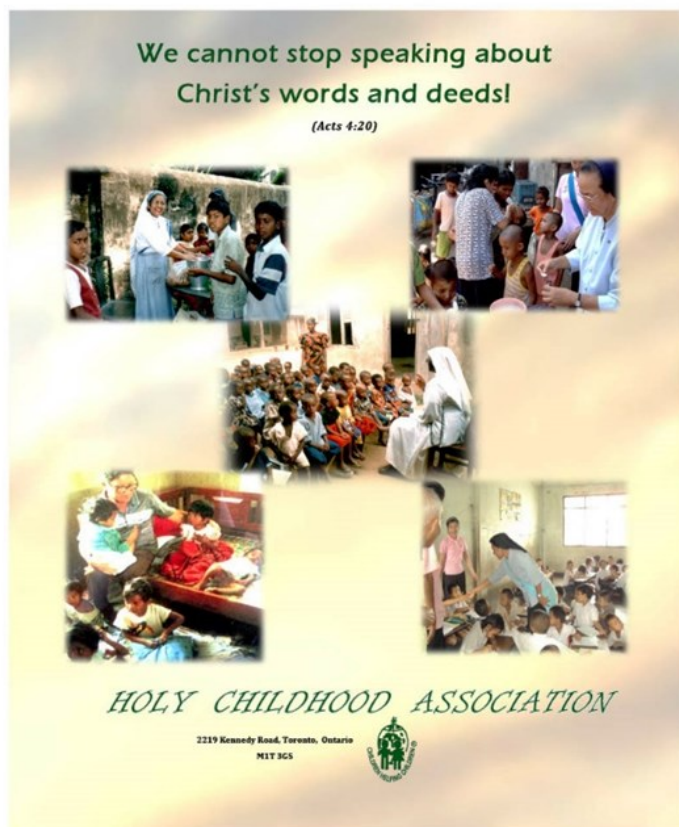


WORLD MISSION SUNDAY: Oct 24, 2021

Spiritual Animation for YOUNG PEOPLE



MISSION SUNDAY THEME

*We cannot stop speaking about
Christ's words and deeds!*



(indianexpress.com)

World Mission Sunday 2021 is on October 24. This annual event is an opportunity for you and children in your charge who belong to the Holy Childhood Association (HCA) to review their responsibilities and promises as young missionaries. It is an opportunity for you to spread the mission of the HCA to other students and teachers/parishioners within your environment. It is a chance to recommit yourself to the mission we all have as Catholics as given by Jesus. It is a reminder that we may be able to offer concrete assistance to children in missionary countries through our donations.

This year once again, this important Sunday is being held during the COVID-19 Pandemic which has so greatly affected our lives. People have been affected medically, socially, educationally, financially, emotionally and of course, religiously. Students have been directly affected in their homes, families and with their schooling. Even now, school for them is not the same as it was. It is difficult to predict at this time of writing what the situation will be when you read this. We all pray that things will be better.

Because of how our lives have been influenced, it is easy to forget about the difficulties faced by children during 2021 in mission countries. It is safe to say that because of the hardships they normally face every day, the Third Wave of the Corona Virus has made life even harder for them. Mission Sunday is an opportunity for young people to reinforce the three responsibilities of members of the Holy Childhood Association (HCA): prayer, knowledge and sharing.

What follows are ideas and reflections you can use with your children on the occasion of World Mission Sunday.

Reflection on the Theme

Read the theme out loud with your children: ***We cannot stop speaking about Christ's words and deeds!***

Points to consider and discuss are:

We – Notice the plural pronoun **We**. This means that mission responsibility is collective. It is not just the duty of the parish priest. It is not the role only of the parishioners at Mass on Sunday. It is not the sole responsibility of parents within a family. It is not just the duty of those who volunteer or are staff at the local St Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army, or other charitable Op Shops. It is not only the job of people who work for the Pontifical Missions or the Holy Childhood Association. The responsibility to speak out on behalf of Jesus is everyone's duty. Our Baptism makes this especially true for us. What does *here* mean? Many people think that Missionary work occurs only overseas. Because situations are so far away, it is easy to dismiss them as irrelevant or too far away for us to do anything. Just as Jesus is present to us everywhere, our voices that promote his charity and mercy can be heard wherever we are. That means **here**, where your children/students happen to be. The need to speak out exists wherever one lives. Discuss this meaningfully with your students/children.

We cannot stop speaking – This comes directly from ***St Peter in Acts 4:20***. The disciples had just been ordered by the authorities not to speak again in the name of Jesus. On their behalf, Peter declares that they will not be able to obey such a directive. Read the story with your children, as it is very interesting and sets up the dynamic between the apostles and the authorities.

Cannot – Discuss this simple word. For what reasons can you not do something? Physical impairment? Lack of knowledge? Lack of desire? Lack of incentive? Fear of consequences? Too much excitement or enthusiasm? Belief? When Peter says that they cannot stop, what does he mean? Why can they not stop? What are the reasons why you cannot stop doing something important?

Speaking – The Bible story mainly focusses on the apostles preaching and talking to the people. However, speaking can be broadened to include any action or activity that reveals the truth about Jesus: love, compassion, mercy, charity. These things should be visible in all aspects of your lives, not just in what you say.

Christ's words and deeds – Everything we do or say should be a reflection of Jesus as revealed in the Bible. Words and deeds are mentioned as separate entities. What we say is just as important as what we are seen doing. We are concentrating on missionary activity this month, and especially on Mission Sunday. Everything Jesus said and did, reflected his role as a missionary. We need to imitate him as best we can.

The theme ***We cannot stop speaking about Christ's words and deeds!*** comes directly from the Acts of the Apostles (Isaiah 6:8), as mentioned above. Children love stories, and that is why reading the Acts with them can be a rewarding activity. The apostles did not have an easy time fulfilling their missionary responsibilities. Lots of challenges.

Is this theme daunting? Of course, it is. Can you stop speaking about Christ's words and deeds?

The mission of outreach to the less fortunate in Mission Countries is one the foundations of our faith.

Poster

Examine the World Mission Sunday poster. Discuss it with reference to the meaning of the words, as mentioned earlier. How does each picture on the poster reinforce the meaning of the theme? Can you see examples of “speaking” the message of Jesus? Who is doing all the talking? What deeds are being done that reflect Jesus? Who is doing them?

All five pictures are obviously situations overseas in missionary countries. Discuss how the use of “words and deeds” is relevant in our own situations in Canada.

Mission Sunday, October 24 – Gospel Reflection

Read with your students/children the passage from Mark 10: 46-52, the Gospel reading for the day.

What does this passage have to do with Mission Sunday? What does it have to do with our theme? The poster? The Gospel passage is all about compassion. Jesus is aware of the human condition that cries out for mercy and help. The story is simple enough: Jesus heals the blind man in Jericho. He does it freely and unconditionally. Even though he is blind, the man “sees” Jesus and recognizes him as the “Son of David”. Today, Jesus invites us to open the eyes of our hearts to welcome in faith the vision of a suffering and triumphant Messiah. He wants us to show the same compassion to everyone around us. This is how we can continually speak about Christ’s words and deeds.

This is a good opportunity to impress upon young people that actions can often speak more loudly than words. **This is our mission!** What we do speaks about what we have heard and seen.

Discuss these thoughts with your children/students. There is much of value in this familiar story.

Keep in mind that **Membership in the Holy Childhood Association (HCA)** is an ideal and practical way to exercise this responsibility of speaking of what has been heard and seen.

HOW CAN CHILDREN SPEAK THE THINGS THEY HAVE HEARD?

How can our children/students speak the things they have seen and heard Jesus say and do? Challenge them to come up with ideas! You can help them get started.

Let me give you an idea!

Do you say grace before meals? Try saying grace at a restaurant, a cafeteria or in McDonald’s or Tim’s when everyone can see you making the sign of the cross. You are speaking about what Jesus said!



(biblepic.com)

The gospel message today (Oct 24) is showing mercy. When you show mercy you are speaking what Jesus did. Write about an example of how you can do this yourself in your daily life.

Write about how you can do something noticeable that shows your friends that you practice your faith.

Do you have friends or even family members who do not do anything to demonstrate their Catholic faith? Write how you might be able to influence them to change.

We are getting closer to the season of Advent. How can you influence your friends or family members to take Advent resolutions seriously?



Acting as a missionary of God is a responsibility given to us at Baptism and reinforced by the Sacrament of Confirmation. This was the occasion when our theme - ***We cannot stop speaking about Christ's words and deeds!*** – was particularly relevant. This was when we committed ourselves to speak about Christ's words and deeds.

Most of us were confirmed when in elementary school at some time. It was a very special event. Have your children try to recall what happened on that occasion. Get them to fill in the answers to the questions below. They might have to get some help from parents or other family members.

Where were you confirmed? (name of the Church, city)

On what date were you confirmed?

How old were you? In what grade were you?

Who was your sponsor?

What was the priest's/bishop's name?

What guests attended?

What were you wearing?

Was there a celebration? If so, what happened?

Can you find one or more photographs taken on the occasion of your Confirmation? Describe your favourite image(s).



Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; ²⁰ for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

HCA PROJECTS IN THAILAND

Two of the most recent projects that the HCA has supported were presented in the latest HCA Newsletters. Perhaps you have already seen them.

A Congregation of Dominican sisters operate the Our Lady of the Rosary Boarding House for girls in Udon Thani in northern Thailand. This house supports access to educational facilities in the area so that poor families can have their girls receive adequate education. The goal is to allow girls access to realistic life choices that allow them to avoid being absorbed into one of the many child prostitution networks in the country.



Girls at OLR Boarding House



Children at the MPH Aids Centre

SO YOU WANT TO BE A MISSIONARY? GUESS WHAT??? - YOU ALREADY ARE!!

Are you a member of the Holy Childhood Association (HCA)? Does your school or Parish belong? Does your teacher know about it? Do your friends know about it? Does your family know about it? Do your friends know about it?

Living the life of a missionary in a far away land can sound exciting. However, have you ever asked yourself these questions or made these statements?

- Aren't I too young?
- What about going to school?
- I have no money!
- I don't even know how to start!
- What about my family and my life with them?
- What about my other future plans?



Maybe you don't have to go far away in order to be a missionary. Being a missionary means proclaiming the Gospel to those who have not heard it or who do not really understand it. **You can do that every day!**

(Bible.com)

How, you ask? Just look ...

- Go to Mass, sometimes during the week
- Go to Confession (Reconciliation) at least once a month
- Say grace before eating - even when out in public
- Read the Bible and Catechism
- Make regular visits to the Church before the Blessed Sacrament
- Fast, even when it's not Lent. Abstain from meat on Fridays
- Ask your friends why they don't go to Mass
- Join your Parish Youth Group
- Be a Church Minister (like being an altar server)
- Dress as a Saint for Halloween
- Wear religious jewelry, or if you "need" a tattoo, have a religious one
- Don't judge
- Don't take yourself too seriously
- Read some Christian books
- Dress modestly but look awesome
- If you can't say something nice, say nothing
- Ask someone to pray for you
- When you receive Communion, act like you really believe it
- Ask people's forgiveness
- Believe that other people have at least 5 things about him/her that are better than you
- Be completely present to everyone who is talking to you
- Don't be a hypocrite
- Donate to the HCA
- Pray more than you talk
- Pray the Rosary. Keep it with you as part of your personal gear
- Remember that you don't have all the answers
- Pray, love, then be yourself

See?? You are **already** a missionary!



(Dreamstime.com)

Prayer for the Venerable Pauline Jaricot's beatification, Founder of the Propagation of the Faith

We suggest that you recite this prayer daily during Missionary Month, as her beatification may be coming soon. The prayer is also available on the following website: www.missionsocieties.ca.

PRAYER

Hasten, Lord, the day when the Church can celebrate the saintliness of your servant Pauline-Marie Jaricot, inspired by you to start the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Living Rosary, and promote the welfare of the poor. May Christians everywhere strive to follow her selfless example, dedicating themselves to spreading the Good News of the Gospel, so that all peoples may come to know the boundless love revealed to the world through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen

Source: missio.org.



(kencastor.com)