

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

MAY 2021 RESOURCE

MARY AND JOSEPH, ONE FAMILY IN MISSION



In the previous *MCA Mission Resource*, we focused on Saint Joseph, in this *special year* dedicated to him and his qualities as a faithful, obedient servant of God, father and husband that made him *Missionary*.

During the month of May we honor Mary, perhaps the *FIRST Missionary*, who from the first word, *her FIAT*, she accepted God's invitation to be the

Mother of our Lord, Jesus. This showed courage, resilience, compassion and fortitude. All of which are qualities of a *great Missionary Disciple*.

In this resource, we will explore not only Mary, but how the Holy Family can inspire us and our families to be stewards of Christ, spreading the good news of the Gospel to all we encounter. It is important that we not only aspire to be Missionaries on our own, but encourage others, especially our families and our loved ones, just as the Holy Family did as *One Family in Mission*.

Throughout the world, Missionaries strive to take care of the families and children they serve, show them by example, how to take care of one another and to help grow the faith and become Disciples of Christ. Families in Mission lands take different shapes and have different homes, incomes and experiences.



A Father in Malawi transporting his wife and child... to Mass!



MCA gives children and their families here an opportunity to help these families, who are most in need of our compassion and resource. May we accept and say **Yes!** to the Lord's mandate . . . to go and make *Disciples of all nations*.

Say **Yes!** to His invitation, as Mary did and help our Missionaries provide the much needed prayer, material support and humanitarian relief to families all around the globe.

How can you inspire your students & their families to say **Yes! and do more to help families in the Missions?**

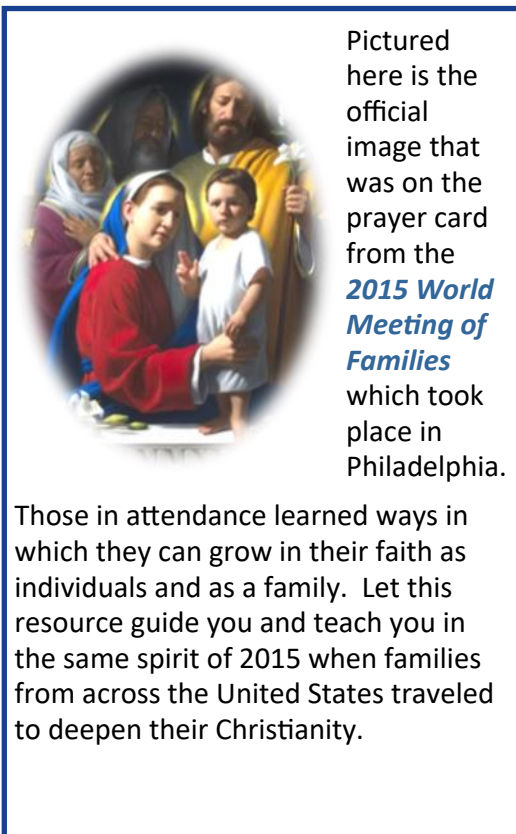
MISSION RESOURCES to GROW AS A MISSIONARY FAMILY

FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS:

- † Introduction to Resource and Mission Trivia [Page 2]
- † Activities for Mother's Day and Father's Day [Page 3-5]
- † Images of the Blessed Mother from the Missions Activity [Page 6]
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FOR SECONDARY & HIGH SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS:

- † You can read Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter about the Year of Saint Joseph [HERE](#) and more details from the Vatican [HERE](#).
- † Remember daily the Pope's Prayer intentions for the Month of May: *Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.*
- † **MISSIO UK** offered a *Mary: Model of Missionaries* workshop found [HERE](#). Explore with your classroom the key points of this workshop, learning more about the Blessed Mother's qualities as a Missionary.



Pictured here is the official image that was on the prayer card from the **2015 World Meeting of Families** which took place in Philadelphia.

Those in attendance learned ways in which they can grow in their faith as individuals and as a family. Let this resource guide you and teach you in the same spirit of 2015 when families from across the United States traveled to deepen their Christianity.

TRIVIA TIME

TEST YOUR MISSION KNOW HOW

- How Many Dioceses world-wide does MCA and the *Pontifical Mission Societies* support?
- Who are the Patron and the Patroness of the Missions?
- Who is the foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith [Hint: the Societies will be celebrating the 200 year anniversary of its founding next year!]

Email the answers to MCA@archphila.org to receive a **World Mission Rosary!**

Answers revealed in next Mission Resource

“HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, SO THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG IN THE LAND THE LORD, YOUR GOD, IS GIVING YOU.” - Exodus 20:12

During the Months of May and June, we take time to recognize our Mothers and Fathers.
Take these activities home to do with your parents on their special days!

MOTHER'S DAY

Create your own Marian shrine and then pray this prayer with your Mom! Cut out the activity on next page.

Prayer for Mothers

*Mary, Mother of God
and our Mother,
pray for all Mothers,
so that they will be able
to fulfill their maternal responsibilities.*

*Help them to be lovers and nurturers of
all human life from the moment of conception
until natural death, all the while being examples
for their own children.*

*Pray for their children, so that they, too,
will be faithful followers of your Son.*

*We pray for our Mothers,
who have given us life and love,
that we may show them reverence and love.*

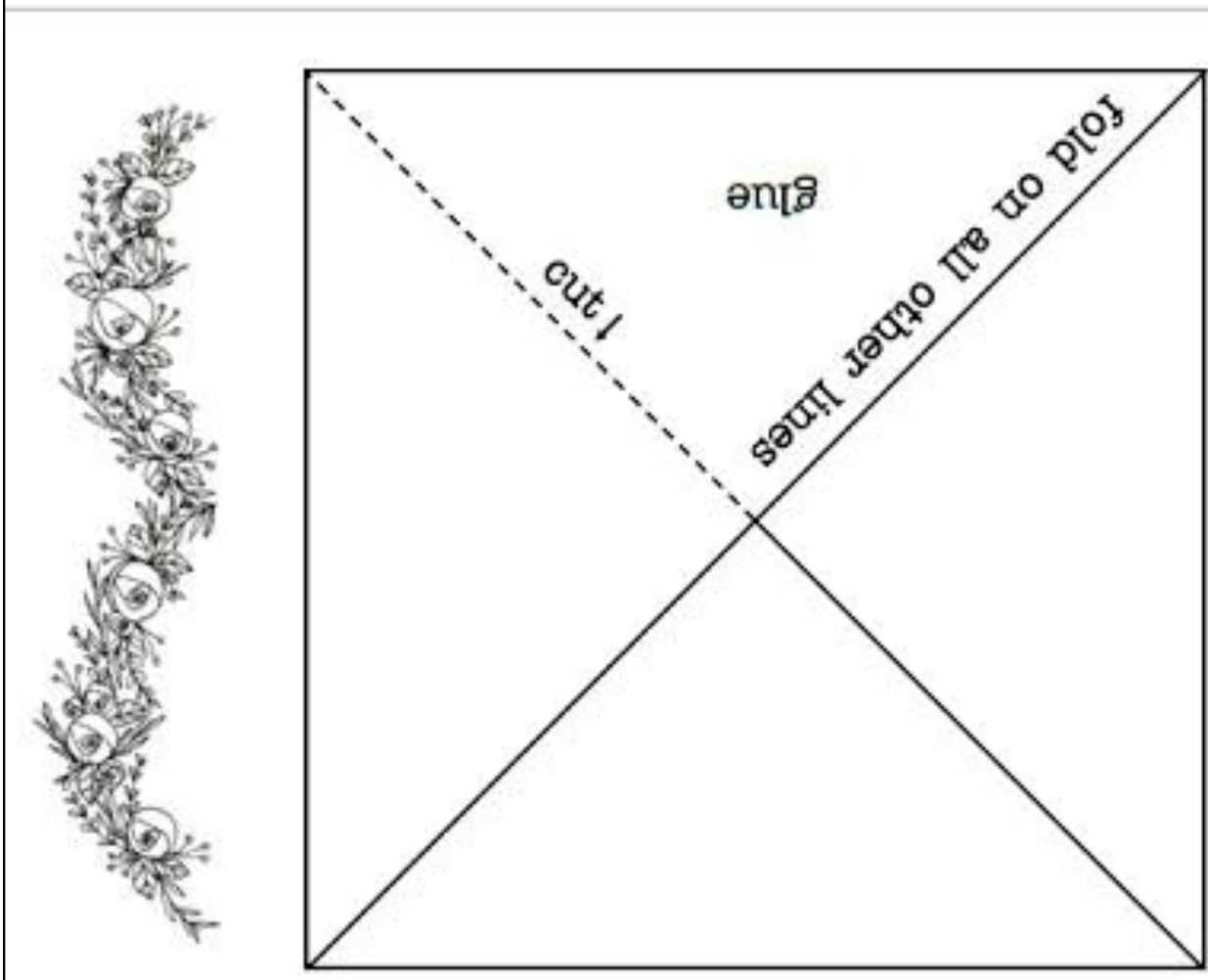
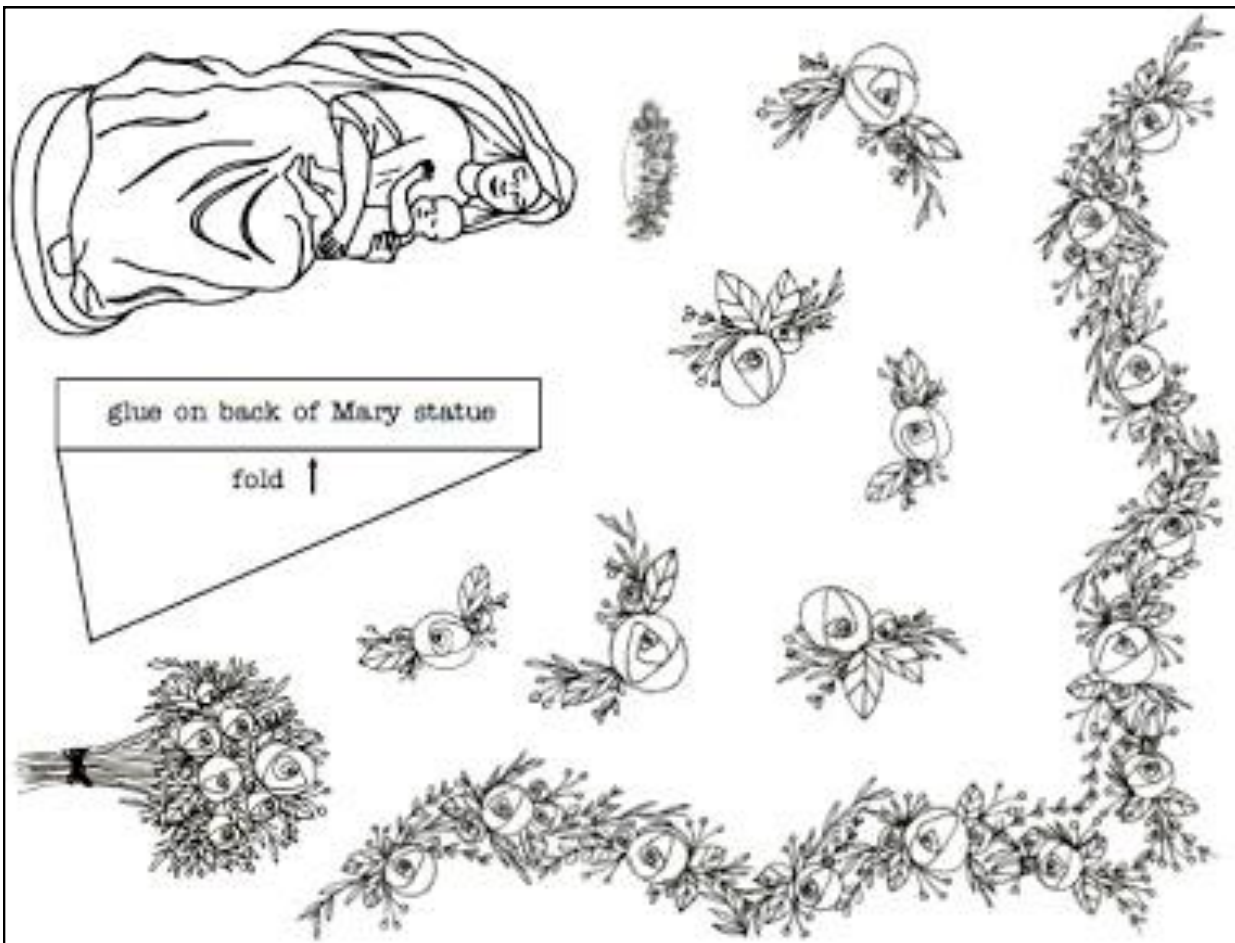
*We pray for Mothers, who have lost a child through
death, that their faith may give them hope and
their family and friends, support and console them.*

*We pray for Mothers who have died,
that God may bring them
into the joy of His kingdom*

*We offer these prayers through Christ, our Lord
and your Son, in union with the Holy Spirit,
one God forever and ever.*

Amen.





FATHER'S DAY

Write in the circles ways in which these important biblical fathers provided good examples for their children and others, and how your Dad, and God the Father provides for you! Have your parents help you with some of the biblical figures.

GOD, THE FATHER

SAINT JOSEPH

YOUR FATHER

ADAM

JACOB

ABRAHAM

NOAH

KING DAVID

MOSES

See the different portraits of Mary from mission areas of the World Mission Rosary, Pray one *"Hail Mary"* each week in May for each Mission area. World Mission Rosary.



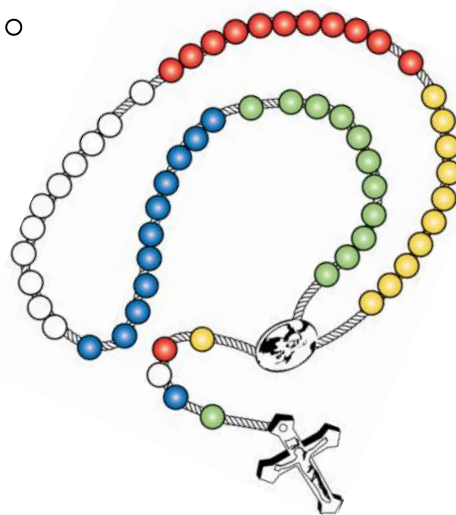
◦Our Lady of Czestochowa◦
Poland◦Europe



•Our Lady of Aparecida•
Brazil•The Americas



•Our Lady of La Vang•
Vietnam•Asia



•Our Lady of Kamalen•
Guam•Oceania



•Our Lady of Kibeho•
Rwanda•Africa

Classroom Activity

Have the students work in small groups to discuss the differences they see in these images of the Blessed Mother. Students can also research more images of the Blessed Mother online from Mission Lands that aren't shown here. Compare and Contrast the differences and similarities from continent to continent!

Saint Spotlight: Saint Maria Bernarda Butler

Missionary Saint and Foundress, Saint Maria

Maria was born to a farm family and had a very happy childhood in Switzerland. She loved nature and learning. When she made her First Communion, her family was pleased by her strong commitment to her faith and spirituality.

At fourteen, Maria was engaged to be married. She heard her first call of Christ. She broke off the engagement and turned to life of prayer. Later, she would say, *"The Holy Spirit taught me to adore, praise, bless and give thanks to Jesus in the tabernacle at all times, even at work and in real life."*

At nineteen, Maria found a place among the Capuchins at the convent of *Mary Help of Sinners*. She rose quickly to become a Novice Mistress and then its Superior. In June 1888, Maria received an urgent invitation from the Bishop of Portoviejo, Ecuador, a region with a severe shortage of priests. He asked her **to be Missionary** to the people of his Diocese. Maria, with six of her Sisters, went and took care of the poor, the sick and the families—teaching God's Word and of His Hope. In a short time, Maria founded a New Congregation, the **Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary, Help of Sinners**. Young women began to join them.

When anti-clerical persecutions flared, Maria and her sisters fled Ecuador for Cartagena, Colombia, where she established a base of operations at a women's hospital. She served the poor and the indigent of the city for twenty-nine years. In 1924, Sister Mary Bernard died at the age of 74. She had spent 38 years as a Missionary and had never returned to her beloved homeland.

Upon her death, she was immediately recognized as a Saint. **Maria was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008 for her Missionary zeal and devotion.** Her Sisters went on to serve in three continents and today the Sisters continue their work in schools, colleges, kindergartens, hospitals, nursing homes in Switzerland, Colombia, Brazil, Austria, Liechtenstein, Italy and some African countries.



Feast Day: May 19th

Patron of: Franciscan Missionary Sisters

Birth: May 28, 1848

Death: May 19, 1924

Eternal Father through the intercession of Saint Maria Bernarda Butler. Help me to lift my daily works to you in a prayer of praise.

REFLECTION: Saint Maria felt called to the Church at a very young age. She made a bold and brave decision to follow her heart. How old are you and do you feel a sense of vocation to be traveling Missionary?

Mission Focus: Families in the Missions

In the Virgin Mary who goes to visit her relative Elizabeth, we recognize the true meaning and the way of the Church herself. The Church is Missionary by nature, called to proclaim the Gospel everywhere and always. Mary's is a true Missionary journey . . . one that leads her far from home, leading her into the world, in places foreign to her daily activities; it makes her reach, in a sense, to the very ends of where she can reach."

Pope Benedict XVI, Agenzia

In the 1,111 dioceses that **MCA** and the **Pontifical Mission Societies** supports, there are countless families in need of life's necessities, health care and financial assistance.



Seeing the people they serve in need, and knowing that they are called to treat everyone as they would like to be treated, tugs at the hearts of Missionaries world-wide. They are moved by the Holy Spirit to go beyond their daily concerns offer themselves – to provide for those that lack the resources to help themselves and come to know and to believe in Jesus Christ.

Pope Benedict in his passage above depicts Mary as inspiration for Missionaries. Like her, Missionaries journey through life, to places unfamiliar, called to spread the Word of the Gospel. Relying on just courage, and faith, so many are moved help these families most in need.

Pictured here are several families living in the Missions. As members of the **Missionary Childhood Association [MCA]**, you are asked to pray and sacrifice for these families that are just like yours. Be a Model Missionary just like Mary!

During the pandemic, families in the US bonded like they never bonded before; playing board games, eating together during meal time, sharing computers for virtual learning and work and so much more.

This is a very different experience for families in Mission lands—many Mission children eat one meal a day, which is provided at school. **With all of our blessings, can you help families that are less fortunate?**

Brother Patrick Njuguna Ngugi with his Brother of Saint Joseph is helping combat the pandemic and food shortages in Kenya. They need emergency food rations and sanitation items. Though there are hand washing points in strategic locations, distributing soap would help ensure the people always wash their hands.



Can YOUR family make sacrifices that can directly help families like yours in the Missions?

- + \$10 helps provide milk for a family
- + \$20 buys rice for a families' dinner
- + \$25 goes towards more hand washing stations





Prayer to the Holy Family

Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary, bless our family.

Graciously inspire in us the unity, peace and mutual love that you found in your own family in the little town of Nazareth.

Mary, Mother of Jesus and Our Mother, nourish our family with your faith and your love. Keep us close to your Son, Jesus, in all our sorrows and joys.

Joseph, Foster-father to Jesus, guardian and spouse of Mary, keep our family safe from harm.

Help us in all times of discouragement or anxiety.

Holy Family of Nazareth, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass.

May we always have God at the center of our hearts and homes until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with you.

Amen.

