and a love of service to blossom once more within them, accompanied by inner joy.

Sister Léna, the novice mistress in Haiti, is pleased to share with us the deep motivations of three young women who wish to give themselves entirely to the Lord.

As for Amélie, she suggests that we sow good seeds starting today and cultivate a life of intentionality in order to enrich our inner soil.

For his part, Éloy Roy, P.M.É., invites us to pray the Psalms to uproot the "old self" within us and make way for the "new self" of which the Apostle Paul speaks.

A FRUITFUL PRAYER

Just as autumn fills us with the abundance of its harvests, may this issue bring forth, in the midst of our daily lives, a song of praise offered to the glory of our Creator. May we welcome the riches of His Word, recognize His presence everywhere, and make our lives an offering nourished by prayer and hope, in faithfulness, gratitude, and joy.

Enjoy reading!

Marie-Paule Sanfaçon, m.i.c.



When God Works Beneath the Surface



Amélie Martineau-Lavallée

In the spring, when we plant seeds in the hope of growing flowers, fruits, or vegetables, there is always an element of the unknown. Indeed, some sterile seeds will not germinate; others may grow well but will be ravaged by the cold, insects, or small animals, or they may rot due to overwatering.

Fortunately, among everything that has been planted, there are some plants that will reach maturity. Will they yield a bountiful harvest? We'll have to wait until fall and the harvest to judge that in hindsight.

What a joy it is to see your cherry tomato plants laden with plump fruit—or what a disappointment to find that only two tiny zucchini have made an appearance! Fall marks the end of a cycle that reveals the success—great or small—of our flower beds and vegetable gardens. However, what a nearly invisible amount of preparatory work it takes to get to this point! But nature reminds us that the visible fruits are only the tip of the iceberg of what is taking shape in the secret depths of the earth.

With the falling of the leaves and the slowing of growth, fall does not represent a time of decline, but rather a necessary period of rest—one that is fruitful

in a different way. In a sense, Jesus speaks to us of these realities when he says: *Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. However, if it dies, it bears much fruit* (John 12:24). Thus, nature teaches us that life always ends up being reborn after the winter's wait. When we learn to read the cycles of life, it enables us to sow more effectively.

EMBRACING AN END TO PREPARE FOR A NEW BEGINNING

Over the years, I've noticed that some people (perhaps more nostalgic than I am) find it harder to close a chapter or to accept that life is taking a different course than they had planned. Although every positive experience brings its share of happiness, and although we might sometimes want to put up *three tents* (Mt 17:4), life calls us to keep moving forward.

Life is made up of cycles that come to a close only to begin anew. The four seasons, as we know them in Quebec, do not exist everywhere. The stark contrast between the 30°C of summer and the -30°C of winter is a true adventure for every form of life that walks or grows on this land.

In reality, turning a page or completing a cycle allows us to begin another. Even if the unknown stirs a certain apprehension within us, we can, as Christians, choose to trust, sustained by the conviction that God, who loves us with a Father's heart, desires our happiness. And then, as I often say when an experience I've enjoyed comes to an end: the important thing is... to start over as soon as possible!

WHAT DO WE CHOOSE TO SOW TODAY?

In my view, the key issue lies in this question: "What do I choose to sow today?" This is where the notion of intentionality comes into play—a concept that has gained popularity in recent years.

Intentionality means acting in a conscious and goal-oriented manner. It means choosing to do what is right rather than operating on "autopilot" without giving it much thought. Intentionality also allows us to look a little further ahead, so that our choices today shape the person we will become tomorrow. A group can also ask itself whether it is acting thoughtfully, even if such an approach requires more consultation to achieve unity.

The end of a cycle, with its autumnal feel, can thus become deeply fruitful if we examine our actions through the lens of this intentionality. In practical

terms, this means becoming aware of what motivates our actions, examining where we invest our energy, and ensuring that our commitments remain true to our values. This discernment requires a certain flexibility, as it also involves being willing to change course when necessary.

WHAT IF DISCERNMENT WERE SYNONYMOUS WITH INTENTION?

In short, intentionality transforms a life that is merely endured into a life that is chosen, by placing responsibility and reflection at the heart of every action. If we think about it carefully, in the Christian tradition, constant discernment and reflecting on one's life—especially at the end of the day—play a similar role.

I don't consider myself an unconditional advocate of intentionality. However, I often find it stimulating to adopt a new lens through which to reexamine my life. And I frequently notice that certain trendy practices—in other words—revive ancient Christian wisdom.

A contemporary perspective can thus shed new light on tradition. What if intentionality were simply a renewed way of living out what was once called *examination of conscience*? While it isn't a carbon copy, there are still similarities between these two approaches.

If you prefer the concept of intentionality to that of reviewing one's life, that's fine. I simply encourage you to invite the Holy Spirit into it. He is a precious ally in any exercise of discernment. And to prepare the seeds for tomorrow, it is good to learn to recognize what the Spirit is bringing to life today.

Every detail, every event in our lives has its own significance. Even what seems small to us is never insignificant. Everything deserves a place in the inner space we've created for intentional reflection. It's as though this process teaches us to enrich our inner soil, to open our hands to receive the fruits that have ripened, and to trust in God's promises at work in our lives. 🍁





Young women happy with their choice: Roseline Fortuné, Withliana Duverson, and Christaïna Saint-Hubert. Photo: M.I.C.

One Call, Three Stories, One "Yes"

Today, many people are searching for their path, making plans, and dreaming of the future. But at the heart of these concerns, a very quiet voice continues to be heard: the voice of God. This call does not dispel questions or hesitations. It cuts through doubts, fears, and the realities of life. Yet some choose to listen to it... and, better still, to respond to it.

**Léna Lagredelle, M.I.C.,
novice director**

In Haiti, three young women share how God touched their lives, upended their plans, and invited them to embark on a journey of faith, service, and hope.

Through these three testimonies, I invite you to discover different life journeys, marked by courageous choices and a shared sense of trust. Three unique stories, united by a single common thread: the courage to say "yes."

ROSELINE FORTUNÉ
– *God's Call to His Service*

Answering the Lord's call means saying "yes", even when the heart hesitates, even when suffering is present. Like Mary, the first to set out on this path, who joyfully accepted God's invitation to participate in His work, I, too, have heard a call. Even today, I deeply believe that the Lord continues to inspire women and men to work in his vineyard. By grace, I am one of those who have been called.



Roseline Fortuné. Photo: M.I.C.

For me, it all began in 2016, when the late Father Lamarre arrived at our chapel. Thanks to him, I discovered a life totally given to others: this man devoted himself unreservedly to the most disadvantaged. His testimony touched my heart and kindled in me a deep love for consecrated life.

In Chantal, I had organized a camp for children from the Kiro movement. That's where I met a novice from my future community. Her demeanor, her love for the little ones, and her spirit of service left a deep impression on me. That is how I discovered the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception through their beautiful Marian spirituality of thanksgiving—a way of praising God, the source of all life.

This novice then invited me to attend a vocational retreat. I took part in it, and that's when I felt the desire to go further. Driven by the desire to contribute to building the Kingdom of God and to make myself more available to my brothers and sisters, I asked to become an aspirant so that I could continue on my journey.

In my country, this choice is not always understood. Many parents are afraid of seeing their children commit to consecrated life, sometimes even going so far as to oppose it. Yet I was blessed: my family accepted it. Better still, they encouraged me to discern carefully, to take the time to understand my decision so that I would never regret it.

Of course, answering God's call required me to make sacrifices. I had to give up certain personal plans and the dreams my family had for me. But deep in my heart, I knew I had to stay the course.

In 2022, after finishing high school, I entered the M.I.C. There I discovered a life filled with encounters: encounters with God, with others, but also with myself. As a Marian community, we are involved in several areas: integral education (for children and adults), missionary ministry serving young people, catechesis, healthcare...

THERE I DISCOVERED A LIFE
FILLED WITH ENCOUNTERS:
ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD,
WITH OTHERS, BUT ALSO
WITH MYSELF.

Then, two years later, came the trial. On February 1, 2024, I lost my father. It was a time of great pain. In that inner darkness, I thought constantly of my family, especially my mother. I would have wanted to be there, close to her, to support her.

The idea of giving it all up deeply troubled me. But, in silence and prayer, I gradually came to understand that remaining faithful to my calling was also a way of loving. So I stayed, simply asking my loved ones to be closer to our mother.

Today, I walk in faith, seeking to fulfill God's will. I want to listen to my brothers and sisters, especially the young people: I want to remind them that they are the Father's beloved sons and daughters. Every day, learning from Mary, I continue on my journey with simplicity, faithfulness, and generosity.



Withliana Duverson. Photo: M.I.C.

WITHLIANA DUVERSON – *God Does Not Call the Qualified, but He Qualifies Those He Calls*

I still remember it: I was in 8th grade when I had a life-changing encounter. Although I can't quite put it into words, it marked a real turning point in my life.

At that time, I already had many plans and big dreams; I knew exactly what I wanted to become. But I hadn't yet realized that God, too, had a plan for me—a different plan, but a magnificent one: to have me take part in His mission. As the Gospel according to Saint Luke (10:2) reminds us: *The harvest is abundant, but the labourers are few.* These words took root within me. Little by little, a desire grew, gently but deeply: the desire to serve God and the Church alongside my brothers and sisters. This led me to a Montfortian priest, to whom I confided my wish. He then put me in touch with a M.I.C. sister, who accompanied me on my journey from a distance for about a month before inviting me to visit the community. That visit to the novitiate house touched me deeply: I was captivated by the sisters' warm welcome and kindness.

After that encounter, eager to continue my reflection, I asked to be admitted as an aspirant. That is how I discovered the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, who continue to accompany me today as I respond to the Lord's call. At the heart of this commitment lies their profound charism: to proclaim

the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ to all those who do not yet know it. This mission is rooted in their spirituality of thanksgiving, inviting us to find reasons every day to give thanks to the Father.

But choosing the missionary life is by no means easy for a young Haitian woman. There is the harsh reality of the country, the many distractions of the modern world, and also the legitimate expectations of parents, who hope above all to see their children succeed. For me, too, it was a struggle, and my family had a hard time accepting my decision. But over time, my mother recognized the truth and depth of my desire, eventually embracing it fully. She now supports me faithfully, which gives me immense strength.

Sometimes I have doubts, but each time, I return to what matters most: God is at the center of my vocation. I then draw strength from this promise in the Gospel according to Saint Matthew (28:20): *I am with you always...* It is this trust that keeps me going and moving forward.

Today, I want to continue responding to this call, day after day, within our community, which is dedicated to education, health care, vocational ministry, and catechesis.

CHRISTAÏNA SAINT-HUBERT – *God Calls Every Day*

God calls... every day. He calls whom He wills, when He wills, regardless of social status or circumstances. And yet, responding to this call is not always easy. There are doubts and hesitations. Sometimes, we prefer to follow our own plans and dreams. In today's world, the many demands place a heavy burden on those who feel called to discern their path.

For me, it all began in ninth grade, when I met a Sister M.I.C. at my parish. I approached her to share my desire with her, and she referred me to the Sisters of Les Cayes so that I could begin my journey. I felt this as an inner calling. But it wasn't until the end of high school that I decided to respond to it by entering as an aspirant with the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.



Christaina Saint-Hubert. Photo: M.I.C.

In my heart, I carried a genuine desire: to place myself at God's service among my brothers and sisters—to make His name known to them, to bear witness to His love for each and every one of them, and to help them come to love Him. My parents welcomed this

decision warmly. They supported and guided me. To fully respond to this call, I even took a decisive step: I left Protestantism to become Catholic.

THERE ARE BRIGHT DAYS,
FILLED WITH JOY,
AND OTHER, DARKER DAYS,
MARKED BY DOUBTS
AND SELF-QUESTIONING.

This journey is not always easy. There are bright days, filled with joy, and other, darker days, marked by doubts and self-questioning. But deep down, one certainty remains: the certainty of seeking God's will and serving my brothers and sisters, following in the footsteps of Mother Délia. 🙏



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The entrance to the Garden of the Resurrection. Photo: M.I.C.

Going Out to Serve

During my visit to Nairobi to see our brothers of the Foreign Missions Society (SMÉ), better known in Kenya as the “Quebec Missionaries”, Father Ergete Terfaye introduced me to the Garden of the Resurrection. This magnificent sanctuary was founded in 1994 by Cardinal Maurice Michael Otunga and Father Ottavio Santoro.

Cecilia Mzumara, M.I.C., Superior General

A HAVEN OF PRAYER AND PEACE

At the entrance gate, the words “Come and pray” were inscribed. Indeed, I was immediately struck by the silence that reigned in this place. There were many people there in prayer, either alone or in small groups. The garden paths led us through the Stations of the Cross, illustrated by biblical mosaics drawn from both the Old and New Testaments. This path connects to what I would call the “Way of the Lord’s Prayer,” since the Lord’s Prayer is translated into more than 150 languages, both local and international. It was this part of the garden that moved me the most. It was so inspiring that I felt as though the Holy Spirit

was pouring out upon me once again as I recited this prayer in Chichewa, one of the national languages of my country, Malawi.

AN ECHO OF PENTECOST

This took place in the aftermath of Pope Leo XIV’s visit to Africa, a visit that had sparked great enthusiasm, with everyone repeatedly emphasizing how the Holy Father’s visit had succeeded in uniting both the continent and the entire world. This fact was all the more remarkable given that the pontiff is fluent in four languages: French, English, Portuguese, and



Sr Cecilia Mzumara, M.I.C., accompanied by Sr. Weynemariam Tesfaye, DHM (Daughters of the Heart of Mary), and Father Ergete Tesfaye, P.M.É., at the entrance to the prayer center. Photo: M.I.C.

Spanish. He had also greeted the crowd in Kimbundu, thereby forging a connection with the faithful in Algeria, Cameroon, Angola, and Equatorial Guinea. This trip was a true gem of its kind, highlighting the diversity and multilingual nature of the African Church.

It is this diversity that I observed as I journeyed through the prayer of the Lord's Prayer. For me, it was a new opportunity to get a taste of the Pentecost experience lived by the disciples in the upper room. Deeply amazed, the crowd exclaimed: *Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? [...] We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!* (Acts 2:7-8, 11)

As I left the garden, my gaze fell on an inscription posted on the gate: "Go forth to serve!" Indeed, the encounter with the Holy Spirit gives us the strength to go out into the whole world and to serve with joy and gratitude.

Together with Mary of the Cenacle and Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit—Délia Tétreault, our venerable foundress—I invite us to honour God by reciting the Lord's Prayer in our mother tongue. In this way, we will be in communion with one another and with all the peoples of the world, while receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to the grace given to us for the common good (1 Cor 12:4-11). Only then will we be able to dare to proclaim the wonders of God in today's world, which so desperately needs witnesses to the Gospel. 🌿



Pilgrims gathered in silence. Photo: M.I.C.



To Those Who Pray the Psalms Today



Éloy Roy, P.M.É.

ROOT, FLOWER AND FRUIT

The Psalms are an expression of the faith of real people who lived in a mythical era that has obviously passed. In that era, the various conceptions of God, the world, society, and the individual did not correspond to those that have developed in the consciousness of the modern believer. However, this primitive faith—in its raw, binary and unnuanced state—has the great merit of being at the root of today's faith. It possesses a simplicity, a fervour, a candour, and an energy that were able to pave the way toward that more enlightened, broader, more profoundly human, and liberating vision that the pilgrims of faith have inherited over the centuries—particularly with the coming of Jesus and the advent of science. The root is not to be confused with the flower or the fruit, but it is wise to remember that the energy it carries is still alive and that, without it, there would be neither flower nor fruit.

THE NAME OF GOD

When the one speaking to him from the midst of the burning bush addressed him, Moses asked what his name was. The answer he heard in Hebrew was: "YAHWEH," that is, "I AM WHO I AM." *This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation* (Ex 3:13–15). This is the name that will be used in these reimagined psalms.

THE WORD

The "Word" that the psalms venerate so powerfully is not primarily a collection of words: it is **SOMEONE**. In a sense, it is **THE ONE WHO IS** in person, who speaks, reveals himself, and makes himself known; **THE ONE WHO IS** in communion with humanity and becomes flesh in us through the person of Jesus, his life, his death, his resurrection, and the gift of his Spirit.

To attune myself to THE ONE WHO IS...

When I pray, O YOU WHO ARE,
I am not doing you a favour;
it is you who are doing me one;
I do not enter your Presence,
for you are already there before me.

I turn toward you
because you draw me
like the sun.
I am a plant
and I drink deeply of your light.

... I attune my heart
O YOU WHO ARE,
the psalms I whisper,
the words of my prayer,
the beating of my heart
are the strings of my lyre.
Like the wind through the branches,
the breath of your Spirit
makes them vibrate,
and so I sing
solely for your pleasure.



HOW TO PRAY WITH MILLENNIA-OLD PSALMS

The Jewish people once had a famous temple. Today, all that remains is a single wall—a ruined, impassable wall...

When I pray, I find myself facing not just one, but at least four gigantic walls: a neglected planet; a world dominated more than ever by the forces of money (these forces feed many people, but they are also the reason why hunger devours hundreds of millions of others); the fascinating world of digital technology and artificial intelligence (between humans and robots, who will soon be the slave of whom?); and a Church

that is faltering, a victim of its undeniable successes and glaring contradictions (it seems, unfortunately, incapable of profound reform).

Faced with these four gigantic walls, how can a Catholic believer still pray, in this 21st century, using psalms that are nearly 3,000 years old?

**TODAY, AS IN THE PAST,
IT IS THE MUFFLED CRY OF THE
VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE,
BELIEVERS OR NOT.**

The Psalms express, above all, the cry of the poor. This cry is timeless. It runs through the entire history of the world. The Bible itself, from Abel to Jesus on the cross, is pierced by it. A cry of fear and immense helplessness, a cry of protest, a heart-wrenching cry that, here and there, transforms into a cry of hope even as the horizon seems almost always firmly shut.

It is the cry of the human being who stubbornly refuses to die before having truly lived and who, even in death, finds the strength to utter a resounding “NO” to the forces of evil, while offering a “YES” of infinite tenderness to Life. Whether we hear it or not, this cry remains as relevant as ever. Today, as in the past, it is the muffled cry of the vast majority of people, believers or not.

At the root of his prayer, the biblical human marvels at the grandeur of nature, seeing in it a reflection of God’s power and wisdom. He believes that he himself was fashioned from clay by his Creator and is nothing before Him. He imagines the world divided between the good and the wicked, ruled by a God who rewards the former and punishes the latter, convinced that misfortunes are decreed from above. This person is naive; he is not scientific; he is gullible, close to his flesh and his instincts, but he has a good heart. He is capable of great tenderness, and he dreams...

TO PRAY WITH THE PSALMS TODAY IS TO CULTIVATE WITHIN OURSELVES A THIRST FOR THE KINGDOM.

The prayer of the Psalms is the prayer of this man, this “old man” of whom the Apostle Paul speaks, who is still very much alive within us and around us. This old man is a religious being—essentially religious—who views things in a Manichaeian way. He is a rabid nationalist, chauvinistic and fanatical. He is insignificant, yet believes himself to be the center of the universe. He is traditionalist and conservative. He is the man of the Law; he judges all those who do not think as he does; he condemns and lectures others. He is the man of “the fear of God,” the man of ritual, the man for whom vengeance is a matter of dignity and an absolute demand for justice. But he is also a man quick to feel guilty and a man of fear. He is a

whiner; he hates himself—in short, he is human. He is not the “new man” that Paul contrasts with the “old man”: he does not know the free, universal, absolute, and total forgiveness that Jesus brings on behalf of THE ONE WHO IS. He has not learned from the Saviour that he is freed once and for all from the yoke of the Law and that he is forever liberated from the fears and anxieties of a slave. He does not know that death has been conquered.

To pray with the Psalms today is to recognize within ourselves the “old man” that we are—the one who has not yet been fully evangelized. It is to recognize within ourselves that religious being, full of good will, but who has not yet seen the light of the Gospel. As we discover, through these texts, how people of old thought, how they prayed to THE ONE WHO IS, and how they viewed their neighbours and the world around them, we cannot help but ardently desire the change in perspective and the openness to freedom that come from the Gospel. Each psalm is a cry, an ardent call to the Gospel. To pray with the psalms today is to cultivate within ourselves a thirst for the Kingdom. 🕊

I support the mission by reading the magazine and making a donation.



Charism: A Seed That Bears Renewed Fruit



The M.I.C. Motherhouse in Pont-Viau. Photo: M.I.C.



Maurice Demers

Following her dream of the wheat field, Délia Tétreault saw a missionary charism begin to take root in her heart and mind.

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception was founded in the early 20th century with the goal of transmitting the faith and proclaiming the Gospel beyond borders, in a spirit of thanksgiving. Over time, this mission has been carried forward by women from seventeen different nationalities, who have ensured the continuation

of their international work by standing alongside *the most vulnerable as a source of hope*¹. But today, in Quebec, the M.I.C., like almost all other religious congregations in the province, are called upon to leave their homes, relocate, and reinvent themselves. They must also reflect on the legacy they wish to leave behind and the values they hope to instill in future generations, so that their work may continue to bear ever-renewed fruit.

A NEW LEASE ON LIFE FOR OUR HERITAGE

The community, clearly recognizing the decline and aging of its membership, has been planning these changes for a long time. Sister Marie-Josèphe Simard stated a few years ago: *Our time has passed; our history has been written [...] We want those who will take over our properties to have strong values. It's as if our mission were continuing in this way*². In April 2026, the City of Laval therefore purchased the Pont-Viau convent on behalf of the Collectif autour d'une tasse (CAT), which will use the spaces. The premises will house social economy enterprises and community organizations. The CAT project will help carry on the congregation's social mission while developing a new range of local services³.

The site's redevelopment will also enable the creation of 200 affordable, off-market housing units managed by the nonprofit organization Interloge. Sister Simard is right to say that "the conversion of the convent is part of the M.I.C.'s ongoing social, spiritual, and cultural commitment."

The nuns had also taken steps to preserve the community's legacy and pass on the meaning of their mission by creating the Délia-Tétreault Museum and making digitized copies of the magazine *MIC Mission News / Le Précurseur* available through the BAnQ. As a historian, I consider this to be an extremely important legacy for understanding Quebec society of the past.

FROM HERITAGE TO THE COMMON GOOD

In Québec City, the Augustinian Sisters also offer us a successful example of how to repurpose the assets of an aging religious community. For several years, the sisters prepared for the transfer of their



Augustinian Convent of the Hôtel-Dieu de Québec
(online: <https://www.augustines.ca/monastere-des-augustines/>;
see also: <https://monastere.ca/>).

heritage. Through this legacy, they sought to keep alive the values that had inspired their charitable work⁴. Their project manager, Denis Robitaille, explains that preserving the former Augustinian monastery at the Hôtel-Dieu de Québec, as well as the one at the Hôpital général de Québec, presented significant challenges. To achieve this goal and safeguard their legacy for the long term, they chose to establish a social benefit trust that benefits the people of Quebec⁵.

Today, people can explore this heritage in many ways: by visiting the museum and historic buildings, by consulting the archives and collections of the community's twelve monastery-hospitals, by participating in cultural and educational activities, or by treating themselves to a respite stay or a day of renewal on site. The former General Hospital, meanwhile, is now a public long-term care and residential facility, directly continuing the sisters' charitable work.



Convent of the Little Sisters of the Holy Family (online: <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1777572/projet-humano-district-galt-ouest-logements-nouvelle-mouture>). Housing units were built on the convent grounds as part of the Humano District project, and these are heated using recovered heat from the data center (<https://humanodistrict.ca/en/>).

THE SEEDS OF THE FUTURE

Several other religious communities here have had the foresight to recognize that their time had passed, planning the transfer of their residences so that they would remain imbued with the inspiration of their charism and continue to serve the community. The symposium on the transmission of religious heritage, held in June 2026 in Sherbrooke, highlighted the importance of this preparation. This observation, emphasized in the presentations, carried particular significance, since the meeting was held in the former convent of the Little Sisters of the Holy Family, now repurposed to house community services as well as spaces occupied by the University of Sherbrooke, which is home to, among other things, the world's first eco-friendly hybrid quantum data center⁶. For these

seeds to truly bear fruit, life cycles must be carefully planned. Religious communities offer us a masterful example of this. 🌱

¹ Translation of a quote taken from the website of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (www.soeurs-mic.com/a-propos). |

² Translation of: Mylène Gagnon, "Vente, destruction et construction chez les Sœurs missionnaires", *Courier Laval*, [Online], September 23, 2020. (Accessed July 18, 2026.) | ³ Translation of: Stéphane St-Amour, "Couvent des Sœurs Missionnaires dans Pont-Viau : Laval en devient propriétaire", *Courier Laval*, [Online], April 9, 2026. (Accessed July 18, 2026.) | ⁴ Translation of: Denis Robitaille, project manager at Les Augustines, "Table ronde – Perspective des congrégations religieuses", presentation given at the symposium "Requalifier le sacré : enjeux religieux, moraux et juridiques du patrimoine chrétien" held at the former convent of the Little Sisters of the Holy Family, Sherbrooke, June 5, 2026.

| ⁵ Translation of: Denis Robitaille, "Le Monastère des Augustines : un patrimoine en fiducie", *Continuité*, n° 137, Summer 2013, pp. 10–12. |

⁶ For more information on career change, see: www.pinq2.com/actu/centre-de-donnees-ecoresponsable-hybride-quantique-bellevue.



A Flame for Eternity

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (Gal 3:27)

Marie-Claude Barrière

At a time when the days are growing shorter and the light is fading, a glimmer of spring sometimes comes to illuminate us. I came across it one morning in a news article: in France, on Easter night 2026, the Church welcomed more than 13,000 newly baptized adults—clear evidence of the renewal of this sacrament in recent years. The most beautiful part is that this phenomenon is being observed not only in Europe but also in Quebec, which is experiencing an impressive rise in the number of new converts, particularly in Montreal and the Old Capital. This movement seems far from being a mere flash in the pan. But then, how can we explain this surge in interest in baptism at a time when places of worship are nearly deserted?

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

According to experts, this enthusiasm can be explained by a combination of individual and social factors. Whether it's the pandemic—a true catalyst for a search for meaning for many—the experience of a personal crisis, or the need for guidance in an increasingly

anxiety-inducing world, these moments of transition are prompting many adults to delve deeper into their inner selves. Many are therefore turning their gaze toward Christ. However, it must be admitted that it is nearly impossible to precisely pinpoint the sources of this surge, given the wide variety of paths and backgrounds among these newcomers. Nevertheless, the French historian Charles Mercier has attempted to offer some answers. In an article published on April 17, 2024, in *Le Monde*, he states: *In a certain sense, the increase in the number of catechumens is also the result of a shift in focus from the cultural to the existential dimension of Christianity, which demands authenticity in the commitment of those who claim to belong to it*¹. In other words, baptism ceases to be a social convention or a family tradition and becomes a conscious, radical, and carefully considered decision on the part of the individual.

To gauge the depth of this commitment, I went to meet Joëlle, who joined the great family of the baptized this summer.



Ms. Joëlle Branco-Gnepa at her baptism last June. Photo: Personal archive

Notre-Dame-d'Afrique parish in Biétry—where she learned to pray—and took her first steps in volunteer work. Her path was already clearly laid out.

**THROUGH BAPTISM,
I WILL KNOW THAT GOD'S LOVE
FILLS MY WHOLE HEART.**

In 2022, having just arrived in Quebec to reunite with her husband and son, Joëlle felt the desire to join a Catholic church. Her search led her to our church steps. It was there that an encounter would change everything: a parishioner warmly welcomed her, invited her to participate in the liturgy, and asked her to become a churchwarden. Without realizing it, this woman had just reignited a spark: Joëlle, who had never been baptized despite her Christian upbringing, chose a godmother from the community and set out with determination on the journey of the catechuminate. But why does one decide at the age of forty to take this step? Her answer is one of great simplicity and profound wisdom: “Through baptism, I will know that God’s love fills my whole heart.” Filled with this certainty and driven by total trust in the Father’s goodness, she understands that this sacrament will confirm an invisible reality: God has always been there, with her and within her. What more could one wish for in this world?

WITH EYES WIDE OPEN

At the Church of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve neighbourhood, I have the pleasure of spending time with Joëlle Branco-Gnepa. A woman with a contagious smile, this native of Ivory Coast perfectly embodies the desire to live out her faith with eyes wide open, her heart and ears attuned to the Holy Spirit. Born in Port-Bouët, a town in the city of Abidjan, as one of six siblings, Joëlle grew up in a deeply Christian family. From childhood, she immersed herself in the Bible, regularly attended the

Last June, Joëlle was baptized and confirmed. She said “yes” to this great love that will never fade. On that memorable Saturday, the joy on her face bore witness to this rebirth. As she puts it so well: “God already loved me, but now I love Him even more.” It’s a safe bet that the water she received, now set ablaze by the Spirit, will become a blazing fire, a flame for eternity. 

¹ Translation of: Charles Mercier, “Les baptêmes de Pâques annoncent-ils la fin de l’hiver pour l’Église catholique (Do Easter Baptisms Signal the End of Winter for the Catholic Church?)”, *Le Monde*, April 17, 2024.



Flakes of Hope

*The wind sweeps away doubts across the frozen plain,
The world hesitates and trembles at winter's door,
The shadows on the clock face seem to have mingled,
And the horizon sketches a bitter future.*

*Yet the night is cloaked in a fragile calm,
The frost suspends time and freezes our torments,
The snow comes to whiten our fragile shelters,
Heaven descends toward us
in the utmost simplicity.*

*In the heart of this night where all seems uncertain,
Hope is reborn beneath the starry vault:
In Bethlehem long ago, upon straw and hay,
Christ the Saviour was born for humanity.*

*It is no longer a feast of fleeting splendor,
But the Word made flesh who joins us in our night,
God made a little child, lying in a stable,
Whose holy light gently guides us.*

*Christmas does not dispel the mists of the earth,
But rekindles the beacon of slumbering faith;
Against cold doubt and the harsh journey ahead,
It offers the promise of infinite Life.*

*In the simplicity of a manger,
God draws near to each
and every one of us.*

*May the light of the Child Jesus
illuminate our paths,
bring our differences together,
and make our hearts a manger
where God may be born again today.*



Merry Christmas!

*May the peace, joy, and hope of Bethlehem
dwell in each of our families and communities.*

My Missionary Experience in Madagascar

Since my arrival in Madagascar on October 30, 2024, this mission has become for me a great school of life, faith, and humility. At first, everything was new: the language, the culture, daily life, and community life. Adjusting hasn't always been easy, but this experience has enriched me deeply.

Felistus Chilumpha, M.I.C.

A MISSION OF OPENNESS

Among my greatest joys is, above all, the special bond I share with the families, children, and patients I care for at the Mahereza Center. I am touched by the warm welcome I receive from the people, their simplicity, and their ability to share even in the face of poverty. This experience has also allowed me to gain valuable skills in caring for patients—from the youngest to the oldest—as well as in supporting pregnant women and assisting with childbirth. I've also learned to collaborate with our partners and donors to improve the well-being of the people at the clinic.

However, certain realities remain painful for me, particularly seeing families struggling to feed their children or pay for their education. Yet, despite all these hardships, every day I discover the strength, patience,



and resilience of the Malagasy people. This experience is teaching me a great deal about solidarity, listening, and being there for the most vulnerable. Despite the challenges, a spirit of brotherhood remains very much alive, and it is this message of hope that I wish to convey through these few photos of the Center.

HARD REALITIES

The international economic situation is hitting the most vulnerable the hardest. The global surge in fuel prices is having an immediate and very visible impact here. Transportation costs are rising significantly, leading to a widespread increase in the prices of basic goods: rice, oil, sugar, soap, school supplies...



The joy of learning: a participant in the women's empowerment program.
Photo: M.I.C.

For many households, their already fragile financial balance is becoming extremely precarious. In the capital, Antananarivo, as well as in outlying areas, the team and I have observed that food expenses now consume nearly all of households' income, forcing some families to cut back on the number of daily meals. School tuition is becoming difficult to afford, and small businesses are seeing their sales slow due to declining purchasing power. Parents are expressing growing concern for their children's future, particularly with regard to school attendance. We are also seeing an increase in requests for one-time assistance, a sign that local support networks are themselves under strain.

A LOCAL COMMITMENT

While talking with a sixth-year medical student at the University of Antananarivo—Dr. Raphael, who sometimes comes to lend a hand at the medical center—we realized just how much he, too, was affected by the situation. Since he relies on public transportation

for his daily commute, he is feeling the impact of the fare increases acutely. He told us that every day now requires careful budgeting, sometimes forcing him to make difficult choices about which trips to take—a situation that directly affects his studies and his ability to be with us.

Despite these challenges, solidarity remains strong and local commitment endures. Initiatives to help one another continue: neighbours working together, informal tutoring, and sharing food during the toughest times. It is precisely this spirit of hope that I am eager to share. 🌊



A beneficiary in a wheelchair; his smile is a testament to his resilience.
Photo: M.I.C.

Fear Shakes Us, Resistance Organizes

Trapped in a self-destructive political system that perpetuates itself, Haiti is sinking into the deepest abysses of its history. Yet, in the midst of this chaos, the Haitian people are doing the impossible to ensure their survival. In this struggle for existence, the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception are fostering resistance, an essential tool for their lives and their mission.

Marie-Rosette Lafortune, M.I.C.

As everyone knows, the country is rocked by intolerable tragedies that strike hardest at its youth—the nation's vital force and, at the same time, its greatest vulnerability. A portion of this rising generation is being corrupted by a clan of social climbers with destructive intentions. This toxic influence pushes young people to jeopardize their future, and the scars of this harmful hold wound the entire social fabric. In this climate of frustration, anxiety, fear, and anguish overwhelm people's minds. And no one escapes this downward spiral.



The M.I.C. Sisters are looking for possible solutions. Photo: M.I.C.

THE M.I.C. IN DELMAS: DEPARTURE AND SHOCK

In Delmas, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, the provincial house was plunged into tragedy. In March, the Sisters resigned themselves to leave the premises, unable to endure another day of incessant gunfire and the constant threat of stray bullets. The police advised them to relocate, because the residence

was in the immediate vicinity of areas where clashes were taking place between law enforcement and gang members. The Sisters then sought refuge in Hinche. The neighbourhood residents, deeply attached to the presence of the religious Sisters who had sustained their hope, resigned themselves to follow in their footsteps. As for the high school students at the Immaculate Conception School, located in the same area, they were sent to another school, the Institution Mère Délia, where apparent calm still reigned. The house remained intact for several months. Nevertheless, the bandits eventually ransacked and set it on fire. The school suffered the same fate, though it was spared the fire.



The provincial house in Delmas, ransacked by gangs. Photo: M.I.C.

A TOUR OF THE MOTHER DÉLIA COMMUNITY

Daily life grew bleaker under the weight of threats and rumours, making any visit impossible. Gunfire, coming from both law enforcement and gang members, echoed constantly, although the trajectories of the projectiles differed radically: the criminals' bullets, meanwhile, flew through rooms and pierced the ceilings of some bedrooms, often forcing the Sisters to lie flat on the floor.

The terrified Christian community stopped attending gatherings, and priests were unable to come and celebrate Mass. Faced with this escalation of violence, the resistance kept the nuns in a climate of trust, but also of caution.

Unfortunately, the rumours turned out to be true. About thirty heavily armed, hooded young men surrounded the back gate, which had become our main entrance. Alerted and guided by a neighbour, the

Sisters prepared to evacuate through the front gate. After a sleepless night, taking with them only the bare essentials, the nuns joined their Sisters in Tabarre. This gathering strengthened their resolve, serving as a true source of mental, spiritual, and fraternal comfort. However, the prospect of entrusting the security of the entire site to mere security guards and court officials remained a source of deep concern. While the bandits did not directly attack the Sisters, their overwhelming numerical superiority instilled fear.

THE OASIS OF THE IMMACULATE IN TABARRE

In early April, armed gangs launched an assault on Tabarre. They set fire to homes and vehicles, sowing chaos and forcing the population to flee. The Sisters, barricaded in a hallway of the house amid unbearable darkness, heard the atrocities being committed in the neighbourhood. Their silence was the only response to the din outside. Despite everything, their resistance

sustained their hope and their faith in the divine presence. Although the security barrier was targeted, the Lord intervened: the attackers were unable to force their way in. The house then became a veritable prison. As a precaution, the Sisters refrained from stepping out into the courtyard even once. There were no longer any pedestrians or cars on the streets of Tabarre, with the notable exception of the National Police, who, fortunately, regained control of the area the very next day, April 3. Law enforcement were deployed there, and two armoured vehicles have been securing the site ever since.

EVEN THE ACCIDENTAL DROPPING OF AN OBJECT BECAME A SOURCE OF FEAR.

ESCALATING ABUSES AND THE QUEST FOR EDUCATION

However, the Sisters of the Mother Délia Sisterhood were forced to return home due to health concerns. Two police vehicles then escorted them to the outskirts of Tabarre, for fear of an ambush by the insurgents. Now isolated in the neighbourhood, the M.I.C. Sisters found themselves at the mercy of these young people led astray by ignorance. Whether speaking, laughing, singing, praying in the chapel, or calling out to a fellow Sister, they had to speak in whispers. Even the accidental dropping of an object became a source of fear. In the absence of electricity, they had to refrain from starting the generator, so as not to provoke the anger and hostility of the gangs, who are extremely sensitive to the slightest noise.

The obstacles were enormous, especially since both schools had to operate outside their walls to make up for lost time. Despite everything, thanks to the mutual support among the nuns and monks, the school year was brought to a successful conclusion, culminating in the administration of official exams. Walking past these heavily armed executioners twice a day was a daunting ordeal: no matter which route was taken, their presence was unavoidable.



For a time, the school in Delmas was inaccessible and was under the control of gangs. Photo: M.I.C.



Before school activities resume, an inspection of the premises is necessary. Photo: M.I.C.

Fortunately, resistance sometimes finds expression through humour—a subtle distraction that dispels fear and nourishes the certainty that one day we will be able to say: “There was a time...” It remains tragic, however, that these young people, brimming with talent and destined for a bright future, have become instruments of destruction in the hands of unscrupulous upstarts.

Finally freed from the threat thanks to the police’s successful intervention, the nuns bear witness to their faith and courage, using lightheartedness to overcome fear and maintain hope. Little by little, people return to celebrate the Lord. From this life, hope springs forth like the buds on trees bursting into bloom in the spring of the Resurrection. 🌸



An Unexpected Encounter

Marie-Paule Sanfaçon, M.I.C.

Toward the end of a sunny afternoon on Saint-Denis Street in Montreal, Liliane and I were walking cheerfully, savouring the beauty of that radiant day. Everything around us was peaceful, and passersby seemed to be strolling joyfully, clearly delighted by this golden hour.

A SIMPLE GESTURE

Suddenly, a homeless man approached us to offer us birthday cards he had made himself. What he didn't know was that Liliane and I make them too. Without making a big deal of it, we looked at them, then decided to buy a few.

It was a very simple act, but one that made the man truly very happy. I felt as though this gesture had brightened his day, and we were glad to be able to help him.

A SECOND ENCOUNTER

We then continued on our way. A little further on, another homeless man came up to us. I won't tell you what went through our minds at that moment: we helped once, but are we always willing to do it again?

He then said to us: "Thank you so much, ladies. You gave my friend a helping hand, and I thank you for that. Your gesture will encourage him to keep working."

He was proud of his friend. What a wonderful lesson! Liliane and I continued on our way, laughing at our presumption, our hearts filled with joy. 

With You, O Lord



NATIVIDAD FLORES, M.I.C.

Sister Maria-de-la-Natividad

1934-2026

Naguilian (La Union), Philippines

As a teenager, Natividad was deeply moved by Hank Williams' song "Calling You"—a first seed of her vocation that would bear fruit on October 20, 1958, when, at the age of 24, she entered the novitiate in Baguio. Fulfilling her dream, she taught catechism to neighbourhood children during school breaks while pursuing a university degree in education. She first taught religion at the Immaculate Conception Academy (ICA), before going on foreign missions to San Francisco, Toronto, Hong Kong, and Aizu-Wakamatsu, Japan. Due to a heart condition, her activities gradually slowed down. On April 11, 2026, as she was preparing to celebrate the 65th anniversary of her religious profession on the 26th of that month, God called her to His table.



LOUISE SAUVÉ, M.I.C.

Sister Louise-de-la-Trinité

1931-2026

Saint-Timothée, Quebec

A woman of great heart, selfless and dedicated to her mission, Sister Louise always knew what she wanted. From a very young age, she vowed to become a nun. At age 19, she entered the novitiate of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. In 1958, upon completing her formation, she left for Japan. As a teacher, she devoted all her affection to the people there, to whom she dedicated herself for some twenty years. Upon her return home, Louise worked nationwide for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, but her health continued to decline. She left her religious community on May 10, 2026, at the age of 94, at Villa Opale. As a woman of prayer, we can imagine the welcome the Lord has in store for you. Together with you, we rejoice in your happiness!



FRANÇOISE LAROUCHE, M.I.C.

Sister Jean-Robert

1932-2026

Sainte-Jeanne-d'Arc, Quebec

Sister Françoise entered the community in 1956 and served for many years as a missionary in Taiwan. As she herself said: *I felt close to these people, to what they were going through, to their need to be loved. I wanted to understand them.* Such was the depth of her vocation. Upon her return to Quebec in 2004, she continued her work by teaching catechism at the Sainte-Cécile parish in Montreal. At the age of 88, she moved to the Pont-Viau house, where she continued to find joy in serving others. She passed away at Villa Opale, surrounded by her religious family, on May 29, 2026.



EMERENCIANA (EMY)

MADRIA P, M.I.C.

1936-2026

Lamian, Philippines

Inspired by her parents' example of trust and patience during the Sino-Japanese War, Emy made this verse from Psalm 39 her own: *Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.* She entered the novitiate in Baguio in July 1964 and took her first vows on May 1, 1967. An experienced nurse, she first worked in her province, then at the motherhouse in 1971, and in Vancouver, before leaving to lend a hand at various health centers in Malawi. Upon her return to the Philippines in 1976, she continued to excel in her field. In 2019, illness confined her to the infirmary until July 9, 2026, the day she answered *Here I am* to the Father's call.



What Is My Vocation?

More than just plucking the petals off a daisy, discovering one's vocation requires reflection and a deep understanding of oneself. One thing is certain: God invites me to live in happiness and love. This call demands my full attention, urging me to listen to my heart before seriously committing to a path.

To help me recognize my vocation, God gives me guiding signs. But to discern them, I often need guidance—and to learn to explore my inner life more deeply.

At one time or another, everyone must choose a way of life that allows them to love with their whole being and to give themselves fully, in harmony with who they are at their core. That is what a vocation is. It can be expressed in different ways: through marriage, religious commitment, or a consecrated life in the world.

Prayer for Vocations

God, most gracious Father,
You revealed to the Venerable Délia Tétreault
the secrets of a life of union with You.
To those whom You continue to call today,
grant Your Spirit.

May they learn, as she did,
to listen to Mary
and discover the unfathomable joy
of a life of thanksgiving and mission.
May Your Spirit impart to all these young people
the fire of love that sets the earth ablaze.

May He inspire them to turn toward others
and lead them to commit themselves to Your plan
of justice and peace, here and elsewhere.
May He go before them on the path
of the Visitation and the Magnificat.

We ask this of You through Jesus,
Your Son, the living and eternal God,
and through Your Spirit, the source of peace and joy.

Amen.

