



HOLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

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JANUARY - JUNE 2023

GRADES 7 - 9

VOL. 32.2

INTERMEDIATE NEWSLETTER - LENT, 2023

Welcome to 2023 and our first Newsletter in what we hope is a post-Pandemic era. In most parts of Canada, COVID mandatory restrictions have disappeared outside of health institutions. It has become accepted that we will be living with the virus and that common sense health precautions will be the way to go. Hopefully, your school year up until Christmas has been back to normal and that it remains so.

As usual in this edition, we anticipate the approach of the Easter season.

This year, Easter is on Sunday April 9: not as late as last year, but early enough not to get complacent after the Christmas season. Ash Wednesday is on February 22. Yikes! That's not far away!

It is important to remember that the needs of children in less fortunate countries are still great, and we remain in a position to significantly help them. In this Newsletter, we will direct our attention to the largest missionary country by population in Africa:

N I G E R I A

The country's name "Nigeria" comes from the Niger River, which flows through the country. Nigeria borders the Atlantic Ocean and four



(Kids-world-travel.com)

countries: Benin to the west, Niger to the north, Chad to the north and east, Cameroon to the southeast. The capital City is Abuja, located in the middle of the

country. While poverty is a reality for many people, the country by African standards is wealthy with large reserves of oil, gas, minerals and agricultural goods. Our help to allow the poor to share in this wealth is critical.



(All flags world.com)

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

It seems that each of our Newsletters features countries that are unique in some way. The same is true of Nigeria. Just look at some of these facts:

1. Nigeria has a population of nearly 214 million people. It is the most populous country in Africa and ranks 7th in the world. This means that one in every 7 Africans is a Nigerian.
2. Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups and over 500 languages are spoken. English is the national language.
3. Nigeria is the 12th largest producer of oil and the 8th largest exporter of crude oil. This is why Nigeria has the biggest economy in Africa.
4. Nollywood – Nigeria's Movie Industry is the second largest producer of movies in the world after Bollywood (India's Movie Industry).
5. Nigeria was the first African country to win a gold medal for football in the Olympics.

HISTORY

Nigeria's modern history begins in the 16th Century with encounters and trade with Europeans in the south and the Muslim Caliphate in the north. The slave trade became a major activity in the 18th and 19th centuries and many were sent to the Americas and the Caribbean. This activity became illegal in the 19th Century, but by then the world had been irreversibly altered by the reality of institutional slavery. Britain became the colonial ruler of Nigeria until independence in 1960. There were struggles for power in subsequent years, and a tragic civil war in the area known as Biafra, inhabited mostly by the Igbo (Ibo) ethnic group, from 1967-1970. Democratic elections were held in the country in 1999 and Muhammadu Buhari has been the elected president since 2015.



President Buhari

Religious and cultural diversity continue to cause conflict even today and bureaucratic corruption is a major problem. Sectarian and religious groups like Boko Haram attack religious groups throughout, particularly the north. Incidents of kidnapping children have occurred, notably the 276 Chibok girls in April 2014. It is unclear how many of them have actually been found. In recent years, attacks against Christian Churches have occurred in increasing numbers.

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Religion in Nigeria

With such a large population, it is no surprise to find that Nigeria is home to people of different religions. Approximately 51% are Muslim, and 47% are Christian, although these numbers are not considered accurate. Surprisingly, only a relatively small number practice indigenous spirituality. As mentioned above, this division has been a source of difficulty and conflict.



Chibok girls released after 8 years
(guardian.ng)

CAPITAL INVESTIGATION



Abuja (Kids-World-Travel-Guide)

The capital city of Nigeria is Abuja. Normally, capital cities are the largest in the country and close to transportation infrastructure. If this were the case in Nigeria, the capital would be in Lagos, with a population of 22 million. Research the history of Abuja. Why is it the political centre of the country? Why is it in the middle of nowhere?

ZUMA ROCK

Located near the capital city of Abuja is Zuma Rock, one of several large monoliths within the country. It has a circumference of 3.1 km and is featured on one of the bank notes.



Zuma Rock (Kids-World-Travel-Guide)

OLYMPIC GLORY



1996 Olympic gold medal for Nigeria
(public domain)

HCA PROJECTS IN NIGERIA

The HCA is presently contributing to two educational projects in the diocese of Nnewi in the Southeast. This is an area of Nigeria with a population made up mostly with an Igbo (Ibo) population. Given the history of the area, people are on the poor side.

The first project is primarily providing money to families so that their children can be enrolled in a quality school. Too many children in the area do not go



Children having classes in an incomplete church

to school at all because families cannot afford the extra fees required. Those who do attend school are usually in schools of very low standard that lack facilities, so minimal learning occurs. Moral and Religious Education rarely occurs.



Some of the teaching and learning materials bought with the money given by HCA Canada. The Archbishop is presenting them to the priests of those schools concerned.

The second project is at St Gabriel's outstation near Okija. There is no school in the area, so the only option for the few children who do attend is extensive and dangerous travel. The project is trying to raise money for the building of an early childhood and primary school.



Nursery and Primary school children in classes



HCA Coordinator visits children and distribute snacks to them

Lent in 2023



Lent begins on Ash Wednesday February 22, with Easter Sunday following on April 9. As already mentioned, Lent is earlier this year. To get you into the mood, see how you go with this quiz:

- 1) For how many days does Lent last ?
- 2) Maundy Thursday is known to honour the ?
- 3) The Sunday a week before Easter is known as ?
- 4) Jesus was heard to say on the cross, Father forgive them ?..
- 5) The week before Easter is known as what week ?
- 6) The Jewish holiday that falls around the same time as Easter is known as?
- 7) What is the name of the person who betrayed Jesus for silver ?
- 8) Over Easter what day of the week is known as the good day ?
- 9) Who found Jesus tomb empty ?
- 10) Name the hill where Jesus was crucified ?
- 11) Which person denied knowing Jesus 3 times ?
- 12) Who authorised the crucifixion of Jesus ?
- 13) Why is Easter known as the moveable feast
- 14) What is traditionally eaten by Christians on Good Friday ?

Once again, no answers! On review, the questions are too easy!

LENTEN PRAYER

Invite Us Deeper

*Almighty and ever living God,
you invite us deeper into your
world, your people, your Lent.
May this time be one of
outward focus;
seeking you in those we
often ignore.*

*Help us live a Lent focused on
freedom, generosity,
and encounter.*

*Give us hearts hungry
to serve you and those who
need what we have to give.*

- Author Unknown

POPE FRANCIS' 2022 LENTEN MESSAGE: The Pope's 2023 message is not available at this time of writing. In 2022, he said:

"Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all" (Gal 6:9-10)



BEATIFICATION OF PAULINE MARIE JARICOT

MAY 22, 2022 - LYONS, FRANCE

As you know from our last Newsletter, the beatification of Pauline Marie Jaricot, foundress of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith of which the HCA is a member, took place on May 22, 2022. To highlight the significance of this event our HCA Director Fr Alex Osei (C. S. Sp) attended the event. He is pictured by her tomb.

Before a person is beatified or made a Saint, there must be a true story of a miracle attributed to that person.



On May 29, 2012, three-year-old Mayline Tran lost consciousness due to suffocation caused by food which caused multiple cardiorespiratory arrests and further complications that left her no hope of survival. Thanks to the intercession of Pauline Jaricot, doctors confirmed that the little girl had completely recovered in May 2014, after a complex and long period of rehabilitation.



DON'T FORGET OUR DRAWING COMPETITION!!!

PONTIFICAL SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILDHOOD: DRAWING COMPETITION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



The Holy Childhood Association is a Pontifical organisation, meaning it is under the sponsorship and blessing of the Pope. This gives the HCA and members elite status.

On the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Pontifical Society of the Holy Childhood, the International Secretariat has announced a **"COMPETITION"** for missionary children and adolescents. You are to respond to the question *"What does Missionary Childhood and Adolescence mean for me in terms of being a Society of the Pope?"* You are to answer with a picture that shows your missionary activity accompanied by a brief descriptive caption of your work and how you feel about being a Missionary connected to the Pope.

The contest closes on May 19, 2023. In order for entries from around the world to be collected and judged, your entry must be received in Toronto by February 28, 2023. Send your entry to:

**The National Director
Pontifical Mission Societies
2219 Kennedy Road
Toronto ON M1T 3G5**

The winning entrant will receive a special HCA Rosary. The picture will be sent by the Director to the International Secretariat and will be published along with winners from other countries. All entrants will receive a Certificate of Participation.

BE CREATIVE!! BE INSPIRING!! GOOD LUCK AND GOD BLESS!!