



# TO LOOK THROUGH EACH OTHER'S EYES

'COULD A GREATER MIRACLE TAKE PLACE THAN FOR US TO LOOK THROUGH EACH OTHERS EYES FOR AN INSTANT' Henry David Thoreau

Logo by Sister Maureen Servas RSM



Left to right, Maria Elena, Sister Jane Kenrick, Maria Ines and Lia. The three Chilean women were experiencing a live-in with the Mercy community at Nuestra Senora de la Misericordia house.

## SSJs Receive Brazilian Novices

By Sister Beatrice Ganley SSSJ  
On Jan. 28 Sisters Anadir Pereira da Silva, Ireny Rosa da Silva and Joana Dalva Alves Mendes were received as novices in the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester in



Ireny Rosa da Silva, right, volunteer at day care center.



Anadir Pereira da Silva, left, health clinic worker.



Joana Dalva Alves Mendes, left, health clinic volunteer.



On a frosty day, Graciela Lagos Donoso, 31, who recently professed first vows as a Sister of Mercy, works with volunteer youths on a clean-up campaign in a campamento, an extremely poor area in Santiago.

Brazil. In a simple ceremony each young woman received a copy of the Portuguese edition of the SSJ constitution from Sister Ellen Kuhl, director of novices. They were accepted by Sister Barbara Orczyk, mission coordinator for the Brazilian region and representative of Sister Elizabeth Anne LeValley, superior general.

In their formal petition for membership, the novices asked, "Teach us your way of life... to follow the example of Jesus... to make our lives a eucharistic gift to our brothers and sisters in the community of faith."

The novitiate community has been established in the city of Goiania, capital of the state of Goias. The house is located on the outskirts of the city in a bairro of about 30,000 inhabited by poor landless persons who have come to the area in something similar to a home-steading venture. Here, during the two-year novitiate, the women will study theology, the history of religious life and the SSJ constitution. They will combine this with pastoral experience and work in human development.

"We see this as an important trust — to be involved in the development of the church in Brazil in this way," said Sister Rosalma Hayes, who, on her recent trip to Brazil, had the opportunity to visit with the novices and was present at their reception.

Previously other women had requested membership in the congregation, but the Rochester Sisters of St. Joseph in Brazil wanted more time to develop their own understanding of Brazilian life and culture. They did not want to accept the women and have them be assimilated into what would be an extension of a North Ameri-

'Ours is the mission of Jesus... to hear your voice, O God, and to bring your good news to all people'

— from hymns sung at the novitiate reception ceremony.

can congregation, thus losing their own cultural heritage.

So, until 1984, women interested in religious life were directed to the already established Brazilian congregations.

These women, however, had a strong desire to live as Sisters of St. Joseph. They were attracted, they have said, by the witness of the Sisters' insertion among the people, by the strong sense of community and by the Sisters' cheerfulness in the ministry. So at the recent congregational chapter the decision was made to establish a novitiate program in Brazil.

"It is interesting to note," said Sister Elizabeth Anne LeValley, "how this is consistent with the actions of the first Sisters of St. Joseph who came to the United States from France in the 1800s. Soon after they arrived, our constitution was translated into English, and novitiates were established in the United States."

She went on to explain that shortly after the chapter's approval of the new constitution, Sisters Rosalma Hayes and Dolores Turner began the work of translating the document into Portuguese.

"These are historic moments for our congregation," she commented. "We will continue to be formed by our interaction and collaboration with the people of Brazil."



Chilean, Soledad Cantillana, 21, who became a Mercy postulant in August, is a catechist in Santiago.

## New Life Grows In Chile Mission

By Sister Jane Kenrick RSM

In the late 1950s, when John XXIII was pope, he asked religious congregations and dioceses of the United States, Canada and Europe to send some of their personnel to Latin America because of the great scarcity of religious vocations in this part of the world. A number of them responded to this calling, sending sisters, brothers and priests to Central and South America.

Today, however, in Chile and some other Latin American countries a new wind is blowing. Perhaps because of the emphasis of the Church on evangelization, perhaps because the Church has been the "voice of those without a voice" (cf. *Puebla Documents*), there is a new surge of interest in Latin America in the priesthood and religious life. At present the diocesan seminary in Santiago is full, and many young men and women are entering religious life.

To help these young people in their discernment, many vocation groups have formed. In 1980 I started such a group in response to four young men and women who came to me asking that I orient them in their search for the Lord's will. Soon a few others joined, and the group named itself "Los Caminantes," those on the journey.

Some have discovered they are not called to religious life, and two have entered two different religious congregations. Two are seeking entrance for 1985, and approximately five new people want to begin to participate in this new year. (The academic/work year is from March to December in Chile.)

In the beginning there were both young men and women in the group. One year ago the group and I felt that it was better to be separated and that the young men needed a priest to work with them.

Meanwhile, other vocation groups began to be formed in other parishes of Santiago. (Sister Kay Schwenzer, also a Rochester Mercy, began one in the parish of El Carmen del Salto in Santiago.)

At our deanery meetings (five parishes make up our deanery), we began to see the need of working together in this apostolate; consequently, we formed a committee of three sisters and two priests to plan and work together this year.

On three occasions we will have workshops where all the young men and women will come together to search and share. At the other monthly meetings the young people

will meet in their respective vocation groups.

Those of us who are ministering in vocation work feel that, first of all, it is a service of the Church; therefore, the vocation groups are not geared to any particular congregation or seminary. Each person is encouraged to feel free to search out the group of his/her choice during the discernment process.

After the person has made the choice, with the mutual agreement of the chosen congregation or seminary, the person enters a new level in the discernment process: he/she begins to participate in the discernment program of that group, is invited to live-in experiences with them and is in more intense contact with the respective vocation director.

Vocation work is a very challenging ministry. It calls for deep prayer and conversion. Please keep us in your prayers because the future of the Latin American Church depends greatly upon this apostolate. Who knows? Perhaps someday Chilean Sisters and priests will be the bearers of the Good News of love, peace and justice not only in Chile, but in the rest of the world as well.

(Sister Jane, a Sister of Mercy of the Rochester Diocese, is both vocation director and postulant director for the Mercy formation program in Santiago.)

'The congregation has inserted itself in the community and the mission will continue to be carried on when you all go. The mission and congregation will not only be something imported from outside.'

— Esteban Montabone, a Latin American youth coordinator, affirming the establishment of novitiates by foreign congregations in Latin America.

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