

WE ARE ALL MISSIONARIES!

A comprehensive lesson plan focused on teaching elementary students about the **Missionary Childhood Association** and connecting it to their baptismal call to be missionaries.

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. **Explain what the Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) is and its purpose.**
2. **Understand how their baptism calls them to be missionaries.**
3. **Identify ways they can participate in missionary work in their daily lives.**
4. **Participate in an MCA commissioning prayer service to become MCA members**

Grade Level: Elementary (1-4)

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Subject: Religious Education/Faith Formation

Topic: The Missionary Childhood Association and Our Baptismal Call

Materials

- Whiteboard or Chalkboard
- World map or globe
- Baptismal candles (real or paper craft versions)
- Art supplies (colored paper, markers, crayons)
- MCA Mite Box



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Introduction

Opening Prayer: Begin with the Sign of the Cross and a simple prayer for children around the world.

Engagement Activity: Show students a globe or world map and ask:

- What do you think a missionary does?
- Where do missionaries work?
- Can children be missionaries too? How?

Connect to Personal Experience: Ask students to share if they remember anything about their baptism (or if their parents have told them about it).

Instruction

Part 1: Learning About MCA

Introduction to MCA:

Explain: "Today we're going to learn about a special organization called the Missionary Childhood Association."

Share the history of MCA:

- Founded in 1843 by French Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson
- Started when the bishop wanted to help children in mission territories
- Originally asked French children to pray a Hail Mary daily and donate a small coin monthly
- Motto: "Children helping children"
- Now works in 140 countries around the world

MCA's Work:

- Explain how MCA funds help children worldwide:
- Health and nutrition programs
- Orphanages and homes for children in need
- Schools and educational supplies
- Teaching children about Jesus and the faith



More on the history and work of MCA can be found at pontificalmissions.org



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Part 2: Baptism and Mission

Discussion:

- Ask: "What happens at baptism?" (We become part of God's family, receive the Holy Spirit, etc.)
- Explain: "At baptism, we also receive a special mission from God."

Key Message:

- From the moment of baptism, we're called to share God's love
- Children don't need to wait until they're grown-ups to be missionaries
- We can be missionaries right where we are - at home, school, and in our communities
- The Holy Spirit gives each of us special gifts to help others

Reflection: Have students think about ways they already act as missionaries in their daily lives.

Part 3: Hands-On Activity

Option 1: "My Missionary Promise" Cards

Provide art supplies for students to create cards with their personal missionary promises. Students write/draw ways they can be missionaries at their age. Examples: praying for children in other countries, sharing with others, being kind to someone who is lonely

Option 2: Distribute MCA Mite Boxes or Start a small fundraising project for MCA

Each child receives their own mite box. Encourage the children to make sacrifices for the children in the missions. Discuss ways in which they can sacrifice their time, their allowance, even get creative, and come up with their own fundraiser for MCA.

Option 3: Mission Corner

Research a mission country where MCA works and create a classroom display, using pictures and cultural artifacts from that part of the world.



Option 4: Daily Mission Reflection

Begin a classroom "Mission Moment" where students share a daily prayer for children in mission countries. Create a place in the classroom to track prayers and participation.

BONUS! Invite a guest speaker from the diocesan mission office to speak about MCA!



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Part 4: MCA Prayer Service and Commissioning Ceremony

Opening Song (optional): “Here I Am, Lord”

Leader:

Welcome, dear children, to this special moment where we gather as one family of faith to commission you as members of the **Missionary Childhood Association**. As missionaries, you are called to pray, to share, to sacrifice and to love others—especially children around the world who need our help and hope.

Let us begin in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, You sent Your Son Jesus to bring light, love, and peace to the world.

Today, we thank You for calling these children to be part of the Missionary Childhood Association.

Help them to be joyful witnesses of Your love through prayer and sacrifice.

May they grow with generous hearts and never forget their brothers and sisters in mission lands.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading (Leader or Reader):

Matthew 28:19-20

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Reflection (Leader):

Jesus sends each of us to be missionaries—not just in faraway places, but in our schools, homes, and hearts. As members of the Missionary Childhood Association, your small prayers and gifts bring big love to children in need. Today, you promise to say a Hail Mary every day for children in the missions and to make sacrifices—whether it’s one penny or ten dollars—so others may know God’s love.

Commissioning Pledge (Children repeat after Leader):

- I promise to pray a Hail Mary each day for children in the missions.
- I promise to make sacrifices, big or small, to help my brothers and sisters in need.
- With God’s help, I will be a missionary of love, hope, and peace.

Closing (Leader):

God of all nations, Bless these children who have answered Your call. Give them hearts that are open and hands that are ready to serve. Fill them with courage to be true missionaries every day. May Mary, Queen of Missions, guide them always.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Closing Song (optional): “Go Make a Difference”

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO THE MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION!

