

Mission Magazine Discussion Guide

Spring 2009

Welcome to *MISSION* Magazine for classroom, religious education and small group use, published by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Each activity / reflection in this discussion guide corresponds to a specific article in *MISSION* Magazine and that particular publication's theme, which, for the issue written during Spring 2009, is: "Believe the Good News" — growing faith in Asia. Should you wish to be added to our distribution list or receive additional copies, please contact your diocesan mission office or the national office at 1-(800) 431-2222 or e-mail: MISSION@propfaith.org.

Cover Photo

✚ Do you have daily chores or a "to do" list that you would much rather put off for another day? Think about the little girl pictured on the cover of this issue of *MISSION*. One of her daily chores is to carry firewood to her family home high in the mountains of Nagaland in northeast India. What do you think would happen if she did not complete her task for the day?

What impact would her decision have on her family?



Take a moment to write down some of your own daily tasks. Next to each, list the names of the people served by your actions. Write a prayer of thanksgiving to God for giving you the opportunity to help others and to keep you mindful that even the simplest of tasks, when done out of love for the Lord and neighbor, can be opportunities to make a faith-filled difference for those around you.

A Message from the
National Director
(Inside Front Cover)

✦ Is there a time when you have prayed for a friend or loved one



to join the Church or come back to Christ? Discuss this experience—and the impact it had on your own faith.

✦ Have you had the experience of knowing a Religious Sister who, through her presence and service, helped you to grow in the Catholic faith? Explain.

✦ In what ways do you help “plant the seeds of the Catholic faith” in your family or community?

Planting Seeds
(Pages 2-5)

✦ What do you know of the history of your own parish or of the Catholic faith in your community? Visit your parish or local library, or go on a web quest to learn more about the founding of your faith community, and the



establishment, growth and development of your parish. See if you can find out the significance of the name of your parish church and how the demographics of your parish may have changed from its inception to the present time.

✦ Father Benny Varghese, a local priest from Nagaland, explains that Sister Velasco Gelos Guadalupe’s hopes were realized “with her prayers and God’s grace.” Discuss a time in your life when you turned to our Lord in prayer, counting on His mercy and blessings. Be specific.

✦ Imagine you are in an area where you cannot openly proclaim the “Good News” of

Jesus. Using words, illustrations and / or body language, express your Catholic faith to others in the group without making specific verbal references to the Bible or Catholic traditions / teachings—even Jesus' name. Allow each member of the group an opportunity to



participate. Discuss what the experience was like, relating it to the mission experience of Sister Guadalupe in Nagaland.

✦What does your school or parish do to help nurture local vocations? How do you nurture vocations within your own family? Discuss.

The Seeds of Faith (Pages 6-7)

✦Has there been a time in your life when you have persisted at something in the belief that one day your efforts would yield an abundant harvest? What were the results? Did your faith or prayer life have an impact on your resolve? Explain.

✦How often would you say that you allow for the events of your life to unfold within "God's time"

—if ever? What does the concept "in God's time" mean to you? Discuss. Take some time this week to reflect on the poem you have read and turn to God in prayer, especially during those moments when you are feeling delayed or rushed. Ask God to help you to appreciate every moment in time.

Mission In Life (Page 8)

✦Who is the special person in your life that "arrives on the scene when life clouds up with doubt"? Write him/her a letter of thanks, thanking God as well for his/her presence in your life.

✦Have you ever experienced a long and painful rehabilitation from an injury/accident? What role did your faith play in your recovery? Explain.

✦ In what ways are you or can you be Jesus' voice, arms, legs and heart? What special gifts has God given you that help you to proclaim His love to others? Give specific examples.

✦ Read Matthew 14: 13-21. Take a few moments for silent reflection. Then, think about a time in your life when you have "helped" the Lord to "work a miracle" - to make a difference in someone's life, even to help that person see there is always a reason to believe. Discuss.

Hope From Good News (Pages 10-11)

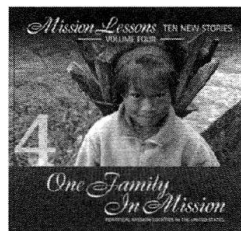
✦ Who are the "strong hands" of your parish? What makes them so effective at teaching and strengthening the faith among those with whom they work? Why do you think they dedicate themselves to the faith in this way? Think about a way in which you could offer your personal thanks to these people

for all that they do for your faith-community. Act on it!

All Are Called (Pages 12-13)

✦ Do you think that it's your job to bring the "Good News" of Jesus to others or do you think of it as something reserved for priests, Religious Sisters and Brothers, or missionaries? Explain.

Mission Lessons feature Monsignor John E. Kozar, National Director of



the Pontifical Mission Societies, telling stories from the Missions—and helping listeners to apply these lessons

for daily living. Listen to these "sixty-second moments from the Missions that teach and inspire" on your local Catholic radio station or at www.iamamissionary.org.

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