

GETTING TO

KNOW



THE HOLY CHILDHOOD
ASSOCIATION
CANADA

**A Dynamic Approach to
Faith Instruction:**

“Bringing the Beatitudes to Life”

Through Membership in

**THE HOLY CHILDHOOD
ASSOCIATION**

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE HCA?

There are three main purposes behind the Holy Childhood Association (HCA).

THE FIRST is to encourage our children **to pray** for all children of the world, so that they all may know Jesus.

THE SECOND is to help our children to learn more about children around the world. Educational materials for use in promoting and teaching children about Mission Work are **FREE OF CHARGE**. Posters, prayer cards, membership cards and Mission Banks may all be obtained from the National Office. Use the order form which can be downloaded from our website. Liturgical year materials, a letter for parents and Guidelines for School/Parish Mission Day Celebrations are also available and may also be downloaded from our website. Newsletters and teacher/catechist guides may be ordered using the order form, or downloaded, as suits individual needs.

THE THIRD is to encourage our children to **sacrifice for and share with** others in the hope that such practices become part of their later years.

IN THE BEGINNING.....

The Holy Childhood Association began in 1843 in the country of France. Bishop Charles de Forbin Janson, the Bishop of Nancy, wanted a way to join the children of France with those from around the world.

His idea was to encourage French children to say a prayer and make a small financial contribution for the children in China. His idea spread rapidly and today, The Holy Childhood Association is now a worldwide mission club in over 120 countries.

In 1931 Archbishop Duke of Vancouver, BC, obtained Pope Pius XI's permission to form our own Association. In December 1933, Holy Childhood was officially inaugurated in Canada for children of elementary school age. Volunteer diocesan Directors or Coordinators are appointed by the local Bishop for each diocese throughout Canada to help organize it. Each participating country has its own National Office - ours is in Toronto (Scarborough), Ontario.

WHY SHOULD I START A HOLY CHILDHOOD CHAPTER WITH MY STUDENTS?

There are plenty of secular and quasi-religious organizations asking for our involvement in their causes. Many of them are well respected and should be complimented for the work they do. But the Holy Childhood Association can do for your students what other organizations cannot. The HCA provides you, the teacher/instructor, with a unique, Catholic-based instructional model that combines faith instruction for elementary aged children with practical, on-going information about the needs of their fellow children around the world. Whether you are working in a classroom or church hall or at a kitchen table, the HCA is the most effective way to combine Catholic instruction with humanitarian outreach.

The HCA model is approved by Catholic School Boards across Canada and provides lesson materials that match the outcomes prescribed for Catholic religious education. What a great way to teach religion and involve your students in helping other children around the globe! Unlike other secular organizations, The Holy Childhood Association offers them the unique opportunity to combine Catholic faith with works of charity.

By our baptism, all of us are called and sent to “...Go, teach all nations...” to spread the Good News about Jesus. Pope Francis further affirmed this fact by declaring October 2019 as an EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH with the Theme; “*Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World*”.

The HCA aims to meet this calling by developing mission awareness in children and, through them, in adults.



THE HOLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION IN SCHOOLS/PARISHES

1. The **Holy Childhood Association** can be incorporated into the regular Religious education program at all grade levels.
2. The **Holy Childhood Association** can be formed as a children's mission club in the school, or an activity for an already-existing children's group.
3. The **Holy Childhood Association** and its activities are a natural fit with the preparation for Reconciliation, First Eucharist or Confirmation.

HOW DOES THE HCA HELP CHILDREN?

The Holy Childhood Association aims to help the greatest number of children possible. It channels aid to institutions and organizations in the developing world concerned with children below the age of 14. Nursery and daycare centres, dispensaries, schools, maternity hospitals, and handicapped centres are among the many beneficiaries of **Holy Childhood Association** assistance.

100% of all funds collected by our children go towards assisting children in need around the world. It is important to note that many more adult volunteers are needed to give the children in parishes and schools across Canada this unique opportunity to develop their **faith through action** by living the Beatitudes and aiding others. Our children are eager to get involved; it takes a caring adult to give them the opportunity to do so.

**I HAVEN'T GOT MUCH TIME IN MY
SCHEDULE ALREADY.**

**ISN'T STARTING AN HCA CHAPTER JUST ADDING T
O MY WORKLOAD?**

Not at all. If you are an animator or instructor working at the parish level, you may be scrambling to find materials that are recent and relevant to your students. If you are a teacher facing an over-crowded schedule, HCA is just what you need.

We provide materials and support throughout the year for your use. These can be either ordered or downloaded, as outlined earlier.

**IT'S PROBABLY VERY COMPLICATED AND
TIME-CONSUMING TO SIGN UP, RIGHT?**

It couldn't be easier! Here's how you do it: Visit the website www.missionsocieties.ca. You will see a heading for Holy Childhood Association. Click on it and browse. You will find some materials available by downloading from the site. Other materials can be ordered from the national office, as per the order form. All materials can be reproduced for your lessons. You can use this website to contact us directly or go to hca@missionsocieties.ca. We love questions! You can also phone or write the National Office:

**Holy Childhood Association
2219 Kennedy Rd., Toronto ON, M1T 3G5, CANADA
Telephone: (416) 699-7077 Toll Free: 1-800-897-8865
Fax: (416) 699-9019**

If you require Newsletters and/or guides, fill out the Order Form with the quantities required for each grade level (Primary, Junior, Intermediate) allowing one for each student. Newsletters are published in the autumn and winter.

By ordering the Autumn Newsletters, you will automatically receive the winter set of Newsletters in late January or February in the same academic year, unless otherwise requested. Indicate what other materials you require from the office. All materials are free. Download any other material you require, and feel free to duplicate these materials as needed.

HOW DO I PRESENT THE PROGRAM?

- A) Read through the materials. Tell the children about CHILDREN HELPING CHILDREN® and the Holy Childhood Association.

- B) Give each of your students a copy of the most recent Newsletter and Prayer Card. The material contained within will provide good discussion points for you to start the program. The Catechist/Teacher Guide will assist you.

- C) Select one day in the week, perhaps Friday, and make it “Mission Day”. Celebrate it with a special prayer and story taken from the newsletters.

Encourage the students to develop their own spontaneous prayers for the children highlighted in the newsletters.

WHAT NEXT?

While this program is centered on **PRAYER** and **KNOWLEDGE**, it is hoped that the educator will lead the children to **WANT TO SACRIFICE**. Years ago, when the Association began, a penny was a sacrifice.

Lead the children to truly understand the meaning of sacrificing – of sharing. The class could plan, as a group, a way to help other children through fundraising. A bake sale, hot dog sale, walk-a-thon or skip-a-thon could be planned. The Pontifical Missions magazine, Missions Today (also available through us) provides stories about HCA students and their work for others in each issue. Contact us if you want a copy.

OR

Individual students may wish to use their own Mission Bank (a small, personal carton available free from the National Office).

OR

At a special “Mission Day Mass” a collection could be taken up by the students to help the children of the country they are studying and to which Holy Childhood Association funds are being sent.

Again, remember that:

All Money (100%) Collected by Children is Exclusively Earmarked for Children.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH THE MONEY COLLECTED FROM THE CHILDREN?

- 1) Count the money, bank it and make the cheque payable to the **Holy Childhood Association**.
- 2) Mail the cheque to the:
Holy Childhood Association
2219 Kennedy Rd.
Toronto ON M1T 3G5.
- 3) Please indicate **clearly** where the donation is from, i.e., school, grade, complete address, educator, and diocese.
- 4) Upon receipt of the donation, all of which will be sent to the Missions, your school/parish will receive: a thank-you letter and receipt; an Appreciation Certificate (schools only), suitable for framing, for the school.

IS THERE A COST FOR THE MATERIALS?

There is **NO** charge for any of the materials available from the National Office. Other donors make it possible for us to offer the material free to students. Great care is taken to keep operational expenses as low as possible. It is our hope that those who use the materials will make a contribution to the Holy Childhood Association.

ANNUAL CELEBRATION

The first Wednesday of May (the month of Our Blessed Mother, Queen of the Mission) is: **CANADA-WIDE**

HOLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION MISSION DAY
“CHILDREN HELPING CHILDREN®”

Throughout Canada, elementary students plan special mission activities to complete their school year mission efforts. Suggestions from the National Office are mailed out with the Winter Newsletters.

TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Please contact the national headquarters in Toronto (Scarborough), or your Diocesan Director (contact information available on our website).

2219 Kennedy Rd. Toronto Ontario M1T 3G5 Canada

Toll Free: 1-800-897-8865 Fax: (416) 699-9019

E-mail: hca@missionsocieties.ca

Website: www.missionsocieties.ca

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

HCA Canada is on the lookout for children's and youth's artwork depicting mission work based upon what they have learned through the HCA program. Please send along to us your scanned (or original) images of children/youth artwork and we shall select various works to be presented in our newsletters. The best work, as determined by the staff at HCA Canada will be showcased in Missions Today magazine! We also want your stories! Send us along your photos and information describing what YOUR SCHOOL OR PARISH GROUP is doing on behalf of our international mission projects. Submissions should be made to:

Holy Childhood Association

2219 Kennedy Rd., Toronto ON, M1T 3G5 OR

E-mail: hca@missionsocieties.ca

STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR TEACHERS/CATECHISTS SEPTEMBER TO MAY

- ◆ Choose a mission animator - Principal /Teacher /Parent Volunteer
- ◆ Make contact with the Diocesan HCA Director and/or National Office (**Call 1-800-897-8865**)
- ◆ Download and reproduce materials as needed.
- ◆ Complete the Order Form for HCA materials (fax or mail it to National Office in Toronto or call us to 1-800-897-8865 to order)
- ◆ Plan HCA Mission presentations with the Religion Rep. / Social Justice Rep., the Principal, staff, parish priest & school council.

Send a letter to parents - Re: HCA

- ◆ Prepare for HCA Enrolment Celebration for October: **WORLD MISSION MONTH**. The Theme for 2025 is: **“Missionaries of Hope among all people”**

OCTOBER

- ◆ **World Mission Month** – Feast of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus
- ◆ **Worldwide Children’s Holy Hour** for the families of the world (*first Friday of October*).
- ◆ Classes can set-up a mission prayer corner and/or bulletin board display.
- ◆ Prepare for **World Mission Month. October** (The National Office always put on our website some special materials for children)
- ◆ Distribute HCA Sept. – Dec. Newsletters to students.
- ◆ Enrolment celebration for students in HCA and distribution of the mission boxes.
- ◆ Review the Teacher/Catechist Guide & integrate Newsletter with Religious Education and other programs.

NOVEMBER

- ◆ All Saints Day (*November 1st*)
- ◆ All Souls Day (*November 2nd*)
- ◆ Look up, discover and learn about missionary saints.
- ◆ Pray for more missionary vocations and children who have died because of lack of food, water, healthy living and/or safety.
- ◆ Have materials ready for HCA Advent program. ***Go on the website; www.missionsocieties.ca for help.***
- ◆ Do students have the HCA Advent Calendar for home use?
- ◆ Include the HCA prayer in daily prayer time. Use it with your children throughout Advent.

DECEMBER

- ◆ Feast of the Immaculate Conception, (*December 8*)
- ◆ Feast of St Francis Xavier (*December 3*)
- ◆ Decorate the school and/or classroom bulletin board with Mission Theme: (*celebrating Jesus' Birthday with all the children of the world*).
- ◆ Research how the birthday of Jesus is celebrated in different countries and cultures.
- ◆ Encourage children to use HCA Advent Calendar & Mission Bank.
- ◆ Continue to pray daily for children around the world.

JANUARY

- ◆ Distribute HCA Jan. – June Newsletter (automatically mailed from National Office if you received Sept. – Dec. Newsletter).
- ◆ If you do not automatically get Newsletters mailed, feel free to download them from our website; www.missionsocieties.ca and print as needed.
- ◆ Decide on mission activities for the second half of the school year.

FEBRUARY

- ◆ Have HCA Lent materials ready for distribution.
Useful materials are:
 - Mission boxes
 - Lenten calendar
 - HCA Stations of the Cross

- ◆ HCA bulletin board for Lent.

- ◆ Invite a guest to speak about his/her experiences as a missionary

- ◆ Ash Wednesday (*February 18, 2026*) - Use the HCA Missionary Prayer with your children throughout Lent.

MARCH

- ◆ Include HCA mission awareness in the Lenten program at your parish or school.

- ◆ Pray for children and missionaries.

- ◆ *“I make a world of difference”* - Compose individual or class stories using this theme and send them to the National Office.

APRIL

- ◆ Start preparations for HCA Canada - wide Mission Day celebration (*1st Wednesday in May*).
- ◆ Send out invitations for the celebration to parents, grandparents, School Council.
- ◆ Request return of mission boxes, tally proceeds and send cheque to the National Office. Our address is:

**HOLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION
2219 KENNEDY ROAD
TORONTO ON, M1T 3G5**

M A Y

- ◆ *1st Wednesday (May 6, 2026) is CANADA-WIDE HOLY CHILDHOOD MISSION DAY.*
- ◆ Celebrate a Mass/ Para Liturgy (Resources are on the website; www.missionsocieties.ca)
- ◆ Enjoy fundraising activities for the HCA e.g., Popsicle sale, Walkathon, Fun Fair, Wacky Hair Day
- ◆ Final tally of HCA donations and cheque forwarded to the National Office of the HCA.

SOME FUNDRAISING IDEAS

Before you start:

1. Make sure everyone understands why you are taking action
2. Set a goal – optimistic but realistic
3. Publicize the action to get support and encouragement
4. Kids do the work
 - decide on their own ideas
 - bring what they need
 - provide prizes
 - assist with publicity

Children throughout Canada raise money for HCA in various ways.

Some recent letters have contained the following fundraising ideas:

- ◆ Auction a service – donate a service e.g. tidy cupboards and sell to highest bidder.
- ◆ Popcorn sales.
- ◆ Bake sale – seasonal – Christmas, Valentines, etc.
- ◆ Jello Day.
- ◆ Mission Fun Fair and Bazaar.
- ◆ Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday).
- ◆ Pumpkin sales (a local pumpkin patch owner may donate pumpkins that can be carved, decorated and sold/auctioned at the school).
- ◆ Dress down days (\$1 or \$2 to be ‘out of uniform’ for the day).
 - ◆ Wacky hair day.
- ◆ Monthly skating (add \$1 to cost and donate it to HCA).

- ◆ Walk-a-thon or any other a-thon – Dance-a-thon, Skate-athon.
- ◆ Talent Show.
- ◆ Seasonal raffle: Christmas/ Valentine/Easter etc.
- ◆ Bottle drive.
- ◆ Recycling program.
- ◆ Yard/garage sale.
- ◆ Publish your own book - stories, poems or cookbook.
- ◆ Loonie / Toonie Drive [each class is given a bucket where they put only their coins. A graph is made so that the whole school can see how much each class has raised.
- ◆ Gently-used toy sale (include books, games, etc.).
- ◆ Polar Bear Project (Help the polar bear from Canada travel to the focus country using toonies as tickets.
- ◆ Looney/Tooney Sunday (children take up collection using Mission Banks one Sunday per month).
- ◆ Guess the Number (how many jellybeans, gumballs, pennies, paperclips, etc. in a jar).
- ◆ Coins Weigh-in (students donate coins that are equivalent in weight of a staff member).
- ◆ Box social.
- ◆ International Food day – bring and sell food from different countries.
- ◆ Hot Dog Day.
- ◆ Sunday Tea - children decorate the Church, make crafts to sell and serve tea & baked goods.
- ◆ Hockey Jersey Day – pay to wear/promote your favourite team [local or national].

- ◆ Ask friends for a donation for the HCA instead of buying birthday presents for each other.
- ◆ Coin Line/ Coin Country – Draw a chalk outline of a country HCA is helping and try to cover it with coins.
- ◆ Pajama Day / Hat Day.
- ◆ Valentine’s Day raffle.
- ◆ School/Parish Christmas concert.
- ◆ Singing carols and collecting donations at the entrance of the church.
- ◆ Donations for palms /palm crosses

TYPES OF PROJECTS FUNDED BY HCA

Nursery Schools; Childcare centres and Orphanages; Literacy programs; Feeding programs; Skills development e.g. sewing, carpentry, cooking; Scholarships/bursaries for needy children [*tuition, school supplies, uniform, transportation, supplementary food*]; Access to drinking water; Medical assistance; Healthy living programs; Catechetical programs; Construction of schools/classrooms; Child Catechetical leadership training seminars and retreats.



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