

World Mission and Catholic Schools Week

Through our Baptism, we are called to be missionaries – called to share our faith, to proclaim the “Good News” of Jesus to all people. In word and witness, through prayer and sacrifice, we are all part of *one family in mission*.

The Holy Childhood Association (HCA), a Pontifical Mission Society specifically directed to elementary age students, recognizes that children are an important and vital part of the worldwide mission of Jesus. HCA invites young people to invest in the life of the Church around the world – *ad gentes (to the nations)* – by offering their prayers and sacrifices for children in the Missions.

As Pope John Paul II said in his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio (Mission of the Redeemer)*, “*Faith is strengthened when it is given to others! It is in commitment to the Church's universal mission that the new evangelization of Christian peoples will find inspiration and support.*”

To enhance your celebration of Catholic Schools Week – and to remind children of their baptismal responsibility for sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, their “job” of being missionaries – consider designating one day that week as **World Mission Awareness Day**.

To help you plan a **World Mission Awareness Day** in your school, we offer the following:

- 1) World Mission Prayer Service
- 2) Getting Started Guide for Mission Awareness Day or Week
- 3) Suggested Activities
- 4) Resource List
- 5) Scripture References

**Catholic Schools Week
World Mission Prayer Service**

Display a globe or world map on a table with the Bible and artifacts or photographs from the Missions. Invite five students to each hold a different colored candle (see color descriptions below) to represent the Missions of the world as designated on the World Mission Rosary. Each decade of that World Mission Rosary – inaugurated by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in 1951 – 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. (Learn more at www.worldmissionrosary.org.)

Leader: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19)

(Each student is invited to step forward and raise his / her candle as indicated below; adapted from Psalm 96.)

Leader: Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all you lands.

All: **A light will shine on Africa today** *(raise green candle)*

Leader: Sing to the Lord; bless His name announce His salvation day after day.

All: **A light will shine on the Americas today** *(raise red candle)*

Leader: Tell His glory among the nations; among all peoples His wonderful deeds.

All **A light will shine on Asia today** *(raise yellow candle)*

Leader: Splendor and majesty go before Him!

All: **A light will shine on Europe today** *(raise white candle)*

(Time for silent reflection.)

Leader: Now let us join together in praying the words that Jesus taught us.

All: **Our Father...**

Closing Song: *Be the Hands, The Heart of God.* © 2000 Janet Bogt and Mark Friedman.
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Catholic Schools Week Getting Started for Mission Day / Mission Week

Goals: Identify at least five goals you would like to see God accomplish in your mission event:
Examples include:

- ❖ To reinforce “we are all missionary through Baptism” and need a heart for the mission of Jesus
- ❖ To teach something about the origins of Holy Childhood Association (HCA) and its founder, Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson
- ❖ To have the children learn more about membership in the Holy Childhood Association
- ❖ To celebrate the “Mass for the Spread of the Gospel” as a school community
- ❖ To become familiar with one or more missionary saints
- ❖ To have the children interact with a missionary in some way
- ❖ To instruct the children how they can witness to Jesus in their own lives
- ❖ To learn a Scripture passage related to missionary activity
- ❖ To develop a habitual prayer pattern for missionaries
- ❖ To introduce the World Mission Rosary
- ❖ To instill compassion for others
- ❖ To build respect for people of other cultures
- ❖ To consider God’s call to a missionary vocation
- ❖ To offer opportunities and incentives for children to reach out to others and share their faith
- ❖ To raise funds for the Missions
- ❖ To have fun – and see its faith connection!

Themes: Choosing a theme will help you to select the appropriate activities, audio-visual materials, crafts, décor, learning games, music, service projects, etc. and to accomplish your specific goals.

- ❖ **Country / Geographic Focus** – Mexican fiesta, African safari, rainforest romp, etc.
- ❖ **Olympic Theme** – “Going for the gold” sports theme with focus on mission heroes/heroines
- ❖ **Bible J.A.M. (Jesus and Missions)** – Using music and Scripture to get into the mission arena
- ❖ **Globetrotters** – Travel from country to country; maybe include passports to the Missions
- ❖ **Mission Possible** – we are special agents through Baptism who bring the “Good News” to all people

Get Help: Don’t consider “going it alone.” Enlist enthusiastic volunteers from the school and parish community.

- ❖ Set up a working committee of mission club members or interested students
- ❖ Invite adult participation and help
- ❖ Be specific in the planning of tasks, time, place, etc.

Be Creative and Have Fun: Plan for interesting decorations, according to the theme that also help to teach.

Catholic Schools Week Activities for Mission Awareness Day

- To promote a sense of solidarity, make a construction paper chain (similar to those created for Christmas trees), with class names and include continents of the world. Have students look up pertinent facts about specific continents or countries and list these on the links as well.
- Ask your pastor or parish priest to celebrate the “Mass for the Spread of the Gospel” on your designated Mission Awareness Day. Designate students as lectors, as well as gift and candle bearers; ask them to dress in outfits that reflect their heritage. Work with your parish music director to select multi-cultural music for the celebration, and encourage students to write intercessions that reflect the needs of the universal Church. Children fluent in languages other than English should be encouraged to offer prayers and read Scripture in these different languages.
- Make a class collage of the Body of Christ to display on a school bulletin board. Encourage students to use pictures from all around the world along with their own school pictures.
- Have children visit www.hcakids.org during computer class to learn more about the Missions.
- Sponsor a “living” World Mission Rosary (www.worldmissionrosary.org). Children can wear shirts, hats or bandanas representing the various colors of this Rosary.
- Host an “international hat parade,” inviting students to wear hats that represent their family heritage. Younger children can participate in a “stuffed animal parade” through which they bring in animals from different countries in the world. Ask students to prepare a brief presentation about their hat and / or animal.
- Have a lunch-time walk-a-thon (see [HCA’s Going the Extra Mile for Kids in Need of Jesus Walk-A-Thon Packet](#)) reminding students that they walk in step with missionaries who bring the Gospel message to children around the world. Make little badges or ribbons for participants to wear during the walk with phrases such as ***Kids 4 Jesus, Go the X-Tra Mile for Kids, I Am a Missionary, “If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles”*** (Matthew 5:41), etc.
- Plan a crazy hat day, sock day, t-shirt day, etc. Charge students a fee to participate. Donate funds to HCA.
- Set a financial goal for your World Mission Awareness Day by adding the combined height of the students of a given class. Aim to raise five cents for each inch, for example.
- Call your local office of the Pontifical Mission Societies (of which HCA is a part), and request that a missionary speak to the students during the day’s general assembly.
- Have a bake sale and ask parents to make desserts that reflect their heritage. Proceeds from the sale can be donated to HCA.

Catholic Schools Week Resources

WEBSITES

The Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States

- ❖ www.onefamilyinmission.org/hca.html
- ❖ www.YouTube.com/pmsusa
- ❖ www.themissionreport.org

The Missionary Society of St. Columban

- ❖ www.columban.org/content/view/9/40/

Maryknoll

- ❖ www.maryknoll.org

Fides News Service

- ❖ www.fides.org

DOCUMENTS

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

- ❖ Teaching the Spirit of Mission *Ad Gentes*: Continuing Pentecost Today
<http://www.usccb.org/wm/spiritofmission.shtml>
- ❖ To the Ends of The Earth – A Pastoral Statement on World Mission, Bishops of the United States
<http://www.usccb.org/wm/earth.shtml>

Pope John Paul II

- ❖ [*Redemptoris Missio*](#) (*Mission of the Redeemer*) Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter on the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate

OTHER RESOURCES

- ❖ ***“Mission Lessons” Audio CD*** – Each CD features Pontifical Mission Societies’ National Director, Monsignor John E. Kozar, reflecting on what he has seen on visits to the Developing World – the life-giving service of priests, Religious Sisters and Brothers, and lay catechists – and on what he has learned from missionaries. The 60-second spots then relate those experiences to the “lessons” they hold for the everyday lives of listeners. Call 1.800.431.2222, extension 709, for more information.
- ❖ ***“Faithful Witness: The Life and Legacy of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen”*** – an audio documentary. Call 1.800.431.2222, extension 709, for more information.
- ❖ ***MISSION Magazine*** (www.missionmagazine.org) – a publication of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, one of four Pontifical Mission Societies like the Holy Childhood Association.

Catholic Schools Week
A Quick Look at Mission & Scripture

- ❖ “Go, therefore make disciples of all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20)
- ❖ “You are witnesses of these things.” (Luke 24:48)
- ❖ “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses... to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)
- ❖ “Go into all the world; and preach the Gospel to the whole creation.” (Mark 16:15)
- ❖ “And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them.” (Mark 16:20)
- ❖ “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.” (John 20:21)
- ❖ “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:19)
- ❖ “Here I am, Lord! I am ready! Send me!” (Isaiah 6:8)