

HCA Program Guide

Advent / Christmas Program Guide

Asia | 2010

Featuring activities for the *It's Our World* Newsletter

An Accidental Missionary – Planting the Seeds of Faith in Asia

While he knew he was destined for a holy life, St. Francis Xavier probably never dreamed of leaving his native Spain to preach the Gospel. Instead, he most likely saw himself as living out a quiet, scholarly existence.

Born in northern Spain in 1506 to a noble family, he was educated at the University of Paris, at that time a great theological center in Europe. Soon after receiving his degree, he met Ignatius of Loyola – an event that would have a profound influence on Xavier's faith-life.

In 1534, Xavier and seven other men joined Loyola to live in community and dedicate themselves to serving Christ and living His Gospel. Three years later, he was ordained a priest. While Loyola intended that Xavier remain a scholar and teacher, the demand for missionaries to the Far East dictated otherwise. When King John III of Portugal asked for men to do missionary work in the Portuguese territories of India, Loyola volunteered two of his seven followers – neither of whom was Xavier. However, at the last moment, one of the men became ill, and Loyola asked Xavier to sail to India in his place. In 1541, Xavier set off for Goa, unintentionally beginning his life as the great apostle to the East. Several months later, Pope Paul III formally recognized Loyola and

his followers as a religious order, The Society of Jesus (Jesuits).

Xavier continued his missionary efforts until his death in 1552. He was canonized in 1622. His feast day is December 3.

The seeds of faith planted so many years ago by St. Francis Xavier continue to bear fruit. In fact, in a recent message to those attending the Congress of Asian Catholic Laity in September of this year, Pope Benedict XVI noted, "*Vast horizons of mission are now opening up before lay men and women of Asia in their efforts to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel.*"

This Advent, encourage students to pray a decade of the World Mission Rosary daily that the faith in Asia continues to be strengthened and to grow. Learn more about the World Mission Rosary at www.worldmissionrosary.org.

Download a free worksheet about St. Francis Xavier at: www.onefamilyinmission.org/hca/hca-reproducibles.html

 **FIND US ON FACEBOOK:**

The Pontifical Mission Societies of the United States

Activities

THE WORLD IS IN MY HANDS!

+ All Grades

+ Matthew 28:18-20 (“The Great Commission”)

+ **Materials:** clear plastic (or glass) ornaments; acrylic paint (blue, green, brown and black), paintbrushes, smocks, and newspaper (to cover the painting surface)

Prepare: Ask a student to read Matthew 28:18-20 to the group. Explain that when they pray, or offer personal sacrifices (such as giving up something they enjoy for the benefit of others), they are living out what Jesus asks us all to do in that Gospel passage. Through prayer and sacrifice, they too *are* missionaries. Remind them that participating in HCA is another way of being missionaries!

Do: Using the supplies listed above, have students make Christmas ornaments that resemble the earth with these words written across the ornaments: “*Go and make disciples of all nations.*” This will remind them the importance of sharing their faith with people throughout the world – the Lord’s call to each of us, first given to them at Baptism.

OCEAN IN A BOTTLE

+ Grades 4-8

+ **Genesis 12:1** “*Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.*”

+ **Materials (for optional craft):** equal parts rubbing alcohol and mineral oil, blue food coloring, empty and clear water bottles (labels removed), glitter, school glue, hot glue and glue gun. **Optional items, small shells and shapes of sea life, such as starfish, seahorses, etc.**

Prepare: Tell students that some people *give to the missions by going* (just as St. Francis Xavier did) and that others *go to the missions by giving* (such as through offering time, talent, prayers, personal sacrifices, financial help, etc.). Read aloud the Scripture passage (Genesis 12:1). Encourage students to think and to pray about what type of missionary they are right now – and what type of missionary they would like to be. If time allows, start a discussion about what they think it might be like to travel to a faraway place to share the “Good News” of Jesus. Make the “Ocean in a Bottle” craft to remind students that while some missionaries travel “oceans away” to share the Gospel message with others, we can keep all those people in the world – missionaries and those they serve – within our hearts through prayer.

Do: Fill half of the bottle with rubbing alcohol. Put two to three drops of food coloring into the bottle and shake. Fill remainder of the bottle with mineral oil, glitter and “sea life” objects. Put top on and seal with white glue. Let dry. Seal a second time with the hot glue. Do not shake. Hold bottle horizontally until clear, then raise and lower ends to create waves.



Students practice traditional dances.

“Thank you for bringing smiles to the faces of our children,” wrote Sister Benedicta, a local missionary in Gujarat, India. “We are most grateful for the sacrifices of young people in the United States through the Holy Childhood Association.”

Thanks to help from young Catholics of this country, Sister Benedicta and others in her Religious Community – the Sisters of Mary Immaculate – are able to educate about 80 children each year. The children under their care also attend daily Mass and are taught how to pray.

“We are concerned for the general development of these children,” she explained. “Our primary aim, however, is faith formation.” In addition to Sacramental preparation and religious education, the children are taught the importance of sharing their faith and expressing solidarity with others around the world. In fact, last year, they collected 2,000 Indian rupees – about \$40 – for the Holy Childhood Association!

A Letter to Parents and Guardians from HCA

Thanks to the prayers and financial help lovingly offered by students here at home through the Holy Childhood Association (HCA), young people in the Missions learn about the “Good News” of Jesus and experience His love through the care of local priests, Religious and lay catechists.

Among the thousands of children in the Developing World who are learning about the Catholic faith are those who live at Our Lady of Fatima Boarding School in Faisalabad, Pakistan. Here, about 50 girls from some of the area’s poorest families receive loving care and a good education.

“Right now, it is very difficult to be a young Catholic in Pakistan,” said Sister Venus Arura.

“We provide an uplifting, Christ-centered experience for these girls and help them to find hope, even in the most desperate situations.”

The children learn about the faith through participation at Mass and religion classes. They also enjoy acting out various Bible stories. Pictured are students in their annual Nativity play.

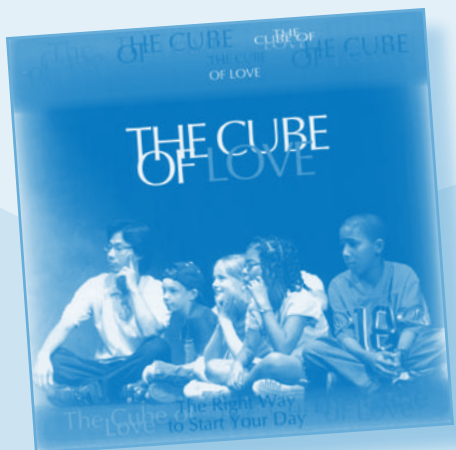
Your child has received a newsletter and / or a coin holder to collect their Advent HCA offerings. As little as *one dollar* – the cost of a fast food menu item – can make a *real* difference in the lives of children in the Missions, just ask Sister Venus.

Thank you for encouraging your child to pray for their brothers and sisters in the Missions and for supporting their participation in the Holy Childhood Association!



HCA Recommends... The Cube of Love

Created by Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare movement, the Cube of Love is designed to help teachers and catechists inspire young people to live the Gospel message of love. In this way, they grow closer to God – and to others. To learn more about the Cube of Love Program and to purchase materials visit www.livingcitymagazine.com/node/270



Advent Mission Prayer

Dear God, in this Advent Season, keep us mindful of those who do not know Your Son, Jesus, or about His great love for each one of us. Fill us with your Holy Spirit so that we may be courageous missionaries of the “Good News” now and all during our lives. Amen.

Countries of Asia Word Search

Word search grid containing the following words:

- VIETNAM
- MONGOLIA
- CHINA
- JAPAN
- LAOS
- INDIA
- VAMB
- MYANMAR
- NANAV
- VIETNAM
- JAPAN
- PLE
- LAOS
- CHINA
- INDIA
- NEPAL
- VIETNAM
- JAPAN
- BHUTAN
- INDIA
- NEPAL
- LAOS
- MONGOLIA
- TAHIANA
- JAPAN
- CHINA
- LAOS
- SRILANKA
- AT
- JAPAN
- BHUTAN
- LAOS
- INDIA

Reading Comprehension

GRADES K-2

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 4. B | 7. A. |
| 2. D | 5. D. | 8. D. |
| 3. B | 6. A. | |

GRADES 6-8

- | | | |
|------|------|------|
| 1. A | 4. B | 6. B |
| 2. C | 5. D | 7. C |
| 3. A | | |

Activities

HAPPY NEW YEAR – VIETNAMESE STYLE!

+ Grades 4-8

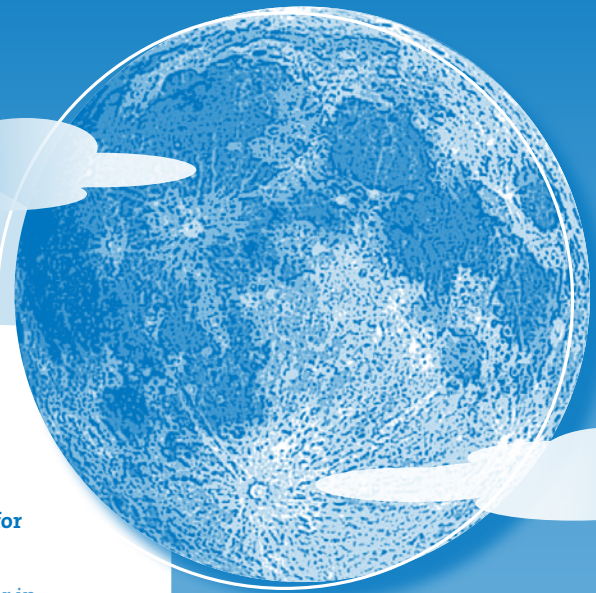
+ **Materials:** World map to locate Vietnam; enough art supplies for children to make books or poster (optional)

Prepare: This activity centers on learning about Lunar New Year in Vietnam, and why it is an especially good time to review good manners. This holiday – *Tet Nguyen* (pronounced *nwen*) *Dan*, or *Tet*, for short – takes three days to celebrate. *Tet* begins sometime in January or February, during the full moon prior to spring planting. With so much to do to get ready for the celebration, work and school grind to a halt as families prepare for the most joyous time of the year. Although the holiday officially lasts three days, many people enjoy a seven-day break from their normal schedule.

Do: Explain to students that we celebrate many things and times of year. Ask students to name several special holidays or events that they celebrate. Then, turn their focus to the moon. Does it change shape? Have students draw the four stages of the moon, and identify each one. Which is the full moon?

The New Year's moon, or *Tet* moon, reminds people to be honest and good. The Vietnamese prize good manners and look to others to be courteous in their behavior. Go around the room, asking students to think about important manners at school, home or play. Write them down. Ask students to prepare a "Top 10" list of manners. Encourage students to think about how they would act if they were visiting a foreign country as missionaries. What manners would be most important then? Ask them to think about how good manners are a way to show God's love to others – and a way to show that we love God. Discuss.

Do: (optional craft): Help students make a book or poster that celebrates "good manners for a new year." Students may draw pictures of good qualities everyone should exhibit – qualities that show we are followers of Jesus!



Words to Watch

These vocabulary words / terms are in the Advent issues of *It's Our World*.

GRADES K- 2

religious community

Jesuits

reserves

GRADES 3-5

religious community

Jesuits

unintentionally

canonized

mentally challenged

occupational therapy

folklore

GRADES 6-8

scholarly

noble

profound

aquatic

subcontinent

confines

excavations