Welcome to the Missionary Childhood Association’s (MCA) SOCTOBER Program for World Mission Sunday and Mission Month. During World Mission Month and in particular on World Mission Sunday, we celebrate missionaries and local people sharing God’s love with great enthusiasm and are inspired by the many challenges they face as they live out their faith. Each of us is invited to be involved in the work of global mission and share the loving grace of God with all.

This resource is designed to provide opportunities for young people to deepen their understanding about missionary discipleship particularly during this Year of Mercy.

The theme of this year’s resource is: MERCY CHANGES THE WORLD

We invite the question: When we think of the Church, whose Church do we think of? With Pope Francis, we wonder about the place of the poor in the Church, and what mission means in the life of a Christian person today. We invite you to wonder about how you build a merciful Church.

You will find age-appropriate resources and activities, liturgy and prayer activities and some fundraising ideas.

What is Socktober?
Socktober is one way in which your school or parish can engage in formation activities and fundraise for children in the Missions through MCA during Mission Month in October.

Using Socktober for formation and fundraising is as easy as using your imagination... and a pair of socks! Socktober activities promise to be fun, exciting and are adaptable to your school and parish needs.

AFTER ALL:
- Socks work best in pairs – people work best when we work together.
- Socks are all different – we recognize that every child is unique and special.
- Socks keep us warm, protect us, help us to enjoy sports and have fun – with your support, MCA protects, houses, feeds and educates children globally.
- Socks are part of the everyday clothes we wear – it’s the normal everyday contributions to MCA that allow us to make an extraordinary difference in the lives of children in the Missions.
World Mission Month

As part of World Mission Month, World Mission Sunday is celebrated annually on the next-to-last Sunday wherever Christians are committed to bringing about God’s reign here on earth, a world where every single person’s dignity is recognized and protected. This year World Mission Sunday is celebrated on October 23, 2016.

It is a time to reflect on the need to proclaim the Gospel in our times. Missionary activity is, fundamentally, a going out of oneself in love, a reaching out to bring God’s love to everyone, especially the outcast and unloved.

Jesus’ mission of creating a world where all can live a fully dignified life is still far from completion. Therefore, the entire month of October has been dedicated to reflecting on the central mission of the Church to help all Christians in their commitment to Christ’s mission of salvation for the world.

On World Mission Sunday, Catholics of the world unite at Mass to recommit themselves to their vocation, through Baptism, to be missionaries. The Church’s missionary activity begins with the proclamation of faith: “Jesus is Lord!” He is our common hope— a hope that saves. On World Mission Sunday, we are called in a special way to be “missionaries of mercy” through prayer and participation in the Eucharist, and by giving generously to the collection.

World Mission Sunday was established by Pope Pius XI in 1926. He saw the day as a way to “foster understanding of the greatness of the missionary task, encourage zeal among the clergy and the people, and offer an opportunity to make the Society for the Propagation of the Faith [a Pontifical Mission Society like the Missionary Childhood Association] ever more widely known and encourage offerings for the missions.”

About this World Mission Sunday / Mission Month 2016 Resource

We understand that good teachers know their students and that a range of varied resources supports them in meeting diverse learning needs. This World Mission Sunday / Mission Month Resource has been created by religious educators, for religious educators. Following are some suggestions for its use:

- Enhance a current unit of work on social studies, history, geography, economics, religion and more
- Plan a mini-unit on mission
- Integrate your celebration of World Mission Sunday / Mission Month into your literacy curriculum
- Create a stand-alone lesson for World Mission Sunday
- Organize a youth ministry gathered event
FUNDRAISING IDEAS

- Hold a “Crazy Sock Day” and encourage your students to wear crazy socks all over their bodies — what is the most creative way they can wear socks? Ask children to make a donation in order to participate.
- Host a “Rock Your Socks Off” dance party, either during a lunch break or after school hours – students who participate can be asked to pay an entry fee.
- Make a class or group Socktober sock puppet and “Pass the Sock Around” as a fundraiser with your group, other classes or groups and ask people to place their donations in the sock.
- Have a “Sock-tion” auction of different items. See if you can obtain pairs of socks from famous people to auction.
  1. Hold a movie day with a movie that focuses on feet, dancing and socks (*Happy Feet, Footloose*). Charge for admittance.
  2. Have a competition to see which student can create the best sock puppet, then hold a puppet show and charge an entry fee for the event (invite parents).

FORMATION ACTIVITIES

1. Put on a sock puppet show with a focus on a mercy story from the Bible or from the Missions that you have read about in your diocesan newspaper.
2. Run a Socktober liturgy or Mass.
3. Create a “Prayer Line” at your school or parish (a portable clothes line showing socks with prayers).
4. Conduct a “simulated story line — This activity is suggested for the last day of the month or the day closest to World Mission Sunday, October 23, 2016 to mark World Mission Month. The idea is to introduce your students to a piece of literature that offers a powerful message about “mission” and “making a difference” which all children in all groups in the school or parish read and study at the same time.
Activity: Read and Respond to Children in the Missions

All people should be able to experience the joy of being loved by God and the joy of His salvation! It is a gift that we cannot keep to ourselves – it must be shared. On World Mission Sunday, we celebrate the missionary work of the Church and recommit ourselves to proclaiming the message of Christ to all and to helping the people of our time encounter Him.

- Sunday, October 23, the Church celebrates World Mission Sunday, a very special day when all Catholics are asked to think about, pray for and support people who are missionaries.
- The word mission means to be sent out. Mission is about being sent. A missionary is someone who is sent out to bring blessings and the Good News of Jesus to others.
- Missionaries not only tell people about God’s care and love for them, but they also show God’s love through their actions.
- Missionaries often go to far-off places, especially places where people struggle every day to survive. Missionaries help run hospitals, schools, orphanages and clinics. They provide for food programs, and they help people learn how to care for and build better lives for themselves, their families, and their community. And, of course, they share their Catholic faith as well – all of their actions for others motivated by God’s great love for each one of us!
- On World Mission Sunday, Catholics all over the world celebrate and pray for mission work that takes place in Africa and Asia, the islands of the Pacific Ocean, and parts of Latin America. We join missionaries everywhere through our prayers, our greatest gift.
- On World Mission Sunday, a special collection is taken up as well. Through our donations, we support missionaries throughout the world.

A Mission Story

Each time you pray or make a sacrifice for children in the Missions, you are showing the Mercy of Jesus to others. Here is a story about children you help live in Africa.

ENCOUNTERING THE MERCY OF GOD: A LOOK AT TWO SUNDAYS

The settings couldn’t be more different.

One, Mukuru, a slum in the Kenyan capital city of Nairobi, home to some 10,000 living in wood and corrugated metal shacks, crowded together, with no running water, electricity or sewage systems. The other, Mutunguru, a place in the country, 60 miles north of Nairobi, an agricultural community of 2,000 families, spread out and surrounded by the beauty of nature, pineapples and tea growing in abundance.

And yet every Sunday the similarities between the two become evident as music, dance, singing and joy characterize the celebration of faith in Jesus and a commitment to carry His “Good News” of mercy and salvation to others.
During the two-hour plus Mass at Saint Mary’s Church in Mukuru, for example, the
50-member choir, which meets for rehearsal three times a week, sings and claps,
raising their hands in praise. The joy, noted one visitor to the parish, was “palpable and
uplifting.” At the Offertory procession, with the gifts of bread and wine are baskets of
vegetables, flour, rice, bread and other necessities to be shared with the less fortunate
members of the parish.

The community of Saint Mary’s embodies the spirit Pope Francis has called our
attention to this Holy Year of Mercy: “It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee,
the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.” Here,
the words at the end of Mass, “go to love and serve the Lord,” come to life as Maryknoll
Father John Lange navigates narrow dirt paths filled with ruts and trash to visit the sick
and those who are suffering in any way. Lay people in the community have identified
those in need, and Father Lange enters their humble dwellings to offer prayers and
help and, above all, to be a presence of the Lord Who never abandons us.

“Keep God in your hearts,” Father Moses Kago tells the parishioners of St. Joseph’s
Church in Mutunguru, during one particular Sunday homily. That rural community
nurtured his vocation to the priesthood. “The Spirit can help you do extraordinary things
when bad things happen,” he adds. Father Kago, who serves as Pontifical Mission
Societies director for the Archdiocese of Nairobi, also emphasizes the missionary
dimension of our faith. “We do not only receive, we also give,” he explained. The call
to Catholics in Kenya to be missionary is one stressed often in parishes, wherever they
happen to be.

“We encourage our Christians to live up to what we have received because of our dear
missionaries,” explains Cardinal John Njue of Nairobi. Missionaries arrived in various
places in Kenya just a little more than a century ago. “The seed has been planted,
and we need to make sure it is watered to grow properly,” the Cardinal added. “We
understand the importance of the missionary vocation of all.” Cardinal Njue’s words
remind us all of the importance of World Mission Sunday.

One day a year, we are reminded that we are members of a global Church and that
part of our Catholic vocation is to support missionaries in the world’s most vulnerable
communities – communities like Saint Mary’s Church in Mukuru and St. Joseph’s
Church in Mutunguru. Both young and old can help raise and contribute money to
share with with our brothers and sisters in these communities.

When people in Kenya, here at home and throughout the world can encounter, celebrate
and share the mercy of God… That’s very “good news!”
Respond and Explore:

• How is life in Mukuru and Mutunguru the same as yours?
• How is life there different from yours?
• What are the differences between life in Mukuru and Mutunguru?
• What is the same in Mukuru and Mutunguru?
• Why do people bring food to Mass at Saint Mary’s?
• What if you did not have electricity, water or enough food to eat? How does it make you feel hearing about Mukuru and Mutunguru?
• What is mercy? How are the people in the story showing mercy?

Act:

• Draw a picture that shows the people of Mukuru or Mutunguru at Mass.
• Make a poster in small groups of what you would change for the people of Mukuru if you could.
• Perform a song that they might sing at Mass.
• What can you do as a group to help people like those who live in Mukuru or Mutunguru?
• Choose an activity to raise money for the merciful work of missionaries.

ACTIVITY: Prayer
Pray the decade of the World Mission Rosary for Africa or the entire World Mission Rosary. To learn more about the World Mission Rosary, visit www.missio.org/Resources

ACTIVITY: Watch and Respond
View the following YouTube videos with your group and conduct a discussion based on the questions below.

1) Pope Francis Minute Explains: The Year of Mercy [make this a hyperlink using the link below]
   https://youtu.be/TAxrKubZr8s?list=PL5sexwzkyqUXgYK9AJZTgt2cRcJBY0hJR

2) Pope Francis in poor Kenyan neighborhood [make this a hyperlink using the url below]
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPV0NhzQX0I

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

• What does the Pope teach us about how we should act?
• How does the Pope want us to treat people?
• How can the Pope be a good leader for the Church?
• What would you say to the Pope?
• What do you think Jesus would say to the Pope today?
EXTENDING THE LESSON WITH ACTIVITY

• Create an artwork or performance that tells people about what Pope Francis says.
• Share your artwork or performance with others.

ACTIVITY: What Did Jesus Say?

Jesus teaches us about mission and what is important. Our mission is to care for people as Jesus did. Jesus teaches us how to care for the people in need when he talked about who will be welcomed in Heaven.

With your teacher, read the Gospel of Matthew 25:35-40

• According to Jesus how should we care for people?
• If we care for people, who are we caring for?
• Do you know people who are sick, lonely, hungry, thirsty?
• What does the Church do to help these people?
• What can you do to help these people?

The theme for this lesson is "Mercy Changes the World". What does it mean to you? Does this story from the Gospel show how to do this?

ONLINE ACTIVITY: Do You Want to Learn More?

Download the MISSIO mobile app to your smart phone to see first-hand the people and programs making a difference in the lives of children in the Missions. With MISSIO you can meet, pray with and learn more about project leaders who work with children in the Missions – building communities, providing health care, education services and pastoral care and so much more.

• In a large group search the MISSIO App [using a tablet and projector] for projects happening right now in Kenya or on the continent of Africa.
• Identify these projects. How many are there?
• Choose a particular project to focus on as a group.
• Research what you can about the project:
  • Who are the project leaders?
  • How are they addressing this issue?
  • How can you help?
• Communicate with the project leaders themselves to find out more and share your support.