



An engineer, Jerry Toohey repairs radios when not running the station.

## Two L.M.s from L.A.

*"Average" is not the word for this young couple who live and work high in the Bolivian sky.*

By Hugh Brown

MARY ANN and Jerry Toohey could easily pass as an average American couple. Mary Ann, twenty-five, is a small, dark-haired, pretty owner of a lovely smile. In the United States she taught school, trying to pass on a little knowledge to fifty fourth-graders in St. Paul's Parish, Los Angeles. Jerry, five years older than his wife, quiet and relaxed, likes to putter around, fixing up everything from clocks to radios.

There's just a touch of gray in his dark hair, natural to one who held the engineering job he had in California. The Tooheys even had a college romance, meeting as undergraduates on the campus of Seattle University. Romance developed into love and they were married four years ago. They have no children yet.

But the Tooheys are not an average American couple at all. In fact, they are rather unique because right now they are in the first year of a three-year assignment as lay mission helpers in Bolivia. They are stationed "high in the sky" at Cochabamba with the Maryknoll Fathers where Jerry runs a 250-watt radio station and Mary Ann teaches.

The Tooheys are members of the

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Lay Mission-Helpers Association of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles (1531 West 9th Street, Los Angeles). They have spent a full year training for their work in Bolivia, taking courses in theology, studying the life of Christ and the supernatural life in general and, of course, studying Spanish and background material on Bolivia. They are the first members of the California-based lay mission group to be assigned to Bolivia. They're also the first to work with Maryknollers, this despite the fact that the Los Angeles organization has more than 110 lay missionaries in Africa, Asia, and South America.

The Tooheys, and other Lay Mission-Helpers, work hand-in-hand with the scarce mission priests. They give religious instructions when the priests' workloads get too heavy to handle, instruct parishioners in various technical skills, and do the physical work of repairing and building. They are the missionaries' "righthands", and only a shortage of interested individuals delays the Association's greater success.

The Tooheys work nine thousand feet above sea level in Cochabamba, which is located about midway between La Paz and Santa Cruz, known as Bolivia's gateway to the lowlands. Here the Maryknollers carry on their work with the Quechua and Aymara Indians, descendants of people who occupied Bolivia before the conquistadors came in the sixteenth century.

In the radio station, which serves primarily as an educational tool, Jerry directs programming and trains Bolivians in the intricacies of electronic operations. He also lends a hand in the co-op which the Maryknollers established to help the Indians market llama and alpaca wool and by-products.

Jerry's spare time is spent on a favorite Maryknoll project: assembling small, one-band transistor radios. After all, what good is a radio station if the people have no radios?

Mary Ann, busy teaching English and Spanish in the primary and high schools, also pitches in to show the native women some aspects of sanitation and home economics. And, of course in her duties as a wife, she cares for the remodeled rectory which is no "home."

All is not work, however, and the Tooheys have time for relaxation and sight-seeing in the beautiful Bolivian highlands. Mission work is not all labor, but it's not just work and relaxation, either. Living as they do under the Lay Mission-Helpers rule of life, they are conscious of the primacy of the spiritual. There is daily Mass, devotions and reading. As they put it, "The only way to bring Christ to other people is by being another Christ yourself."

The Tooheys are doing their part. ■



Former rectory is Mary Ann's home.