

MIC MISSION NEWS

MAY-JUNE 1997

The Child,
Promise
of the
Future!



MIC MISSION NEWS

BIMONTHLY MISSION MAGAZINE
PUBLISHED BY THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
VOL. 24, NO. 3 • MAY-JUNE 1997

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Film-O-Progrès, Inc.

PRINTING:

Transcontinental Inc.

SUBSCRIPTION:

		SUPPORT:
\$ 8	1 year	\$ 10
\$ 15	2 years	\$ 20
\$ 23	3 years	\$ 30
\$ 15	1 year USA and other Countries	

TAX RECEIPTS:

Registration number: 0940007-47

PRESSE MISSIONNAIRE M.I.C.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Please send your old and your new addresses. When renewing subscription, include file number.

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NEW: E-MAIL ADDRESS

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ISSUED:

May 1997

PUBLICATION MAIL:

Registration No. 0358

ISSN 0315-9655

MEMBER:

Association of Roman Catholic

Communicators of Canada (ARCCC)

COVER PAGE:

Japan - A schoolboy at play.

Photo: M.I.C., Japan

CENTER PAGES:

Canada - Camille Langlois and her Papa

Photo: L. Barrière

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MY NAME IS TODAY

The Springtime of Life

Springtime... when grass is the greenest, when flowers and trees bloom! This annual season of rebirth brings to the fore that unique sense of wonder most candidly reflected on children's faces. All of us can look at children with sensitivity, see their beauty and feel their pain. A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of surprise and excitement. Sometimes though, it must be frightening to be young and to have adults and society expect so much: *"Remember, child, you are the future... you are our hope." "When you grow up..." "Soon you'll have responsibilities..."*

Children can't wait; their future is today. Each child is unique, and the rearing of each child is a unique experience. Parents, teachers, mentors and other caring adults soon discover that enduring lessons about life are best taught to children through personal witness and an encompassing love.

MIC MISSION NEWS presents in this issue the needs and joys of children. We wish to highlight the role of the most essential helping environments that nurture the growth of children - the family, the school, the church, the community. In most cases, children are blessed to

be surrounded by parents and other people who care deeply for them, who recognize their abilities and encourage their initiative and creativity, who do all they can to guide their steps toward a bright future. However, in many developing countries, childhood is a luxury few families can afford.

The experiences of M.I.C. Sisters and lay collaborators working with children in different parts of the world are rich with examples. They now share with us varied experiences replete with love and appreciation of children from diverse cultures. We are invited to value the richness of this diversity and at the same time, to celebrate childhood - the springtime of life - in all its incredible beauty. While their encounters with impoverished and suffering children have caused them sorrow, our missionaries and lay friends have generously responded by reaching out to make a difference. These caring people have accepted each child they have met as truly deserving of a welcoming space in their hearts and in their daily lives.

May we, too, share in the joy that children spontaneously bring into our world. As we delight in this joy, may the Spirit inspire and help us to create for them a future of peace. □

Ma. Anthea Raso, M.I.C.

LET US GIVE CHILDREN A FUTURE OF PEACE!

BY JOHN PAUL II



Trusting and joyful children

*To make children happy, to provide them only the best, to prepare their future... an indispensable task which demands the joint efforts of the family, the school, the Church and society. For John Paul II, the better world that we wish to give children takes shape through a sound education for peace.
"Nothing should be spared so that children may become heralds of peace."*

Let us give children a future of peace! This is the confident appeal which I make to men and women of good will, and I invite everyone to help children to grow up in an environment of authentic peace... Everyone is well aware of how childhood experiences can have profound and sometimes irreparable consequences on an individual's whole life. It can hardly be hoped that children will one day be able to build a better world unless there is a specific commitment to their *education for peace*. Children need to *learn peace*. It is their right, and it is our duty...

CHILDREN AND HOPE FOR PEACE

...Many children are living today in often tragic conditions... I have not failed to show my heartfelt concern for children by calling these serious situations to the attention of world public opinion... But I have no intention of yielding to pessimism or ignoring the signs of hope. How can I fail to mention, for example, the many families in every part of the world in which children grow up in an atmosphere of peace?

And how can we not note the efforts being made by so many individuals and organizations to enable children in difficulty to grow up in peace and happiness? Public and private associations, individual families and particular communities have taken initiatives, the only purpose of which is to help children who have suffered some traumatic event to return to a normal life. These are particularly concrete propositions of education programmes, aiming to develop fully all the personal resources of children and the youth so as to make of them authentic harbingers of peace.

There is also a growing awareness in the international community which, in recent years, despite difficulties and hesitations, has made efforts to deal decisively and systematically with problems connected with childhood.

The results achieved thus far encourage us to continue these praiseworthy endeavors. If children are properly supported and loved, they too can be *peacemakers* themselves, young builders of a world of unity

and solidarity. With their enthusiasm and youthful idealism, young people can become *witnesses* and *teachers* of hope and peace for adults. Lest these possibilities be lost, children should be offered, in a way adapted to their individual needs, every opportunity for a balanced personal growth.

A peaceful childhood will enable boys and girls to face life and the future with confidence. Let no one stifle their joyful enthusiasm and hope!

CHILDREN IN THE SCHOOL OF PEACE

Little children very soon learn about life. They watch and imitate the behavior of adults. They rapidly learn love and respect for others, but they also quickly absorb the poison of violence and hatred. Family experiences strongly condition the attitudes which children will assume as adults. Consequently, if the family is the place where children first encounter the world, *the family must be for children the first school of peace*.

Parents have an extraordinary opportunity to help their sons and

daughters to become aware of this great treasure: *the witness of their mutual love*. It is by loving each other that they enable the child, from the very first moment of existence, to grow up in peaceful surroundings, imbued with the positive values which make up the family's true heritage: mutual respect and acceptance, listening, sharing, generosity, forgiveness. Thanks to the sense of working together which these values foster, they provide a true education for peace and make the child, from its earliest years, an active builder of peace.

Children share with their parents and brothers and sisters the experience of life and hope. They see how life's inevitable trials are met with humility and courage, and they grow up in an atmosphere of esteem for others and respect for opinions different from their own.

It is above all in the home that, before ever a word is spoken, children should experience God's love in the love which surrounds them. In the family they learn that God wants peace and mutual understanding among all human beings, who are called to be one great family.



Photo: Kingman Family

In loving one another, parents help the child to grow in a peaceful environment.

Besides the basic education provided by the family, children have a right to a *specific training for peace at school* and in other educational settings. These institutions have a duty to lead children gradually to understand the nature and demands of peace within their world and culture. Children need to learn the *history of peace* and not simply the history of victory and defeat in war. Let us show them examples of peace and not just examples of violence!

Fortunately, many positive examples of this can be found in every culture and period of history. Suitable new educational opportunities must be created, especially in those situations where cultural and moral poverty has been most oppressive. Everything possible should be done to help *children to become messengers of peace*.

Children are not a burden on society; they are not a means of profit or people without rights. Children are precious members of the human family, for they embody its hopes, its expectations and its potential.

...It is therefore to men and women of good will that I address this confident appeal. Let us all unite to fight every kind of violence and to conquer war! Let us create the conditions which will ensure that children can receive as the legacy of our generation a more united and fraternal world! *Let us give children a future of peace!* □

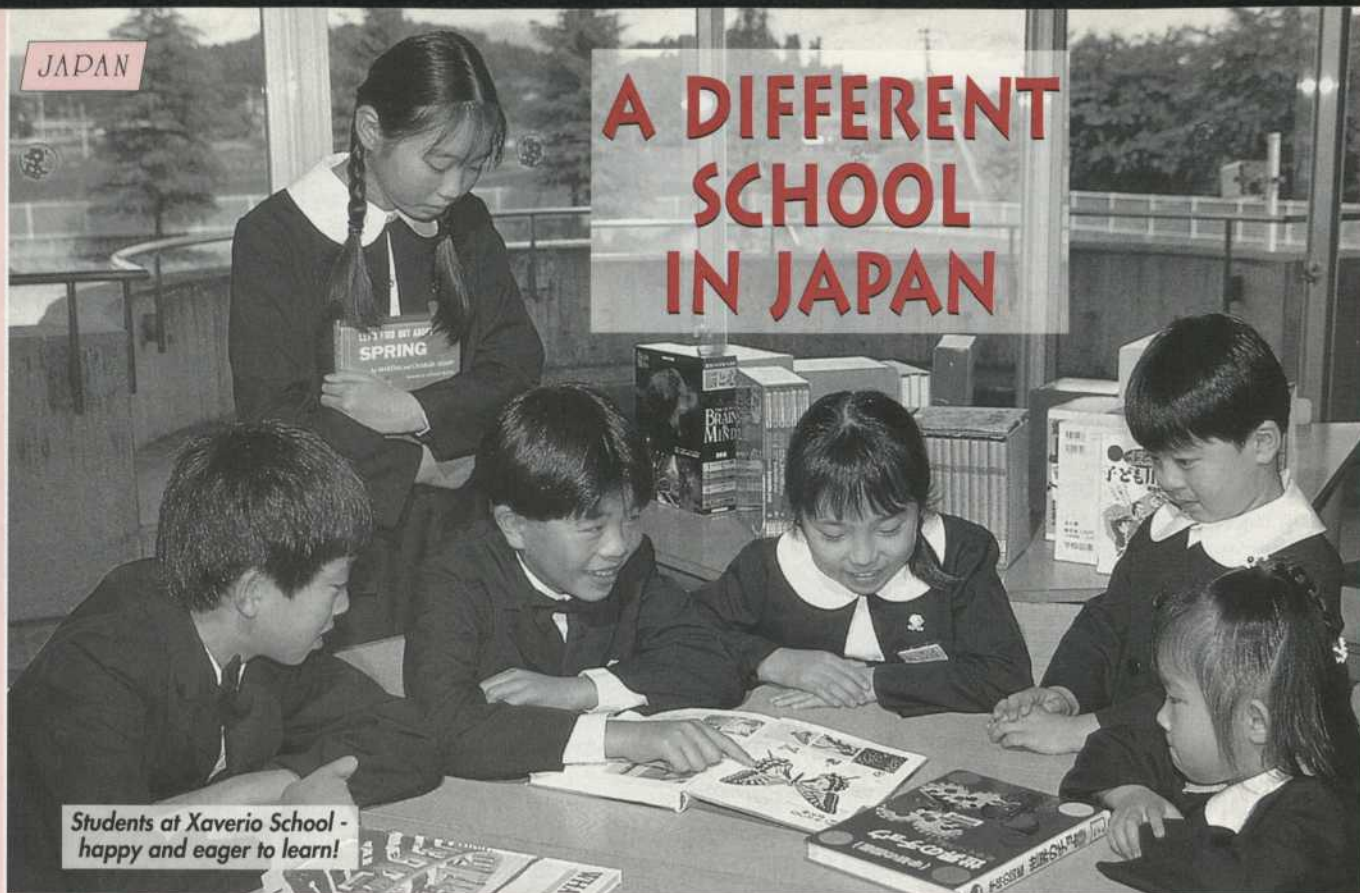
Excerpts, Message for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, January 1, 1996

An essential task of the school - to teach children the ways of peace.



Photo: T. Lortie, M.I.C.

A DIFFERENT SCHOOL IN JAPAN



Students at Xaverio School - happy and eager to learn!

BY LOUISA NICOLE, M.I.C.

May! The school year is just beginning in Japan. At St. Francis Xavier School in Koriyama, boys and girls learn in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Sr. Louisa Nicole, Directress of the school for nine years, tells us how these students become receptive to universal friendship and sharing with the poorest of the poor in Japanese society and in the world. Christian values are part and parcel of this solid formation.

Saint Francis Xavier (Xaverio) School in Koriyama celebrates this year 65 years of existence. From the time it was founded, its mission has been to promote the Christian spirit in Japanese society through education. Without neglecting academic results, which partly condition the children's future, the school promotes universal friendship and the love of the poorest in Japanese society.

Rebuilt ten years ago, Xaverio School is grand and beautiful: a unique architecture, ample space, proper lighting, clean surroundings, with nothing lacking. The most important thing, however, is that the teachers strongly believe in doing more than just teach. They are eager to educate the hearts of their pupils. Though most of them are non-Christians, they study the Bible. Every morning before going to their respective classrooms, they read a passage of the Bible and pray together, allowing the Message of Jesus Christ to penetrate their hearts. The religion we share is the religion of Love: *Love one another*, Jesus said. The children of Xaverio are happy, their eyes shine because each one of them feels loved and respected by both their teachers and their schoolmates.

In Primary School, a boy in the fifth grade who was admitted to our school because he had been abused by

his classmates at his former school, wrote to his teacher: *I am happy to have come to Xaverio. It is a school unlike any other: Religion and English are taught and it is possible to be friends with one another.* In Secondary School, several girls who had been hurt emotionally have knocked at our door and have been helped by the warm and welcoming atmosphere of the school.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Perhaps because their country is an island, the Japanese have a strong tendency to seclude themselves in little islands: my country, my city, my company, my school, my class, my club. Newcomers are not easily integrated. How then can the circle be widened? With the advent of television, satellites and computers, the whole world has already made its way into our midst. These media provide an incredible amount of information, but they do not have the key to the heart. The only way to open the heart is by sharing... in other words, by a heart-to-heart communication.

When communication in words is impossible, one can communicate with the heart. This is what our students in both the Primary and Secondary Schools have learned from the young people of the School for the Deaf-Mute and from the elderly. In the last few years,

Xaverio School and the School for the Deaf-Mute have been exchanging visits. The young people of the latter try to talk while ours try to learn sign language. It's fantastic! Everyone experiences limitations, while hearts are moved by friendship.

At the beginning of the school year, the Students' Association gives each of the 240 girls in Secondary School the name of an elderly person living in a home, to whom she must write a letter every month. As you can imagine, this is quite a chore for some of them. In December, all the girls are bussed to the home to meet their unknown elderly friends, giving rise to unforgettable emotion. Few words are spoken, but there are smiles, tears of joy and warm handshakes. The girls understand this silent language. They often return on their own for a Sunday visit to the grandfather or grandmother because they saw joy on this person's face and learned about gratuitousness. For Christmas, each girl makes with her own hands, the gift that will light up the dimmed eyes of these lonely men and women. The girls of the Easter Club founded by Monique Cloutier, M.I.C., go regularly to visit the elderly on Saturdays. They prepare entertainment for the handicapped and participate in activities organized by the city for senior citizens.

THE CROSSROADS OF FRIENDSHIP

Sr. Therese Renaud, M.I.C., then Directress of Xaverio School, launched *Ai no Kai* (Crossroads of Friendship). A strongly committed team composed of the teacher of each section - Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary, and the Directress, comes up with activities to inform the children and put them in touch with the poorest people in Japanese society and in the world. It was *Ai no Kai* and the Parents' Association that made it possible for us to invite our missionaries of Madagascar and our Sisters of Africa and the Philippines to Japan. This year, Japanese volunteers came to share their experiences, one from Thailand, the other from Sri Lanka. Sr. Kyoko Takahashi, M.I.C., also gave the parents a report of her visit to our mission of Peru. Moreover, the teachers of our school who had lent a hand as volunteers after the major earthquake of Kobe showed slides to the students.

TAKING CONCRETE ACTION

From information one must go into action. Assisted by their parents, the children of all three sections collect old newspapers, cardboard boxes and empty bottles, etc., which are sold for recycling. The proceeds are being forwarded to the victims of Kobe. At the school's Annual Bazaar, a corner is set up for the handicapped to sell their handicrafts and for the Christian women who make patchwork items to help the missions. There is also a Charity Bazaar organized every year by the girls in Secondary School to provide a few bursaries for young Filipino students, while the young ones in Primary School organize the Little Ones' Bazaar to support their friends of Malawi. The Parents' Association, for its part, shares the funds raised at the end of the year between Bolivia, Madagascar, the Kobe victims and the social projects of the city. What tremendous generosity! Recently, a teacher discreetly handed me ¥ 200,000 (\$2,400) saying: *Our children are grown up and they earn their own living. Please use this for someone who needs it, in Japan or elsewhere.* You can imagine how I was touched !...

Xaverio School has created links with the entire world. The most wonderful thing about it is that everyone is on board: the teachers, the parents and the students. The youngsters are happy to know they have friends all over the world and are able to reach out to them. Several M.I.C. Sisters have succeeded one another as school directress. Their dynamism and missionary zeal drawn from their contact with

our Foundress, Délia Tétreault, deserve our deep appreciation and gratitude. Heartfelt thanks to each one of them! □



A Xaverio student accompanies a blind friend.



A deaf and dumb boy addresses the student assembly.



Photos : M.I.C., Japan

The teaching staff at Xaverio School. Louisa Nicole, M.I.C. (center) and Estela del Bando, M.I.C. (2nd row, 3rd l.)



Since 20 years, the Good Hope Choir has been promoting beauty and harmony.

Sr. Mary Olga Lam (center) and the interviewees (l. to r.): Connie Chue, Dominic Lee, Corina Chen and Kiran Belaramani



The Future is Determined by the Present

BY MARY OLGA LAM, M.I.C

Our attitudes towards life are formed as early as childhood and adolescence. This was highlighted in an interview conducted by Sr. Mary Olga Lam, Directress of Good Hope Secondary School in Hong Kong.

On a special radio program celebrating Bible Sunday last December 8, Sr. Mary Olga questioned four guests from the school: Miss Corina Chen, Assistant Directress, Mr. Dominic Lee, Coordinator of the Counselling Department and Religion teacher, Connie Chue and Kiran Belaramani, two Secondary VI students. The first three are Catholics, Kiran is Hindu. In a highly commercial city as Hong Kong, where the population is immersed in the quest for material goods, how do they see the study of religion? Here are their answers.

Sr. Mary Olga: Kiran, has your life been influenced by the study of the New Testament?

I studied mostly the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. Being a Hindu, I was curious to know about Christianity, which, until now, was not a part of my experience. As I advanced in the course, the Gospel began to have an influence on me. First, I realized that all religions have a single goal: to be happy with God. In my home, there is a place for prayer with Hindu images. To these my sister and I added a cross because we now believe in Jesus, in His existence and in His teaching. He has become a living person for us because of our study of His doctrine.

The Gospel has influenced me a lot by its invitation to *Love* and to *Serve* all people. I have been visiting



A positive regard for self and for others - a mission priority of Good Hope School

homes for the elderly, orphanages and other places where I can serve. These experiences have changed the way I see life. Now I am less afraid of death, not only mine but also that of my loved ones. My fear has decreased ever since I found out that there is resurrection and eternal life with God.

I also learned how to reflect whenever I have to make a decision in my life, because I want to make choices similar to those Jesus made. He

saw what is right and what is wrong in the choices to be made and He always made the right choices. My life as a student is filled with duties and I used to be stressed and irritable. But today, knowing that Jesus said not to worry, I am much calmer. I try to accept life as it comes and to encounter every event as a challenge to be met. This has helped me to develop a feeling of self-confidence. Yes, my study of the Christian religion has influenced me in many ways and I am aware of the changes that have taken place within me. I think that my life is really better than two years ago.

Sr. Mary Olga: Connie, do you also feel that your religious studies have had an influence on you?

I think my attitude has changed, if I compare it with how it was before. For example, I used to have an unfavourable opinion of one of my classmates. When I learned that God is our Father and that we are all brothers and sisters, I realized that my attitude was wrong. I went to talk to this companion and she became a good friend.

My way of reasoning has also changed in the last two years. I take more time to reflect and I even find that there is a connection between my knowledge of Holy Scripture and the way I think. My behaviour has improved. I try to be more pleasant and as a result I have made some new friends. At home, I argue less with my brothers. I am no longer afraid to be home alone since God is with me. This thought that God is with me helps me in difficult times. When I get poor results in school, I am disappointed, but I continue doing my best because God permits what is good for me. I am growing and I learn something new every day. Even if I succeed in the exams required in Hong Kong to obtain the certificate, I shall continue my religious studies.

Sr. Mary Olga: Corina, you are a former student of Good Hope and you are now Assistant Directress of the school. Could you share with us your experience and your

opinions concerning the relevance of Bible studies for the young people of Hong Kong?

In a Catholic school such as Good Hope, we offer a religion course because we believe it imparts to the students values that will become dear to them and that go far beyond what civics and ethics can bring them. As an educator, the mission statement of the school is very important to me: "Through a holistic approach that includes the elements of a healthy moral education, we wish to develop the potential and acknowledge the personality of each student." This principle helps me to see each person as a unique being capable of excelling in different activities. My study of the Word of God has taught me to do my best with the gifts I have received. God gave each one talents that enable him or her to contribute in a unique way to the service of humanity. I feel that my religion courses and the education and values I acquired at Good Hope are at the source of my attitude towards life.

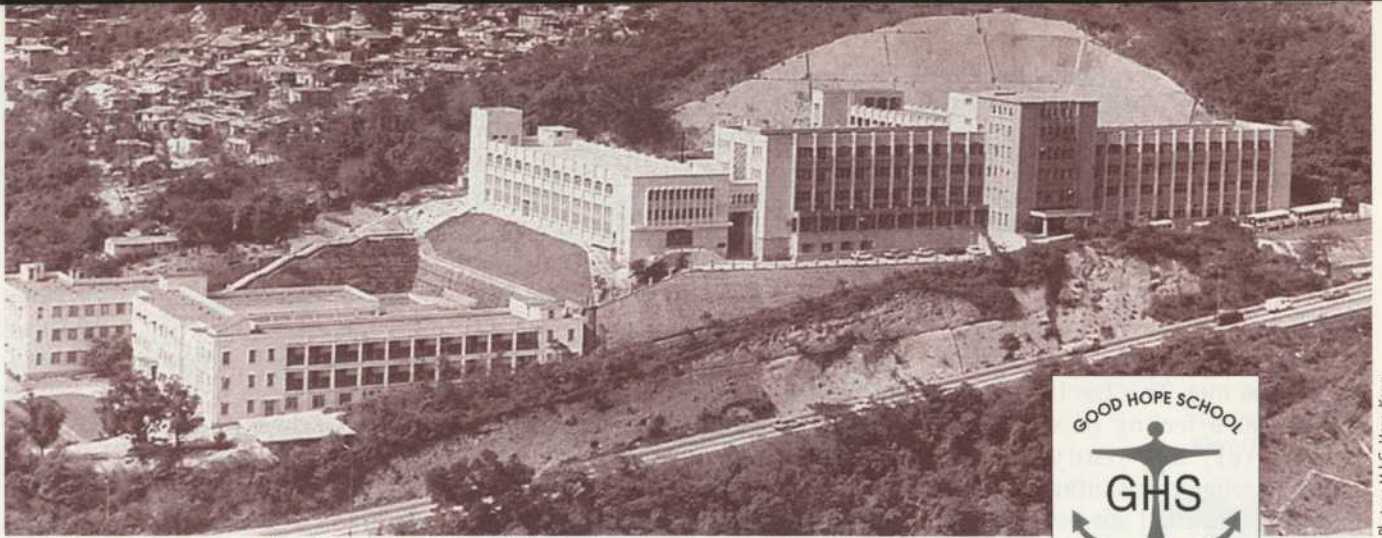
I enjoy very much reading the Old Testament, the parables and the teachings of Jesus. The history of salvation reveals God's love for humanity. Jesus paid attention to people who were not accepted in society in His time. This reminds me that discrimination and prejudice go against His teaching. Nations, and especially young people, should be able to live in a world of love. When surrounded with love and joy, young people are capable of facing

different challenges with courage, of struggling in hope for a better world, of seeing life and its problems with a positive attitude and of creating bonds of trust and friendship.

I think the religion course is helpful, but in a way that is different from the other subjects. Proficiency in mathematics will enable young people to solve problems and create computer programs. They see these subjects as so much more practical... But in my estimation, the religion course prepares them to face challenges of much greater importance: it helps them to reflect on the meaning of life and to learn how to celebrate life. All this is essential for their spiritual growth and enables them to share the joy of knowing the Good News and the spirituality of thanksgiving.



Exerting oneself at exercises in 'mountain climbing' and other sports helps students to look to the future with confidence and courage.



Photos: M.I.C. Hong Kong

Good Hope Primary School and Secondary School (r.). The latter counts 1,390 students, 247 of whom are Catholic.



Sr. Mary Olga: Mr. Lee, you are a counsellor and a religion teacher. Do you believe that teaching the Bible can contribute something to Hong Kong society? Have the years you spent teaching religion brought you any new insights?

Hong Kong is a commercial city in which wealth is highly regarded and eagerly sought. This is precisely the reason why the teaching of the Bible is especially helpful here. The emphasis on material gain involves dangers for the well-being of our society. For example, the race for money leads to corruption and a recent report indicates clearly that corruption is on the rise here. Even physically, it has been proven that heart diseases and cancer are more frequent in highly competitive communities. Beyond these considerations, in a society where money becomes the ultimate criteria of success, of love and of relationships, human values are distorted.

*When people have no eyes but for the glitter of gold and diamond, they no longer see the brightness of the sun.
When people have no knowledge but the value of hard cash, they can no longer see the tenderness of the human heart.
When people believe that everything can be had for a price, they can no longer appreciate the things no money can buy.*

In short, if we only think of money and wealth, we fail to see what surrounds us: the beauty of nature, the beauty of the human heart and the beauty of God revealed by the actions of others. If we spend all our time in the race for money, we have no time for ourselves, we lose contact with our inner being and with God. On the contrary, the Word of God, who despises riches, teaches us what is really important in our lives: who we *are* and not what we *have*. Our being, which is

created in God's image, is more valuable than material goods. It is only when this image is reflected in us that it can reveal God's love for those around us. By discovering the teaching of the Scriptures I am able to know the deep meaning of happiness and how I can attain it.

Personally, the Word of God has taught me the value of a simple life. Simple is beautiful! By leading a simple lifestyle, I feel that my senses are more receptive to that which surrounds me: I see better, I listen better, I speak better, I feel better. I have less worries because I place my hope in God. I therefore have more time for myself and for others. My contact with myself and others has become more intense. By strengthening my relationships with myself and others, I also intensify my relationship with God and I live without fear. In short, the Bible can offer a solution to most of the problems encountered by our civilization ever since the industrial revolution. □

MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

MAY 1997

May your Spirit, Risen Lord,
guide women towards integral advancement,
in the manner of Mary, your Mother,
and Mother of the Church!

JUNE 1997

We pray to you, O Lord,
that the peoples of Africa, in union with their pastors,
will set out with renewed energy on the paths of faith,
development and peace.



ÉLIETTE GAGNON, M.I.C.
From Bagotville,
Diocese of Chicoutimi.
Left for Bolivia
in January 1997
after working in Cuba.



JEANNE-ODETTE RASOARIMANANA, M.I.C.
From Antsirabe, Madagascar,
Diocese of Antsirabe.
Left for Bolivia
in January 1997.



THÉRÈSE BERGERON, M.I.C.
From Ste-Sophie,
Diocese of Quebec.
Returned to Peru
in January 1997.



THÉRÈSE BEAUDET, M.I.C.
From Deschaillons,
Diocese of Quebec.
Returned to Peru
in January 1997.



THÉRÈSE RENAUD, M.I.C.
From Loretteville,
Diocese of Quebec.
Returned to Japan
in February, 1997.

Missionaries of the Gospel

*Go...
make disciples
of all nations!
Mt. 28:19*



CATHERINE WAN KA-LAI, M.I.C.
From Hong Kong,
Diocese of Hong Kong.
Left for Malawi
in February 1997.



MONIQUE CLOUTIER, M.I.C.
From Ottawa, Ontario,
Diocese of Ottawa.
Left for the Philippines
in April, 1997.



Photo: H. Turcotte, M.I.C.

Missionaries with us

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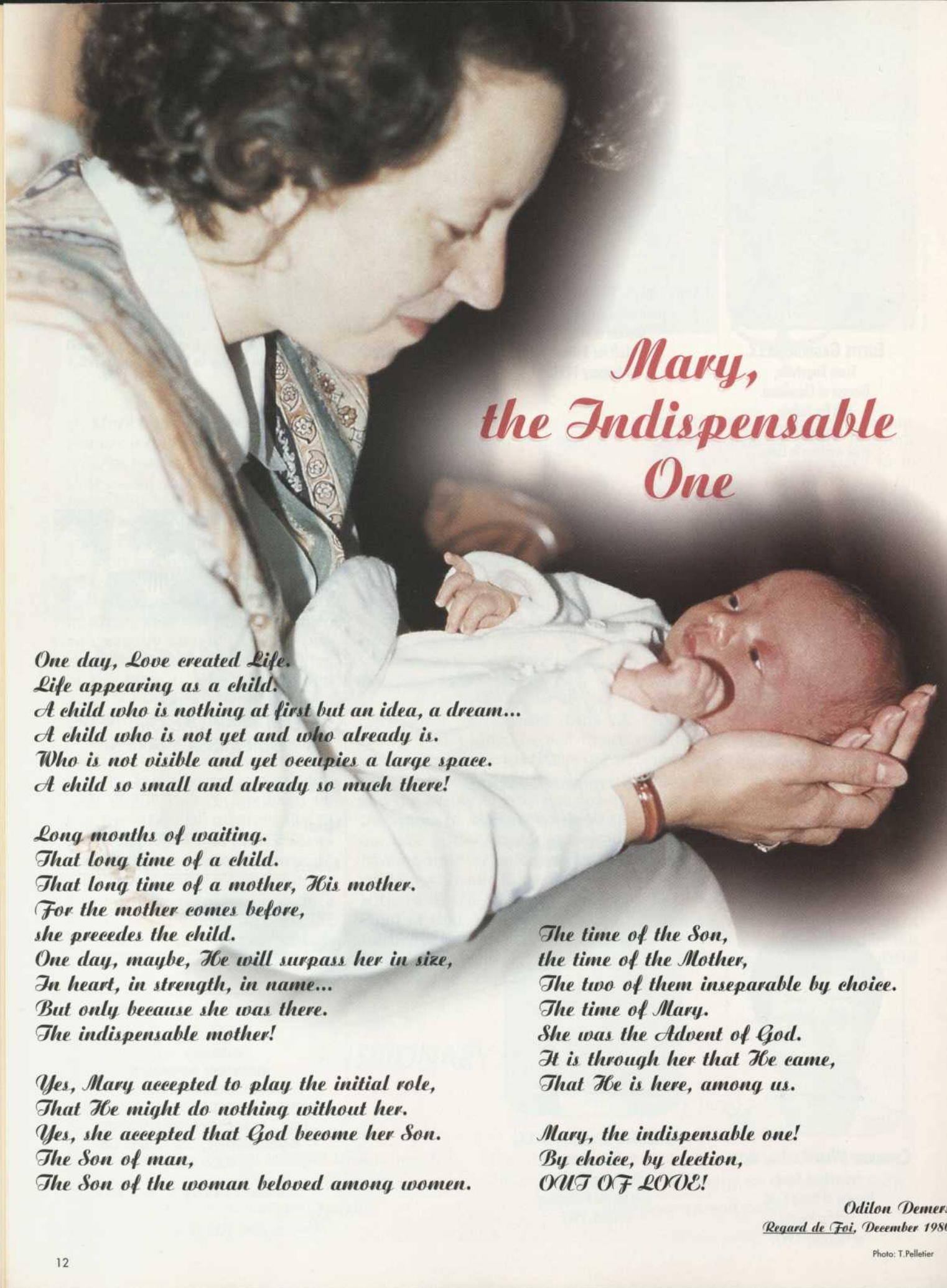
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Thank you for your solidarity



Mary, the Indispensable One

*One day, Love created Life.
Life appearing as a child.
A child who is nothing at first but an idea, a dream...
A child who is not yet and who already is.
Who is not visible and yet occupies a large space.
A child so small and already so much there!*

*Long months of waiting.
That long time of a child.
That long time of a mother, His mother.
For the mother comes before,
she precedes the child.
One day, maybe, He will surpass her in size,
In heart, in strength, in name...
But only because she was there.
The indispensable mother!*

*Yes, Mary accepted to play the initial role,
That He might do nothing without her.
Yes, she accepted that God become her Son.
The Son of man,
The Son of the woman beloved among women.*

*The time of the Son,
the time of the Mother,
The two of them inseparable by choice.
The time of Mary.
She was the Advent of God.
It is through her that He came,
That He is here, among us.*

*Mary, the indispensable one!
By choice, by election,
OUT OF LOVE!*

*Odilon Demers
Regard de Foi, December 1980*

Photo: T. Pelletier

THE STREET, THEIR WHOLE WORLD



Photo: S. Longtin, M.I.C.

BY KATTIE LUSSIER

One always returns to one's first love! Kattie Lussier was 14 when she first encountered the street children. Her aunt, Suzanne Longtin, M.I.C., who was then a missionary in Bolivia, had found the right words to tell her about the tragedy of these young people completely marginalized, without family and without specific work. The missionary flame was lit! Today, Kattie knows first-hand the violent situation of street children. She is a member of the board of directors of ERI (Enfants de la Rue International - Street Children International) and has worked six weeks with the street children served by the Amanecer Programme in Bolivia. She will return among them next September, with hopes of being able to respond to their plight.

As I have always been very sensitive by nature, I was sure that my first contact with street children would wring a few tears out of me. Before leaving for Bolivia, I had tried to remember all the stories I had heard about street children in order to prepare myself to work among those "poor children". But I never met any "poor children", only children who are poor, and the only tears I shed were those of an aching heart on taking its leave of dearly loved ones. What a strength emerges from the sons and daughters of the street! What a lesson in courage they gave me! Do I feel sorry for them?... Never! Do I support them?... Always!

THE WORLD OF THE STREET

First of all, there is a distinction between the children **of** the street and the children **in** the street. Indeed, according to ERI, the young worker in the street is a minor, sometimes as young as 6 or 7. In some cases, he and his family moved to the city in

the hope of improving their quality of life. In other cases, since the father and/or mother does not earn enough to provide for the family's needs, he too must work and bring money home. Oftentimes he still goes to school and must return home at night. There are approximately 300,000 of these children in Bolivia. It is quite frequent for a young worker **in** the street to leave his family for good and become a child **of** the street.

The child **of** the street is hardly older than the one **in** the street. Generally speaking, he does not go to school. He is no longer in touch with his family or he is an orphan; he is in the street both day and night. The street is his sub-culture (drugs, prostitution, stealing...) and his only universe. That is where he develops and grows. There are approximately 80,000 of them in the country and, generally, more boys than girls. If they are not given any help, these

young people are very likely to become delinquent. The street world being fraught with danger, the child quickly learns how to fight and his instinct of survival makes him very resourceful. Strength, courage and perseverance are the keys to survival. No job is too hard or too thankless when one needs to eat. And the laws... were they not adopted by people who have a roof over their heads?

Life on the street means living today without thinking about tomorrow; it means fighting constantly and wandering aimlessly... Above all, it means living under the wing of Lady Liberty and following one's heart without ever asking. Yet, when the lion reverts to being a cat, the street is a dark and cold place to be in. Deprived of love, these children recreate among themselves the illusion of a family in which strength establishes the hierarchy. The bond that unites them is very strong. This is how they manage to stay alive. But what does

a child do when, in spite of all, he is scared? What does he do when hunger tightens its grip on him so hard that he is barely able to think, even less sleep? What does he do when, finally, he goes to sleep being so cold that he wonders if he will wake up in the morning?

Unfortunately, the answer these children so longingly await comes to them in the form of drugs. Far from fulfilling their needs, it nevertheless silences the symptoms and they find themselves in a state of euphoria, a certain illusion of well-being. A ten-year-old child confided to me one day that *cleffa* (glue) was more vital to him than his own life... It made him forget fear, hunger and cold; at night, he could not live without it. Inhaling glue or fuel costs very little and acts directly on the brain, causing the disappearance of several physiological sensations, but also causing irreparable damage.

Some of the young people I encountered in the daytime did not even recognize me the night I went to bring bread and milk in the street. They were sniffing merrily out of anything that could be used as a container. As far as I'm concerned, I shall never again be able to see those little cartons of juice our Quebec children stuff into their lunch boxes without having a thought for the young Bolivians who use them for a very different purpose...

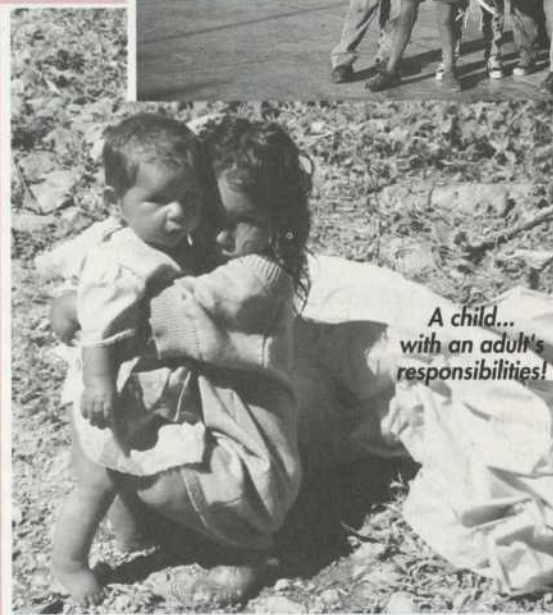
OPPORTUNITIES FOR A NEW START

My story would be quite pathetic if it were not for the people who are prepared to help these children and to inject some hope into the street world. Indeed, there is hope and the young people who really want to come out of it can do so, thanks to such centres as the Amanecer in



Katie greets her young Bolivian friends.

Day and night, these boys are on the street, their whole world!



A child... with an adult's responsibilities!

Photos : Groupe Solidarité - Bolivie

Cochabamba, Enda-Bolivia in El Alto (Province of La Paz) and Trinidad (Province of Beni), as well as others which are, alas! still too few. What is special about Amanecer, where I worked, is that it offers a complete rehabilitation programme in several stages. The more committed a young person is and the more efforts he makes, the more services are available. The early stages are difficult because the children who wish to live in these homes must go to school or work for the centre and, while the primary objective is to get the child

off the street, it is much more difficult to get the street off the child... The street is freedom and many cannot do without it. Sayaricuy, where I was helping out, is the first stage, with a dormitory, and many children do not stay more than a few weeks, even a few days. However, those who persist and who commit themselves fully soon make us forget the energy spent uselessly on the others. What can be more wonderful than to see a child blossom, his eyes shine and, finally, to see him smile at us?

Street children are not evil and many of them will do anything to break away from it. All they need is to be given the chance and especially to meet someone whose heart is open to them. I have given them mine and they have shared it. I am eagerly waiting for the day of my return among them. Even if I am convinced that no one can truly understand them without having lived the same suffering, I know that I shall always treasure the lessons they have taught me and I shall never be able to thank them enough for it. □

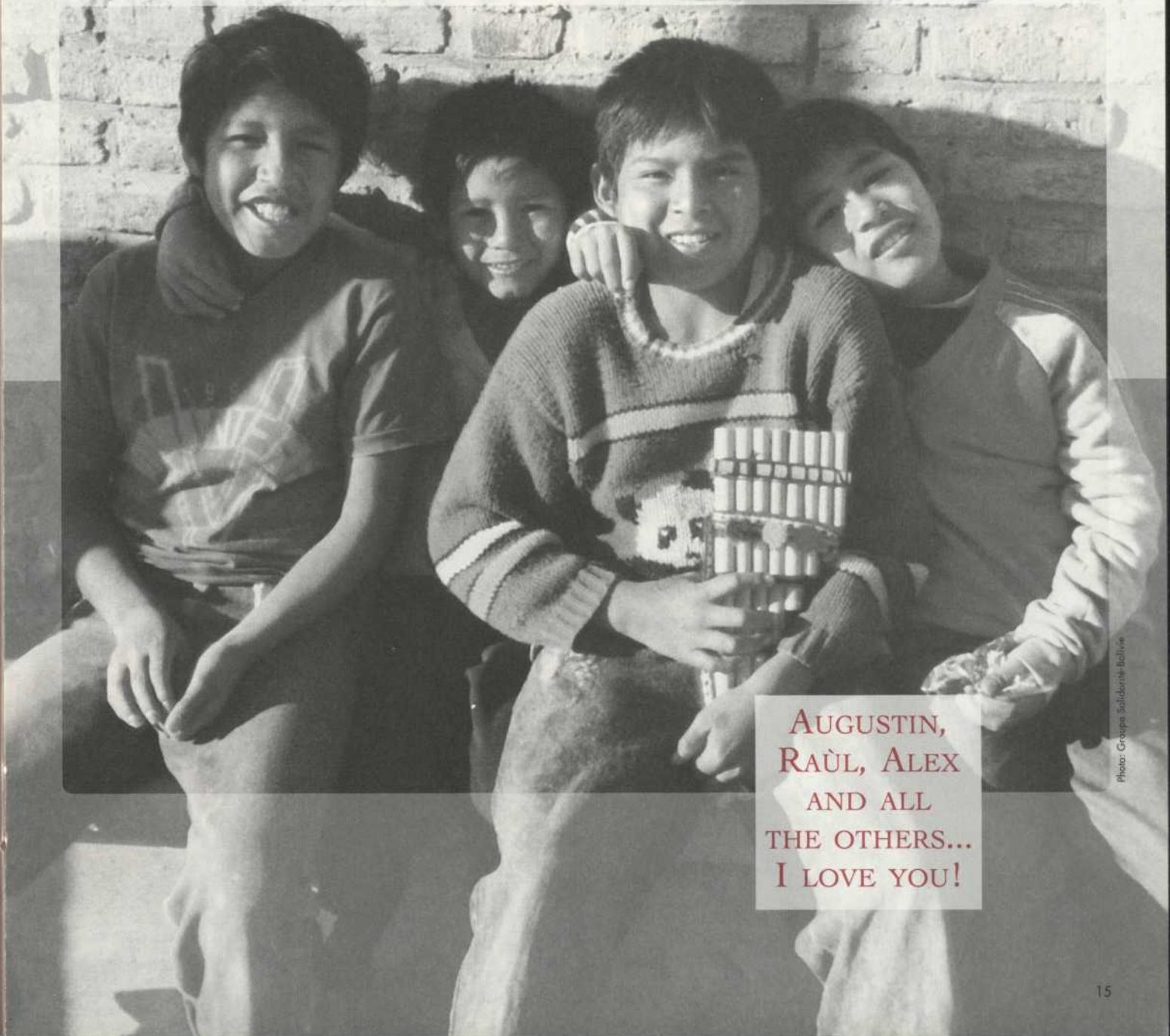
Happy Moments for Street Children

*I looked at him sideways to let him feel me out
I gave him a faint, tenderly guarded smile.
Then, one day, I kissed his smudgy cheek
The child is transformed because he feels loved.*

*Happiness streaked through the eyes of a child
and suddenly, they all came running for the same thrill.
How they wished they could keep as a mother
This woman who rocks them tenderly today.*

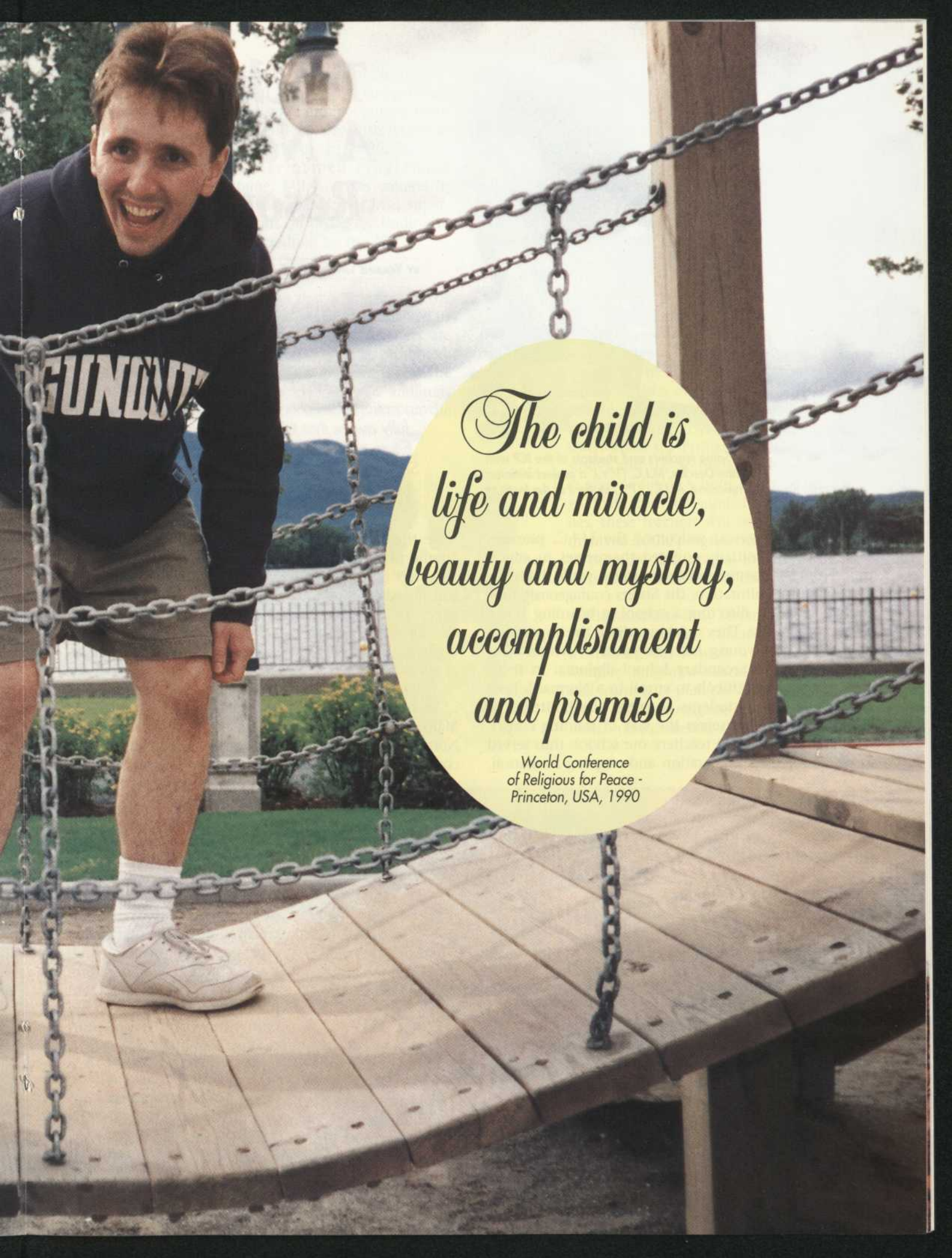
*Why get attached to her since she is going away...
yet when will such happy moments come by again?
Let us fill our hearts with the joy of these moments
that we may recall them tomorrow, when she does not come. □*

Kattie Lussier



AUGUSTIN,
RAÛL, ALEX
AND ALL
THE OTHERS...
I LOVE YOU!





*The child is
life and miracle,
beauty and mystery,
accomplishment
and promise*

World Conference
of Religions for Peace -
Princeton, USA, 1990



Some teachers and students of the ICP with Jeanne Desclos, M.I.C. (1st r.), a project initiator; Pierrette Rasoamampianina, M.I.C., (1st l.) student at the Institute

1952 Madagascar welcomed the M.I.C. pioneers who initially engaged themselves in education. From the moment of their arrival, while living experiences of inculturation, the Sisters courageously took the challenge of directing a school, a boarding house and an orphanage. They quickly realized the importance of forming the young teachers most of whom were equipped with a Secondary School diploma. In those days, it was very difficult to enroll in a Normal School as the number of students accepted was limited. The Sisters took on themselves the task of training conscientious and competent teachers; our schools thus served as places for their preparation and ongoing formation.

Later on, to compensate for the limited enrolment at the Normal School, the Government organized evening and weekend courses in pedagogy and methodology in different places to facilitate access to a teaching certificate (CAE - *certificat d'aptitude à l'enseignement*). Most of our teachers took this training. However, this too soon proved to be inadequate. In order to be qualified to teach, a Bachelor's degree in pedagogy was required. How to remedy this situation? The need of a Normal School for the private sector became quite evident.

A MAJOR TURNING POINT

The year 1987 marked a major turning point concerning our priorities in the area of education. At this

Teachers, A Needed Resource

BY YOLAINE LAVOIE, M.I.C., AND JEANNE DESCLOS, M.I.C.

Educators have a role of prime importance all along the school years. To measure up to such an important task, teachers need initial and ongoing formation. It was not by mere chance, therefore, that the M.I.C. Sisters invested in the preparation of teachers in Madagascar. They were fully aware that this can help transform the future of Malagasy children. Sr. Yolaine and Sr. Jeanne describe the unique contribution of a Catholic Institute of Pedagogy.

time the focus was put mostly on social problems. Should more emphasis be placed in this area or should we direct our efforts towards education? After weighing this question, the M.I.C.s of Madagascar vigorously engaged in a new orientation. We chose to keep our schools and to give them a new direction, more in keeping with the realities of a country impoverished by years of socialism.

Such an option required better training of teachers. Many high school graduates do not have access to the Normal School; can this training be taken outside the country? But where? It appeared more feasible to have this new experience perhaps in Haiti, where the social realities and current challenges seemed quite similar to ours. However, the study period of Sr. Marguerite Razanabelo in Haiti coincided with a time of political upheaval in that country and the pedagogy programme she was following was disrupted. We therefore decided to conduct our own pilot project in Madagascar by launching the ICP (*Institut catholique de pédagogie - Catholic Institute of Pedagogy.*)



Jeanne-Marthe Razanadrasoa, M.I.C., graduate of the ICP in 1996, gives sessions on pedagogy to new teachers in her milieu.

This project was carried out jointly by the Religious Communities of women who placed in common their own resources of personnel and logistics. All recognized the urgent need for locally trained lay teachers and religious personnel in their schools.

In 1992, the Institute opened its doors to 26 student-teachers. A well-prepared staff now invests competence, energy and time at the ICP. A good number among them already teach in our schools and are also with tenure at the Government's Normal School. In 1996, Isabelle Raheliarisoa, M.I.C., was named Programme Coordinator. Estelle Fontaine, M.I.C., gives courses in Psychology. Sr. Marguerite Razanabelo, M.I.C., supervises on weekends the sessions on pedagogy leading to the CAE. These sessions are credited by the ICP.

A SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION

Reflection on the major issues that will influence the future of Malagasy education and society has enabled us to determine more clearly what kind of teachers are needed and what educational project must be promoted. Undoubtedly, the same pedagogical programme as the Normal Schools of Madagascar are followed and new methods of learning, focusing on creativity and on the

active methods are used. While aiming for pedagogical competence, we also emphasize the formation of qualified leaders imbued with genuine personal autonomy and capable of meeting the challenges of team work and communication. We see to it that they are prepared to take on their role as guardians of the faith, witnesses in evangelization. Thus the contribution of ICP in the formation of teachers is quite specific: the wholistic formation of the person where emphasis is placed on self-knowledge, cultural and social values, education and commitment to an adult faith.

After a period of trial and error, of attempts that were more or less successful, of steps forward and steps backward and many meetings with State representatives, we can now rejoice. The first group of students graduated in 1994 after two years of intensive training. Following several visits to the Ministry of Education, the Bachelor's and Master's degrees awarded by the ICP finally obtained State approval. The Institute trains teachers for the Primary School (2 years of study) and the Secondary School (3 years) as well as future school heads. When they graduate from ICP, guided by Christian values, these teachers will be prepared to get involved in the progress of the country and to promote the integral formation of persons placed under their charge.

This Institute truly responds to a need of the milieu and its influence is already felt in making our schools *a place of evangelization, integrated education, inculturation and learning of dialogue between young people of different religions and social environments.* (The Church in Africa, N° 102). □



Photos: M.I.C. Madagascar

Malagasy children - full of hope for the future!

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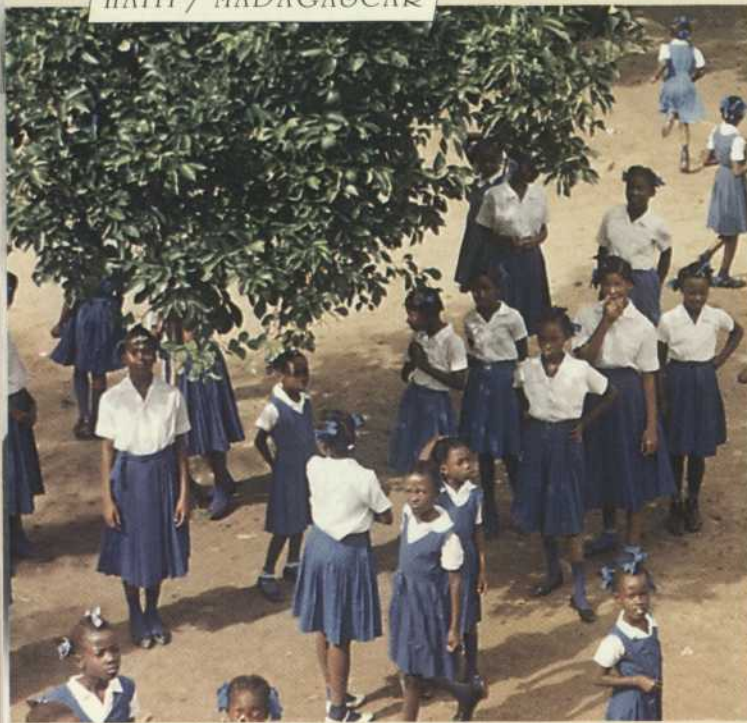


Photo: M.I.C.

TO RECEIVE AND TO SHARE

BY ADELINE BONNY, M.I.C.

For more than 20 years, the education of primary school children has been the main preoccupation of Sr. Adeline Bonny, a native of Haiti. Concrete and demanding duties as an educator, both in Haiti and in Madagascar where she spent ten years, reinforced her belief that the future of a people is prepared by education. Her return to Haiti gave her the joy of transmitting the wisdom of life received from the Malagasy people... she has become a link between two peoples and two Churches.

Having returned from Madagascar in 1994, I am now involved in the area of education at Trou-du-Nord, Haiti. As Directress of our Primary School, I experience once again how our Haitian system of education is influenced by social and political turmoil. This situation requires me to distance myself from my recent teaching experience in Morondava, Madagascar, without forgetting the precious cultural enrichment I have received.

STRIVING TO MAKE A NEW START

Education for development, such is the overall objective proposed by Haitian thinkers. The key to reaching this goal is the Haitianization of school books. It is essential to have books that reflect our social environment as well as themes for study that are close to Haitian reality. In order to banish illiteracy, facilitate understanding and enhance oral and written expression, Creole has been introduced in the schools. The national plan for 2004 is to provide through education an initiation in technology and production activities. There is, however, a major gap between ideal and practice. Because of repeated changes of government, political problems, frequent upheavals and diverging opinions concerning the options taken, the reforms at every level are at a virtual standstill.

In Madagascar there is also talk of recovery of the nation with high expectations placed in education. Emphasis is put on civic and moral education for the formation of Malagasy citizens. There is a will to safeguard traditional values. Some of these values inspire my reflection and action in Haiti in a more immediate way: solidarity, gratuitousness, the sense of responsibility and the willingness to take charge of one's future. Teamwork is encouraged and the 18 ethnic groups that

constitute the Malagasy people are asked to work together. In the schools, all efforts are combined for the realization of a common plan to prepare a more directed and balanced adult life. Collective projects for the protection of the environment, such as reforestation, are also encouraged.

This concept is quite consistent with our Haitian motto *Strength through unity*. However, in Madagascar as in Haiti, there are very different aspirations and political trends and people are easily divided by party spirit. Mutual help as practiced by Malagasy people sometimes has an ulterior motive. An unrequited helpful gesture could cause the apparent generosity to run dry. Becoming aware of the assets as well as the limitations of our respective situations is a valuable acquisition, especially for a missionary.

CULTURAL ASSETS

The culture of Madagascar has influenced me in so many ways. I appreciate the Malagasy values of simplicity, of searching for what is essential and performing humble work. Thus, having the children go back to school, which is quite a headache for parents, is less so in Madagascar than in Haiti. In that country, it is more important to get school supplies than shoes and new clothes. Remembering this, I insist more with parents here that the school uniform be the last thing they think about.

In Madagascar, past history and education have not resulted in distaste for humble, manual labour, which is so vital to the development of a country. For example, it is not uncommon to see government employees working on a farm to provide more adequately for their own

needs. Children who are motivated are happy to do manual work. Similarly, in our schools, even if these are private schools, the students contribute to a large extent in the upkeep of their quarters. As the tuition is quite reasonable, the children from different economic backgrounds learn to live together as equals. I try to propose and uphold these lasting values in Haiti.

In Haiti, when I notice how aggressive some groups are, particularly about beliefs and practices pertaining to religion, I cannot help telling the students and other people about the ecumenical spirit that exists in Madagascar. Among adults, young people and children in that country, there is a respect for each person's belief. This ecumenical spirit is reflected in the relationships between Lutherans, Catholics, Episcopalians and others. Political or religious events are held in one church or another with the participation of all without fear of partisan attitudes. Baptisms, Confirmations and First Communions are occasions for thanksgiving and sharing among friends of different faiths.

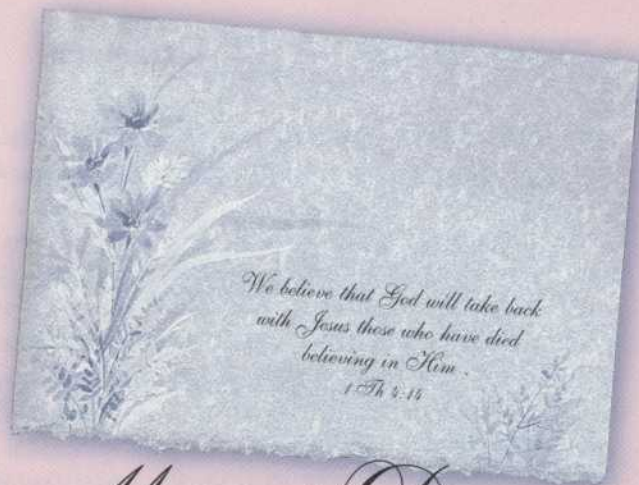
Even if not the whole Malagasy population know Jesus Christ and His message, they all believe in God the Creator. Changing one's religion from Protestantism to Catholicism is considered a return to the origins of the Christian faith. Mixed marriages of young people who live their faith in different religions are more frequent in Madagascar, regardless of the role their parents play in their respective Churches.

Education in Haiti as in Madagascar demands a lot of love, determination and perseverance. Sharing values that are common to both our peoples and discovering our differences have helped me to grow. Communion between our two Churches is a strength and I am determined to make the most of this missionary experience especially in my commitment among the children of Haiti.



In Madagascar as in Haiti, Sr. Adeline inculcates values of solidarity, gratuity and a sense of responsibility.

Photo: M.I.C. Madagascar



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The Child, Promise of the Future!

BY CHRISTIAN BEAULIEU



With the birth of each child, the human adventure starts anew, opening itself to the future. It is in a child's feeble hands that we confide the sacred trust of our dreams and of our hopes! For Christian Beaulieu, the most important and essential possessions to transmit are the profound convictions which life makes us discover laboriously and which can enlighten one's existence. The story of the young Samuel as told in the Bible sheds a totally new light on this mission

The birth of a child is loaded with consequences and rich in unexpected developments! As in the case of young Samuel, the arrival of a child disturbs, unsettles the lives of many people... The child takes his place and nothing will ever be the same as before... life around him and even the future! You may say that a child doesn't change the world. Yet, the coming of a child is the dawn of a new day for him, for those who receive him: his parents, those who surround him, his future educators, even for the future generations.

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE BEGINNINGS?

Do you know in what social environment young Samuel was born? in what circumstances he grew up? In society and in the Churches of the time, the enthusiasm, the burning fire of the early days had died out. Parents and priests, represented by old Eli who was now deaf and blind, lacked vision and spirit. It was in this difficult period that young Samuel was consecrated to God and, while still a very young boy, already ministered in the sanctuary of Silo in the presence of Eli, the priest. One night, lying down in the temple of the Lord, he sleeps near the Arc of the Covenant and the light of God, which burns still, allows him to see. A glimmer of hope remains!

In fact, the Lord calls... But Samuel cannot recognize him, because the Lord has not yet spoken to him. He jumps up, runs to the bedside of the priest Eli and tells him: *Here I am, why did you call me?...* When for the third time the scene is repeated, Eli understands that it is the Lord who calls the child and he teaches him how to answer... Perhaps it is too late? Will there be a fourth time? But the Lord returns. He speaks with insistence: *Samuel, Samuel!* And the young Samuel listens... and allows the Lord to speak to him! The next morning, at the break of day, Samuel *opens the doors of the house of the Lord*. A symbolic gesture! He brings about the restoration of the covenant between God and His people.

What about the children of today? Do they not ask the same questions as Samuel? How to find again enthusiastic and exciting educators to transmit the faith? What has become of the charismatic people of old? Where have the flame and the freshness of the origins gone? What has happened to the effervescence, to the bubbling activity of the Spirit of great beginnings? Of course, such dynamism cannot be summoned at will. What then are our chances for the future? How do we make a new start? How can the Lord still make His presence felt to His people today?

The experience of the aging Eli can help us to situate ourselves anew in face of this great challenge. Charged with promoting the alliance with God and filled by the Lord with numerous blessings, the old man Eli, as opposed to Samuel, is lying in his usual place, far from the Lord. He is without any vision for the future of his people. He has no word to fill the void of which Israel suffered and the Lord reproached him for not having learned to transmit to his sons the spiritual heritage which has been given to him. It is thus the ruin of his house...

THE HERITAGE WHICH WE CANNOT GIVE UP

Do you know what Saint Paul asked Timothy to transmit without fail to his spiritual children, to the future generations? *My dear Timothy, take great care of the spiritual gift that has been entrusted to you. I exhort you to revive the spiritual gift which God has given you. Guard the deposit which God has entrusted to you.*

(1 Tm 4:14; 2 Tm 1:6,14)

One cannot be more specific. What is the most sacred thing we are given to transmit to our loved ones?... What is it that we would not want for anything in the world to see them deprived of? What is the most valuable, the most essential possession we have to transmit to our children as parents, workers in a pastoral service or educators of the faith?... What is the content of this deposit which we must transmit in vivid, striking terms? Without which, the mystery of faith vanishes into thin air and glides between our hands. Without

which, the best of our heritage would suffer the risk of disappearing, dying. And that is failure... the catastrophe.

Our children are not called to grow wild. Not everything is of equal importance. The Gospel must be taught to them with new words, otherwise it will go unheeded. Each one of us has within himself a store of inner convictions tried by fire, discovered painfully and laboriously by dint of living. These are very simple truths that

shine with powerful light and summarize our entire lives. They are the result of an incredible work that has taken place in our hearts and in the hearts of those dear to us. This is the Gospel each of us must proclaim to the best of our ability, this is the grace unlike any other which must be transmitted! Have I caused this prophetic gift to become commonplace, sterile and spiritless? Do I have such a poor opinion of myself that it prevents me from projecting this powerful light in the hearts of others?

At the rise of a new day, Samuel opened wide the doors of the Temple of Yabweb...

With him, a great new beginning is at work. For today again, with each child, the dawn of a new day rises... And we are offered a future... where God awaits us □

One may read in the Bible the story of the birth of Samuel and of his call to serve the Lord and His people: 1 Samuel, Chapters 1 and 3.

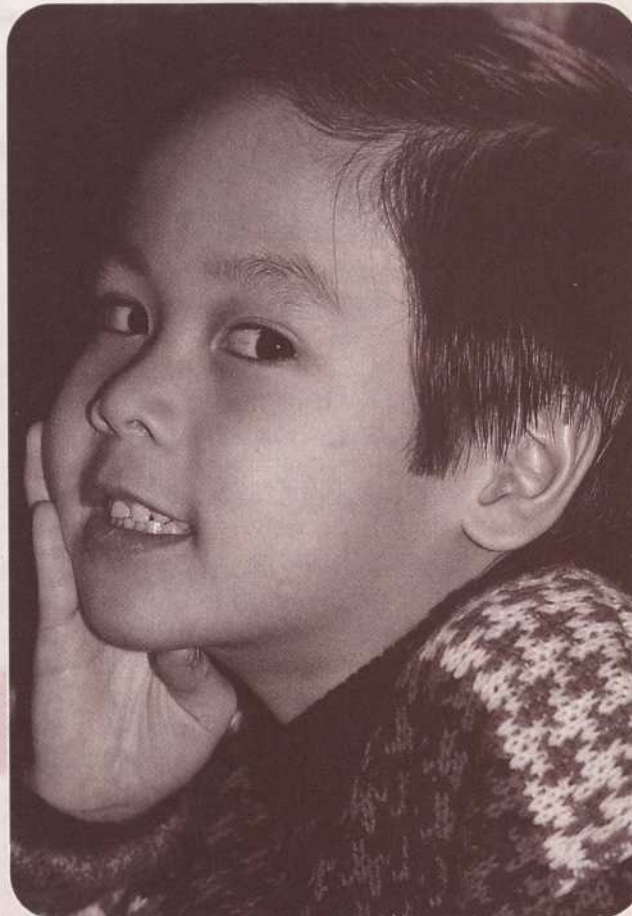


Photo: Khank LA

Sparks of Friendship



With enthusiasm, Sr. Gabrielle Saucier invites young students to the love and respect of peoples.

BY GABRIELLE SAUCIER, M.I.C

"There is life in our big house", the M.I.C.'s of Pont-Viau say with joy. Indeed, more and more people know about the missionary animation project that was started in 1987. Children come from all parts of Montreal and the surrounding suburbs to our residence in Laval to experience activities centered on the mission. Some schools also invite M.I.C. Sisters to take part in their missionary programme. To date, more than 3000 school children have been reached. Sr. Gabrielle Saucier tells us why this project is close to her heart and how the children participate in it.

GOOD SUPPORTERS OF THE MISSION
Young people are good supporters of the mission. With their love, their richness and their determination to make the world a better place, children can effectively cooperate in the work of evangelization. This brand new dynamism is meant to grow. In their effort to develop this missionary drive among children, parents, educators and Christian communities become quite creative. Missionary promotion thus becomes the key element of their educational mission. They help the children live a relationship with Jesus each day - in their own environments - and this encourages them to make use of their richness to reach out to others.

For the last three years, a school animator has invited us to meet the students of the Second Cycle in order to awaken and support their missionary spirit. A few parents from Auteuil drive the whole class to Pont-

Viau for a missionary awareness programme. A Pastor from the Diocese of Saint-Jean-Longueuil pays the cost of bussing a group of children to Laval. Several school Principals foot the transportation expenses of their students' periodic visits to Pont-Viau throughout the year. Commitments take a variety of forms!

In the context of our missionary and cultural animation project in Pont-Viau, the schools are invited to actively participate in the elaboration of a programme which has as objective to promote understanding, respect of different values, beliefs and cultural practices of various peoples. This is considered a vital task of the Christian life. It has to do with faith, love and hope which are the life force of all the baptized in Christ.

Our programme respects the many possible options, be they moral or spiritual. An unconditional welcome is extended to all. Whenever possible, another perspective is added to

our meetings. The children need to recognize that God loves them in a personal way. When the moment comes for a spiritual approach, Jesus offering water to the Samaritan woman speaks eloquently about the relationship He wants to establish in order to transform lives.

When the students of Coursol School were asked, "What kind of water was Jesus talking about?" *Oh! well, it's the pure water of love He wanted to give her!* answered Simon without hesitation. In their prayer, Marie-Claude and Carole expressed themselves to the same effect: *Jesus, share your spring of water with those who thirst. Come and change our world, stop war as well as pollution. Bring love to those who are unhappy. And all of us will help you to rebuild this world.* Marie-France, however, prayed to Jesus in these terms: *While you were on earth, Jesus, you showed us such wonderful acts of love. So why is there so much meanness?... Lord, help us to get back to reality.*

For all the children, the video on Délia Tétréault, our M.I.C. Foundress, is most interesting. They grasp the meaning of the prophetic dream Délia had as a child. She saw a large field undergoing a sudden change: the ears of wheat became heads of children of all races and colours... Like Délia, the children want other children everywhere to be happy, to feel joy and God's love for them. Like Délia, they cannot fall asleep in life with only one dream in their minds. Evelyn, grade 6, puts it this way: *Holy Spirit, you taught us how to do good around us. You taught us how to love one another. You showed us how beautiful life can be. But we forgot it all. Please, do come quickly to remind us!*

TEAM WORK

Both lay people and Sisters support this project in which diversity is a sign of richness and mutual cooperation. Consultants in Christian education, pastoral animators and teachers provide for the joint effort of school, parish and our missionary service. The educational and professional quality of their presence gives us a glimpse of a bright future.

Our senior M.I.C. Sisters bring a magnificent contribution in which their experience is indeed a message and a challenge. Their main asset is the knowledge of languages and cultures together with their deep life of faith. They thus continue their commitment after 30, 40, 50 years spent in Japan, China, Africa or elsewhere. Other younger M.I.C.'s of various nationalities participate in the project, bringing the freshness of their testimony. They express a great sensitivity to the experiences of solidarity and creativity of their peoples as well as to the encounter with the God of life who liberates and is committed to the poorest of the poor.

A POSITIVE INDICATOR

One positive indicator of genuine missionary awareness is observed when prejudice



Schoolboys learn about the beliefs and cultural practices of the African people.

testimonies in the large number of letters received: Philippe, grade 5, wrote: *I am spoiled by the privileges I enjoy, which children of other countries do not have. I am so lucky to go to school, to have many presents, many toys, to be able to go out... In some countries, money and food are hard to obtain. Donations would help them a lot to be healthy and to be educated. As human beings, we can help others like us to survive a longer time without suffering. Let us try to put ourselves in their shoes.*

Photos: T. Lortie, M.I.C.

falls and a growing ability to understand and accept people of other countries, other colours and other economic standards is witnessed. It is most important to check the quality of the message received. A little quiz for the students at the end of each encounter never fails to produce pleasant surprises: *What quality do you admire the most in your friends of Malawi, Japan, or other countries you visited? What gesture impressed you the most in their way of living? What values do you admire the most in them?* Thus a new friendship develops between the children here and those abroad. Missionary projects are given support, and correspondence with children of Haiti flows regularly.

The sending of materials overseas continues... and there is no lack of

The children were deeply interested when Sr. Anne-Marie Parent related the story of her vocation and recalled enthusiastically the events of her missionary life in Haiti. Marie-Maxime wrote: *I was surprised and happy to know that people like you can devote thirty years of their life to the children of Haiti. Many of us want to become missionaries with Délia Tétréault. Even if I don't want to become one, I support the project. What a proof of love for the whole world!*

The children are thus led to give witness by their actions, their life and their faith. Every gesture of friendship, every attitude of sharing, every victory over selfishness becomes an authentic sign of evangelization. Together, they bring to the world the fruits of a vibrantly alive Church, open to the springtime of life! □



M.I.C.s of different nationalities with the missionary animation team: (l. to r., 2nd row) Srs. Yvette Belanger, Anne-Marie Parent, Gabrielle Saucier.

Photo: A. Raso, M.I.C.



Photo : S. Morissette

In the Garden of God

Sister Adrienne De Grandpré (Sainte-Lucille)

Sr. Adrienne was born in St-Nazaire-d'Acton October 6, 1905. In her childhood and teenage years, she lived first in St-Liboire and then in Drummondville. She finally settled with her family in Rhode Island, USA, and worked in factories for five years.

In 1930, she decided to join the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. Assigned to our convent of Quebec City, she devoted herself for eleven years to various housekeeping tasks in our retreat house. In 1944, she left for Haiti. Along with a few companions, she opened our mission of Les Côteaux where she taught elementary school children for a few years. Her activity was then directed towards community services, which gave



her the opportunity to welcome local people. She also exerted her zeal as spiritual director of a group of the Legion of Mary. Her most noticeable trait was her love for the poor. Her great kindness and unconditional welcome earned her the people's love and respect. Humble, patient, gentle and serene, she allowed Christ's love for the humble and the poor to shine through her.

The life of Sr. Adrienne was made up of small acts which she did with a generous heart. Taught by Mary and nourished by the Eucharist, she allowed herself to be transformed by Christ. She died quietly on October 8, 1996, at the age of 91, having lived 66 years in the religious life. She left us the memory of her great charity.

Sister Berthe Surprenant (Marie-de-la-Présentation)

Born September 16, 1896, Sr. Berthe was originally from St-Alexandre-d'Iberville. She was five years old when her parents settled in Swanton, Vermont, USA. At the age of 20, she entered the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. She experienced the challenges of a Community still in its beginnings and received her formation from Mother Délia Tétréault, our Foundress.

She took part in the opening of our first houses in Rimouski, Quebec and Chicoutimi and also devoted herself as a promoter of our magazine LE PRÉCURSEUR. Her special ability to care for the sick oriented her apostolic life towards this service. Having been assigned to the Oriental Hospital in Vancouver, she assisted the elderly and the TB patients of Asian origin and quickly earned their confidence and affection. Her presence was filled with love



and joy and with the eagerness to share the Good News. After serving eleven years in Vancouver, she received an assignment to Africa. She assisted the nurse at the dispensaries of our missions and cared with particular attention for the little children and the poor. Her failing health obliged her to return to Canada, where she went on gracefully into old age.

A hard worker and a loving companion, Sr. Berthe was able to see the bright side of life and found happiness in fulfilling the will of God the best she could. Having celebrated her 100th birthday and her 80th year in the religious life, she handed her soul over to God on October 31, 1996. She witnessed the early years of the Institute, kept alive the thanksgiving and Marian spirit bequeathed by our Foundress, Délia Tétréault, and contributed to the growth of our Community.

Sister Cécile Anctil (Saint-Alphonse-Rodriguez)

Sr. Cécile was born in Montreal on the 17th of October, 1908 and was baptized in Saint Joseph Parish. She made her profession as a member of the M.I.C. Institute on August 8, 1930.

After being assigned to missionary animation and to the promotion of our magazine LE PRÉCURSEUR, she left for our Oriental Hospital in Vancouver, where she devoted herself to the care of the elderly. She later served on the night shift at the Chinese Hospital of Montreal. She worked a few years in the art studio of the Mother House, a prelude to her artistic career. From 1956 to 1973, while upgrading her own knowledge, she taught plastic arts and art history to the students of our Immaculate Conception Secondary School in Granby. A whole generation of students has kept an unforgettable memory of those days. Having retired from public teaching, she opened a studio in Granby: her desire



was to make God known through beauty. Transferred to Trois-Rivières in 1977, her reputation soon attracted many students. Her friendliness and her helpfulness won the hearts of people she encountered and allowed her to establish long-lasting friendships.

While in retirement in Joliette, Sr. Cécile was always ready to give her help and her joy seemed to lie in spreading it around her. Her work was nourished by prayer as she aspired to be united to God in order to share Him with others. She had a special devotion to Mary and promoted devotion to the Rosary and the Miraculous Medal. She was in prayer before the Tabernacle, where she enjoyed spending long hours, when the Lord came for her suddenly on November 2, 1996. She was 88 years old of age and had lived 68 years in religious life.

Sister Rachel De Mars (Bernadette-de-Lourdes)

Born in North Dakota, USA, on August 22, 1906, Sr. Rachel was 14 years old when her family moved to Newport, Vermont. At the age of 19, she entered the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and made her profession in 1927.

She first worked at promoting our magazines, LE PRÉCURSEUR and THE PRECURSOR in Canada and in the USA, and then became Superior of the new Mother House opened in 1938 at 2900 St. Catherine Road, Montreal. Later, after one term in authority at our house of Granby, she was assigned to the Philippines, where she opened a new mission in Mati. Then, named superior of our Immaculate Conception Academy of Manila, in Gagalangin, she spread joy and won the hearts of its many students and personnel by her kindness and thoughtful concern. When the development



of the M.I.C. Community and its increasing works required the appointment of a Regional Superior for the Philippines, Sr. Rachel was chosen for this responsibility. At the end of her term, she became Directress of the Scholasticate and, later, of the Novitiate in Baguio. As she advanced in age, she gladly accepted the less demanding activity of working in the Provincial archives. She returned to Quebec in 1989.

She was a cheerful, simple, devoted and loving person who knew well how to express and share her deep values. Having lived many years near our Foundress, she was thus imbued with Mother Délia's spirit, especially love of the will of God and thanksgiving with Mary. She died on the 10th of December, 1996 at the age of 90, having spent 71 years as a religious. Sr. Rachel left a rich spiritual heritage to the young generations.

Sister Eva Tessier (Marie-du-Crucifix)

Sr. Eva was born in St-Bonaventure-d'Upton in 1907. She made her profession in our Institute in 1933 and followed a nursing course at the Hôtel-Dieu Hospital in Montreal. In 1936, she left for China and worked in our different dispensaries of Manchuria for twelve years. This period was marked by the war between China and Japan followed by the conflict between Chinese Nationalists and Chinese Communists.

Filled with charity and zeal, she fulfilled her mission with courage and tenacity, finding in faith, prayer and recourse to Mary the light and strength she needed to proclaim Jesus Christ and to be Good News in circumstances that were at times difficult. Her work at the dispensary, her visits to the sick and the care of wounded soldiers provided opportunities for her to touch

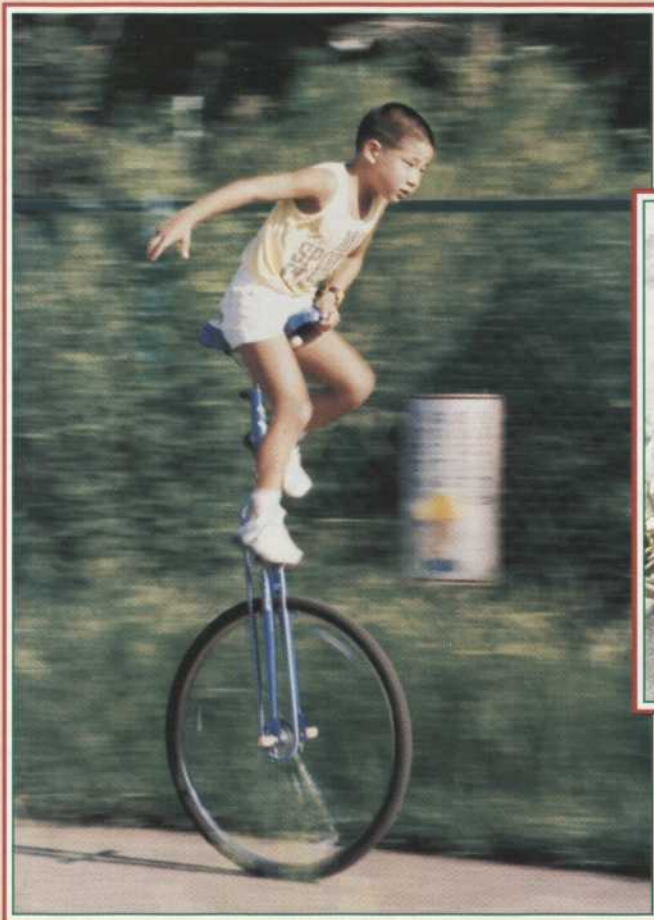


their hearts. Drawn closer to the love of Christ, many were baptized. Forced to return to her homeland in 1948, she then devoted herself to the care of her sick sisters before leaving for Haiti, where she worked courageously and cheerfully in the different dispensaries there for more than twenty years.

A woman of faith and prayer entirely devoted to the cause of Christ throughout the course of her life, Sr. Eva was in the midst of her activities and still full of vitality when the Lord called her unexpectedly on January 8, 1997, at the age of 89. She has spent 66 years with us and her life at the service of the sick and the very poor remains for us an eloquent and precious testimony.

Sr. Jeanne Guinois, M.I.C.

NEWSBRIEFS... FROM HERE AND ELSEWHERE



Japan - The monocyce trip made by Ken Ichikawa took him from Soya, north of Japan, to Seto in the south.

Haiti - Catarina Hongo, M.I.C. meets children from the neighbourhood.



Photo: M.I.C., Haiti

JAPAN

AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE

There are all sorts of challenges in life. Young Ken Ichikawa recently met a big one: he rode a monocyce from the North to the South of Japan, totalling 3600 kilometers. Why? To make friends and to help the children of Haiti. Sr. Céline Bourbeau relates this feat.

Nine years old Ken lives in the large city of Tokyo. When he was three years old, he attended the *Seibo Yochien* Kindergarten run by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. His home is four kilometers away from the Kindergarten. The very first year therefore, that is at the age of three, Ken went to school by himself on his tricycle. The following year, he used roller skates, which he soon exchanged for a skateboard. At age five, now a little man, he rode a monocyce.

The neighbours and all those who saw him go by were worried. The police received many calls: *There is a little boy all alone on a monocyce.* Ken's mother was uneasy. She would have preferred to see her son study quietly at home like the other children. The father, however, was

proud of his son and encouraged him. When questioned about the dangers of such a sport, he answered: *When you allow a child to take risks, chances are this child will be more conscious of danger.*

Ken's father had been a motorcycle enthusiast in his youth. As a student he had travelled across Japan on a 50cc motorcycle. One day, Mr. Ichikawa told his son about this experience and asked him if he would be prepared to repeat the exploit on his monocyce. *Oh Yes, I'd love to,* answered the child. There was the challenge! Ken would take advantage of his holidays to make the same trip on his monocyce as his father had made on a motorcycle. He had another idea as well. From Kindergarten, he remembered the Directress, Sr. Catarina Hongo, who had gone to Haiti after many fruitful years of service in the school. Ken had been very impressed and now, he too wanted to help the children of that country who are poor. He would send them the money he would collect during his memorable trip.

To prepare for this event, Ken has been riding his monocyce every day for the last four years. In 1995, he took part in two competitions: in May, he finished ninth in a 42-kilometer race among 200 candidates including a world champion; in the same year he won a 200-kilometer race. To help him train every day and to make it even more challenging for him, Mr. Ichikawa built a new monocyce 1.60 meters high. In the two months that preceded his departure, Ken cycled through the streets of his neighbourhood until 10 o'clock every evening, thus covering some 3000 kilometers.

July 15, 1996 ! Time to go! Ken was now in Soya at the extreme north of Hokkaido. Until September 1st, he cycled an average of 80 to 100 kilometers a day at a maximum speed of 70 km/h. After travelling 48 days along the west coast of the Sea of Japan, he went to Seto at the extreme south of Kyushu. All this time, Ken's father and his three-year-old brother followed him by car. Ken had some enriching experiences along the way: he saw the aftermath of the terrible earthquake of Kobe (1993); farther south he visited the victims of a recent typhoon, stopped in Hiroshima, etc. When he finally reached the end of his odyssey and his parents greeted him, he threw himself into their arms in tears. He then gave his first impressions: *It was wonderful! The sky, the sea, the rivers, the mountains. But it was difficult too, especially when I rode uphill or downhill. There were times when I thought of giving up the whole idea. I don't think I did anything special, it was fun! Everywhere I stopped, I met friends who encouraged me and were kind to me.* And his father added: *I think he has learned a lot.*

This was a great risk taken by a child. For Ken, it was an invaluable experience, one he will never forget. Thanks to the courage and determination of this boy, the children of Haiti will receive a generous donation and Ken will have been a missionary in his own way. □

Céline Bourbeau, M.I.C.

Text based on reports featured in Japanese newspapers.

CANADA

A MISSIONARY HEART NEVER GROWS COLD

There are people who leave an imprint on our lives. Their vulnerability and their limitations do not prevent particular aspects of their personality to challenge us and to draw us towards something more. Certain events, especially the departure of these loved ones, make us fully aware of the beauty hidden behind their humanity. The homage which Sr. Ida Brochu-Caron renders her mother is an invitation to discover in our own loved ones the meaning they give to their lives and to recognize their unique way of living the mission.

In her old age, my mother revealed to me the tremendous power of love and openness to others that gave meaning to a life which has apparently become useless and to colour each day in a different shade. My mother's concern for others, which was the fabric of her life, enabled her at 92 years of age to take an interest in the lived experiences of those she loved. Missionary endeavours were a prime concern of hers and this preoccupation enhanced her creativity. She would collect from parish bulletins and from magazines that were given to her, excerpts for the young people with whom I associated and for whom she prayed. She would also choose

texts likely to nourish my missionary homilies and find prayers to be used on recollection days with my Sisters. Everything was chosen carefully. She would even add wise and discreet explanations on how I might use them.

The remaining years of her life spent in the hospital, though painful to her, were rich with the witness of her faith. When she first arrived at the Centre, a few people laughed at her life of prayer but after a while "little Mrs. Caron" received many confidences and each day someone came to confide their dearest intentions to her Hail Marys.

We too often get hooked on appearances and find it hard to know the facets of the interior life of those near us. What meaning do they give to their life? What aspects of their mission are we fortunate enough to know? The Father's visitation and their last moments of life on earth are often moments of grace and lucidity, moments of deep and rich discovery for those who remain. The death of my mother, which happened last August 29, brought out of the shadows some aspects of her life which I only vaguely suspected. When I look at her now with filial love, her life shines with a new and eternal light. The richness of her life prompts me to pay this final homage to her.

May this simple testimony become a source of serenity and light for certain elderly people, but also and especially for the young people who wonder if, after all, love is worth the cost. □

Ida Brochu-Caron, M.I.C.



Photo: M.I.C., Canada

A special joy! Mrs. Caron reads to Sr. Ida a letter from her daughter Rose-Alice, M.I.C., missionary in Peru.

A VACATION AROUND THE PLANET

Hello!

The school year is almost over! You already dream of a vacation? You want to take a break and have fun, but would you also like to make new friends and do some interesting things together? Well, how about a fun trip around the planet, meeting children all over the world? Here is your guide for the journey; it tells you where and how children get around. Have a nice trip and don't forget to contact me when you return.

FROM ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER...

To read is to take off on a trip! You get a million messages from the news media on what life is like for the children of the world. Today, grown-up people and even children are speaking out or writing to get people thinking about the children who are the victims of war, hunger, sickness, violence and exploitation through child labour. Go with your group and meet the children of the world.

TO SLIP INSIDE YOUR BAGGAGE:

- * Magazines, newspapers, videos, songs, poems. If possible, UNICEF kits (available free of charge)
- * Two questions:
What are the achievements and the joys of the children of the world?
What are their difficulties and sufferings?

MEMORIES IN A JUMBLE

Together as a group, arrange in a dynamic way the information you collected:

- * **Reality Poster:** Divide this poster into two sections. On one section, write the title: *Joys and Difficulties of the Children of our Country* and on the other: *Joys and Difficulties of the Children of Other Countries*. Now you are ready to classify your information.
- * **Hope Poster:** Under the title: *Our Wishes, Desires and Hopes*, write what you would like to see, what you desire and hope concerning the children of this country and of other countries. Say why you carry these wishes and hopes in your heart. Draw pictures, make things, write something to let other people know what you hope for.

SHOW YOUR COLOURS

In the form of a news report, let each one present a cause about which he or she feels strongly:

- * State the cause you chose
- * Explain the issue
- * Propose solutions
N.B. Use the posters

Happy Trip!
Enjoy yourself...
take time to swim,
play tennis, go on picnics!

Service national Mond-Ami, Montréal
Répertoire d'activités des Clubs Mond-Ami
Authorized adaptation and publication



Photo: T. Dufour, M. L.

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MISSIONARY ANIMATION CENTER
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Outremont, Qc Canada
H2V 2B4 Tel.: (514) 495-1551

OFFICE OF THE DÉLIA TÉTREAULT CAUSE
100 Place Juge Desnoyers
Pont-Viau, Laval, Qc Canada
H7G 1A4 Tel.: (514) 663-6460

AFRICA:

PROVINCIAL HOUSE
P.O. Box 47, Mzimba
Malawi, Central Africa

CUBA:

Calle 33, N° 3409 - Entre 34 y 36
Playa
Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba 12100

HAITI:

MAISON PROVINCIALE (DELMAS)
C.P. 1085, Port-au-Prince
Haïti, Les Antilles

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PROVINCIAL HOUSE
Good Hope Convent
381, Jat's Incline
Kowloon, Hong Kong

JAPAN:

PROVINCIAL HOUSE
8-13-16 Fukazawa, Setagaya Ku
Tokyo 158, Japan

MADAGASCAR:

MAISON PROVINCIALE
Lot 11-J-4 bis, Ivandry
Antananarivo, Madagascar 101

PHILIPPINES:

PROVINCIAL HOUSE
P.O. Box 468, 1502 Greenhills
Metro Manila, Philippines

SOUTH AMERICA:

CASA PROVINCIAL
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Lima 5
Perú, América del Sur

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PROVINCIAL HOUSE
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Fu Hsing South Road, Section 2
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Photo: H. Turcotte, M.I.C.

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to you children
of the world,
for keeping us
in wonderment
and full of hope
towards life !**

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PUBLICATION OF
THE MISSIONARY SISTERS
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

MAILING ADDRESS:

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MY NAME IS *TODAY*

Many of the things we need can wait.

The child cannot.

Right now is the time bones are being formed,

blood is being made and

senses are being developed.

To children we cannot answer "Tomorrow,"

The child's name is "Today."

*Gabriela Mistral
Nobel poet, Chile*

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DO YOU WISH TO DISCERN THE LORD'S CALL WITHIN YOU?

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