

HCA Program Guide

Program Guide

Thailand | Fall 2009

The national office of the Pontifical Mission Societies, which includes the Holy Childhood Association, has moved! Our new national office is located at 70 West 36th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

All of our phone numbers and e-mail addresses remain the same.

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

Getting to Know... Thailand

Immortalized in the classic film, *The King and I*, the Thai kingdom was established in the mid-14th century and known as Siam until 1939. Thailand is the only Southeast Asian country to have never been taken over by a European power. From its earliest history, the nation was governed by an absolute monarchy. However, a bloodless revolution led to a constitutional monarchy.

Political conflict continued intermittently in Thailand throughout the 20th century, most recently in 2008, when protestors representing the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) held anti-government demonstrations. In December 2008 the PAD ended its protests following a court ruling that dissolved the party in power and two other coalition parties for election violations. A new government was formed; a new prime minister named. Sadly, the violence does continue in Thailand's southern ethnic Malay-Muslim province. To learn more, visit <http://www.unicef.org/thailand/> and download the document "Everyday Fears" a report on children's perceptions of living in the southern border area of Thailand.

The culture of Thailand incorporates a great deal of influence from India, China, Cambodia and the rest of Southeast Asia.

Thailand's culture and tradition has also been inspired by Theravada Buddhism. Like most Asian cultures, respect towards ancestors is an essential part of daily life; elders have by tradition ruled in family decisions or ceremonies.

The majority of Thais (95 percent) are Buddhists. Muslims are the second largest religious group; Christians, mainly Catholics, represent a small portion of the population. There is also a small Jewish community in Thailand, dating back to the 17th century.

Despite years of rapid development, many groups in Thailand have been left behind, particularly ethnic minorities, migrants, refugees and the very poor making them vulnerable to human trafficking and health epidemics, such as HIV/AIDS.

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Getting to Know...Thailand

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Reaching out to these marginalized groups with the message of God's love are missionaries and local church workers. Among them is Father Giovanni Contarin, a Camillian priest who serves as director of a center for children in Rayong, Thailand.

"When we began to take in children with AIDS, I could not believe my eyes to see these little innocent ones die," said Father Contarin.

Today, the center cares for about 35 children. Through much prayer and financial support, Father Contarin has been able to extend the lives of many of the children in his care.

"I am happy to say that our children have been baptized and have made their First Holy Communion and Confirmation," he said.

Oon is one of Father Contarin's success stories. She has survived to the age of 17 and is looking forward to going to college.

"My children bring vitality and love to the center and to the sadness AIDS brings to the world," said Father Contarin.

Activities

FOLLOW JESUS

+ Grades 2-6

+ **Materials: an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper and #10 envelope for each child, pencils or markers**

+ **Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 2:13-17, John 1:43-49**

Read: Read the Scripture passages aloud.

Discuss: Ask children to share their opinions about each of the Gospel readings. Encourage them to think about what it must have been like for all of these men to have been called by Jesus to follow Him.

Expand your discussion by asking: Have you ever been playing a game or watching television, and just as it was getting interesting, your mom called you? How did you react? Have you ever played follow the leader? Was it more fun to be the leader, or the one following?

Do: Give each child a piece of paper, and a pencil or marker. The children will first fold the paper into thirds, then unfold it; on each section, the child should write one of the following statements:

- I will follow Jesus at School by:
- I will follow Jesus at Home by:
- I will follow Jesus in my community by:

Write the following on the blackboard as suggestions / idea generators:

- John 13:34 (Follow Jesus by loving one another)
- John 15:10 (Follow Jesus by being obedient)
- Philippians 2:5 (Follow Jesus by having a good attitude)
- Colossians 3:15 (Follow Jesus by not arguing or fighting)

Then have the children complete each statement on their paper by writing down ways they can follow Jesus in each specific area. Then refold the paper, place it in an envelope; have the children write their name on the envelope. Instruct them to take the envelope home with them and give it to their parents / guardians, encouraging them to review their work at least once a week to see how well they have fulfilled their promise to follow Jesus.

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A Letter to Parents from HCA

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Congratulations! Your child is enrolled as a member of the Holy Childhood Association (HCA), uniting them in faith with thousands of children throughout the world – including those who live in the Missions. As members of HCA, young people grow in their understanding of the Catholic faith while fulfilling their Baptismal responsibility to be missionaries.

HCA kids are encouraged to pray daily for their brothers and sisters in the Developing World who have not yet heard the "Good News" of Jesus. They are also invited to offer their personal sacrifices and financial help to support the pastoral and evangelizing work of the Church among children in the Missions.

As an HCA member, your child receives three issues of the *It's Our World* newsletter, featuring stories about children helped through HCA, a prayer card, and a bookmark/membership card. Supplementary materials are provided to your child's teacher as well.

Each year, HCA chooses a Scripture-based theme for the school year. For this year, that theme is "I am sending you" (John 20:21).

As we thank you for your support of your child's endeavors, we ask also that you pray with them for missionaries and for the Church in the Missions. To learn more about HCA and the Pontifical Mission Societies, visit www.onefamilyinmission.org or www.themissionreport.org.



Membership Prayer Service and Commitment Ceremony

This service may be adapted to your particular parish/school needs. If everyone in the religious education program and school participates, you may choose to begin with a procession to enhance the service. Consider the following for this procession: two candle bearers and students bearing a globe precede the prayer service leader and other students carrying symbols related to the Missions, baskets containing HCA membership cards or pictures of the student-members.

INTRODUCTION – LEADER

Today we gather for a special celebration. We remember Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit will be with us in all that we do. We celebrate our membership in HCA and our commitment to be instruments of peace and messengers of Jesus' love. Now we join our minds, hearts and voices in prayer.

OPENING PRAYER – LEADER

In remembrance of our Baptism, we begin our prayer as always, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, our Father, hear us as we ask for Your loving help for all those who have not heard the "Good News" of Your Son, Jesus, or experienced His love. Holy Spirit, touch our hearts so that we may have the courage to share our faith with children all over the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Your Son. Amen.

READING JOHN 12:26

COMMITMENT CEREMONY – LEADER

As members of HCA, you, along with thousands of other students across this country and around the world, will

promise to help make a difference in the lives of children. You are asked to share the gift of faith you have received and to offer your prayers, sacrifices and love so that other children will come to know Jesus and His great love. You are asked to learn from the children you help and to allow those children to touch your hearts. If you are prepared to give witness to the Gospel, to be an Ambassador for Jesus, and to share God's love with children in need in the Developing World, please stand.

Leader: Will you do your loving best to support HCA so that children in the Developing World may come to know the Good News of Jesus and experience His love and forgiveness?

All: I will.

Leader: Will you remember each day in prayer your sisters and brothers who suffer from hunger, disease, homelessness, and the effects of war and violence in our world?

All: I will.

Leader: Will you pray for those who do not know Jesus so that they may find hope in His love for each of us?

All: I will.

Leader: As HCA members — ambassadors for Jesus — let our first act be to join our hands in prayer.

All: Our Father....

Leader: Let us ask Mary's intercession to help us be missionaries for her Son by our actions and through our prayers and sacrifices.

All: Hail Mary...

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with each of you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Let us offer each other a sign of peace as we go forth as HCA members, as ambassadors for Jesus — as missionaries.



Mark Your Calendars!

HCA Christmas Artwork Contest!

Visit www.hcakids.org to download an entry form and to learn more about the Holy Childhood Association's annual Christmas Artwork contest for children in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Activities

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HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

+ All Grades

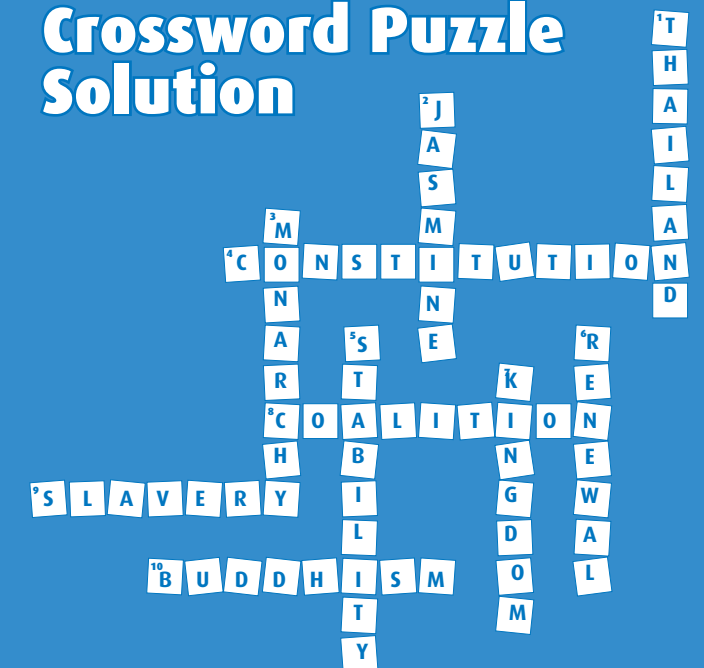
+ Materials: construction paper, markers, glue

+ Isaiah 58:11 ("The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.")

Create a bulletin board display to remind children that God is always there to guide them. Cut out stems and leaves out of green construction paper and affix these to your bulletin board. Then, ask children to cut out "petals" from different colored construction paper and write their name on these petals. If you are short on time, hand out petals which you have pre-cut. Attach the petals to the bulletin board stems. At the top center of each stem, affix a circle with the word "God" If you do not have access to a bulletin board, children can create individual flowers using the same method — on the petals, children can list their own name as well as the names of friends / family members.

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Crossword Puzzle Solution



Words to Watch

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

GRADES 3-5

gulf	habitat	recruitment
plain	mountainous	exploitation
plateau	poachers	harboring
peninsula	mischievous	materialism
monsoons	HIV	
threatened	AIDS	

GRADES 6-8

Hansen's disease	monarchy	regime
leprosy	Siam	isthmus
HIV	escalation	peninsula
AIDS	ally	human trafficking
Buddhists	oppressive	

HCA Recommends!



Panda Math: Learning About Subtraction from Hua Mei and Mei Sheng (hardcover) by Ann Whitehead Nagda.

Publisher: Henry Holt & Co., 2005.

This book about two young pandas living in the San Diego Zoo is a perfect complement to the article, “Thailand’s Panda Family — A Polly Parrot Report” on page four of the *It’s Our World* for grades 3-5; it offers an opportunity to integrate your mission lessons with both math and science activities. For more information, visit www.annnagda.com.



The Whispering Cloth by Pegi Deitz Shea. Illustrated by Anita Riggio. Publisher: Boyd’s Mills Press, 1995.

This book tells the story of Mai and her grandmother who live in Ban Vinai camp in Thailand. While waiting to come to the United States, Mai’s grandmother teaches her how to embroider pa’ndau, Hmong story cloths. *The Whispering Cloth* is a story of a child’s hope in the midst of confinement and war.

Worldwide Children’s Eucharistic Holy Hour

The “Worldwide Children’s Eucharistic Holy Hour” takes place at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. on Friday, October 2, at 10 a.m. EST. This year, the Holy Childhood Association is honored to have been invited to help the World Apostolate of Fatima unite the prayers of our world’s children at this Holy Hour. To be a part of this event right in your area, gather students in grades 2 through 8 in your parish church or chapel, and follow the program provided online at www.childrenoftheeucharist.org. This event will be broadcast live by Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), starting at 10 a.m. on October 2.

World Mission Sunday

World Mission Sunday will be celebrated this year on October 18. To learn more, visit www.iamamissionary.org.

Activities

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GIVE THANKS!

- + Grades K-5
- + Materials: small, soft ball (such as a tennis ball)

Discuss: In our daily activities, we sometimes forget to say “thank you” to Jesus for everything He gives us. We must learn to slow down and be quiet for a few moments each day to be thankful for God’s blessings. When we do this, we gain an appreciation for all that we have, whether it is something big or small.

Do: Tell students that they are going to take some time to think of some of the blessings they have received from Jesus (their parents, their faith, their abilities). Explain to students that you will start the activity by saying a word at random and then tossing the ball to one of them. Whoever catches the ball must think of a reason to thank Jesus for a blessing that relates to that particular word. For example, if you say “house,” the student could answer, “I thank Jesus for giving me a warm house to live in.” Instruct the student to then toss the ball back to you so that you can announce the next word. *For older children, instead of having the ball return to you, the child giving the reason to say “thank you” can come up with the next blessing and toss the ball to another child.*

Add a missionary dimension to this activity by encouraging children to say a short prayer after they have offered their thanks. For example: “I thank Jesus for giving me a warm house. Today, I pray for children in the Missions who do not have a safe place to live.”