

Mission Connections: Special Catechetical Leaders Edition

Youth Connecting in Mission

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We Need One Another

It has been an intense week. The election seems to have stirred up emotions of all kinds on all sides. One thing I have heard from numerous people is how surprised they were to see how divided a nation we seem to be. Percentages look as though we are almost literally divided half-and-half. As I think about the fact that half of my neighbors, half of those I attend Mass with, half of those I pass on the streets and in the grocery store every day, half of those in my children's schools, may feel differently than I do on some things, I am reminded of something Pope Francis said in an interview on November 1st. He stated that as in all conflict, "either you dialogue or you scream."

In these days following the election (as in the days leading up to it), it feels as though social media, the news, even family members and acquaintances, have been "screaming" about these differences. Screaming so loud that sometimes it can be deafening—certainly making it hard to hear the voice of GOD amidst all the "noise."

And yet I can't help but realize the beauty in the day on which Pope Francis made his statement about conflict—it was November 1st—All Saints Day. I am struck by this contrast—the intense week in which many are pointing at and crying division, and the intense week just prior to it, in which our faith points to and cries community.

In my house, we spent All Saints night/the eve of All Souls by praying specifically with each of my children's namesakes. In doing so I was amazed to realize how much similarity I see between the little lives snuggled with me on my bed and those

lives who went before and inspired me long before my children came to be. There is a definite connections to their patrons—little did I know years ago—a connection between lives that never even knew each other.

We are a part of a Church that believes so strongly in being connected to one another that even death in this world does not stop our being a part of the community! We believe so strongly in our need for one another, that we continue to call on our community members who have gone before us, asking them to help shape our discipleship, inviting them to remain a part of our lives. And despite the differences of centuries, the separation of life and death, the division of time and space, we believe—and for two whole days of our Liturgical calendar, we *celebrate*—that we are ALL connected! No differences, no separations, no divisions. We need one other!

I pray that in this week of difficulty in our nation we may also remember the week of beauty that preceded it. I don't pretend to have the answers for how to do this perfectly, or claim to know how to bring about more connection than division in our country. But I do know how to help do it in my own heart: hugging my children more, smiling at those in the grocery store, saying a prayer for those who cut me off in traffic, shutting off social media or the evening news for a few days, reaching out in charity and seeking opportunities for encounter with those who are different than myself, telling the stories of kindness I see, choosing dialogue over screaming. Then little by little, perhaps the importance of our always-and-eternal connectedness to one another may start to "scream" louder than our divisions. This is my prayer—for you, for me, for our children, for our world!

Don't Forget:



Nov 14-18: International Education Week

Nov 17: Give to the Max Day — visit giveMN.org/organization/Mission-Office

Nov 21-25: Mission Office closed; wishing you a **Happy Thanksgiving!**

Nov 26: Happy Birthday Bishop Donald Kettler!

Dec 1: World AIDS Day

Dec 9: Mission Office Open House & Christmas sale



Give it a Try!

Try incorporating these resources, projects or activities into your ministry.



Mission Education Resources

November 14-18th is International Education Week. This is a week promoted by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, dedicated to encouraging those in education like yourselves to dig deeper into promoting the ways that learning about our world can benefit us all and prepare our young people to live and work as part of a global community! Among the many organizations that celebrate this important week, the Peace Corps encourages your participation by providing free trainings and lesson plans. Visit www.peacecorps.gov/educators/resources and search "International Education Week." You can also contact the Mission Office for further ideas, resources, speakers, etc. that can

help you do this—next week, and all year!

Activity Ideas

If you're looking for a community service idea for your class, group or community, try one related to All Saints or All Souls to emphasize the importance the church places on community and connectedness. You could send cards to those who have lost loved ones in past year, or make a "holy card" with their loved ones picture, dates and a prayer. Or give it a global feel by learning about saints from other cultures, or those whose saint-hood related to their work with mission. (Hint: Josephine Bakhita, Kateri Tekakwitha, Martin de Porres, Katharine Drexel, as well as Therese of Lisieux and Francis Xavier are a few)

Words of Wisdom: "Mission is never the fruit of a perfectly planned program or a well-organized manual. Mission is always the fruit of a life which knows what it is to be found and healed, encountered and forgiven." (Pope Francis)