



Holy Childhood Association

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PRIMARY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS/CATECHISTS - ADVENT 2022

Dear Teachers/Catechists,

Welcome to this Advent/Christmas season of mission activity with the Holy Childhood Association (HCA). Special greetings to return educators in this new academic year and a warm welcome to newcomers. It is hoped that you find our information about “*Children Helping Children*” rewarding and useful. The purpose of the Newsletter is to provide our Canadian children with information about activities involving children in missionary countries around the world. It is hoped that this will stimulate interest in our children so that they become interested in being involved in missionary work at their level, that they will pray for children in need throughout the world and that they will become informed Catholics regarding Pontifical mission activity.

Almost like a broken record (Do you remember them?) at this time of writing it is difficult to know how things will be in your province when you actually get this publication. Of course, we are referring to COVID and how our lives may or may not be affected. Generally, it seems that most things have returned to normal in our lives, and we pray that is true for you in schools as well. We want to assure you that the HCA is still as active as ever, in terms of the educational work that we produce for use by Catholic Schools and Parish groups throughout Canada. Materials still can be delivered either through the post or online.

This is just a recap of what the HCA can do for you. Hard copies of all of our materials can be ordered, using the order form, and are shipped to you free of charge through the post. In addition, Newsletters, Teachers’ Guides, general educational documents and specific Lenten/Advent support materials are available online through the HCA section of our website missionsocieties.ca. Naturally, some items that are not normal document size, such as mission banks, stickers, prayer cards, membership cards and the poster can only be sent in the mail.

Our mission of “children helping children” is as relevant as ever. Although the Pandemic seems to have faded slightly into the background, mission countries are still suffering from the effects of the disease and care for victims is often problematic. Child poverty still exists in many parts of the world. Availability of education and facilities are still lacking for students in many areas. Children in some countries are exploited for their financial or military value. As members of the HCA, we need to continue our efforts to help these children around the world. Your role in guiding the young people under your care in this mission is significant.

Once again, the Season of Advent approaches. The first Sunday of Advent is Sunday, November 27. This always arrives sooner than we would like to think, and schools are always very busy with Advent and Christmas preparations. All the best!!

PONTIFICAL ASSOCIATION OF THE HOLY CHILDHOOD - DRAWING COMPETITION

As you will read in the Newsletters, this year has been a year of celebration for the Holy Childhood Association (HCA). We are part of the greater organization of the **Pontifical Mission Societies**, and several anniversaries have been celebrated this year. In addition, the foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Pauline Marie Jaricot, was beatified on May 22, 2022. Please try to do some research on these anniversaries and share the information with your children. As you know, knowledge of the context of our activities makes the rewards more satisfactory. This works for children as well as adults, as you well know.

The 100th anniversary of the Pontifical status of the Holy Childhood Association is being celebrated with a **DRAWING COMPETITION**, open to all HCA children and adolescents. Entrants are asked to illustrate a response to the following question:

“What does Missionary Childhood and Adolescence mean for me in terms of being a Society of the Pope?”

The response is to be accompanied with a caption that captures the thoughts about missionary work and relates to the drawing. Entries must be received by **February 28, 2023**. Send them to:

**The Director
Pontifical Mission Societies
2219 Kennedy Road
Toronto ON M1T3G5**

Teachers and catechists are encouraged to promote this competition. Learning about the Pontifical societies, promoting lay missionary work in Canada and supporting the international nature of our Association could make for an interesting and rewarding unit of study in your school.

Holy Childhood Mission Focus – Papua New Guinea

In this issue, the missionary country of focus is Papua New Guinea (PNG). We are supporting Elementary Education in the **Diocese of Wabag, Enga Province, Papua New Guinea**. We help with the resourcing and promotion of instruction in Religious Education in parishes and elementary schools.

The intention of this Guide is not to teach you everything about PNG. Rather, it is to give you a broad context in which to research. It is a fascinating country, and most people might be familiar with some stereotypes (ie cannibalism) that have no relevance to the people of PNG today. Nevertheless, they do provide an interesting context in which to explore.

In the Newsletter, there is general information about PNG, but there is also focus on Enga Province, which receives most of our assistance. The author of these Newsletters and Teachers’ Guides spent 5 years in Papua New Guinea, some of that time in Enga.

Papua New Guinea is a challenging country to study, as it is the most diverse country in the world. There are over 850 distinct languages active within the country, and a corresponding number of unique cultures. Several geographic features have resulted in this: rugged mountain ranges, deep narrow valleys, fast flowing rivers, deep gorges, waterfalls, dense tropical rainforests, swamps, hidden coastal areas, over 600 islands, coral reefs. Tribes have historically not been able to mingle and therefore developed autonomously.

The country remained “undiscovered” until the European exploration of the 18th and 19th centuries. Much of the country has been administered by Germany and England in the past century. There was involvement with the Allies during WWII against the Japanese. After the war, Australia administered PNG until independence in 1975.

Accompanying exploration was the arrival of missionaries from many Christian denominations. Catholic missionaries have played a large role in the education and development of the country. Some of the early clergy were the first “Europeans” to discover remote areas. Many schools and colleges are still administered by religious orders.

Inevitably, the modern world has crept into Papua New Guinea and initiated changes. Many tribes have only recently been exposed to “modern” lifestyle, culture, and Christianity. The Highlands of PNG were only “discovered” in the 1930s. There are people today who have never seen Western/European people.

With “discovery” came exposure to new culture, education, and cash economy. Some people have found modern ways more attractive than subsistence living. Rising levels of education have opened different expectations for the future. There has been increased migration to the towns and cities in search of a limited number of jobs. Unemployment has risen along with increased lawlessness.

Visitors can find amazing things to experience in PNG. Perhaps the most sensational is the cultural expression displayed by the people. Body decoration and face painting to accompany singing and dancing – sing-sings – can be a spectacular experience. The fact that there are so many cultures means that one can see something different in every area of the country. Sing-sings can be held for many reasons: weddings, pay back, compensation, funerals, etc. They become an expression of traditional wealth as displayed with exotic feathers, shells, and other jewellery. Today, sometimes money is visibly included.

For further information on mission activities, we recommend www.missionsocieties.ca where you can find World Mission TV for inspirational mission stories and lesson plans featuring projects we support around the world. We also suggest that you visit our partners in Australia at www.catholicmission.org.au. In addition, you can find videos and information on Papua New Guinea by searching You Tube and Google. There are many excellent resources available that are suitable to use with your students. Also, there are many You tube and Geographical videos that focus on PNG.

You can now do your own research on Papua New Guinea and find countless areas of interest to students.

Suggestions for using the Newsletter

1. Always begin your lesson with the HCA prayer. Each student should have their own prayer card. (Additional cards are available from the National Office.) They can recite the prayer as a group, or have a student lead the prayer. Remind students of why they are members of the HCA.
2. Using a globe, atlas, the internet or all three, find Papua New Guinea. Observe its unique geography, especially its numerous mountain ranges and countless islands. Locate its immediate neighbours: Indonesia, Australia, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Fiji, New Zealand, the Philippines. Find Canada and how far away we are. Read together the information provided in the Newsletter and discuss.
3. We are confident that some Primary students are already familiar with several Advent concepts and that you can guide them and work on these themes in class as part of your Religion program.
4. Refer to the assistance given to PNG by the HCA. Use the internet to look up Enga and find out as much as possible about the people.
5. Look up and watch various You Tube references to PNG. As stated earlier, there are several.
6. Use the Newsletter as stimulus for research projects. Topics could include sing-sing body decoration, sing-sing dances and singing and very colourful bird and animal species. There are many possibilities.
7. Inspire your students with the work of the HCA and its affiliation with the Pontifical celebrations as described in the Newsletter. **Please promote the Drawing Competition as outlined in this Guide and in the Newsletter.** This Newsletter and your Guide are the only direct locations for us to advertise it to your students. Make it a project that can be done during Religious Education and Art classes. As teachers, you are aware that if activities are just left to the initiative of students in their own time, things often do not get done. This way, there is the potential for many students to become involved and many entries to come forward. Take photos and send us feedback on activities from your group.

Religious Education Applications

1. Throughout Advent, say the Mission Prayer daily. Add it to the prayers already said each day within your classroom, school, or community. Make use of your prayer table, which usually consists of a candle, a children's version of the Bible, a Rosary and appropriate pictures, photos, or other relevant books. Use the colour purple on your table. Purple is a symbol of penance and is used by the Church during Advent.
2. Discuss with students, ideas for what they can do or give up to prepare for Christmas during the season of Advent. What positive things can they do?
3. Advent begins on Sunday, November 27. Encourage students to attend Mass not only on Sundays, but during the week, if possible. Discuss with them the fact that this Advent season is the longest it can be. Why?
4. Involve your students with the unique and special Advent traditions such as the Advent Wreath, Advent Calendar and Jesse Tree. Encourage them to be made for their classroom or meeting place and also at their homes.
5. Look at the Advent section of the Newsletter. Structure RE classes around the Advent activities listed there.
6. Download the Advent Word Searches, Crosswords, information and activities from the website.
7. As Advent is a time for reconciliation, review what students know about the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). Encourage them to participate in this sacrament either within the Parish Community or the school, if it is offered. (Depending on your location and Diocesan customs, Primary children may or may not have received First Reconciliation. If some have not, your parish priest may be willing to conduct a non-sacramental rite for those individuals).
8. Familiarise your students with the special days that come after Christmas: Feast of St Stephen (Dec 26), Feast of the Holy Innocents (Dec 28), Feast of the Holy Family (Dec 30), Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Jan 1), Epiphany (Jan 8) and Baptism of the Lord (Jan 9). Discuss their significance. All of these special memorials flow from the Nativity of Jesus.

ADVENT ACTIVITIES

There are several activities relating to Advent that are available on our website

<http://www.missionsocieties.ca/holy-childhood-association-hca/education-materials/>. Here is a list of them.

- Advent crosswords
- Advent word searches
- Advent Discussion questions – 14 questions to stimulate discussion among students with teachers, catechists and parents
- Advent wreath – information on the Advent wreath: what it means and ideas for construction.
- Christmas timeline – put events in the correct order!
- How well do you know your Christmas carols? – match the title with the line from the carol
- Jesse Tree – what it is and ideas for making one
- O Antiphons – special Advent prayers, based on Biblical prophecies
- Advent quiz
- Simple Advent traditions for families – ideas for celebrating Advent with your family at home. They can be adapted for use in classrooms or catechist groups.
- Blessing of the Christmas Tree