

Bolivia

Continued from Page 10

a display of handicraft produced by the mothers group of the parish community.

After these happy activities we met with Archbishop Manrique and the team which leads the parish community. They told us the story of the growth of the parish during the last year and shared with us some of the struggles they have had. These struggles related not just to their growth as a faith community but to the economic struggles which constantly plague the poor.

The political climate of Bolivia is harsh at present. There is curfew every night beginning at 11. Violators have been known to draw gunfire. Meetings of more than a few people are forbidden; the universities of the country have been closed for an indeterminate period of time. The army is everywhere and automatic weapons are as much a part of the street scene as the colorful dress of the Indian women of the nation.

In this oppressive climate there is in God's loving providence a strong witness of faith among the people. That faith will be purified in coming years since in the judgment of



On the shores of Lake Titicaca, Bishop Clark and Archbishop Manrique converse with some children.



Archbishop Manrique, Bishop Clark and Padre Rene at San Jose Obrero.



Bishop Clark, Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, director of the lay team at San Jose Obrero, and Father Deckman.

many there is no indication that present government policies will change for the better.

Archbishop Manrique took Pete and me to the High Plain where Pete served when he first went to Bolivia. It is over 2 1/2 miles above sea level and ringed by mountains of spectacular beauty. At that altitude the air is very thin. I am sorry to say that the present Bishop of Rochester did not fare well in the thin air. Only the kind ministrations of Pete and our hosts, the Resurrection Fathers, brought relief.

It was a moving experience to visit a materially poor but spiritually rich parish community to which our diocese has made such a significant contribution.

It was of great encouragement to meet Archbishop Manrique in whose spirit wells a remarkable blending of gentleness and courage.

I think Bolivia is lucky to have Pete Deckman again, but I can understand better now Pete's desire to return to the people there.



Bishop Clark is greeted in Bolivia by Padre Rene, Dr. Rodriguez and members of San Jose Obrero.



The parish family at San Jose Obrero.

CHILE

From the days of Catherine McAuley the Spirit of Mercy has been one of warmth and hospitality. One hundred and fifty years after Mother Catherine and thousand of miles from her beloved Dublin her daughters in religious life make that spirit real in Santiago.

Sisters Kay Schwenze, Janet Korn and Janet Wahl live and serve in one neighborhood, their sisters, Jane Kenrick and Janet Caulfield (on home leave at the time of our visit), serve in a nearby section on the periphery of the city. Also working with Sisters Jane and Janet is Sister Anne Gleeson, a Sister of Mercy from Australia.

The Sisters' work is an integral and much appreciated call in the Church at Santiago. Strong signs of the esteem of the Diocese of Santiago for our sisters were the visit of two of the auxiliary bishops of Santiago during our stay there.

Bishop Jorge Hourton and Enrique Alvear came on separate occasions to share a meal with us and to speak of their gratitude for the presence of the Sisters. They spoke on those occasions of some of their concerns as well as much of the excitement of the church.

Here, as in Brazil, the Church speaks clearly for the poor of the nation. One high point of our visit was a morning spent at the Vicariate for Solidarity. This agency, sponsored and backed by the Archdiocese of Santiago, has for its primary purpose to stand in Christian love and commitment with the oppressed of the land. Through a wide range of publications, legal assistance to those in need, activity on behalf of political prisoners the staff at the center seeks to bring Gospel justice to bear in Chilean Society.

It is not an easy task because reprisal exists; but it is a rewarding work because the fruit of it is new spirit and life for our sister diocese.

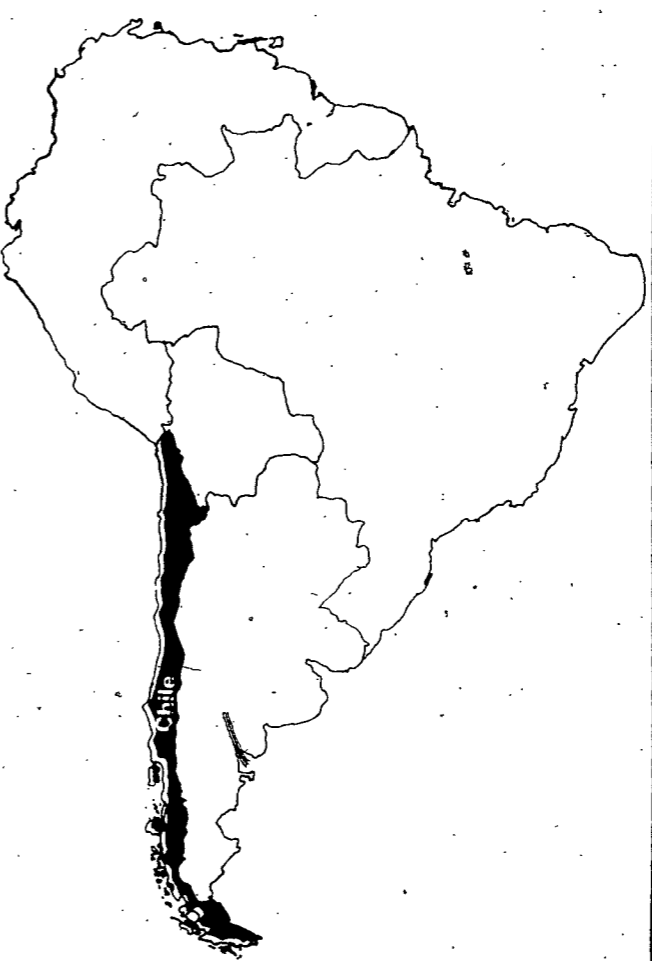
Let the words of our sisters open for us save thing of their experience of this vital Church.

Sister Janet Wahl, Immaculate Conception, Rochester.

"There are two things I appreciate more deeply from my experience in Chile.

"First, we can not separate faith from life. In other words we need always to be clarifying, penetrating, the realities of life with a faith dimension. This means entering into genuine dialogue with the land.

"It is not enough to analyze the political, social and economic scenes or even to apply Scripture in these events.



We must penetrate the example of Jesus in this mission of love for us. I feel that I've come to ground my own response move in the pattern of the gospel. We all need to put our hearts and wills to the great mission of Jesus.

"Secondly, I have a greater sense of the local Church and with the union among the local Churches. I think we experience this especially because we feel very much sent from one local Church to another. This is something which keeps growing with us. We can not forget our union and interdependence, especially in these times when we think of what is happening with sister churches all over. El Salvador, Brazil and Bolivia."

Sister Janet's words remind us of the common call we have to contemplate the mystery of Jesus — an activity pointless to many but at the core of the Christian apostolate.

Continued on Page 12