

Student Activity

Compassion for those who suffer

Grades: K-2nd



Goal: This month of the missions, our Saint of the Month is Blessed Oscar Romero. He spoke for those who were marginalized and suffering. Today, COAR missionary group is continuing the work of mission he began in El Salvador by extending a helping hand to those who need it the most—the children.

Material: COAR has given us permission to share with you the lesson plans they have so your students may see how the work of this missionary group has helped many children in El Salvador. Slide show on Blessed Oscar Romero's life and work of COAR can be downloaded from the MCA website. View the PowerPoint presentation and decide what is appropriate for your grade level.

Instructions: Follow steps 1-5 with the last five slides of the PowerPoint. Read the Scripture of Matthew 25: 34-40 and reflect with them what the bible scripture means. *(Slide show was provided by COAR missionary group)*

October is the month of the missions and the rosary! What better way to celebrate our call to mission as a church and pray for the world, than by learning about the missionary legacy of Blessed Oscar Romero. On October 14, 2018 Pope Francis will be canonizing him and five others, making him a Saint. His name will be added to the list of catholic saints, that by their example teach us the meaning of loving one another as God loves us. For the Mission of evangelizing begins when we encounter the love of Christ in others.

The Mission Office in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles collaborates with the missionary group COAR (Comunidad Oscar Arnulfo Romero). They are the oldest organization to be named after him and that is still actively doing missionary work in El Salvador. Blessed Oscar Romero was the Archbishop of San Salvador at a time when the country was going through a very violent civil war. Many innocent families and their children were caught in the middle of the violence. Children would be orphaned at a very young age and would have no home or anyone to care for them. COAR has been helping children in Zaragoza, El Salvador since 1990. It offers more than 1,000 children an education from K-12th grade, foster care for 50-100 orphaned children, as well as medical and dental services to all the children.

1. Read the Scripture of Matthew 25:34-40 and reflect on the scripture with the following questions: Who do you think the person telling the story is? What did those who saw the person in the story hungry, thirsty, naked, and in prison do to help? What does Jesus mean when he says "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me"?
2. We are all one family, brothers and sisters in Christ. Created in the image of God. As children of God we all have the right to live with dignity. How are the people in the story helping their brothers and sisters in Christ? When we see others suffering we are called to treat them with compassion and love.
3. We as a church continue to help our brother and sisters in Christ to live with dignity through the missionary work of the church. Talk to your students a little about who is COAR and how it was funded.
4. Share with your students how there are 12,000 homeless children and the story of Leonel. How he arrived at COAR malnourished and loosing his hair because of it. Many children like him are in need of help.
5. Ask the students to draw: What things do kids need most? How would you feel if you did not have these things? How are you—as a member of the church—called to help?
6. COAR saw the need of the homeless children sleeping in the street and responded with love and compassion like the story in the scriptures. They helped Leonel by giving him a safe home, food, clothes, and medical care.
7. Donations like the ones you give MCA help missionary groups like COAR to help children who are living in places where they don't have a safe home, or a guaranteed meal every day. Our prayers and donations help other children live with dignity and love, as they should, for they too are beloved children of God like you.

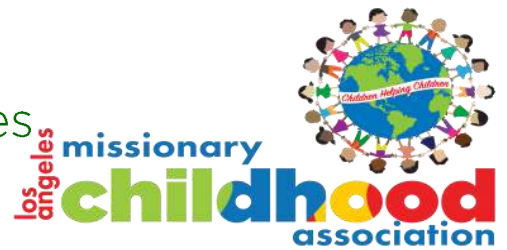
*"Many would like the poor to keep on saying that it is God's will for them to live that way. But it is not God's will for some to have everything and others to have nothing. That cannot be of God. God's will is that all his children be happy." --Blessed Oscar Romero
SEPTEMBER 10, 1978*

The slide show of COAR can be downloaded from the MCA website. It has been uploaded with permission for you to use at your schools. The first slides in the PowerPoint presentation are on the life of Blessed Oscar Romero and how COAR came to be. The last five slides are to be used with the scripture reflection of Matthew 25:34-40. Each slide had notes added by COAR. Please feel free to edit the lesson plan so that it can be appropriate for your grade level and the amount of time you might have available.

Student Activity

Love our neighbors like we love ourselves

Grades: 3rd-5th



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Instructions: Follow steps 1-6 with the last five slides of the PowerPoint. Read the scripture of Luke 10: 29-37, reflect with them what the bible scripture means. *(Slide show was provided by COAR missionary group)*

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1. Read the Scripture of Luke 10:29-37 and reflect with the students the meaning of the scripture: What happens in the story? In the parable the first question asked is "who is my neighbor?" What moved the Samaritan to help? At the end of the parable Jesus asks who was neighbor to the robbers victim, what was the answer? Why is it important to be neighborly to others?
2. God tells us that we are to love one another and love our neighbor as we love ourselves. (Mark 12:32) Would you say the Samaritan in the story did this? If yes, how did he do it?
3. Who would you say is your neighbor? We all live in communities where we have lots of people that live around us. Do your parents or other adults in your life speak to your neighbors? Do you play with other children in your neighborhood? In the story of the good Samaritan we hear how neighbors are supposed to treat each other with love and compassion. We are going to hear how COAR reached out to their neighbors in need and helped them.
4. Share with your students the story of the Amaya sisters. They were a very poor family that lived in a tiny shack, without a bathroom, no front door that locked, and it was all one room. Their mother was often sick and could not care for the children, or hold a job and her baby was very sick.
5. COAR reached out to the Amaya family and helped them. The Amaya sisters were able to go and live at COAR where they had a bed, a warm place to sleep, healthy meals, clothes and go to school. The sisters live with other girls and a housemother. Through the help the girls received at COAR they are learning what it means to be a good neighbor and that in a community everyone can help each other.
6. We as children of God are part of a global community, we all share one home planet earth, and should see all who live in our common home as our neighbor. We cannot interact with everyone in the world but we can interact with those who are close to us. How can we build a community where we all treat each other as we want to be treated?

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Student Activity

We are workers, not master builders

Grades: 6th-8th



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Instructions: Follow steps 1-6 with the last five slides of the PowerPoint. Read the scripture of Luke 21: 12-19, reflect with them what the bible scripture means. *(Slide show was provided by COAR missionary group)*

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1. Read the Scripture of Luke 21: 12-19 and reflect with the students the meaning of the scripture. What is happening in the scripture? Who will be persecuted and why? Is this still happening today?
2. The life story of Blessed Oscar Romero who will be canonized this month is testimony to the relevance and importance this scripture passage continues to have today. As baptized members of the Body of Christ we are prophets, kings and priests. As prophets we are called to denounce injustices and help those who are marginalized. How did Blessed Oscar Romero do this?
3. In the country of El Salvador children and teenagers are in danger of being pulled into crime activity and gangs because of the poverty and violence that is still very persistence. At COAR children and teenagers are offered a safe place to study and make friends. This is also a place for them to build communities and lasting friendships, they learn strong moral values that will allow them to make good decisions as adults.
4. The following prayer was inspired by Blessed Oscar Romero: *"It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all the could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about. We plant the seed that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need future development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, no messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own."* (<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prophets-of-a-future-not-our-own.cfm>) What do you understand from what is said? How can we then in our communities model the example of COAR and Blessed Oscar Romero?

"If God accepts the sacrifice of my life, may my death be for the freedom of my people. A bishop will die, but the Church of God, which is the people, will never perish. I do not believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I will rise again in the people of El Salvador." -- Blessed Oscar Romero 1980

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