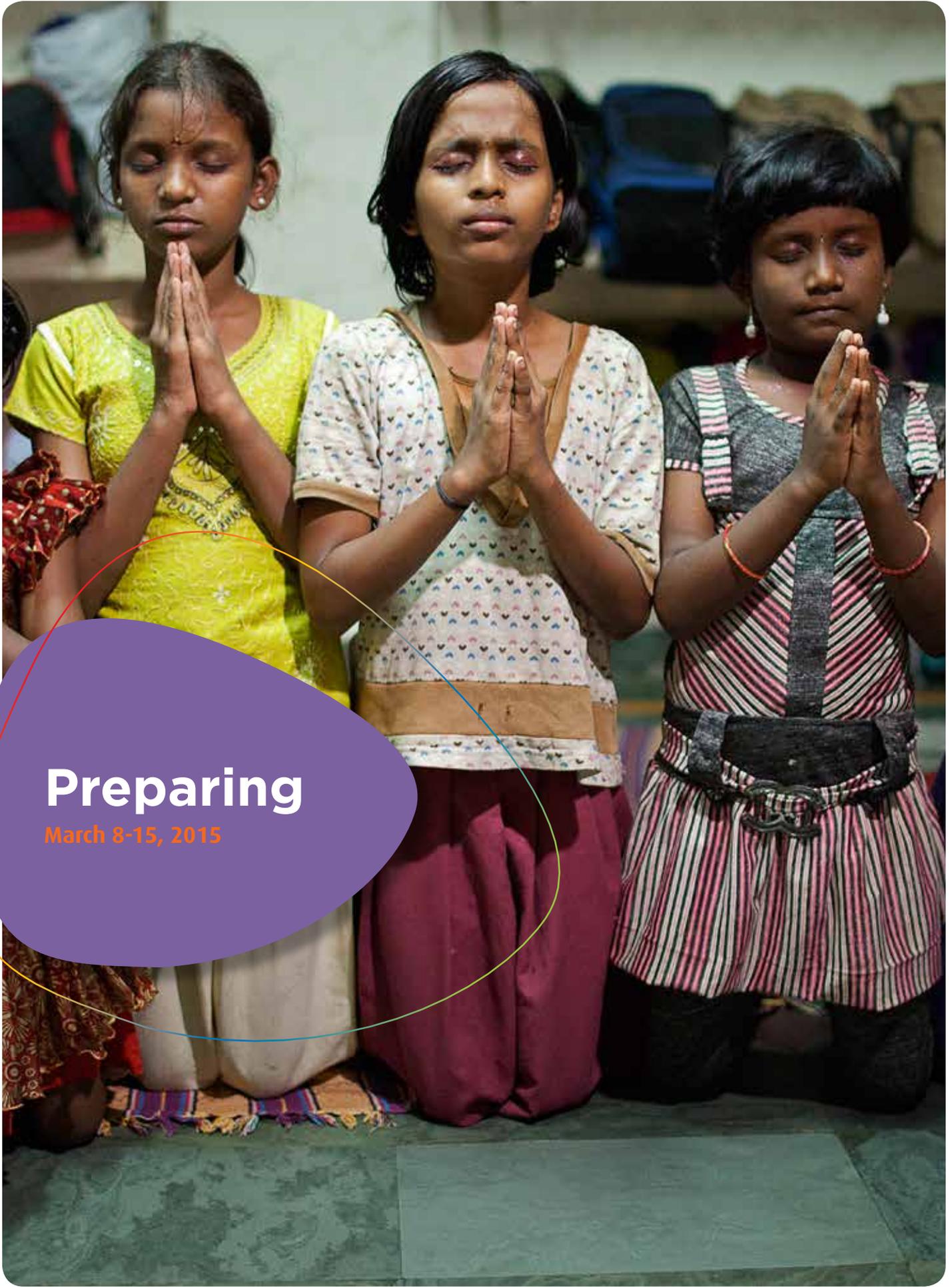


National
Prayer
and
Penny
Week
2015



Missionary Childhood Association
A Pontifical Mission Society

Leader's Guide
Grades K-8



Preparing

March 8-15, 2015

Preparing for National Prayer and Penny Week

March 8-15, 2015

The activities, ideas, strategies and stories from the Missions that follow are designed to help students in grades K through 12 prepare for the celebration of National Prayer and Penny Week (March 8-15). Most of these ideas may be adapted for use with families and small parish groups. If time allows, we encourage students to participate in at least one activity a day. *If this is not possible, try to implement the program on “Day 6,” since those activities lay the groundwork for the fullest participation in National Prayer and Penny Week.*



Day One | All Grades

Begin the week by sharing some of the history and purpose of the Pontifical Mission Societies, which includes the Missionary Childhood Association (www.OneFamilyinMission.org) and about *National Prayer and Penny Week*. If your group consists of young children, be sure that they understand the meaning of the word “poor.” Explain the difference between being materially poor and spiritually poor. Then note:

- The Pontifical Mission Societies provide help to local Catholic churches in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands and remote areas of Latin America so that others can come to know about Jesus. (*Consider noting each continent on a world map or globe, or asking students to identify them.*) Here, some of the poorest of the poor learn the Good News of God’s great love for all people.
- Missionaries are people who have been called by God to go out and proclaim the Good News. They are also called to care for those who suffer from hunger, poverty, homelessness and natural disaster. These missionaries offer God’s love to the poor in word and service.
- As Catholics, we, too, are called to be missionaries. While we may not be able to travel to other countries, we can still bring the love of God to others. We can offer our prayers, talents and financial help to support missionaries and local priests, Sisters and Brothers in their service to the poor.

- Prayer is the most important part of being a missionary.
- Next week, we are invited to participate in a program called *National Prayer and Penny Week*. During that time, we will offer special prayers for the world's poorest children. We will also collect money so that children in the Missions may know Christ and experience His love. Next week, we will spend time in prayer, and make sacrifices. We will also experience what it might be like to walk in the footsteps of those served by the Pontifical Mission Societies.
- This week, we will hear stories about people who have been helped by missionaries. We will discover how our prayers, sacrifices and financial offerings are part of making a faith-filled difference in the lives of the poor.
- Provide each student with a penny. Ask them to put the penny in one of their shoes. Ask them to take a moment to pray for missionaries around the world each time they feel the penny in their shoe. Encourage them to invite friends and family members to do the same. See if they can keep the penny in their shoes for the entire Prayer and Penny Week. Provide a few additional pennies to each student to take home to challenge other family members to do the same.
- The story *From Medals in the Soil* found in the Resources Section of this guide, offers students an example of how prayer can overcome anything and allow for the love of Christ. Tell the stories in your own words, or make a copy of the story and questions below for use at home.

Questions for Critical Thinking

Grades K-4

- **Who first taught you to pray?**
- **Why do you pray?**
- **What is your favorite way to pray?**
- **What is your favorite prayer?**
- **For whom do you pray?**

Grades 5-8

- **Why is prayer necessary?**
- **How do we know that our prayers for others make a difference?**
- **How does knowing that other people pray for you affect your life?**
- **When something we pray for is not granted, what could that mean?**

Activities for Grades K-4

- Post a world map on a wall. Then play a variation of “pin the tail on the donkey.” Provide each student with a small post-it note or sticker and invite each (one at a time), to come forward to be blindfolded and place their sticker on the map. Keep track of where each sticker is placed. Once everyone has had a turn, lead a discussion on the prayers that may be needed for the locations chosen by the students. Families can easily adapt this idea for use at home.
- Using the word “bless,” ask the students to create an acrostic. It can serve as a guide for their prayer for missionaries who care for children. If you are working with children who have limited writing abilities, conduct this activity as a large group using sheets of newsprint. If you have an older group, create small groups or pairs. Families can easily complete this activity at home. Invite families to send in the acrostic they created for posting in your classroom or meeting space. Or you could make it part of your parish or school bulletin or post some of the acrostics on an appropriate website.
- Play a variation on musical chairs. Post on each chair the name of a mission country. An alternative version is to pray for a need of missionaries (good health, safety etc.). Play several rounds of the game, each time inviting the students to read the card posted on their chair and taking a minute to say a prayer for the country or need posted.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Post a world map in your meeting/classroom space. Make sure to point out the location of India since this week’s story takes place there. Assign each student a country or continent. Point out each location on the map you’ve posted, or have the students do so. Provide each person with a sheet of paper plus a pen, pencil or crayon. Invite them to write a prayer for the children of the country assigned. Invite everyone to share their prayer. Families can easily adapt this idea for use at home.
- On a sheet (or two) of newsprint write each letter of the alphabet as if you were creating a list. Ask the students to brainstorm with you an A-Z list of things related to missionaries for which they can pray. An alternative option would be to ask each student to create their own list. Families can complete this activity together at home as well.
- Pair up students (boys with boys / girls with girls). If you have an uneven number of students, form trios, as needed. Then, ask students to take turns checking the clothing tags on the back of their partners’ shirts to see where the shirts were made. Have students call out the name of these countries. Invite all of the students from each identified country to gather together. For example, everyone who called out “Colombia” should get together. Provide each group with a sheet of newsprint and a marker. Invite them to create a simple prayer for children and families in that nation. Share the prayers. Suggest that students repeat this activity at home with family members.



Day Two | All Grades

The story *Tea-a Drink with Hope and Faith* found in the Resources section of this guide, offers students an example of how missionaries share the love of Jesus with the poor. Tell the stories in your own words or make a copy of the story and questions below for use at home.

Questions for Critical Thinking

Grades K-4

- How do you know that Jesus loves you?
- How do you show other people Jesus' love?
- How do others show Jesus' love to you?
- Why does everyone (especially those who are poor) need to feel Jesus' love?

Grades 5-8

- In what ways can you help others get to know Jesus?
- Have you ever been told you are too young to share your thoughts about Jesus? Do you think that is true?
- What are some different ways to be witnesses for Jesus?

Activities for Grades K-4

- Develop a list of scenarios that are common in the life of your students. You will need at least six actions that portray love and six that do not. For example:

SCENARIO 1

- A) Your mom has a headache and you find something quiet to do while she rests.
- B) You are fighting with your sister and you push her down.

- Pose each scenario to the students and ask them which actions show love and which do not. Then lead a discussion on the many ways we can show love. Be sure to note that when we show love for others, we also show them the love of Jesus. Suggest that students spend time this evening with their families, sharing how they experience love from one another.
- Invite the students to sit in a circle. Designate one student to sit in the center of the circle. The student in the center should point to one student in the circle, and ask, *“Does Jesus love me?”* The student picked must respond by saying, *“Yes, Jesus loves you, and so do I.”* Once this is completed, ask students to change places and repeat this exchange. Pick another student to sit in the center and repeat the exercise. Continue the exercise until all students have a chance to be in the center and ask the question at least once. Then, lead a discussion based on John 13:34 – *“Love one another”* – and talk about why it is important to share the love of Jesus with everyone we meet.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Brainstorm with the students a list of ideas about how they can make Jesus known to others. Once you have generated a good list, ask the students to choose one of the ideas to carry out this week. Have the students divide into pairs and share with one another how they will go carry out the idea. Suggest that students initiate a similar conversation among family members.
- Divide the students into two groups. Designate one group as group A and the other, group B. Invite each group to sit in a single line. Tell them you will designate one person in each group as a messenger and that you will share a message with him or her. The message can be something as simple as noting what the lunch menu is for that day. That person’s task will be to make sure everyone in the group gets to hear that message. In group A, only one person can share the message in their group, announcing it to each member, one at a time. In Group B, once a student hears the message, he or she can share it with any other group members. Repeat the activity swapping directions for each group. Talk about the call to all who are baptized to share the Good News of Jesus and to be missionaries.
- Discuss with students things that can get in the way of helping others know God. Record their answers on a sheet of newsprint. Then divide students into groups, assigning each group one of the reasons mentioned during the brainstorming. Ask the groups to talk about possible solutions. Then invite the groups to share their responses. Invite families to talk about their own roadblocks to knowing God and establish some possible solutions to those roadblocks.

We Give Love and Care



Day Three | All Grades

The story “*St. Anthony’s Mission Center*” found in the Resources section of this guide, shows how love and compassion change the lives of children and families in the Missions. Tell the story in your own words or make a copy of the story and questions below for use at home.

Questions for Critical Thinking

Grades K-4

- What does it mean to be a caring person?
- How do you feel when people show that they really care about you?
- How do you feel when you do something really caring for someone else?

Grades 5-8

- When someone is uncaring toward you, how does that affect you? Give examples.
- “It’s uncool to be a caring person.” Do you agree? Why, or why not?
- How is caring for others good for not only the recipient, but for the one who shows he/she cares?

Activities for Grades K-4

- Decorate a small box. Put a slot in the top. Provide each student with an index card and a marker. Ask them to either draw or write one way they can care for someone else. Once completed, they can drop their index card into the box. Remove the cards from the box and share the responses with the students. Discuss the different ways we can care for someone else and how God cares for us. Be sure to note that there are people all around us every day that are in need. Ask, “*Who do you know that can use your help in any of these ways sometime this week?*” Invite a few responses. Suggest that the students find one opportunity to care for someone by doing one of the ideas mentioned. Encourage families to discuss ways they care for one another, for their community and for people half a world away.

- Provide students with an index card and a marker. Ask them to write at the top of the card: "Recipe for Caring." Then ask them to develop their own recipe. For example: one serving of love, a dash of kindness, etc. Once everyone has completed their cards, invite them to share their recipes with the group. Invite students to take their recipe cards home, and suggest that other family members create their own recipes.
- Clip out several articles from newspapers or magazines about people who are setting good examples and others who are not. Post these articles around your meeting space or classroom. Provide each student with two sets of colored self-stick notes or stickers (one note or sticker for each article). Invite the students to walk around the room and read the articles. Designate one sticker color as the bad example and the other as the good example. Ask them to post a sticker on each article accordingly. If you have a young group unable to read well, then gather these students at each article and provide a brief summary. Invite them to post their stickers. Once completed, lead a group discussion about students' choices.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Work with the students to create a list of 25 ways to show care and concern for others. You can do this by dividing the students into smaller groups and combining their ideas. Or you can conduct the activity as a large group, inviting someone to serve as a recorder and noting all of the ideas on newsprint. Ask students to choose one idea to implement at home, one for school, one for an extra-curricular event or club, and one idea they will encourage someone else to try. Type up a "top ten" list for families to review and act on as well.
- Brainstorm with students about ways to make your school or church environment more caring. Create a list of recommendations. Present them to school or church administrators. Families can also brainstorm ways to make their homes more caring.
- Ask students to sit in a circle. Toss a small ball around the circle, and have each student who catches the ball share one way he or she has shown kindness, compassion, or generosity to someone in the last 24 hours. Make sure everyone has a chance to receive and toss the ball. Then repeat the activity asking the students to share one way they intend to show kindness, compassion, or generosity in the next 24 hours.

God's Gift of Forgiveness



Day Four | All Grades

The story *Rolling Away the Heart's Stone* in the Resources section of this guide, offers students an example of the importance of forgiveness and compassion to others. Retell the story in your own words or make a copy of the story and questions below for use at home.

Questions for Critical Thinking

Grades K-4

- Why is it important to forgive others?
- How does it feel when you are forgiven?
- How does it feel when someone forgives you?

Grades 5-8

- What does it mean to be a compassionate and forgiving person?
- What qualities does a compassionate and forgiving person possess?
- How are the people of Sierra Leone healing?

Activities for Grades K-4

- Brainstorm with the students ways to identify a compassionate person. Ask them to list names of the people they know who are compassionate and why they chose them. Divide students into small groups. Provide each group with a sheet of newsprint and a marker asking groups to create a hero of compassion. Have them draw an image of their hero, give that hero a name and note the qualities he or she possesses. Once completed, invite the groups to share. Conclude by asking students to think about how they can be heroes of compassion as well. Invite students to tell their families about these compassionate heroes and/or to define a similar family hero.

- Provide students with a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Provide younger children with a sheet of construction paper and some crayons or markers. Ask the students to write (or draw) their response to the following statement: *I can show compassion in our world by...* Allow time for them to complete the task. Then lead a discussion using the responses they have written or drawn. Invite the students to take their work home and encourage a family conversation using the same statement, perhaps over dinner.
- Provide each student with a jar, small lunch bag or other type of container, along with craft materials. Invite them to decorate their containers. When they have finished, give each student several strips of paper that you have pre-cut, and ask them to write down a few examples of how they can show (or have shown) compassion to their classmates. Once completed, invite students to share their ideas. Conclude by asking them to put their paper strips in the containers they decorated and share with their families.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Ask students to write the name of one of their heroes at the top of a sheet of paper page as well as the numerals 1 through 10 down the left side of the sheet. Ask them to list ten reasons this person is their hero. Invite some sharing once everyone has completed their lists. Families can do this activity by choosing a family hero and discussing that person's qualities.
- Invite the students to divide into small groups, four, or five in each group, and give each group a sheet of newsprint and markers. Ask them to discuss and brainstorm ways they show compassion to others. They should list these actions on the sheet of newsprint. Ask them to add to their list additional ways they might show compassion in the future. Invite the groups to share their ideas. Families can conduct this activity at home as well. Suggest they choose and incorporate one idea into their home lives for the next week.
- Brainstorm with the group, ideas or projects that can promote reconciliation or forgiveness.
- Provide each student with a couple of sheets of blank paper, and a pen or pencil. Ask them to create a short story (three paragraphs), based on a world without compassion. An alternative option would be to invite them to create a collage that conveys *compassion-less* world, using images from newspapers, magazines or printed from the Internet. You can also divide the students into small groups to create their stories. Ask students to share their stories with their families, reporting on responses on their return to class.



Day Five | All Grades

The story *Life's Storms* found in the Resources section of this guide, offers students an example of the importance of celebrating our faith in Christ Jesus. Retell the story in your own words or make a copy of the story and questions below for use at home.

Questions for Critical Thinking

Grades K-4

- What does it mean to have a faith-life?
- How can faith in God help us in difficult times?
- What is the best thing about having faith in Jesus?

Grades 5-8

- What do you think of when you hear the word *faith*?
- Why is it important to have faith in God?
- How is your faith strengthened by others?

Activities for Grades K-4

- Using 10 sheets of construction paper, write out the word “faith” twice (one letter on each sheet). Do not let them see the letters ahead of time. Divide the students into two groups, asking each group to form a single file line. Mix up the construction paper, and place five sheets, letter side down on the floor at one end of the line so that each group will be able to spell the word faith. Give the first person at the other end of each line a small ball (tennis, handball, etc.). Tell students that they must pass the ball to the next person in the line without using their hands. If the ball is dropped, then that group must start over. When the ball makes it to the end of the line, the last person may turn over one sheet of construction paper. Groups continue this process until all of the letters have been turned over. Once all of the letters are revealed, ask the students to figure out the order in which they should appear. Spend some time discussing the idea of faith and the role it plays in the lives of students. Suggest that the students ask two or three family members or friends to find out what role faith plays in their lives.
- Create a set of cards with photos of various items on them. Or you can simply write out the names of the items. Choose foods, school supplies, toys, games, whatever is easily accessible. On the last card you will need to post a photo of Jesus (or write the words, “faith in Jesus”). Gather the students around you and show them the first two cards. Ask them to vote on which item is more important. Allow some discussion if the students do not agree. Then proceed to the next card, having the students compare it to card number two. Follow the same process until you reveal the final card. Lead a large group discussion on why faith in Jesus is important in our lives. Invite students to spend some time with their families this evening talking about the importance of our faith.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Divide the students into small groups, four or five in each group, and provide each group with a sheet of newsprint and some markers. Ask them to think about what images come to mind when they hear the word *faith*. Then invite them to draw those images, or write down the words that come to mind. Invite the groups to share their impressions with everyone.
- Invite the students to stand in a circle. Provide one student with a small ball. Then ask everyone to close their eyes. Ask the person with the ball to pass it to the person standing to his or her right; however, everyone must keep their eyes closed. Continue until the ball has been passed completely around the circle. Then discuss why it was important for the students to trust one another in accomplishing the task, even though they could not see each other. Talk about how belief in God is similar. While we cannot see God, we have faith and trust in Him.

**On this day you will need to introduce (or re-introduce) the idea of National Prayer and Penny Week. This will allow students not only to begin collecting donations for the Missions, but also to explore the ways these funds may be gathered. For this reason, we ask that the activities listed for each grade level be presented sequentially and completely.*



Day Six | All Grades

The story *To Peace Together Hope* found in the Resources section of this guide, provides an example of the great needs of missionaries and mission churches throughout the world. Tell the story in your own words or make a copy of the story and questions below for use at home.

Questions for Critical Thinking

Grades K-4

- **Why is the work of missionaries, such as those in this story, important?**
- **What might you do to support the efforts of Catholic missionaries?**
- **Why does God ask us to support the efforts of missionaries?**

Grades 5-8

- **Who are the “missionaries” who have brought Jesus to you?**
- **How can your prayers, time, talents and financial gifts make an impact on the world?**
- **In the coming week, you will have the chance to support the missions. What are some steps you can take to do so right now?**

Activities for Grades K-4

- Show the students a penny. Ask them what they can do with just one penny. Allow for some responses. Then, note that a single penny alone is not worth much, but a lot of pennies add up to a great deal! Ask the students to do a counting game with you. Depending on the age group with which you work, you may need to begin with some very simple math problems. For example, how many pennies make a dollar? How many pennies do you need to equal \$100 (10,000 pennies), \$1,000(100,000), etc.? Ask the students to think about how many pennies each could collect in a week.
- Place a large jar or clear container on your desk or in another prominent location in the meeting space/classroom. Tell the students that they will be participating in a penny/coin drive during the upcoming week. The idea is to earn money for the people they have been learning about during the week. Tell them that they may bring in pennies and other coins, or paper money from home to fill the container.
- Invite students to decorate the jar or container by passing it around the room with a few permanent markers. Ask each student to draw a symbol or write a word on the container.

- Brainstorm with students about ways they could make the fundraiser a bit more fun or competitive. Some ideas might include:
 - Create a competition related to weight (for example, a goal of 10 pounds of coins) or number (most quarters collected).
 - Divide the students into two groups. Give each group a large jar or container. The group with the most pennies or coins in their container will be declared the winner.
 - Ask students to decide on one of the options from those discussed. Then, talk about creative ways to collect money (i.e., chores at home, small jobs around the neighborhood, savings, etc.).
- Provide each student with six pre-cut strips of construction paper in the colors of the World Mission Rosary, along with a pen, pencil or marker. Ask them to write their names on the paper strips. Collect the strips for use next week. Tell the students that as money is collected, they can take one of their paper strips, write the amount collected, and build a class or group paper chain. (See www.WorldMissionRosary.org to learn more).
- Consider sending home a letter explaining to parents and family members about *National Prayer and Penny Week* – and asking them to enthusiastically work with their children toward their efforts to collect funds for the Missions.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Begin by presenting the following mathematical problems to the students, asking them to work individually to solve each problem (the answers are noted in parenthesis). You may want to provide each student with a scrap sheet of paper, and a pen or pencil.
 - How many pennies does it take to equal \$10? (1,000 pennies)
 - How many pennies does it take to equal \$100? (10,000 pennies)
 - How many pennies does it take to equal \$1,000? (100,000 pennies)
- Divide the students into small groups or pairs. Provide each group with a large jar or clear container, and a permanent marker. Tell the students they will be working as a team in the upcoming week to help raise funds for the Missions. Ask them to assign their group a name. Invite them to write the name of their team on the jar and even decorate the container. Explain that the fundraising goal is to earn money for the people they have been learning about this week. Tell them that they may bring in pennies and other coins, or paper money from home to fill the container.
- Ask the groups to talk about and set a goal for their fundraising efforts. It can be monetary, numerical, weight-related, size-related or color-based (silver vs. copper). The goal should be realistic and achievable. It is always best to exceed a goal rather than fail at meeting one. After some discussion, invite the students to share their goals.
- Gather the students back into a large group and invite them to brainstorm with you some creative ways to collect funds in the upcoming week. Ask them to think about ways to get other students, family members, friends and neighbors involved. Note their ideas on a sheet or two of newsprint. Then ask each fundraising group to gather and select a few of the options suggested. If they have additional approaches or ideas that they wish to adopt, that is fine. Once again invite the groups to share their strategies. Encourage ongoing creativity throughout the entire week of fundraising.
- Consider sending home a letter explaining to parents and family members about *National Prayer and Penny Week* – and asking them to enthusiastically work with their children toward their efforts to collect funds for the Missions.

A young girl with dark hair and a white paper flower in her hair is shown from the chest up. She has her hands clasped in a prayer gesture. She is wearing a blue sweater. The background is a blurred, warm-toned interior. A purple oval graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'Celebrating' and 'March 8-15, 2015'.

Celebrating

March 8-15, 2015

National Prayer and Penny Week

March 8-15, 2015

Day One | All Grades

If you have not previously shared the story *From Medals in the Soil* in the Resources section of this Guide, do so in your own words. The story offers students an example of how the Missions are changing the lives of children and families in poor countries. If already shared last week, invite students to recall its message, or ask someone to summarize it for the group.

Pray today's Responsorial Psalm PS 19:8, 9, 10, 11

R. (John 6:68c) Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

*The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul;
The decree of the LORD is trustworthy,
giving wisdom to the simple.*

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

*The precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the command of the LORD is clear,
enlightening the eye.*

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

*The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever;
the ordinances of the LORD are true,
all of them just.*

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

*They are more precious than gold,
than a heap of purest gold;
sweeter also than syrup
or honey from the comb.*

R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

- Lead a discussion with the students on the Psalm and how it relates to the story of and other missionaries like them.
- Introduce the students to the World Mission Rosary. Here is some background information to share with students:
 - In February of 1951, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith from 1950 to 1966), in a radio address (*The Catholic Hour*), inaugurated that World Mission Rosary. He saw the need for us to pray not just for ourselves, but for the whole world, and especially for those who are poor and vulnerable at home and around the world.
 - Each decade of that World Mission Rosary calls to mind an area where the Church continues her evangelizing mission: green for the forests and grasslands of Africa; blue for the ocean surrounding the islands of the Pacific; white symbolizing Europe, the seat of the Holy Father, shepherd of the world; red calling to mind the fire of faith that brought missionaries to the Americas; and yellow, the morning light of the East, for Asia. (See www.WorldMissionRosary.org to learn more).
- Ask the students to share how they are doing with their money collection project. Invite them to count the money they have collected and brought with them today. Then invite them to place their collection in the container they decorated last week. Have a few students share the ways they are collecting funds for the Missionary Childhood Association. Have grades K-4 also take one of the strips of paper and note the amount they added to the jar today, and begin making a group paper chain from the strips of paper by connecting their individual links.

Activities for Grades K-4

- Introduce the students to the World Mission Rosary by noting that each decade has been assigned a color. The color helps us focus on areas in the world where the Church continues her evangelizing mission. The colors are as follows:
 - Green for Africa
 - Blue for the Pacific Islands
 - White for Europe
 - Red for the Americas
 - Yellow for Asia
- Using a world map or globe, ask students to identify the locations corresponding to the color. Invite the students to share what they know about each area of the world. Ask them if they can name why each color might have been chosen for each location. The answers are as follows:
 - Green for the forests and grasslands of Africa
 - Blue for waters surrounding the Pacific Islands
 - White symbolizing Europe, home to our Holy Father
 - Red for the fire of faith that brought missionaries to the Americas (this may require some explanation from you)
 - Yellow for the first morning light of Asia

- Provide each student with a piece of yarn and one simple green, blue, white, red and yellow bead, inviting them to make a prayer bracelet. Ask them to create their prayer bracelet by stringing the beads on the yarn and then tying the two ends together. Conclude by praying a decade of the World Mission Rosary together. Invite the students to take their prayer bracelet home, and make a commitment with their families to pray the World Mission Rosary this week. Consider sending home the needed supplies for each family member to make their own bracelet.
- Provide the students with an outline map of the world (each continent should appear on the map). Also provide them with green, blue, white, red and yellow markers or crayons. Ask them to color in the continents according to the World Mission Rosary colors noted above. Then invite the students to divide into five groups, assigning each group one of the five continents. Ask each group to compose a prayer for the missionaries and their mission family in that location. Ask the groups to share their prayers with everyone. Students can take their maps home and invite their families to pray for each of the locations highlighted by the World Mission Rosary.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- You will need some information about each part of the world represented in the World Mission Rosary (or make computers and Internet access available for the students to do so). Divide the students into five different groups. Assign each group one of the areas – Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands, Latin America, Europe – represented by the World Mission Rosary, and provide each group with the relevant information. Ask the groups to review the resources and highlight at least eight to 10 facts. Groups should then share their lists with one another. Families can accomplish this activity by assigning each family member one or more of the locations, and then share the information.
- Tell the students that thousands of Catholics travel to Rome each year to see the Holy Father. At the Vatican they will find a scroll where visitors can share their thoughts on the role of faith in their lives. “The Faith Scroll” is also a place where travelers (also called pilgrims) can write their prayer intentions. Invite the students to reflect on someone or something for which they want to pray. Invite them to share their requests as you write them down on a long sheet of paper that resembles a scroll or in a blank book. Place the scroll or book in a location where students can continue to add their requests for the remainder of the year. You might even consider asking your school or parish priest to bless the scroll or book. Suggest that the students create a family faith scroll, where family members can enter their prayer intentions on a regular basis throughout the year and even beyond!

Day Two | All Grades

If you have not previously shared the story *Tea-a Drink with Hope and Faith* found in the Resources section of this guide, do so in your own words. The story offers students an example of how missionaries share the love of Jesus with the poor. If already shared last week, invite students to recall its message, or ask someone to summarize it for the group.

Pray today's Responsorial Psalm PS 42:2, 3; 43:3, 4

R. (see 42:3) Athirst is my soul for the living God.

*When shall I go and behold the face of God?
As the hind longs for the running waters,
so my soul longs for you, O God.*

R. Athirst is my soul for the living God.

When shall I go and behold the face of God?

*Athirst is my soul for God, the living God.
When shall I go and behold the face of God?*

R. Athirst is my soul for the living God.

When shall I go and behold the face of God?

*Send forth your light and your fidelity;
they shall lead me on
And bring me to your holy mountain,
to your dwelling-place.*

R. Athirst is my soul for the living God.

When shall I go and behold the face of God?

*Then will I go in to the altar of God,
the God of my gladness and joy;
Then will I give you thanks upon the harp,
O God, my God!*

R. Athirst is my soul for the living God.

When shall I go and behold the face of God?

- Lead a discussion with the students on the Psalm and how it relates to the story and the work of other missionaries.
- Ask the students to share how they are doing with their money collection project. Invite them to count the money they have collected and brought with them today. Then invite them to place their collection in the container they decorated last week. Have a few students share the ways they are collecting funds for the Missionary Childhood Association. Have grades K-4 also take one of the strips of paper and note the amount they added to the jar today, and add to their group paper chain with the strips of paper by connecting their individual links.

Activities for Grades K-4

- Explore with students the life of Venerable Pauline Jaricot who encouraged “prayers and pennies” for the Missions of her day (including our own country). Information (and video can be found at <http://www.onefamilyinmission.org/society-propfaith/paulinejaricot.html>). Then invite the students to pray the following prayer for her beatification:

*Lord, You want all men and women to be saved
And come to knowledge of the Truth.
You inspired Pauline-Marie Jaricot
To devote herself entirely
To the Propagation of the Faith
In the world.
Hasten the day when the Church
Publicly recognizes the holiness of her life.
Let her example inspire me and
Christians in great number
To announce the Gospel
So that finally all people may know You.
You, the only true God,
and the One whom You have sent,
Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord.
Amen.*

The prayer may also be downloaded as a prayer card at <http://www.onefamilyinmission.org/images/stories/pdf/spof/paulineanniversary/PaulineJaricotPrayerCard.pdf>. Consider printing out the card and sending it home for families to pray together.

- Pauline Jaricot said, “Oh! I’d love to have a well of gold to give some to all the unfortunate, so that there would not be any more poor people at all and that no one would cry anymore.” Share this quote with the students. Divide the students into small groups. Ask groups to imagine they each had their own “wealth of gold.” Ask them to talk about what they would do with that money to help the poor of the world. Ask them to develop a list of five to 10 things. Then have each group present their lists.

Activities for Grades 5-8

→ Download copies of the background information on Pauline Jaricot available at http://www.onefamilyinmission.org/images/stories/images-/spof/Jaricot2012/PaulineJaricot_150th_WebText.pdf.

Divide the students into four groups, provide each group with one of the following sections of the background information you have downloaded.

- Pauline's Story Begins...
- The Society for the Propagation of the Faith...
- Suffering for a Loving, Generous Heart...
- Three Lessons from the Life of Pauline Jaricot...

→ Invite each group to read and discuss their assigned section, and then plan a creative presentation to share its content with the entire group. Ask each group to share their presentation, allowing for questions and answers. Conclude by inviting the students to pray one of the prayers found on the last page of the resource.

→ Pauline Jaricot wrote of her parents: *"Happy are those who have received from their parents the first seeds of faith.... Be praised Lord, for giving me a just man for a father and a virtuous and charitable woman as a mother."* Invite students to discuss what Pauline might have meant by this statement. Organize students into pairs and allow time for them to discuss how their own parents / guardians / godparents helped them come to know about God. Finally, provide each student with a thank-you note, telling them to write a note of thanks to their parents / guardians / godparents / grandparents / aunts / uncles for encouraging their faith.

Day Three | All Grades

If you have not already shared the story, *St. Anthony's Mission Center* found in the Resources section of this guide, do so in your own words. The story offers students an example of how providing loving care changes the lives of children and families in the Missions. If already shared last week, invite students to recall its message, or ask someone to summarize it for the group.

Pray today's Responsorial Psalm PS 25:4-5AB, 6 AND 7BC, 8-9

R. (6a) Remember your mercies, O Lord.

*Your ways, O LORD, make known to me;
teach me your paths,
Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my savior.*

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

*Remember that your compassion, O LORD,
and your kindness are from of old.
In your kindness remember me,
because of your goodness, O LORD.*

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

*Good and upright is the LORD;
thus he shows sinners the way.
He guides the humble to justice,
he teaches the humble his way.*

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

→ Lead a discussion with the students on the Psalm and how it relates to the story of and other missionaries.

→ Explore with the students the life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux using the information provided below:

- St. Thérèse of Lisieux was born Marie Françoise Thérèse Martin in Alençon, France, on January 2, 1873, she was the youngest of nine children. Her father was a watchmaker. Her family moved to Lisieux, after Thérèse mother died.
- When she was 15, Thérèse entered the Carmelite convent at Lisieux, becoming a religious Sister two years later.
- Thérèse wanted very much to leave her convent in France and be sent on mission, specifically to Vietnam. Her poor health prevented her from making that journey, but not from being a missionary.

- Determined not only to love God herself, but also to lead others to know and love Him, Thérèse offered her prayers and her own sufferings for missionaries around the world. St. Thérèse did go to the Missions – at least through the mail. She wrote to missionary priests serving in Asia and Africa. In those letters, she told of her great love for Jesus, and of feeling a part of the missionary work of those priests, especially through her prayers.
- She wrote in one of her books *Story of a Soul* about an incident from her childhood: “Papa rewarded me by giving me a pretty little coin. I placed it in a box, and it was from this box that I drew my offerings on the big feasts when there were special collections for the Propagation of the Faith.” St. Therese wrote of herself in her autobiography as “The Little Flower.”
- Then invite the students to pray the following prayer:
Lord who has said: “Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven”; grant us, we beg you, so to follow, in humility and simplicity of heart, the footsteps of the virgin blessed Thérèse that we may attain to an everlasting reward. Amen.

Ask the students to share how they are doing with their penny collection project. Invite them to count the money they have collected and brought with them today. Then invite them to place their collection in the container they decorated last week. Have a few students share the ways in which they are collecting funds for the Missionary Childhood Association. Have grades K-4 also take one of the strips of paper and note the amount they added to the jar today, and add to the group paper chain with the strips of paper by connecting their individual links.

Activities for Grades K-4

- Provide the students with cardstock paper and some markers, or crayons, and a variety of craft items, including scissors for the older students. Invite them to copy the above prayer and create a prayer card. Assist the younger students with cutting the paper.
- St. Therese wrote: “I will let no tiny sacrifice pass, no look, no word. I wish to profit by the smallest actions, and to do them for Love.” Share this quote with the students. Divide the students into small groups. Ask groups to identify small actions they can perform that will help the poor of the world. Ask them to develop a list of five to 10 things. Then have each group present their lists.
- Everyone can do something. Ask the students to think about what they can do to help make God’s world a better place and to show his love to others through their actions? See if the group can develop a list of at least 50 actions. Families can complete this activity at home as well.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Watch the video entitled *The Story of St. Therese of Lisieux* available for viewing or download at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0k19qcgW1U>. Discuss how the simplest acts can make a difference.
- Ask the students if they have ever heard the song “We Walk By Faith.” (You may find the lyrics to the song at this link: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jeremycamp/walkbyfaith.html>.) Invite someone to sing the refrain or sing it yourself. Ask students to share what walking by faith means. Allow some responses. Provide students with a few index cards and a marker. Ask them to write the phrase: “By faith I...” on each of the cards. Then ask them to take some time to reflect on and complete the phrase on their index cards. Either collect the cards and share each of the responses, or invite the students to post their cards on the walls around the room. Then invite everyone to walk around and view the cards.
- Divide students into small groups and ask them to brainstorm strategies for inviting formerly Catholic friends, families and neighbors back to Church. Ask them to think through a few ideas. Have the group share their ideas. Invite the students to choose one strategy they can use with someone they know whom they would like to invite back to the Church.

Day Four | All Grades

If you have not previously shared the story, *Rolling Away the Heart's Stone* found in the Resources section of this guide, do so in your own words. The story offers students an example of the importance of forgiveness and compassion to others. If already shared last week, invite students to recall its message, or ask someone to summarize it for the group.

Pray today's Responsorial Psalm PS 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20

R. (12a) Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.

*Glorify the LORD, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion.
For he has strengthened the bars of your gates;
he has blessed your children within you.*

R. Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.

*He sends forth his command to the earth;
swiftly runs his word!
He spreads snow like wool;
frost he strews like ashes.*

R. Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.

*He has proclaimed his word to Jacob,
his statutes and his ordinances to Israel.
He has not done thus for any other nation;
his ordinances he has not made known to them.*

R. Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.

- Lead a discussion with the students on the Psalm and how it relates to the story of the people of Sierra Leone.
- Ask the students to share how they are doing with their money collection project. Invite them to count money they have collected and brought with them today. Then invite them to place their collection in the container they decorated last week. Have a few students share the ways in which they are collecting funds for the Missionary Childhood Association. Have grades K-4 also take one of the strips of paper and note the amount they added to the jar today, and add to their group paper chain with the strips of paper by connecting their individual links.

Activities for Grades K-4

- Divide the students into small groups. Provide each group with a sheet of newsprint and a marker. Assign each group one of the following phrases: forgiveness is . . . forgiveness is not . . . Ask the groups to make a list accordingly. Alternately you could have groups respond to the phrases compassion is . . . or compassionate is not . . . Families can conduct this activity at home as well.
- Provide each student with a small box or jar, or some kind of small container as well as a few small slips of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask them to note on each slip something that makes them afraid or worried. If the children are too young to write they can draw a small picture or you can assist them in the writing. Invite them to place each slip in the jar. Then suggest that they make this their *Let Go and Let God Jar*. Tell them that anytime they are worried or scared they can write it down. Then they can place it in the jar as a reminder that God is in charge and will protect and care for them.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Using magazine photos or images found on the web, select several images that convey acts of compassion. Post the images on the walls in your meeting space/classroom. Ask the students to walk around the room to view the photos. Then lead a group discussion on their impressions of the photos. Help students recognize that each photo represents compassion in some way. Families can do this activity by simply reading through the daily paper or viewing the daily news online and discussing some stories.
- Ask students to complete the following sentence: *Compassion is...* Some examples might include: *compassion is caring about other people; compassion is helping others; compassion is showing concern for others, etc.* Once the students have mastered the concept, invite them to offer examples of acts of compassion. They should include acts they have witnessed at home, at school, at church, in their extra-curricular activities, and in the community. Suggest that students ask their friends and families to complete the sentence as well. They can record each answer and share it with at the group's next meeting.

Day Five | All Grades

If you have not previously shared the story *Life's Storms* found in the Resources section of this guide, do so in your own words. The story offers students an example of the importance of having faith in Christ Jesus. If already shared last week, invite students to recall its message, or ask someone to summarize it for the group.

Pray today's Responsorial PS 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

R. (8) If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

*Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.*

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

*Come, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.
For he is our God,
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.*

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

*Oh, that today you would hear his voice:
"Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as in the day of Massah in the desert,
Where your fathers tempted me;
they tested me though they had seen my works."*

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

- Lead a discussion with the students on the Psalm and the faith of people in the Philippines and throughout the Missions.
- Ask the students to share how they are doing with their money collection project. Invite them to count the money they have collected and brought with them today. Then invite them to place their collection in the container they decorated last week. Have a few students share the ways in which they are collecting funds for the Missionary Childhood Association. Have grades K-4 also take one of the strips of paper and note the amount they added to the jar today, and add it to their group paper chain from the strips of paper by connecting their individual links.

Activities for Grades K-4

- Before your class begins, take a medium-sized ball of yarn and tie it to the entrance door of your room or class. Unravel the yarn throughout the room until you reach the end of the yarn. Ask a few students to start rolling up the yarn, from the end of the roll until they reach the entry door. Lead a large group discussion using the following questions:
 - How does the yarn compare to Christian faith? (We must go where our faith leads us.)
 - What does it mean that the yarn ends at the door? (As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI told us, we are called to “open the door to faith.”)
- Initiate a contest with students by providing small groups of three to four with a sheet of newsprint, markers and other craft supplies. Ask them to create a mock-up of a door, and then decorate it with signs and symbols of faith. Once the groups have finished their work, have them post their doors on the wall around the room. Invite the students to view each image. Then hold a vote to determine the group’s top three favorites. Families can also do this activity, by having each family member decorate a door in their home.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Invite the students to call out phrases that include the word faith: “walk in faith” or “living in faith,” as examples. As they call out the phrases, write them on sheets of newsprint. See if the group can come up with at least one phrase for each student.
- Provide each student with a Bible. Then divide the students into small groups. Assign each group one of the Letters found in the New Testament. Ask the groups to search their assigned Scripture and locate a story that models what it means to follow God by faith alone. Write the name of this story and reference down on a sheet of loose-leaf paper. After they complete the assignment, have the groups share their answers and discuss what it means to follow God in faith. Invite the groups to share their selected passage and the rationale behind the choice. Then lead a large group discussion on the following question: Why is following God by faith sometimes difficult?
- Acts 14:27 tell us to “open the doors of faith.” Ask the students to think about the first time they remember walking through the doors of a church they had never been to before. What do they remember feeling or thinking? How were they welcomed? How might they welcome a new church members or visitor?

Day Six | All Grades

If you have not previously shared the story, *To Peace Together Hope* found in the Resources section of this guide, do so in your own words. The story provides an example of the needs of local mission churches as they serve the poor. If the story was shared last week, invite the students to recall the story, or invite someone to recap the story.

Pray today's Responsorial Psalm PS 81:6C-8A, 8BC-9, 10-11AB, 14 AND 17

R. (see 11 and 9a) I am the Lord your God: hear my voice.

An unfamiliar speech I hear:

*"I relieved his shoulder of the burden;
his hands were freed from the basket.
In distress you called, and I rescued you."*

R. I am the Lord your God: hear my voice.

*"Unseen, I answered you in thunder;
I tested you at the waters of Meribah.
Hear, my people, and I will admonish you;
O Israel, will you not hear me?"*

R. I am the Lord your God: hear my voice.

*"There shall be no strange god among you
nor shall you worship any alien god.
I, the LORD, am your God
who led you forth from the land of Egypt."*

R. I am the Lord your God: hear my voice.

*"If only my people would hear me,
and Israel walk in my ways,
I would feed them with the best of wheat,
and with honey from the rock I would fill them."*

R. I am the Lord your God: hear my voice.

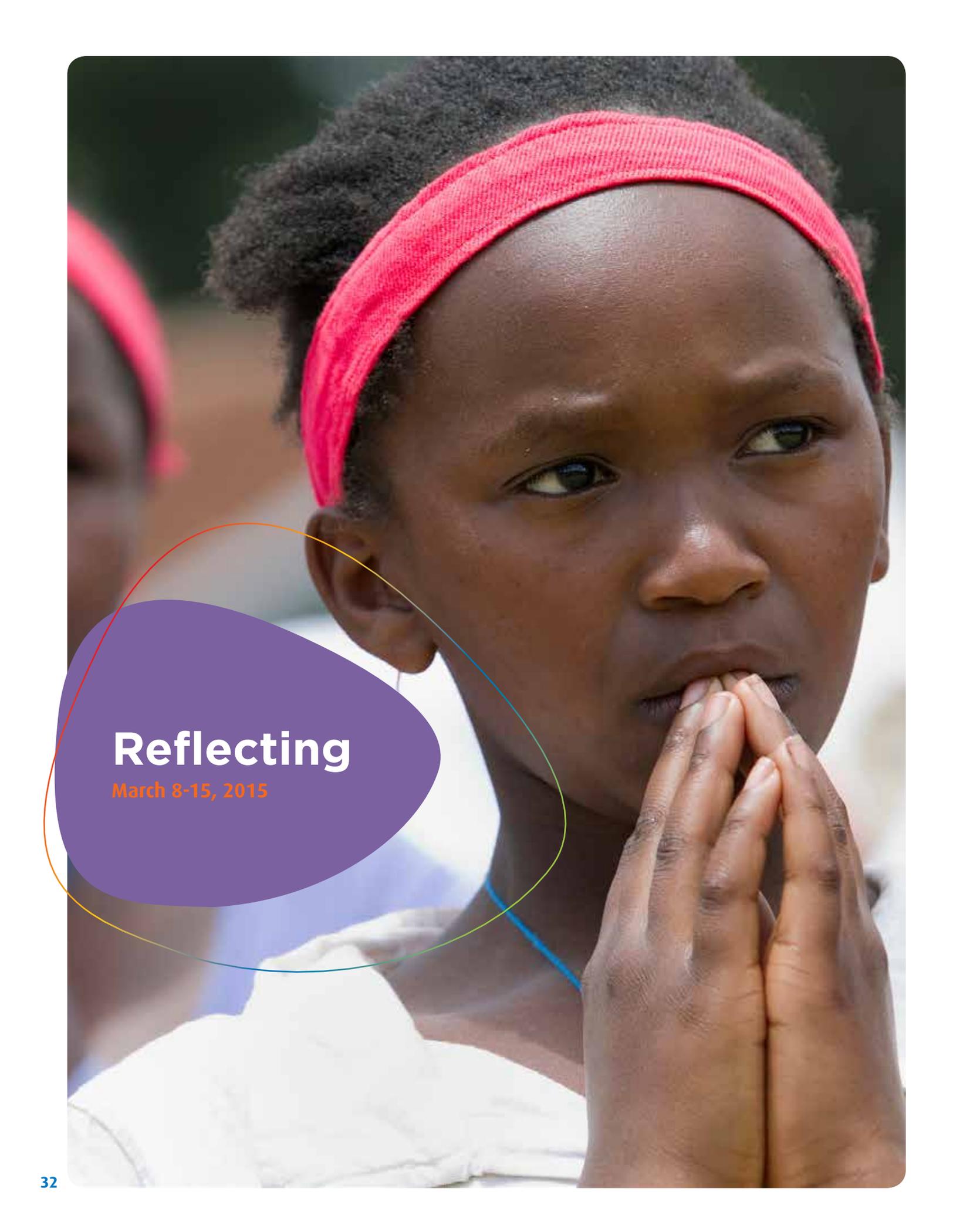
- Lead a discussion with the students on the Psalm and other places throughout the Missions who serve the poor, those living amidst violence and those in need of God's loving care.
- Ask the students to share how they are doing with their money collection project. Invite them to count money they have collected and brought with them today. Then invite them to place their collection in the container they decorated last week. Have a few students share the ways in which they are collecting funds for the Missionary Childhood Association. Have grades K-4 also take one of the strips of paper and note the amount they added to the jar today, and add to their group paper chain from the strips of paper by connecting their individual links.

Activities for Grades K-4

- Ask students to describe what makes their home (the United States) different from some of the countries helped by the Missionary Childhood Association. If you prefer to narrow it down to a particular continent or country, please feel free to do so. Discussion topics can include: food, education, weather, language, clothing, homes, hobbies, etc.
- Divide students into pairs, then ask the following question: *If you were granted three wishes for yourself, what would they be?* Invite the pairs to share their responses. Ask each pair to join with another pair of students and then ask: *If you were granted three wishes for the Church, what would they be?* Invite the groups to share their responses. Ask each group of four to join with another group of four (making a group of eight), and ask: *If you were granted three wishes for the world, what would they be?* After discussion time, invite each group to share their responses. Then talk about what it would take for the wishes they have for the world to come true. What role can they play in making those wishes a reality?

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Post a world map on a wall, blackboard or bulletin board. Lead a group discussion based on the following questions:
 - How many countries are there in the world?
 - How many continents are there in the world?
 - What do you think the personal needs of a missionary might be, serving right now in one of those countries?
 - Depending on where a missionary is located, what types of resources might they need?
- Lead the students in a discussion about what a “perfect world” would look like. Ask them to offer suggestions, as you note them on newsprint. Once you have generated a list, ask the students to identify ideas and actions that might make that perfect world more of a reality.



Reflecting

March 8-15, 2015

National Prayer and Penny Week

Follow-Up Strategies and Ideas

After *National Prayer and Penny Week* has finished, we encourage you to continue to educate students and families about the work of the Pontifical Mission Societies, and how their prayers and offerings make a faith-filled difference for the poor of the Missions. For this reason, we provide a variety of follow-up ideas and strategies intended to encourage support of the missionary work of the Catholic Church. Suggestions are provided for engaging students in grades K-4, 5-8 and 9-12. Choose strategies that work best for your group. Many of these ideas are easily adapted for use at home with families.

Activities for Grades K-4

Have students work out an acrostic using the word MISSION. Each letter might stand for a particular prayer intention of a missionary (M: for motorcycles so missionaries can travel to bring the Good News of Jesus to others) or for a country that child might like to visit and why (S: I would like to visit South Sudan to help the poor realize that I know of their suffering and pray for them). At the end of class, allow students to present their acrostics, and then post them as mission reminders.

- Place a mirror in your meeting space or classroom. Label it: "I am a missionary." When students sneak a peek at themselves from time to time, they will be reminded of their responsibility to continue the mission of Jesus.
- Celebrate with students the days throughout the year associated with missionary saints. How did they spread the Good News of Jesus? Research one important fact about each saint. Create a collage or bulletin board with images of those saints and those facts.
- Put the names of world leaders on popsicle sticks. Ask the students to choose a name daily, and pray for that leader to find peaceful solutions to issues in his/her country or community.
- Get the students involved in making a "love chain." Have strips of paper for students to write their names. Form into links in a chain by stapling the strips together appropriately. Add other strips with the name of missionary saints and people from the parish or (arch)diocese working in the Missions. Print a sign that says something like: Each link in this chain has the name of a missionary who spreads the love of Christ around the world. You can be a "link in this chain" through your prayers and generous gifts.

Activities for Grades 5-8

- Ask students to design a poster about what they think it means to continue the mission of Jesus.
- Engage students in a discussion to find suggestions on how young people can be missionaries through their words and actions every day. List the ideas on paper and cut them into single pieces – one idea on each piece of paper – and then place them in a large bowl. Each day, draw a suggestion from the bowl and have students be on mission in that particular way.
- Bring adhesive strips and copies of the local newspaper and mission magazines to class. Help students sort through stories and name a place where the healing presence of Jesus is needed. Then during a time of prayer, take a flat map or globe and place an adhesive over the country that is hurting. Or, write words like God, food, peace, love, bread or other Gospel values on the adhesives. Invite the students to place the strips on the map where people are hurting and in need of those gifts/qualities.
- People pray in many languages. Research the “Our Father,” also known as “The Lord’s Prayer” in different languages. Learn to say the words “Our Father” in the language of a mission country. Use the “Our Father” in the language you learned to start your prayers.
- Invite students to write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, forgiveness, petition, each relating to the Missions and missionaries. Keep these prayers, as well as a picture of a child in a mission country for each prayer, in a prayer journal. Have students pray for their brothers and sisters in the Missions every day.
- Use adhesive strips for a fundraiser for the Missions. Prepare a set of clear labels with a mission Scripture passage, such as, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21). Sell the adhesives for a reasonable price. Perhaps you can do this on the day of a school Mass, or after Saturday/Sunday Masses in the parish, with permission.

RESOURCES

Day One | Grades K-12

“From Medals in the Soil...”

It started with medals in the soil.

In December 1948, Spanish missionary Sister Guadalupe journeyed to the remote northeastern part of India called Nagaland, invited by the government to help staff a newly established hospital. No direct evangelization, she was told. The same directive was given to the other Sister from her Religious Community, Sister Margarita, and the one missionary priest.

So Sister Guadalupe tried something indirect. As she visited villages, she planted religious medals in the soil, praying and hoping for God’s grace and the growth of the faith.

Just four years later, Sisters Guadalupe and Margarita left Nagaland. Within the year, a small Catholic community formed, and government restrictions on missionaries soon began to ease. Today, more than six decades later, there are close to 60,000 Catholics spread over 35 parishes and 10 mission centers in the Diocese of Kohima, which encompasses virtually all of Nagaland. There are 14 major tribes, with Catholic communities in almost all of them.

Your prayers and help connect you with the growth of the Church there and with the 175 diocesan and missionary priests, religious Sisters in 18 Religious Communities, and the lay faithful who serve those in need.

Just last year, that included aid to build a new church for 1,000 in our mission family who belong to St. Paul’s parish in Peren. In fact, in the past five years, your support through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith helped to build five churches where more than 5,000 of your brothers and sisters in this part of the Missions may celebrate the Sacraments and attend Sunday Mass.

Your generosity has also helped families in villages care for their children, offering their little ones a place to live and an education. At St. Joseph’s Home in Burma Camp, some 45 children, most from poor families, but some orphans as well, are provided with food, clothing, school books and medical care – all for about \$70 per child, help that comes from the Missionary Childhood Association.

And finally, your sacrifices through the Society of St. Peter Apostle form more priests to serve the poor here. Some 60 young men are preparing for the priesthood at *Good Shepherd Major Seminary in Dimapur*.

“The mission in Nagaland is tough and rough, and yet we joyously carry on,” Bishop James Thoppil of Kohima, India, told MISSION. “We move ahead in our work with the support and prayers of mission-minded people. Your interest and support are a great boost for our work.”

Yes, the Church is called to transmit the joy of the Lord to her children – and her children are joined to that effort, on the ground or behind the scenes, through every prayer and every generous sacrifice.



Some orphans are provided with food, clothing, school books and medical care – all for about \$70 per child.

– Nagaland, India

RESOURCES

Day Two | Grades K-12

Tea —a Drink with Hope and Faith

The indigenous peoples — Khasi and Garo — mostly Catholic, are the poorest of the population in Bangladesh. Transplanted from India by the British tea companies, they are now virtually “slaves,” observed Felix Ashacra, a leader in Bidyabill village of the Finlay Tea Estate in Srimangal, located in the dusty center of the country. “Tea workers are like slaves to the authorities,” he said. “We lack in basic human needs.” And there is a reason for their poverty — workers on tea estates earn just the equivalent of 50 cents per day.



The Church here also provides food, lodging, and clothing, as well as health care and education for some 300 children in the tea estates.

Finlay Tea Estate – Srimangal, Bangladesh



For these tribal peoples, rejected in all other ways in their sufferings, it is through the Church that they find hope in faith. This was illustrated by their request of Bishop Bejoy D’Cruze, OMI during his first visit to the area. “We don’t ask for food and clothes from you, Bishop, but help to set up a long desired grotto to our Blessed Mother,” Ashacra said. The Church here also provides the 700 mostly tribal Garo people in 147 families with those basic necessities, as it is able. Bidyabill is the largest Catholic village among the 74 tea estate villages under St. Joseph’s parish in Srimangal. Holy Cross missionary Father Dominic Sarkar serves the area, visiting the 10,000 Catholics spread over 10,000 square miles — lots of work, concrete help for the poor, always with the offering of the hope and love of the Lord; help for body and soul. St. Joseph’s is the oldest and largest in the Diocese of Sylhet. Two other priests and eight Sisters also serve at St. Joseph’s, which operates four hostels for children — providing food, lodging, and clothing, as well as health care and education for some 300 children of the tea estates. In another village a local priest echoes the tragic tale of the tea workers — but speaks too of the Church’s work to change that. “Tea workers are deprived of a good wage, and so also education, for themselves and for their children,” said Father Subash Costa, OMI of DeMazenod Catholic Church in Khadim Nagar. The Kalagool ESA Primary School at the Kalagool Tea Estate provides more than just school subjects to its students.

“Often children come to school hungry, suffering from malnutrition,” Father Subash explained. “So we offer them bread with their learning!”

RESOURCES

Day Three | Grades K-12

St. Anthony's Mission Center

In Bangladesh, there are children with no home, no families — seemingly, no option. They sleep on the floor in extreme cold or extreme heat. Not long ago that had been the reality at St. Anthony Mission Center in Shimulia, some 45 miles north from the capital city of Dhaka. Like about half of the country's population, the people in the area just two years ago had no electricity. Village roads would be muddy and slippery with even a little rain; flooded when rains turned torrential. The main road is now cement, although still poorly constructed, and some electricity is in place.

Founded by a local priest, Father Dominic Rozario, back in 2005, the center is home to 45 children, mostly non-Christians; there they also receive an education, as well as food, clothing and shelter. The village has only seven Catholic families; all who embraced the faith through Father Rozario's own work and witness. Over several decades, his outreach to migrant workers and the most vulnerable peoples in these remote areas led to his opening at least five mission centers within the Dhaka Archdiocese. His own vocation and his work with the most poor and in need was inspired by a now deceased Italian missionary priest.



Up until this year, there had been no electricity, and the Sisters and children had to sleep on the floor.

- Shimulia, Bangladesh

Three local religious Sisters, all Catechist Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Queen of Angels, care for the children at the mission center. Up until this year, there had been no electricity, and the Sisters and children had to sleep on the floor; they endured sweltering heat in the summer and harsh cold winters. But sacrifices of U.S. children through the Missionary Childhood Association purchased beds for the center. Children helping children — the motto for the Missionary Childhood Association, and a model for our own missionary life of prayer and sacrifice, no matter our age.

RESOURCES

Day Four | Grades K-12

Rolling Away the Heart's Stone

A wounded country. That's how Archbishop Edward Charles described his homeland of Sierra Leone. And the wounds are still deep from a civil war that began in 1991. The litany of horror unleashed by rebel forces seems unfathomable to most. Young boys, eight to 18, were kidnapped, drugged and forced by soldiers to be killers, even of their own families. Then, when the rebels no longer needed them, the boys would be set free – but with an amputated foot or hand as an ugly reminder of their years of violence. Young girls, some as young as six, also kidnapped, were drugged as well, and then sexually exploited in rebel camps, their bodies mutilated. Many died from lack of care for their wounds. And there are thousands of orphans, alone to beg on the streets, their families massacred in the fighting.



There are thousands of orphans alone to beg on the streets.

– Sierra Leone, Africa

The Church suffered casualties of war as well. Priests and Religious were killed; numerous Catholic churches, schools, convents and clinics were looted or destroyed.

“It is never easy to forgive when another person hurts you,” said Archbishop Charles. “But it’s even harder to do so when you see purposeful evil perpetuated upon innocent people and helpless children. “But forgive we must,” he added.

“My people inspire me and, at the same time, challenge my faith,” he explained. “I have asked the Lord in prayer the exact quote as Peter did in the Gospels, ‘How many times must I forgive my brother?’ And the answer always comes back the same, with a number we will never reach as humans.”

The healing efforts include St. Mary’s Children’s Home, which offers loving care to the youngest victims of the war. Take, for example, the baby girl who was found abandoned and near death by the roadside near Bo. Brought to St. Mary’s, she was named Cecilia, and given loving care by the local priest, Father Peter, and the staff at this home. Now four, she is the youngest resident of St. Mary’s.

There is also Fatima House of Light, where young women, many of whom had been victims of the war’s brutality, are taught a trade, such as sewing, typing, or cooking. Each day, many also attend therapy for the physical wounds of war.

“In the morning and at the end of a long day, I pray to the Lord for strength and courage, for myself and for my people,” said Archbishop Charles. “We must carry Jesus in our hearts, and not a pebble of hatred or vengeance, since that pebble becomes a rock, a stumbling block on our God-given journey.

“We need to roll that rock away, just as the finger of God did on that Easter morning,” he concluded. “Because with trust in the Lord all things are possible.”

RESOURCES

Day Five | Grades K-12

Life's Storms

“Indeed in every storm in our lives we are always reminded that God is the Lord of all. He continuously inspires people to show His infinite love and boundless generosity.”

So wrote missionary Sister Maricris Cabarles reflecting on the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, which devastated the Philippines last November, and the outpouring of support for the suffering in this part of the mission world.

“The storm surge swallowed and drowned thousands of people, houses, cars and establishments along the Eastern part of Leyte,” she wrote *MISSION*. “Huge trees were uprooted. Countless electric posts were blown in all directions.”

More than 250 people took refuge in the Catholic school there, where the Sisters provided food, blankets and sleeping mats. In the days that followed, the food supply dwindled, and there was no electricity or clean water.



Help was provided to some 50 families who lost roofs of their houses, and to others whose homes were totally destroyed.

– Phillipines

And yet, Sister Maricris reflected, despite the difficulties, “God is so good to touch generous people to share their blessings.”

And she and the Sisters in her Religious

Community who run the school, the Sisters Oblates of the Holy Spirit, began a campaign to help families in the area restore damaged houses, “Rebuild Houses, Rebuild Homes.” Help was provided to some 50 families who lost roofs of their houses, and to others whose homes were totally destroyed.

“One of those big hearts who allocated their funds was the National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the Philippines, Father Socrates Mesiona,” Sister Maricris wrote. (And your help to a special appeal from the Pontifical Mission Societies assisted with those homes – and reached those families; see sidebar story.)

Brother Anthony Dameg, who works with Father Socrates, also shared a gift, Sister Maricris noted – 10 coats to warm those who had no cover from the cold, and 15 beautiful images of Jesus and Mary.

“The people were happy to place those images on their altar in thanksgiving,” she noted. “Our grateful hearts extend warm thanks to all the kind-hearted donors who opened the door of hope for us.”

RESOURCES

Day Six | Grades K-12

To Peace Together Hope

“We keep working at it. We labor on by the grace of God.”

So wrote Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama of Jos, Nigeria. The task – to restore peace to that once serene and beautiful city in his homeland.

During 2010, repeated conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the area - the first one in January and again the day after Christmas – seemed to make that an almost impossible venture. But Archbishop Kaigama remains determined. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in his Angelus message on December 26, specifically citing the most recent attack, invited the whole Church to pray “to vigorously ask the Lord to touch the hearts of men and bring hope, reconciliation and peace.”

The January 17, 2010 conflict left churches and mosques destroyed, and homes and businesses gone. People watched as loved ones were maimed or killed. Two months later, infants and children were among those brutally murdered in an attack on Dogo Nahawa, near Jos. “I was in tears when I visited the scene as the whole community was shocked to their marrow,” Archbishop Kaigama said.



The local church immediately became the “bridge builder,” Archbishop Kaigama explained, as the Catholic community helped over 600 families affected by the fighting. The faithful joined government and international agencies in reaching out to those families with comforting prayers or just a listening ear.

A Mass of Solidarity was held in mid-March, where prayers were offered for peace and reconciliation. Cardinal Peter Turkson, originally from Ghana and now president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace at the Vatican, journeyed to Jos for that Mass. “In hearing what has befallen you,” he told those gathered, “the rest of the family of God could not sit unconcerned.”

At a Mass in Dogo Nahawa, worshippers asked for forgiveness for those who had committed the violence there. The local community gathered basic necessities for those in need, and distributed crop seedlings as well. They also reconstructed the area’s only health clinic, which had been destroyed in the fighting. “The

fact that life is gradually returning to normal in villages that lost so much is nothing short of the miracle of love," Archbishop Kaigama said.

At another Mass at the site of additional attacks in Mazah village, there were prayers for peace as well. "We mobilized the faithful within Jos to visit the village and celebrated Holy Mass with the people," the archbishop recalled. "The rough, undulating and steep road to Mazah gave the visit the touch of a pilgrimage as we trekked in a long file, crossing mountains and rivers."

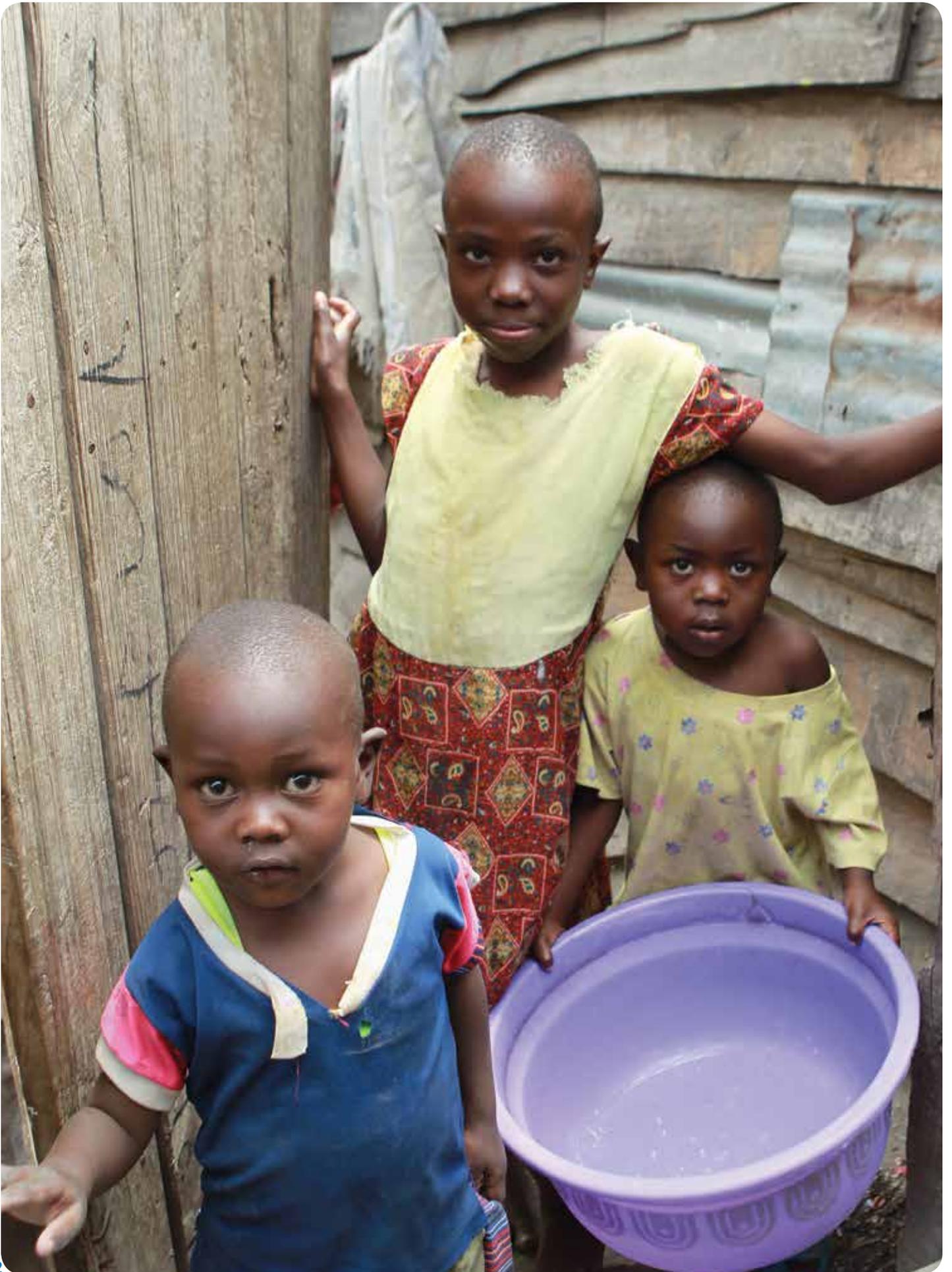
Seven people died, and four were seriously injured in the Mazah violence. A man who lost his wife and children told Archbishop Kaigama that he had forgiven the harm done him. The head of the village declared the same. "This visit was as historic as it was healing," he said.

"We keep encouraging Christians not to lose faith in God nor be paralyzed by fear and anger, but rather to renew their love for God and neighbor,"

The local church immediately became the "bridge builder," helping over 600 families affected by the fighting. The faithful joined government and international agencies in reaching out to those families with comforting prayers or just a listening ear.

– Jos, Nigeria





Prayer Service

Overview

In Scripture, we read of the challenges faced by Paul and Barnabas and other missionaries of the very early Church. We are told that those who are called on behalf of the Church to bring the Good News of Christ to others in foreign lands must receive support from those of us at home. We must be ready to encourage, pray for and offer our support to those who are called to the work of the Missions. This prayer service invites us to do just that.

Music will greatly enhance this service. Begin and end with a song. Consider selecting songs that speak of faith and belief. Some options include:

- *Thuma Mina / Send Me, Jesus* (South African tune)
- *God Has Chosen Me* by Bernadette Farrell
- *Here I Am Lord* by Dan Schutte
- *Go Make a Difference* by Steve Angrisano and Tom Tomaszek

Introductory Prayer

We begin our prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Ever faithful God,

You call us to proclaim the Good News of Jesus each and every day.

Hold us in Your love, and grant us strength to be faithful to Your ways.

*Send us into the world as ambassadors of Your compassion and goodness
that by our hands all will be transformed by Your loving kindness.*

*May we work fervently to grow in our faith,
and to share that faith with all the world.*

*Receive this prayer we offer today,
for those who seek new life in Christ and for all people everywhere.*

Glory to You forever and ever.

We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Amen.

Proclamation of the Word

A Reading from Acts (14:21-28)

After they had proclaimed the good news to that city and made a considerable number of disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch. They strengthened the spirits of the disciples and exhorted them to persevere in the faith, saying, "It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." They appointed presbyters for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had put their faith. Then they traveled through Pisidia and reached Pamphylia. After proclaiming the word at Perga they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now accomplished. And when they arrived, they called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

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Sharing

- Invite participants to discuss practical steps they can take to support the Missions beyond *National Prayer and Penny Week*.

Prayers of the Faithful

Ever mindful that our God is present, faithful and true to our needs and those of the world, let us bring our petitions before Him. Our response is *Lord, give us greater faith, and hear our prayer*:

- We pray for all leaders, those in the Church, those in governments and other institutions, that they answer the essential call to care for the poor and vulnerable among us, and in all places throughout the world.
- We pray for all missionaries, those near and far, that God will continue to bless their work and that through their service and example they might make Jesus known to others.
- We pray for our school/parish community, that we may be witnesses without fear in our homes, our schools, our communities, our country, and our world.
- We pray for all missionaries who have sacrificed their lives in the service of God and to the poor, that they may be raised to new life with Christ.
- We pray for those missionaries who minister in challenging and often dangerous environments, that they be of strong faith, and serve as a continual sign of hope for those for whom they serve and care.

God of justice, God of kindness, God of love, we pray these prayers knowing that You are all powerful and that all things are possible in You.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us.

Our Father... For the kingdom, power, and glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Let us pray:

God of love,

You show us all that is right.

Help us to become living signs of Your goodness and love.

Lead us to new ways of seeing You, praising You, and growing in our love and commitment to You.

We ask that You give to all missionaries a spirit of wisdom, understanding, strength and courage as they seek to serve You in the name of our Church.

Grant them boldness to walk with our brothers and sisters who live in poverty, loneliness, and despair. Provide them with safety, perseverance, and the fortitude they need to bring Your Son, Jesus to those in need.

And give to us, Lord Jesus, humble hearts.

Give us hearts for serving all we meet.

Inspire all of Your followers to carry Your love to all people.

We ask this through Your good and faithful name.

Amen.

Blessing and Sending Forth

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing:

May God give you today the same grace given the holy apostles.

May God fill you with the Holy Spirit to sanctify yourselves.

May God communicate to you your mission in order to procure the salvation of others.

And may God Bless you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Adapted from — St. John Baptist de La Salle, Meditations, No. 43.3



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