

Series 9, No. 4
July - August, 1982

MIC

MISSION NEWS



Japan

*Creation retains the hope of being freed to enjoy
the same freedom and glory as the children of God.*

Rom. 8: 21

Editorial

In our responsibility for MIC MISSION NEWS, we are conscious that you, our readers, want to know more about what Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception do; more about the people with whom we work; what the hopes and needs of those people are; how they are faring; what affects their lives; how they see themselves in relation to one another and to the world. That is why we concern ourselves with the thoughts and experiences of MIC's and the people with whom we share and live.

There are still millions who have not heard the Good News of the Creator's dynamic love for mankind. Many others may not be responding fully to this love through concern and service of His neglected poor. As MIC's we desire to incarnate the prayers and gifts of the Church that sends us and makes its presence real in another culture. New signs of life spring up around us, small and unassuming now, but enduring and full of promise; signs of life in profusion, with a strength that comes from within, a confidence in what lies ahead. For these reasons, MIC MISSION NEWS reaches out for your prayers, your support, but especially for YOU.

We echo Jean Vanier: "Our hope is to share with you in the deep lifestream of humanity: in the laughter of children, in the peace of mankind. As we must give ourselves to the rose and the tree, to the earth and the wind, let us give ourselves to the future of our world."

Sr. Ma. Anthea Raso, M.I.C.

***Hope, like love, transcends all time.
It is a friend, a healer, a maker of dreams.***

F. Weedn

MIC MISSION NEWS

is a bimonthly published by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

EDITORIAL TEAM:

Sr. Ma. Anthea Raso, M.I.C.

Sr. Madeline Maillet, M.I.C.

Sr. Rita Blais, M.I.C.

Lay-Out Consultant:

Sr. Fleur-Ange L'Heureux, M.I.C.

POSTAL ADDRESS:

Box 157, Laval Branch, P.O.

Laval, Quebec, Canada H7N 4Z4

Second Class Mail Registration No. 0358

Returned Postage Guaranteed

ISSN 0315 - 9655

Port au Prince, Haiti

Responding To God's Call

"My heart exults; how good, how generous is the Lord to me!"

A young Haitian, Jeanne Françoise Alabré recently made her final commitment as a M.I.C. Sister. Her provincial superior Sr. Georgette Barrette, asked her, "Why did you become a missionary Sister?" The following lines tell us Sister Jeanne's answer.

- Sister Jeanne, the photograph taken on your profession day gives the impression that you felt very happy indeed on this memorable occasion. Could you tell me why?

- *The main reason for my happiness was that the Lord's promise long cherished in my heart had at last been fulfilled. I had entered into an alliance of love with God. What happened to me then was such a wonderful event that I could not keep it a secret. I had to exult and sing and tell others how good, how generous the Lord had been to me.*



- What does it mean for you to be an M.I.C.?

- *For me to become an M.I.C. means to enter into the project of Delia Tetreault, our Foundress: to live a life dedicated to the Lord in his Church, according to the plan Delia herself elaborated and which is followed by her community. I participate in her project: to spread the Good News to those who as yet do not know Christ, in a spirit of thanksgiving, with Mary, Jesus' first missionary. What greater mission can there be?*

- How did you come to the decision of entering the M.I.C. community?



"I am deeply grateful to my parents... today they share in my joy."

- I always had the desire to dedicate my life to the Lord in a spirit of thanksgiving for all his gifts, although I really did not wish to enter a religious community. It was when I saw these devoted and happy missionaries who had come to Haiti from a distant land work among the poor that I first said to myself, "Why should I not follow their example?" I then felt an insistent call to join their ranks.

As I grew up from childhood, I watched the Sisters at work. My mother once told me how it was thanks to one of them, Sr. St. Valentine, that I had safely come through a serious illness shortly after my birth. As a nurse, she took such good care of me that she saved my life. But my real meeting with the M.I.C.'s took place in 1966 when I became a student at the Cayes Domestic Science Centre. It was there more particularly that I met our cheerful Sisters.

- From your own experience, do you think your parents had their share in promoting your vocation to the religious life? They seem to approve your choice...

- Parents surely play an important role in awakening and deepening their children's faith. It is thanks to my parents that I understood and

lived up to the religious formation the Sisters gave us at school. At home, my parents were always ready and willing to answer our questions on spiritual matters. They taught me by their own example how to pray, to love our Lord Jesus, to cherish Mary, to discern God's action in our lives... I am deeply grateful to my parents. Today they share in my joy.

- What advice can you share with young people?

- I would like to tell them not to spurn this precious opportunity. It seems impossible that anyone who feels this all important call should fail to answer the invitation of a God who loves us so dearly. Why should we refuse to answer love's call when it comes from the God of love himself? You who hear this call, be sure to answer it with your whole heart.

- What do you expect to do from now on?

- After completing my studies, I hope to go and live with the poorest of the poor, with those who have not yet heard the Good News, so that their own lives too may be transformed...

- Thank you, Sister Jeanne, for sharing your joy with us. May all your apostolic dreams come true!



"A love which trusted and forged ahead."

Delia Tetreault And Her Message

by Sr. Pauline Longtin, M.I.C.

Courageous Dynamism

In the first installment of this article (see May-June 1982 issue) Delia Tetreault was introduced as "a woman gifted with dauntless courage, a mystic who wielded considerable apostolic influence, a person in whose character both strength and tenderness were harmoniously blended." If we read her biography, however, we realize how at birth she was so frail that she was not expected to live. As she grew up to girlhood, poor health continued to plague her, making it difficult for her to pursue her studies at the boarding school of her native city of Marieville, Quebec. Therefore, from a mere human viewpoint, nobody could have foretold what great promise the future held for her. She wrote to her first companions in the foundation, "As

you know, God does not proceed as human beings do. He builds on nothingness." (19/7/4).

When one studies her personality from a closer angle, one discovers that she possessed a vitality at once pliable and daring. Only an intense interior flame could radiate afar, shedding such light and producing such warmth... These are indeed the characteristics of fire: to radiate, to enlighten, and to comfort. Enthusiasm might well be compared to a flame. In a talk to the Sisters (1926) the Foundress remarked, "There exists a fake enthusiasm. What we must possess is genuine enthusiasm... What is this genuine enthusiasm, I hear you ask... To me, it is love, an overflow of zeal, a heart which exults in the joyful exercise of virtue."

Elsewhere, "Love alone can bear fruit in the supernatural as well as in the natural order. Whence come works within the Church? All kinds of works? From love and from the union of hearts..." (1922).

And works of the Church were set going under the dynamic impulsion of Delia Tetreault like so many sparks of fire which in turn touched off other sparks. In the thirty years of her active life, the Foundress established 36 houses of her Institute among which 19 were located in the Far East: China, Japan, the Philippines; 16 in Canada, and 1 in Rome.

An innovator, she organized an Apostolic School in 1902; she also inaugurated on Canadian soil the Closed Retreat movement in order "to develop among women and young girls zeal for the interests of God and those of his Church." From the onset, she invited her friends and acquaintances to active participation in the works of her budding community. Her first missionary workshops were opened to provide opportunities of collaboration in her missionary spirit. Thus was launched the impetus

for lay collaborators which for more than half a century produced so many works of charity.

With unflinching discretion and perseverance she worked at reawakening in her compatriots zeal for the promotion of the Pontifical Missionary Works of the Propagation of the Faith and of the Holy Childhood. Convinced that the Mission related more to human groups than to geographical sectors, less than ten years after the foundation of her "work for the missions", she put her Sisters at the service of immigrants in several large Canadian cities such as Montreal, Quebec, Vancouver. These works are going strong after 70 years. Missionary history still reveals the

role played by Delia Tetreault in the foundation of the Quebec Foreign Mission Seminary. The missionary press also became, in her hands, a powerful means of reaching the masses through the publication of the magazine *PRECURSEUR* first published in 1920.

To all these enterprises must be added a vast correspondence which, to a great extent, contributes in helping us discover the secrets of this extremely rich and fruitful life, as well as the message of her conquering enthusiasm: a LOVE which TRUSTED and FORGED AHEAD.

Read in next issue: Presence and Participation.

Ancud, Chile

An Honour And A Privilege

by Sr. Paulette Côté, M.I.C.

At long last I have reached the mission of Ancud where I have lately been assigned. It is a small pleasant town situated on the island of Chiloe, at the southern tip of Chile. It took me fifteen hours of travel by bus from the city of Santiago, quite a long journey enlivened by interesting episodes. And now, I have settled down for the time being, and am eagerly making plans for the immediate future. From the windows of our little convent we can admire the foaming waves of the ocean and listen to the music of the surf pounding on the shores. The summer season lasts from October to February. Rainy days are plentiful throughout the year and the weather is nearly always cool.

The population is mostly made up of people of Spanish origin. They

are deeply attached to the Sisters. Our apostolate here consists chiefly in pastoral work. Once a week, the parents gather at our place to follow courses in catechetics which will enable them to teach religion to their own children. The latter are also assembled at the convent once a week to make sure they have absorbed the lessons given by their parents. After two years of preparation, boys and girls are allowed to make their First Communion. Besides courses in catechetics, adults may also attend Gospel sharings. One sister is in charge of CARITAS, on the diocesan level. Thanks to this charitable organization which supplies funds from many countries, 8,000 children were fed in our own diocese last year.



"I am happy to be here and I thank the Lord for this privilege of being with His children in Chile."

Since last July, I have had to travel through several places where stark poverty may be said to reign. The poor suffer from the injustice of the uncaring wealthy. I often wish our pampered children could know about the thousands of little ones who have to go hungry because there is not enough food to go around. These children live in hovels and they lack warm clothes to protect them against the cold. Hereabouts, the greater part of the population depends on high-sea fishery for a living. Whenever the sea is in a milder mood, fathers and sons launch out into the deep hoping for a plentiful catch. It is perilous and gruelling work at best.

In Ancud, education is highly appreciated. The city has primary and secondary schools. Even studies on the university level may be pursued. As Catholic priests are few

in number, they cannot assume the task of teaching religious subjects in these establishments. This teaching which it is our privilege to impart must be given outside regular schedules. At the beginning of the school year, my own task will consist in counselling a group of mothers who work as catechists in primary classes. I will also give instruction to a group of young apostles among whom budding vocations to the priestly or religious life may be found.

I am very happy to be here and I thank the Lord to have given me the strength to say "Yes" a second time, after a good many years spent in our Haitian mission field. It is a great honour and a great joy to know that we, as missionaries, are doing our share in spreading the kingdom of God by our presence in this lonely outpost.

Gently Into The Evening

*BLESSED are they who understand my
faltering steps and shaking hand.*

*BLESSED are they who know that my ears
today must strain to catch
the words they say.*

*BLESSED are they who seem to know that my
eyes are dim and my wits are slow.*

*BLESSED are they who looked away
when coffee spilled today.*

*BLESSED are they with a cheery smile
who stop to chat for a while.*

*BLESSED are they who never say,
"You've told that story twice today."*

*BLESSED are they who know the ways
to bring back lovely yesterdays.*

*BLESSED are they who make it known
that I am loved, not left alone.*

*BLESSED are they who know the loss of
strength I need to bear the cross.*

*BLESSED are they who ease the days
on my journey home in so many
loving
ways.*



Sr. Rose-Alice Rousseau, M.I.C., on a visit to a friend in a mission outpost in Baures, Bolivia.

1982: Year of the Elderly

The following prayer, used extensively in Central American Christian Communities, is an example of the Latin American people's great devotion to the Blessed Virgin, an integral part of their religious culture. The prayer is also an outgrowth of their critical reflection on prevailing social conditions in the light of Sacred Scripture.

To Our Lady Of The Americas

*Virgin of hope, Mother of the poor,
Our Lady of Pilgrims,
today we pray to you for our race
and our continent,
the land you visit with bare feet,
offering riches of the Child
held tightly in your arms,
a fragile Child who makes us rich,
an enslaved Child who makes us free.
Virgin of Hope.*

*Mother of the poor,
there is much misery among us.
Lacking is the bread of truth
in many minds.
Lacking is the bread of love
in many men and women.
Lacking is the bread of the Lord
among many people.
You know poverty and have lived it.
Give us the spirit of the poor in order
to be happy,
but alleviate the misery of our bodies
and uproot from the hearts
of so many people
the egoism that impoverishes.*

*We are the Church in pilgrimage...
May the bishops have the hearts
of fathers.
May the priests be friends of God
to the people.
May the religious manifest
the anticipated joy
of the Kingdom of Heaven.
May the lay people give witness
to the Risen Lord in the world.
And may we walk together
with all people sharing
their sorrows and hopes.*

*Our Lady of Pilgrims,
we are the people of God in America.
May we advance toward progress,
in the ways of peace and justice.
Brighten our hopes,
lighten our poverty,
join us in the pilgrimage to the Father.
So be it.*

Amen.

Maryknoll '81

Japan

A Family Away From Home

by Sr. Virginia Guerrero, M.I.C.

Several months ago, Sr. Suzanne Morneau and I moved into our modest lodgings in Higashi Oyase. Life is much simpler. We take turns cooking our meals and doing the housework. We hope, during our stay here, to go through varied experiences which we deem worthwhile from the point of view of insertion into a milieu. This seems to us the best way to learn: from reality and not from what others say or from what books tell.

Just last month, I received an invitation from my grandfather's nephew, Gengie Sato, to attend the anniversary celebration of the family's ancestors. It was Spring vacation at Seisin International School, so I took the opportunity to visit my relatives. Gengie Sato's eldest daughter met me at the Fukushima city station. It was our first meeting. I tried to communicate with her but was unsuccessful as she was using a dialect of the north. Gengie Sato was overjoyed to see me. He brought me to the family altar and told me about the celebration. He explained how he was celebrating in memory of nine ancestors. As instructed, I burned incense, rang the bell twice, and clasped my fingers.

At supper, we shared a meal made up mostly of vegetables gathered from the mountain side and the fields. Afterwards, we gathered together for hymns and songs. One of my relatives got so interested in hearing English spoken during meals, that I became an instant English teacher.

On the following day, I helped prepare the family altar for the celebration. A good number of relatives and guests were expected along with the Buddhist priest or bonze. At dinner, I sat close to my grandfather's relatives. One asked me why I came to Japan. He further inquired whether I would not change my mind and get married to a Japanese. Gengie Sato at one time also put the same question to me. I made it quite clear that I was not getting married neither here nor when I return to the Philippines.

After the meal, it was my relatives' turn to go to the Buddhist temple to thank the bonze. I went with them. The temple is on top of a mountain overlooking the whole valley. Once there, my relatives performed a religious ceremony and burned incense. Gengie Sato introduced me to the bonze who belongs to the Soto sect. We had tea together at a private place within the temple precinct. When we bade goodbye, he came to the door of the temple, standing there, stately and wise, with his hands clasped. I would have liked to talk with him much longer.

My short family visit provided me with precious experiences and lessons on the Japanese people. I was glad to see that Gengie Sato is very happy, surrounded by his children and grandchildren. Being the daughter of a Japanese-Filipina mother (married to a Filipino) it was a

Continued on p. 14

Madagascar

When The Waters Rise...

by Sr. Marie-Odila Plante, M.I.C.

January 1982 proved to be a particularly rainy month in Madagascar. Rushing down mountain slopes, the waters raised the level of the Ikopa, Sissons, and Mamba rivers which ring the capital city. The lower parts of Tananarive are usually the first to feel this sort of rampage and our own little sector of Tsaramasay lies right in the path of the floods. On January 18, a few city areas were already submerged and the inhab-

itants had sought refuge on the surrounding heights where public buildings were being transformed into refugee centres.

On the 20th, a few neighbouring families driven from their flooded homes took over the parochial hall. They were shortly joined by other families although the place was already bursting at the seams. The leaders of local communities then asked us to lodge the homeless in our



Sr. Yolaine Lavoie, M.I.C., serves flood victims their daily ration of hot milk.

Sr. Doris Trottier, M.I.C., and her Malagasy companions help in the distribution of relief goods.



schoolrooms. Sr. Raivamanana Rosalie, the director, put a few classes of the primary school at their disposal. But as the rain kept on falling, more and more people took to the road, seeking refuge. Finally, six of our classrooms had to be placed at their disposal and our younger pupils were sent home on indefinite leave.

On the evening of the 28th, the light drizzle became a heavy downpour which lasted all night. Suddenly, the church bell tolled. The uncanny noise woke us up. We ran to the windows and saw lights going on in the rectory and in the parochial hall. People laden with parcels could be seen hurrying to and fro. A few men climbed over our garden wall and rang our doorbell. Sr. Marie Paule Sauvé recognized a parish-leader who asked to use our telephone to call civic headquarters for help. Unfortunately, the weather had broken down all lines of communication. The man explained that the

canal having overflowed, all those who lived in the neighbourhood were forced to flee. They were told to make their way to Antinamana where the parochial hall and various classrooms would harbour them. A little later, the doorbell rang again. Mrs. Therese, our employee, stood there with her children laden with packages of whatever they had managed to salvage from the rising waters. The children were fed and put to bed, on the floor, wherever a place could be found. Meantime, other stranded people arrived from Ankazomanga. Food was already scarce, and everything had to be strictly rationed. Community leaders tried to gather in separate groups the people from the same villages to facilitate food control. The local Red Cross sent in trained helpers with the most urgently needed drugs to take care of the sick. All this was free of charge and the poor benefited.

Our district, flooded at 60 per cent above water level, had an excess population of 5,000 refugees. Over 1,500 were temporarily our guests at our primary school. Sr. Doris Trotter led several groups to the Catholic Relief Service Bureau which helped them out in many ways. The American Relief Office gave out hundreds of blankets for the elderly and for pregnant women. A list of families thus aided was drawn up, with the names and age of the children. A team of five persons met every morning with S. Yolaine Lavoie to supervise the distribution. After roll call, each child was handed a ticket. Water was boiled so as to serve the milk hot. Each mother brought a cup or container into which the diluted milk was poured. This lasted for over two weeks. About 230 children relished their daily cup of hot milk.

Members of the social committee made the rounds seeking out those in direct need of lodging. Eight refugee centres were visited and people helped in a practical manner. I sometimes joined the committee members to meet and comfort the aged and the sick. Among them were several paralyzed persons who had been carried here on makeshift litters, over bumpy roads. Evidently these refugee centres offered little comfort. Scarcely any of the people's belongings could be brought in their headlong flight to safety.

If the capital was sorely hit by the floods, other regions also suffered. Every day sad news were relayed on radio and newspapers. By February,

42,000 evacuees had been reported temporarily lodged in 113 evacuee centres. On February 11, the numbers went up to 64,000 persons helped in one way or another in 200 centres. Among these unfortunates, 55,166 were from Tananarive.

Months have gone by and the centres are still open. What will the evacuees find when they can finally return to their homes? A great number of houses have been crushed, the roofs having caved in, the furniture has suffered from the mold or robbers have made off with it, the harvests are ruined. Numberless problems remain to be solved. Such catastrophes clearly remind us of the necessity for detachment and for sharing. On the other hand we admired many acts of solidarity, of devotedness to the wellbeing of others. In situations such as this, no one is spared, so the spirit of mutual help spontaneously develops among people who perhaps tended to keep apart. We did what we could to help our unfortunate Malagasy brothers and sisters but what we were able to give was only a drop in the bucket. If our readers could help us in bringing relief to those who still suffer from the aftermath of the catastrophe we would be very grateful for whatever their situation would allow them to do.

N.B. Send any material help you wish to forward to our Malagasy friends to the following address: MIC Mission Procure, 121 Maplewood Avenue, Montreal, Canada H2V 2M2.

A FAMILY... Continued from p. 11

beautiful experience for me to know how close are the ties which exist in our family. I learned a lot about my Japanese relatives, and I would not exchange this experience for a book which would explain Japanese customs and traditions. For me, the

visit was sheer inculturation! Moreover, it was a memorable and meaningful experience to find myself in the midst of non-Christians. My Japanese relatives know that I am a Catholic. I felt it was a privilege, and at the same time a responsibility to be true to my own missionary calling.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

In 1902, Delia Tetreault founded the first Canadian Missionary Congregation: **The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception**. Since 1923, at the launching of a missionary publication "The Precursor," she invited her compatriots to participate more directly in the Mission by becoming ASSOCIATES and BENEFACTORS of the Congregation.

Today, we offer you in her name a means of personally collaborating in the missionary service of the Church: **Immaculate Conception**

Missionary Association (ICMA). The bimonthly magazine, MIC MISSION NEWS, the link between the MIC's and their Associates, is sent to all the members.

Your affiliation gives you share in the prayers and apostolic works of all the MIC's. Every week, two masses - applicable to the deceased - are offered in one of the MIC houses throughout the world. Moreover, a stream of Marian prayers flows in the Congregation for the intentions of the Associates and Benefactors.

Schedule of Masses for our Associates:

July, 1982:

Mzuzu (Malawi)
Trois-Rivières (Canada)
Les Cayes (Haiti)
Koriyama Momomidai (Japan)
Indian Rd. Cres., Toronto (Canada)
Taipei (Taiwan)
Gagalangin (Philippines)

August, 1982:

Murray, Quebec (Canada)
I.C.A. Greenhills (Philippines)
Pucallpa (Peru)
Chipata (Zambia)
Mother House, Montreal (Canada)
Maison Delmas (Haiti)
Ste-Dorothée (Canada)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

*I wish to become a member of the ICMA
and subscribe to the MIC MISSION NEWS.*

NAME _____ For 1 year (\$ 3.00)
ADDRESS _____ For 2 years (\$ 5.00)
_____ For 4 years (\$10.00)
POSTAL CODE _____ For life (\$50.00)

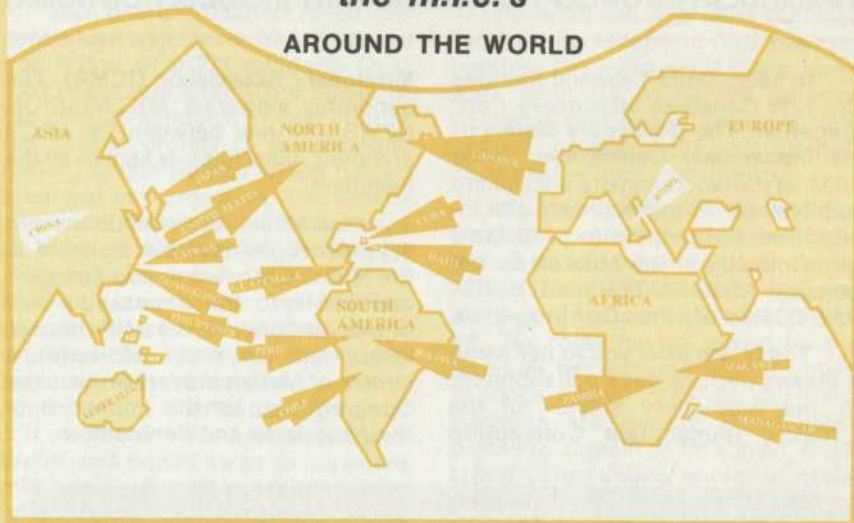
Other countries
including U.S.A. (\$4.00)

Please remember a dear departed one at Masses offered for deceased Associates:

Cut along line and return to ICMA:

**Box 157, Laval Branch, P.O.
Laval, P.Q., Canada
H7N 4Z4**

the m.i.c.'s
AROUND THE WORLD



For further information, please contact The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception at any of the following addresses:

The Generalate
121 Maplewood Avenue
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
H2V 2M2

Missionary Animation Centre
2100 De Londres, Ville St. Laurent
Montreal, Que., Canada
H4L 3A6

Chinese Center
30 Goulburn
Ottawa, Ont., Canada
K1N 8C8

56 Indian Road Crescent
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M6P 2G1

2950 Prince Edward St.
Vancouver, B.C., Canada
V5T 3N3

1417, 38th Avenue
San Francisco, Cal.
U.S.A. 94122

Provincial House
13-16 Fukazawa 8 Chome
Setagaya Ku, Tokyo 158
Japan

Provincial House
Good Hope, Clear Water Bay Road
Kowloon, Hong Kong

Provincial House
10 Grant St.
Greenhills, Metro Manila
Philippines 3113

Provincial House
P.O. Box 47
Mzimba, Malaŵi
Central Africa