

It's Our World

MCA MISSION NEWS ✚

Lent 2013 | Celebrating The Year of Faith

"In His name the nations will put their hope." (Matthew 12:21)

GRADES

6-8

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A HOME OF HOPE AND LOVE

For years, the Adoration Sisters of the Holy Face in Cebu City, Philippines, have been handcrafting Rosaries and selling them to support the work they do with poor families, the elderly and street children. The Sisters also rely on local donations. A recent \$20,000 grant from the Missionary Childhood Association will help the Sisters reach out to even more people in this very poor area.

The Sisters' main focus is education – both academic and religious. They run a school and a formation center serving hundreds of poor children. Some graduates have gone on to college while others have pursued vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

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ABOVE Children celebrate a local feast, "Flores de Mayo"
RIGHT Sisters preparing the soil for planting; with their students, they grow vegetables and prepare healthy food for the "soup kitchen."

MCA MAIL BAG

Dear MCA,

On December 9, 2012, the 6th, 7th and 8th graders of our parish Sunday religious education program organized a "Muffins for Mission" event after both Masses in our parish. Please find enclosed a check for \$227, reflecting the donations they received during this event for the Missionary Childhood Association.

God bless you!

Father Leo Seiker
St. James Catholic Church
Cortland, NE

Dear MCA,

The Good Shepherd Sisters in Chiang Rai offer you our sincerest thanks for the generous donation. We are most grateful for the support that we have received and are pleased to say that the children at the Good Shepherd Youth Center are doing very well. We see great progress with all of them. This could not have happened without help from you.

May God bless you,

Sister Lena Siriworasin
Director of the Good Shepherd
Youth Center

Last year, the Missionary Childhood Association provided \$5,500 to help support the work of this center, which provides a home to young girls, many of whom have been rescued from human trafficking. Today, about 45 young girls find an education and vocational training, as well as abundant love from the Good Shepherd Sisters.

A HOME OF HOPE AND LOVE

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In addition to their work at the school, the Sisters coordinate a program through which flip-flop style sandals are distributed to children in need. And, once a month, the Sisters visit the families of their students to deliver food and medicine, as needed. Most importantly, they take time to pray with them. On Saturdays, a "soup kitchen" serves healthy meals including vegetables grown by the Sisters and their students.

With your continued prayers and support, you can help the Sisters continue to make a real difference in the lives of these children.

MCA MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Thanks to your help, the Missionary Childhood Association was able to provide a grant of \$4,500 to the Kusumia Catholic School in Rajasthan, India. The school serves poor Catholic girls from surrounding villages, some of whom are orphaned. All of the girls attend religious education classes and daily Mass. In addition to academics, the girls are taught skills such as sewing, cooking, and gardening. Thanks to the Sisters who run the school, many of the girls have pursued college degrees, and now work as teachers, nurses and other professionals. A good number of these young women also decide to enter the Religious life – inspired by the loving service of the Sisters!

WHO AM I? WHO DO I WANT TO BE?

Prayer. Fasting. Repentance. These are the hallmarks of the Lenten Season as we unite ourselves with the life of Jesus both during His public ministry (His preaching, teaching and healing), and ultimately through His suffering and death on the Cross. Lent is also a time for self-reflection, when we can learn more about ourselves and the special people God has called us to be. What type of person do you think you are? What special gifts or talents has God given to you? Use the following quiz – just for fun! – to see what makes you special in the eyes of God.

PART 1 Answering Questions

Answer each question with a “3” if the statement is true of you most of the time. Answer with a “2” if the question is true of you sometimes. Answer with a “1” if it is rarely true. It is important that you answer how you truly are, and not how you wish you were or want to be. After you’ve completed the survey, follow the instructions to discover more about your God-given gifts and talents.

1. ___ I really want to help people get to know Jesus.
2. ___ I like to make people think.
3. ___ I really love to read the Bible.
4. ___ When I complete a task, I love to have a visible end result.
5. ___ I am a people person. People energize me.
6. ___ I am usually pretty soft spoken.
7. ___ I am usually drawn to and involved in activities that help people.
8. ___ I am well organized.
9. ___ I make decisions based strictly on facts and things that are proven.
10. ___ Some people think I talk about my faith so much that it seems pushy.
11. ___ When I know people are doing the wrong thing, I feel the need to tell them and try to correct the situation.
12. ___ I am constantly thinking of better ways to communicate things.
13. ___ I am good at thinking about and finding solutions to problems.
14. ___ I spend a lot of time praying for other people.
15. ___ I have a passion for comforting those who need it.
16. ___ I like to work behind the scenes more than in the spotlight.
17. ___ I am sensitive to the needs of others.
18. ___ I often set goals and seek to meet them.
19. ___ I would rather reflect Gospel values than go along with the crowd.
20. ___ It really bothers me when other people do things that are wrong.
21. ___ I am more task oriented than people oriented.

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- 22. ___ I like homilies in which the priest explains Scripture and offers examples about how I can apply its lessons in my own life.
- 23. ___ I have a great desire to see others grow and learn.
- 24. ___ I find that I often put myself "in someone else's shoes."
- 25. ___ I enjoy working with my hands.
- 26. ___ If a need exists, I am always ready to meet it.
- 27. ___ I do things on time.
- 28. ___ I am socially active and get along with people easily.
- 29. ___ I would rather speak about something than write about it.
- 30. ___ I like teaching people how to do things well.
- 31. ___ I don't like to think too much about theology or doctrine.
- 32. ___ I am very protective of my friends and family.
- 33. ___ I act on my emotions more than on logic/ thinking.
- 34. ___ I feel motivated when I'm encouraged to serve.
- 35. ___ When I give, I always like to give my best.
- 36. ___ I am willing to attempt difficult tasks for the love of God.



Go back now and add up the totals for the following groups of questions.

Numbers 1, 10, 19, 28 = ____
(Evangelization, Sharing Faith)

Numbers 2, 11, 20, 29 = ____
(Insight)

Numbers 3, 12, 21, 30 = ____
(Teaching)

Numbers 4, 13, 22, 31 = ____
(Encouraging)

Numbers 5, 14, 23, 32 = ____
(Pastoral)

Numbers 6, 15, 24, 33 = ____
(Merciful)

Numbers 7, 16, 25, 34 = ____
(Servant)

Numbers 8, 17, 26, 35 = ____
(Giving)

Numbers 9, 18, 27, 36 = ____
(Administrative)

Now go back and circle the 2 highest and 2 lowest totals. If there's a tie, list both:

Areas in which I am most gifted/ talented:

Areas in which I am the least gifted:

Did you learn a little bit more about yourself by taking this quiz? What type of profession might you decide to pursue based on your answers? Would you consider a vocation to the priesthood or Religious life? Perhaps you might want to work as a lay missionary overseas? Share your answers with friends and family – maybe even have some of them take this quiz! Use what you have learned about yourself to make positive changes this Lent, as you continue on your faith journey, trying to be more like Jesus.

Adapted From TeenSundaySchoolPlace.com

LET'S TALK ABOUT CHRISTMAS – IN LENT

This past Christmas Eve, Father Andrew Small, OMI, National Director of the Missionary Childhood Association, went to a party – with Egyptian children in an afterschool program at St. Mary Virgin Catholic Church in Cairo. There was face painting and a visit from Santa, who brought gifts for the children. Father Andrew also brought presents for the children – “crazy bands” bracelets in the shape of famous New York places, like the Empire State Building and the Statue of Liberty.

But those were just the gifts given to children on Christmas Eve. Last year, just after Easter, your help through MCA – \$5,000, in fact – was sent to this parish to provide food for children in this afterschool program. Contributions from children in the United States to MCA last year helped close to 1,000 children just in this Alexandria area of Egypt – ensuring each received nutritious food and an education!



Father Andrew Small, OMI (far right), with Sudanese refugees and Father Antonios Favez, National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Egypt.

estimates put the number of Sudanese who have fled to Egypt between 750,000 and four million.

Reflecting on this visit, Father Andrew noted, “We are bound together in prayer for the poor, the oppressed, the refugee and the outsider. Their story is the story of the Christ-child and the Holy Family – it is our story as we celebrate once again the difference God makes.”

And Father Andrew heard a message as well, from local priests and Sisters there. Requests for assistance from families are increasing, as are costs for food. Please continue to pray for the children of Egypt and children all over the world. And please consider making a sacrifice this Lent to MCA to help your brothers and sisters in Egypt and throughout the Missions learn about Jesus.

Father Andrew’s Christmas Eve journey also included a stop at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Alexandria – which has also received MCA help. At this parish, families receive help to provide food and an education for their children.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church serves mainly people from Sudan who, over the past two decades, have left their war-torn homeland to come to Egypt; in fact, some



The children of St. Mary Virgin, Catholic Church in Cairo.

A TASTE OF EGYPT

Koshari is a traditional food of Egypt that is as popular as chili is in the United States. Frequently served by food vendors in cities such as Cairo, this healthy stew combines beans, tomato sauce and pasta, with a little bit of spice. If you like to cook, or simply want to try something new for dinner, ask an older sibling or parent to help you make this Egyptian dish.

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup brown lentils
- 4 cups water
- 3/4 cup uncooked long grain rice
- 1 cup elbow macaroni
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 large onions, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (15.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- red pepper flakes, to taste
- salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

1. Combine the lentils and water in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil, then simmer over medium heat for 25 minutes. Add the rice to the lentils, and continue to simmer for an additional 20 minutes, or until rice is tender.
2. Fill a separate saucepan with lightly salted water and bring to a boil. Add the macaroni and cook until tender, about 8 minutes. Drain.
3. Meanwhile, heat the vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic; cook and stir until onion is lightly browned. Pour in the tomatoes and season with red pepper flakes, salt and pepper. Simmer over medium heat for 10 to 20 minutes.
4. In a large serving dish, stir together the lentils, rice and macaroni. Mix in the tomato sauce until evenly coated.

Source: AllRecipes.com

TEST YOUR LENT IQ

How much do you really know about Lent? Take this brief quiz to find out. Choose one answer for each question by placing a check in the space provided. You can check your answers with your teacher.

1. The word "Lent" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for:

- Spring
- Summer
- Winter

2. The first day of Lent is:

- Shrove Tuesday
- Ash Wednesday
- Maundy Thursday

3. Lent is a time to remember Jesus being tempted three times in the wilderness by Satan. In the first temptation, Satan tried to get Jesus to turn which of the following into bread:

- a brick
- a stone
- a log

4. In the second temptation, Satan took Jesus to the highest point of the Temple and challenged him to:

- fight him
- deface the Temple
- throw himself down to be saved by angels

5. In the third temptation Satan showed Jesus the world and said he could control all this without any interference if he would:

- have a meal with Satan
- bow down and worship Satan
- pay Satan 30 pieces of silver

6. Lent is the time when many Christians give up something they enjoy eating in order to learn more about themselves and how to live a life closer to the example of Jesus. This is called:

- fasting
- binging
- whining

7. Lent is the time when many Christians give to a good cause the money they do not spend on food which they stop eating. Giving away money in this way is called:

- offering
- begging
- charity

8. One of the ways to learn about how God wants us to live is to pray; Lent is a time for prayer – but it doesn't have to be limited to that time. The special prayer which Jesus taught his followers is called:

- The Our Father
- The Lent prayer
- The Profession of Faith

FAMILY TIME

Looking to do something special with your family this Lent to help deepen your faith and be more mission-minded? Consider setting some time aside on one evening for a "hunger meal."

A hunger meal can be light soup with a small portion of rice or vegetables, or simply some bread and water. There is no dessert. Whatever your family chooses, be aware that the meal should call to mind the suffering of the world's poorest families – those who often go hungry. After offering a prayer of thanksgiving, take time to eat and enjoy each other's company. Allow some time for a Scripture reading and reflection / discussion. Consider one of the following passages:

• James 2:1-26 • Matthew 5:1-11 • John 13:31-38

Conclude your family time with a simple prayer thanking God for the gifts you have received and asking Him to give your family grace and courage to be able to share what you have with others.



DID YOU KNOW?

Ancient Egyptians used to play a game very similar to today's bowling. According to the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame, British anthropologist, Sir Flinders Petrie, discovered in the 1930s a collection of objects in a grave in Egypt that appeared to him to have been used for a crude form of bowling.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN EGYPT

According to an article published online by the Catholic Education Resource Center (<http://catholiceducation.org/articles/religion/re0804.html>), the Egyptian Church was founded by the Apostle Mark — a Gospel writer and disciple of Peter — martyred around 63 A.D. The first Church to develop a strong centralized hierarchy, the succession from Mark continues to this day. The term Coptic is Arabic, derived from the Greek word for Egyptian. Interestingly enough, the Alexandrian patriarch is the only other patriarch to have the title of pope, and until the Council of Chalcedon, the see of Mark was second in primacy after Rome.

After the Arab invasion in 641, the Coptic Church went into decline. Islamic rule brought persecution as well as some periods of relative freedom. The Church has continued to grow, despite recent attacks by Islamic militants and the exodus of those faithful looking for a better life in the West.

Outside Egypt, the largest concentration of Coptic Christians in America are in Los Angeles, New Jersey, New York, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Houston and Cleveland.

