












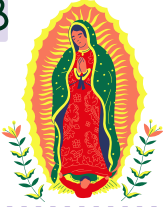



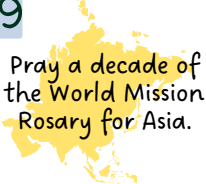




MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD'S TEACHER'S TOOLBOX ~ MAY 2026

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Short reflections on Sunday's Gospel</p> | <p>Pray these Mission Monday meditations with your students</p> | <p>A little help from Heaven's Heroes - the saints *Inspired by "365 Saints" by Koenig-Bricker</p> |  |  | <p>1 Pray a decade of the World Mission Rosary for Africa.</p>  | <p>2 Tomorrow is National Lemonade Day! Inspire your students to run a lemonade stand next weekend. All proceeds go to the missions!</p>  |
| <p>3 John 14:1-12 "No one comes to the Father except through me." What other people or paths am I tempted to follow? Do they guide me to Heaven or steer me away from it?</p> | <p>4 Lord, many children will make their 1st Holy Communion this May. May the Eucharist fuel them to be missionaries to all people near and far every day.</p> | <p>5 St. Philp~ At the Last Supper, he asked Jesus to show him who God is. Discuss: Without seeing Jesus, in what ways do we know He is present? Missionaries help children answer the same question.</p> | <p>6 May is the month of Mary. Discuss: As I pray my daily Hail Mary for the missions, how does she help me hear Jesus' voice?</p>  | <p>7 Use the MCA Country of the Month lesson plan: Philippines!</p>  | <p>8 Pray a decade of the World Mission Rosary for Europe.</p>  | <p>9 Tomorrow is Mother's Day! Thank all the mother figures in your life. May Our Blessed Mother, bring all orphaned children to Jesus.</p>  |
| <p>10 John 14:15-21 Although I have never seen Jesus in person, in what ways do I know that He is alive and working in my life? Share this with someone who needs to hear it.</p> | <p>11 Use MCA's Prayer Service today: Missionary Musings with Mary!</p>  | <p>12 St. Brendan An angel appeared to him to explain God's will for his monastery. Discuss: Angels gather at the altar at every Mass. Keep them busy by offering your personal prayers and those for the missions to take to God.</p> | <p>13 Before Jesus' returned to heaven, He told us to "Go and make disciples of all nations." (Mt 28:19). Discuss: How do MCA members do this through daily prayer and sacrifice?</p> | <p>14 Ascension Thursday! Which Mass will you attend?</p>  | <p>15 Pray a decade of the World Mission Rosary for Oceania.</p>  | <p>16 Today is Nickel day! Search under the couch and in your pockets for spare change. Add them to your classroom mission bank!</p> |
| <p>17 John 17:1-11a Re-read today's passage. How does Jesus define eternal life? Does this differ from how the world defines it?</p> | <p>18 Good morning, Jesus ~ I give my entire day to You. May I honor You in all that I think, say, and do so that I may bring Your children closer to You.</p> | <p>19 St. Vincent of Lerins He wrote a book, <i>Commonitorium</i>. This book was his private space where he reflected on his faith and sorted truth from falsehood. Discuss: Where can I make a quiet prayer space at home for my thoughts to flow?</p> | <p>20 Cuba celebrates 124 yrs of independence from the US today! Ask students to earn \$124 as a class for children in the missions.</p>  | <p>21 One month from today is the first day of summer! Children in the missions need help beyond the school year. As a class, brainstorm ways to pray and sacrifice for the missions this summer.</p> | <p>22 Pray a decade of the World Mission Rosary for the Americas.</p>  | <p>23</p>  |
| <p>24 John 20:19-23 "As the Father has sent me, SO I SEND YOU." This makes the Church MISSIONARY!</p> | <p>25 Memorial Day!</p>  | <p>26 Use MCA's Saint of the Month! Lesson Plan: Venerable Fulton Sheen</p>  | <p>27 The "Butterfly Peace Garden" is a clinic in Sri Lanka that heals child soldiers. Ask students to offer a quarter for each butterfly seen this season to share the peace of Christ with children in war zones.</p> | <p>28</p>  | <p>29 Pray a decade of the World Mission Rosary for Asia.</p>  | <p>30 Please send a check of all your students' sacrifices this year to the Archdiocese's Office of Missions. The children in the missions thank you!</p> |

Pentecost!



Philippines



Welcome to the Philippines, a country located in southeast Asia. The country is made up of over 7,000 islands!



Its name comes from the Spanish explorers who named the island country after King Philip of Spain.

The country covers an area slightly larger than the state of Texas. The population in the Philippines, however, is over four times the amount of people who live in Texas. The Philippines is the seventh most populated country in Asia and the twelfth in the world. The capital city is Manila.



The country sits on the western edge of the Pacific Ocean in the "Ring of Fire", where there are active volcanic eruptions. The Philippines experience about 20 earthquakes per day, but most are too weak to cause damage.

Due to the country's island topography, most Filipinos live where the land is suitable for farming: northwest and southcentral Luzon and the island of Cebu (see map above).

Filipinos speak two official languages: Filipino (based on Tagalog) and English. The Christian faith was introduced by missionaries in the late 1800's, so about 83% of Filipinos are Catholic. About 5% are Muslim, and the remaining population either practices a different branch of Christianity or has no faith at all.

The Philippines are home to many groups of indigenous (native) children, who are often neglected by society. Missionaries are at work addressing their personal needs and helping them find ways to use their cultural practices to celebrate the gift of Jesus' love.



Cotabato, Philippines

Cotabato, which is located in the southern part of the Philippines on the island of Mindanao (see map to the right), is home to many groups of indigenous people, including the Manobo. Although there are multiple Manobo tribes, they are often split into two distinct groups: the Karagatan and Dulangan. The Karagatan Manobo people live close to the coast, whereas the Dulangan Manobo people live in the mountains.



Some of the Dulangan Manobo people have begun to adopt Filipino and Christian beliefs. However, others prefer their traditional way of life to honor their ancestry. Due to cross cultural misunderstandings, society often overlooks them and refuses to address basic necessities, such as healthcare and education.

Thanks to the heartfelt prayers and sacrifices of MCA members worldwide, MCA gifted \$2,500 to the Dulangan Manobo hostel for girls in Cotabato. The girls at the hostel come from poor families who live too far from any local schools. Rather than wasting multiple hours to walk to school, parents keep their girls home to help prepare meals and take care of the home. When girls are not educated, they have a difficult time becoming active members society and are less likely to prioritize education when they start their own families.



The hostel is run by the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions. There is space for 60 girls to attend school. Those who go above and beyond in the classroom are selected to take advanced preparatory classes in hopes of being accepted into university one day.

In addition to class, the sisters accompany the girls in their daily lives. Through conversation and observation, the sisters learn what aspects of Dulangan culture are particularly important to the girls. They find opportunities for the girls to experience the life changing power of Jesus' love and to desire to live a life pleasing to Him. Sometimes it is through prayer or scripture, and at other times the girls may discover Jesus through the constant support of the sisters.

This May, the month of Mary, Queen of the Missions, pray a Hail Mary for ALL indigenous children in the missions to be treated with dignity. Pray for missionaries who serve people in places deeply tied to ancestry, that they may also discover an identity as Jesus' beloved sons and daughters. Turn your prayer into action! What extra chores or sacrifices will you make at home this month in honor of the missions?

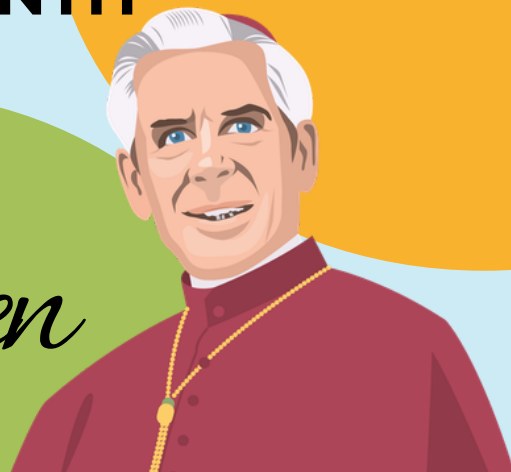


Filipino children at their MCA and religious education meeting. At last report, they raised \$156,015.67 for MCA!

SAINT OF THE MONTH



Venerable Fulton Sheen



Heaven's Heroes: growing in faith with a little help from the saints

This month, we are inspired by

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

Birthday

May 8, 1895

To be beatified:

September 24, 2026 in St. Louis, Missouri

Catholics are encouraged to ask the saints, blessed, and venerable people for their intercession while praying to God.

Reading about their lives can serve as inspiration to us for our daily lives.

May the following lesson, **follow-up questions, prayer, and activities** bring us closer to Jesus and help us to grow as missionary disciples.

Goals of the Lesson:

- To inspire children to have a love for saints
- To help students understand that we are all called to holiness
- To teach children to turn to saints in prayer

Materials Needed:

- This lesson plan
- A map or globe

It may be helpful to remind students that a saint is a person who lived their lives in a way that honored Jesus' teaching and by doing so, taught others about Him. Also, it is important for them to know that it is not only those whom the Church has proclaimed a saint who are in Heaven. The official recognition simply allows us to venerate them.

BEFORE YOU READ

Prepare students for the story of Fulton Sheen by introducing the new places, vocabulary, and unfamiliar concepts.

Concepts to understand:

- What does it mean to be called "venerable?"
- What does it mean to be beatified?

Find these places on a map.

- South Africa
- Kenya
- Malawi

Venerable Fulton Sheen



May I find the message God would like me to hear in the life of Venerable Fulton Sheen.

Peter John Sheen was born on May 8, 1895. He was the oldest of the four sons of Delia and Newton Sheen. His “nickname” soon became his mother’s maiden name—Fulton. He would be called that throughout his lifetime. Fulton was an excellent student during his long educational career. He earned two doctorate degrees—one in sacred theology (the study of God and His relationship to the world) and one in philosophy. His degree in philosophy earned him an award from his university in Belgium that no American had ever won.

Fulton Sheen became a priest in 1919 and began work as an assistant to a pastor in London while teaching theology. He was called back to his hometown of Peoria, Illinois in 1926 to serve as a parish priest. He served for just nine months before being assigned to teach at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

In 1929, Sheen gave a famous speech to the National Catholic Education Association in which he encouraged Catholic School teachers to lead a renewal of our faith. Sheen felt strongly that our belief in God should be visible to people in our daily lives—in the way we act and speak—and not reserved just for Sundays when we worship. He said, “If you don’t behave as you believe, you will end by believing as you behave.”

1951 was a big year for Sheen - he was ordained an Auxiliary Bishop of New York and began a

television career with a show called Life is Worth Living. He began each show with the same phrase; “Peace be to you.” Fan letters poured in at a rate of about 8,500 a week! In 1953, Bishop Sheen won an Emmy Award for “Most Outstanding (TV) Personality.” In his acceptance speech, Sheen said, “I’d like to thank my writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John!” He took every opportunity to remind people of the faith.

Sheen was credited with helping many famous people to convert to Catholicism in his time—you could say he was an early “influencer”!

In 1951, Sheen also started the World Mission Rosary as a powerful tool to pray for people in the missions who have not heard Jesus’ name. The World Mission Rosary is distinct from a standard rosary because of the colors of its decades. Each one is different and stands for a unique part of the world. **Green** is for the grasslands of Africa, **red** is for the fire of the faith that missionaries brought to the Americas, **white** is for Europe - the seat of the Holy Father, **blue** is for the color of the Pacific that surrounds the islands of Oceania, and **yellow** is for the sunrise of the east over Asia. Sheen famously said, “When the World Mission Rosary is completed, one has embraced all continents in prayer.”

In 1958, Bishop Sheen was named as the National Director of The Society for the Propagation of the Faith—the adult version of the Missionary Childhood Association.

Venerable Fulton Sheen



He visited the missions in South Africa, Kenya, and Malawi. He called the missions, "the greatest love of my life." He left that position when he was appointed Bishop of Rochester, New York in 1966.

On October 15, 1969, Sheen was made an honorary Archbishop and retired from ministry, although he continued his writing. Ten years later, when Saint John Paul II visited New York, he famously embraced a frail Archbishop Sheen on the steps of Saint Patrick's Cathedral and told Sheen, "You have written and spoken well of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are a loyal son of the Church."

Sheen died in 1979 during his daily adoration time in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Recently, it was announced that Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen will be beatified on September 24th, 2026 in Saint Louis, Missouri!

Leading up to his beatification, let us celebrate Venerable Fulton Sheen's legacy by recommitting ourselves to intentional prayers for the missions. As you see in the photos below, the World Mission Rosary is prayed worldwide - including people in the missions!



Fulton Sheen in Sasolburg, South Africa.



Fulton Sheen in Eldoret, Kenya

In Eldoret, Kenya, Archbishop Sheen stands next to a young African bishop, Kenya's first, who is now Maurice Cardinal Ottunga, Archbishop of Nairobi. (Yves Tourigny, W.F.)



Croatia



Sri Lanka

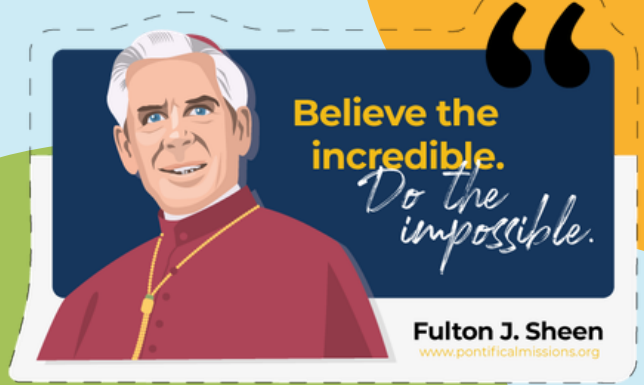


Malawi



U.S.A

Venerable Fulton Sheen



Pray

Dear God, you gave Archbishop Sheen the gifts of communication and dedication to a life of publicly spreading the faith. Help me to live my faith publicly every day and to use my special talents in service to the missions, which were Fulton Sheen's "greatest love." Amen.

Think

1. Fulton Sheen said, "If you don't behave as you believe, you will end by believing as you behave." As a class, discuss what this means.
2. Do I sometimes feel the need to hide my faith? Why? Brainstorm a list of ways to live out your faith publicly every day (Ex: praying "Grace" before mealtime).
3. Are there any Catholic people in my life today that I respect? How do they inspire me to deepen my relationship with Jesus?
4. Fulton Sheen called the missions his "greatest love." What about the missions touches your heart? Let that lead you to deeper prayer and sacrifice for children in the missions.

Act

All students: Fulton Sheen started the World Mission Rosary in 1951 as a way to pray for the whole world. Organize a World Mission Rosary Dress Down Day for your class. Assign a color of the WMR to each class or student to wear that day. Charge them \$1 for the missions to do it, then come together and pray the WMR. Print out the WMR placemat (on following page) explaining the colors and how to say the WMR.

GO! : Send bouquets of blessings to the missions this May! If you don't have an MCA Mite Box, make your own mission bank from a shoebox, plastic jar, or can. Many children in the missions go without the basics of education that Fulton Sheen cherished. Thank God for your school and teachers and make a small sacrifice for mission children into your classroom mission bank.

Green is for the forests and grasslands of Africa.

Blue is for the sea surrounding the Pacific Islands of Oceania.

White is for Europe, home of the Holy Father who bridges Heaven and Earth, the Christian and non-Christian world.

Red is for the fire of the faith that Missionaries brought to North and South America.

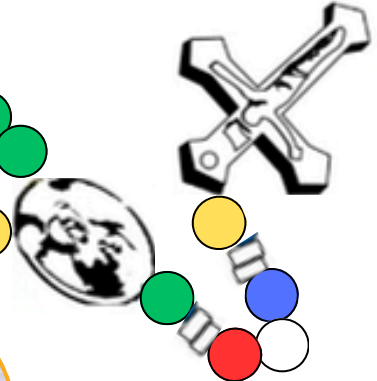
Yellow is for the morning light of the east in Asia.



The World Mission Rosary

Started in 1951 by Fulton Sheen.

Embrace the whole world in prayer.



MCA Prayer Activity All Ages



Missionary Musings with Mary

Goal: To remind students that May is the month of Mary - a time when many Catholics turn to Mary to ask for her intercession. Just as a child listens to his mother, so will Jesus to Mary. We can ask Our Blessed Mother to guide us to her Son, Jesus, so that we may recognize and respond to what He calls us to do, especially as missionaries.

Materials Needed: This prayer service, printed for individuals or projected onto a smart board, readers for each country, a globe to find each of the places.

Leader: We will take a special “trip” around the world to see how Mary is presented in different countries. All humans are made in the image and likeness of God, which means people from different cultures will portray Mary and Jesus with their local features. For each country, we will pray for the children in the missions and ask the Blessed Mother to intercede for us.

Uganda



Reader 1: In Tororo, Uganda, most people are farmers. They grow all of their own food and depend on the labor of their children to achieve a nutritious harvest. This means many children do not go to school. Father Cyril, who runs the Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) in Tororo, sees the impact that local mission schools have on communities. With more local schools, students don't need to walk as far and parents can send their children for at least half a day during the busier seasons. By educating children, especially girls, they are more likely to make it a priority for their young so that one day 100% of the population in Uganda is educated.

Reader 2: We pray that ALL children in Africa are given the chance to develop the gifts that God has blessed them with.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace...

Papua New Guinea



Reader 3: Agnes is fourteen years old. She is a student at Mary, Mother of God School in the Southern Highland Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG). MCA recently funded a bore hole for clean running water in the school bathrooms. Many girls who are Agnes' age drop out of school due to the lack of bathrooms. Girls who drop out of school often get married and have kids in their early teens.

Reader 4: Through the waters of our baptism, may we extend the hand of Christ to all children in Oceania in need of clean water. May our prayers give them the chance to live out Jesus' plan for their lives.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace...



Haiti

Reader 5: Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere. Children live in huts made from sticks and sheets of metal they find in garbage piles. Missionaries risk their lives to spread the Gospel while violent gangs control the country. One missionary group, called “Hands Together”, teaches children to look for Jesus in the small daily miracles. With Christ in their hearts, these children are the biggest hope in creating a peaceful future for the country.



Reader 6: We pray that ALL children in the Americas understand that no matter the inhumane situations in which they may find themselves, they have dignity because they are sons and daughters of Jesus.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace...

Vietnam

Reader 7: 100 million people live in Vietnam. About 7 million (7%) are Catholic. Of those, about 500,000 children are active in the Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement (TNTT), through which they become MCA members! Thanks to prayers and sacrifices from MCA members worldwide, children in Vietnam attend weekly adoration and Bible Study to learn about the miracle of the Eucharist. They take leadership in their local parishes as readers, altar servers, and organizing children’s Masses. As witnesses to the depth of Jesus’ love on the cross, these children transform the way they live their life for Him and invite others to do the same.

Reader 8: We pray that ALL children in Asia, especially those living under oppression and fear, find comfort in Jesus’s saving love and trust in His constant presence.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace...



*Photo and story credit: Fall 2025 edition of Mission Magazine, Ines San Martin

Closing Prayer

Leader: Lord Jesus, we ask that You hear all of our prayers and that they may lead to faith-filled action.

All: Amen.

Leader: Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, patroness of the missions...

All: Pray for us!

Leader: Saint Francis Xavier, patron of the missions...

All: Pray for us!