

By our baptism in a missionary Church, we are all missionaries!

"Convinced that children can be a spiritual and social force for a real transformation of the world, this Society aims at creating a movement of Christian children committed to helping other children."

- Pontifical Mission Societies Statute, 1-13



Our Goals as the Missionary Childhood Association

We aim to strengthen our young church through the witness of spiritual and material generosity. To foster a missionary spirit of MCA members who will continue to proclaim the good news as adults.

- In developing their **spirituality** of prayer for the good of others, the children pray for other children and for the spread of the Gospel message.
- Through **material generosity**, MCA raises children's awareness of their neighbor's needs and instills the value and power of solidarity and reciprocal support. This teaches them that all human beings deserve to live worthily as children of God.
- By fostering a missionary spirit in children, it guides them throughout their lives, to be **missionary witnesses**.

Help create Missionary Witnesses! Bring MCA Awareness to your Parish or School.

Free information, guidance and Mission-related activities and materials are available for Schools or Parishes wishing to become involved in the Missionary Childhood Association Program.

Contact Us

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Coming in October:

The month of October is Mission Month! Join us for our **annual MCA Youth Appreciation Mass** held annually at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Downtown L.A. **For more information and to RSVP your attendance, please visit www.missionsLA.org**



MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION



"The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father."

Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity
(Second Vatican Council, 1965)



What is the Missionary Childhood Association?

The Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) is one of the Pontifical Mission Societies that operates in every diocese of the world under papal statute: Pontifical Mission Societies Statute, 1-13.

Through this Society, the Holy Father elicits the zeal, love and generosity of students to share their faith with young people in more than 1,110 mission dioceses throughout the world. MCA offers the opportunity for young people to share the Good News of God's love and salvation. Children learn about their brothers and sisters in mission countries—children just like them. They discover that their own prayers, personal sacrifices, and financial help make a faith-filled difference for their mission family—and make them missionaries today.

MCA helps young Catholics to become more aware and appreciative of the multicultural dimension of the Church. It will ideally stress the connection between prayer, reflection and action. It should motivate youth to reject the values of the culture (individualism and materialism) and to appreciate and implement the values of Jesus (compassion and generosity).

How are we different from other Outreach programs?

Many local charities and outreach programs exist to relieve the pressing needs of the poor and marginalized in our country and abroad. Catholic students respond with love and generosity to these noteworthy projects. However, MCA programs are not in competition with other social service programs.

MCA is unique to other organizations that assist children in that its primary aim is to encourage children to share their faith with children in the developing world through their prayers, personal sacrifices and financial offerings.

MCA focuses on the spread of the Gospel and the importance of prayer, and helps to instill in our young people a desire to share their faith and the healing message of Jesus with other children who need it most in missionary lands. This is all in response to the call we receive at our baptism to be missionaries.



A Brief History...

The Association was founded by **Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson**. He was born of nobility in France, and as a youngster, he was deeply concerned about the plight of unwanted infants abandoned by their parents in China, a practice that was prevalent in that country during the early 19th century. As a

young priest, he requested permission to be sent to China where he planned to devote his life to alleviating any condition of child abuse. His request was denied. Later, he again appealed to the Missionary Father for an appointment to China. Instead, he was urged to apply his energy and zeal to home mission services in France. The welfare and education of mission children remained foremost in his mind. After extensive discussions with missionaries and Pauline Jaricot, foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Bishop de Forbin-Janson conceived the idea of an organization made up of children in Christian countries helping, through prayers and alms, these abandoned children of China.

Although he was denied being a travelling missionary to China he still practiced his call to be a missionary, right where he was.

In 1843, he formally organized his "**children helping children**" society and called it the Holy Childhood Association. Members were asked to pray a daily Hail Mary for mission children and contribute one penny in monthly dues which would be given in direct aid to assist those children.

The movement flourished and spread to other countries, arriving in the United States in 1846. It enjoyed papal approval from its inception, and was formally designated a Pontifical Association in 1926. Thereby designating it as the Holy See's official agency for mission for children – providing substantial support for children's most basic human needs while offering them hope in the person of Jesus Christ. Its name was changed to **Missionary Childhood Association** in 2011 to closer align its identity with the Society worldwide. Today, children in over 110 countries are being helped through the prayers and sacrifices of Missionary Childhood members throughout the world.

How are contributions to MCA distributed?

Contributions to MCA are allocated to mission dioceses throughout the world according to need. Once each year, National Directors of the world's Pontifical Mission Societies meet in Rome to review requests for funding from mission dioceses throughout the world.

This system of allocating funds helps to ensure that aid is distributed fairly and that those who are most desperately in need receive enough support.

Today, through our network of national directors and local churches in 1,150 dioceses throughout the Developing World – including those in the most remote areas of the world – the Pontifical Mission Societies help support, day in and day out: 9,000 clinics caring for the sick and the dying; 10,000 orphanages providing a place of safety and shelter; 12,000 schools educating children in some of the poorest parts of the world; 9,000 religious sisters and brothers in formation programs and 80,000 seminarians in training for the priesthood.

This is all concrete proof that through solidarity and missionary commitment, young children can achieve great things.

Who may participate in MCA?

Even though the Pontifical Society of the Missionary Childhood Association pertains principally to children and adolescents who are its real members, the message it proclaims is addressed to all those who wish to collaborate. **All adults who are helping form children in our society: parents and family, teachers, catechists, and MCA Mission Moderators are vital in the formation of child missionaries.** Through their witness, preparation and dedication they help form the little missionaries to the values of love, solidarity, and sharing.

