

# Special Information

## HOLY FAMILY YOUTH CENTRE

**“The Path is made by Walking”**

### A Brief Account of the Mission given to us by the Council of the Unit



- To form an intercultural missionary community at the service of a mission to young people, especially young adults
- To give a witness of community
- To make our *Holy Family* Charism known

Our missionary community project began to take shape in May 2013. We tried to listen to the calls of the Spirit, adapting our community life and our way of being present to young people. This led us to set up our community in a new place and three months ago we moved to the community of 2414 Nicolet Street.

Events have shown that it was a good move. Our new house has become “The Youth Centre of the Holy Family of Bordeaux” to the delight of the African Mission which already uses the Centre and the Tamil Mission which will soon do so. We hope that the Polish Mission and many others will follow suit.



As soon as we arrived at the African mission, we knew that we were in a land other than our own. NDELA, who was in charge of the young Congolese people, already had a well-established plan for them. He wanted to set up a movement that exists in Congo – The Youth of Light (12-35

years). We quickly realised that we should not come with our own plans, but rather become part of NDELA's vision for the young people. We became partners of the Youth Team. It is through their activities that we witness to our *Holy Family* consecration. On several occasions, we have been asked to speak about our lives as Religious.

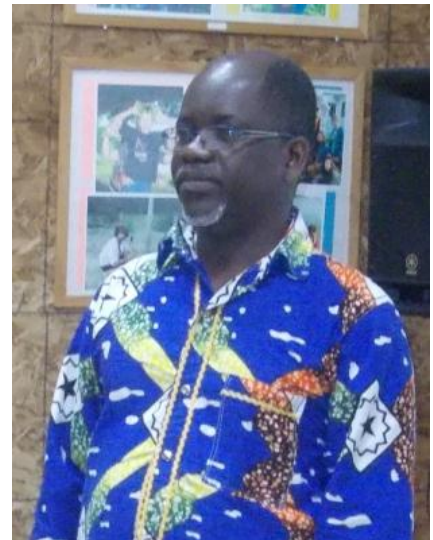
The first thing we did was to have a meeting with Ndela, the person in charge of the Congolese Youth Mission, and then we met with the Mission Youth Team.

We asked them how our house could be of use to the Youth Project of the African Mission, what they expected of us and how we could be of assistance to them.

The Spirit directs us to where the Lord is calling. Without our being aware of it, prayers were already being directed to the Lord for our missionary effort for young people. The following is Ndela's request to the Lord, which preceded our arrival:

**“The wind is favourable for those who know where they are going!”**

“When I came to Montreal, I knew that the young people were caught up in counter values coming from various sources. I also knew that it was only Christ who could really transform their lives by a true conversion of their ways of thinking and feeling and of their deepest God-given identity. I knew this because of my faith and my experience in working pastorally with young people in my diocese of origin. I knew where I wanted to go with these young people but I needed **favourable winds**. I wanted very much **to give them a family** which would be happy to give them a warm welcome by sharing bread, experience, information and recreation with them. I needed **a place in the area they were living where they would feel loved, understood and not judged – a place where they would feel accepted**. So I prayed that one day I would find enough material resources to be able to build them a youth centre where, like the father of a family, I would spend my life listening to them, helping them and accompanying them. This seemed like a pipe dream to me but, at the same time, it was so much part of me that it seemed real. **So I waited for a favourable wind.**





How wonderful you are, Lord. That was when I met your community – the *Holy Family* of Bordeaux. That was when you surprised me by wanting to share your home with all the young people who wanted to come to you in the name of Christ and to do that to the point of moving house in order to give them more space. In you, I saw my dream come true of having a Youth Centre, a welcoming space of love, sharing and recreation. It is your community and especially the three of you, Sr. Paulette, Sr. Aldégonde and Sr. Maria, which is the answer to my prayer. I also predict that your walls will expand because my young people will spread the word that they feel at home with you right in the centre of town. Blessed be God who responds to our deepest desires and who surprises us with the unexpected. Thanks to your entire community, a favourable wind for the young people of Montreal and the Mission of Our Lady of Africa. Amen.”

Our *Holy Family* of Bordeaux Youth Centre gives young people a space for their spiritual journey; a space for reflection about their vocation; a space to receive young people in search of meaning.

But the Spirit is always moving us forward. And this is what encouraged us to make contact with the Tamil Mission in Montreal. We found a large community of young people of all ages, parents waiting for Sisters to take an interest in their young people and a priest who was anxious for us to be with them. We agreed to take a group of 12-18 year olds on Sunday mornings for a Bible course at the Tamil Mission. This will be done in conjunction with our *Holy Family* Youth Centre.

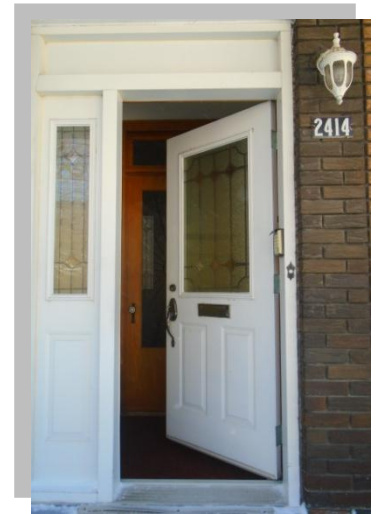


To close the Year of Consecrated Life, we will welcome a group of young women of 18 to 35 years of age on Saturday, 30 January, to reflect on Vocation, to share and pray on responding to the question, “Lord, what do you want me to do?” We will also present the calls of the Lord to Pierre Bienvenu Noailles, at the time of his conversion, his entry to the seminary and the foundation of the *Holy Family*. We will also present the various *Holy Family* Vocations with emphasis on the consecrated life. The Youth Centre has a concern for all vocations, especially vocations to the consecrated life.

We are hopeful for new *Holy Family* vocations. We see signs of this already. We are carrying out our mission in communion with the entire *Holy Family* around the world so that the whole human race may become one single family following in the footsteps of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Together in the same mission  
Srs. Paulette, Maria, Aldégonde

Montreal, Nicolet  
16 January 2016



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