



# HOLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

2219 Kennedy Rd., Toronto ON, M1T 3G5, Canada  
1-800-897-8865 www.missionsocieties.ca

## INTERMEDIATE NEWSLETTER – LENT 2025

JAN. - JUNE 2025

GRADES 7 - 9

VOL. 34.2

Welcome to 2025 and our first Newsletter of the year. It's hard to believe that this year marks a quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century AD! Where does the time go?

As usual in this edition, we anticipate the approach of the Easter season. This year, Easter is on Sunday, April 20. This is three weeks later than when Easter occurred in 2024, on March 31! This means that Ash Wednesday in 2025 is on March 5, giving us all a longer breathing space between Christmas and Easter! This all happens because Easter is a moveable feast. Try to find out how the date for Easter is determined each year. Your teacher or catechist should be able to help you.



In this Newsletter, we will direct our missionary attention to the South American country of **COLOMBIA**. Although blessed with many natural resources, the remoteness of many areas of the country and continual civil strife have resulted in many people living in poverty.



### Fast Facts

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Republic of Colombia.

**CAPITAL:** Bogotá

**POPULATION:** over 52,000,000 in 2023

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:** Spanish.

**MONEY:** Peso.

**AREA:** 1,138,910 square kilometers, 5<sup>th</sup> largest country in Latin America

### COLOMBIAN FLAG



On the Colombian flag, the yellow stripe represents the gold abundant in Colombia, the blue the country's seas and the red, the blood spilled fighting for Colombian independence.

**Colombia is nicknamed the "gateway to South America". Can you examine a map and suggest why?**

Colombia is a land of extremes. The Andes mountains run through the centre of the country. There are tropical beaches in the north along the Caribbean Sea and large areas of grassland and desert. Nearly half of the south consists of the Amazon basin with its vast dense rainforests, unique wildlife and jungle areas. This diversity makes it difficult for many people to make a sustainable living, and to receive the necessities of life that we in Canada often take for granted to overcome poverty.

### **HISTORY**

Modern Colombia has evolved from the colonial era. The Spanish arrived in the 1500s and for approximately 250 years the native population was exploited as the Spanish hunted for gold and other treasures. By the late 1700s, people in Columbia rebelled against the Spanish. Several years of conflict resulted in Independence for Columbia in 1835. However, there have been many years of civil war as various groups have fought over the right to rule the country. This unrest and the geographical remoteness of many areas have contributed to the poverty that exists in some areas today. The present population is descended from three ethnic groups: Indians, African people brought to Colombia to work as slaves and European settlers. This rich cultural mix makes the country's food, music, dance, and art diverse and unique.

## From where do you think the country of Colombia got its name?

### ECONOMY

As mentioned above, Columbia is rich in natural resources. Its biggest trading partner is the United States, which buys 40 percent of the country's exports. Colombia is famous for its coffee, bananas and oil, but also sends overseas coal, gold, platinum and emeralds. The most controversial export, though, is illegal drugs. The Colombian government is trying to rid the country of the gangs, called cartels, that produce illegal drugs for sale around the world.



(Maria Ruiz, CCA 2.0) Harvesting coffee



Have a cup! (CCA 2.0)

### NATURE and WILDLIFE

Because of the diverse geographical features of Columbia, about 10% of all animal species in the world live in Colombia. Four are highlighted here, to show the variety present.

The Colombian jaguar can be found throughout the country in all types of geographical conditions. This is largely due to active conservation initiatives that protect the animals as well as farmers. The Andean condor is the national animal of Columbia and is the largest flying bird in the world. The spectacled bear is the only type of bear in Columbia, and sightings are rare. The dart frog is toxic to the touch and can cause skin irritation.



Poison dart frog (Jose Guzman, CCA 4.0)



Spectacled bear (Jonathan Mendez, CCA 4.0)



Colombian jaguars (The Animal Reader)



Andean condor  
(Thomas Fuhrmann, CCA Share-Alike 4.0)



(Copa America, 2025)

### SOCCER

Soccer is the most popular sport in Colombia. Currently, the National Team is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the world,

## HCA PROJECT IN COLOMBIA



The HCA is currently involved in two projects in schools in Colombia.

#### 1. Project of the Apostolic Vicariate of Inirida - Colombia Early childhood dining room

This project involves the purchase of food for the canteens for 5 days a week, 8 months of the year. Because of the remoteness of the area, children often do not have enough food to allow for healthy learning at school. There are approximately 200 children involved.



## 2. Project of the Apostolic Vicariate of Carreno - Colombia

This project provides children with educational needs, primarily school facilities, supplies and food.



# LENT 2025

As mentioned previously, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday March 5, with Easter Sunday following on April 20. Here is a tune up exercise for you to help prepare for the Lenten season. No answers are provided, but you can get help from your teacher, catechist or even parents!

1. What is the first day of Lent called?
2. What do we call the day before Lent begins?
3. From where do the ashes come?
4. What colour vestments does the priest wear during Lent?
5. What prayer of the Mass is omitted during Lent?
6. What word is never said or sung during Lent?
7. Which day of the week is traditionally not part of Lent?
8. On what days are Catholics required to fast during Lent? (2)
9. What snack originated during Lent as it contains only flour, water and salt?
10. What food was **traditionally** eaten the day before Lent begins?
11. What Irish saint's feast day takes place during Lent?
12. On what Sunday during Lent does the priest bless palms?
13. What event in the life of Jesus do the palms recall for us?
14. How many Stations of the Cross are there traditionally?
15. How many times does Jesus fall in the Stations?
16. Who helped Jesus carry his Cross?
17. When does Lent officially end?
18. What is the Triduum?



## POPE FRANCIS' 2024 LENTEN MESSAGE

The Pope's 2025 message is not available at this time of writing. His 2024 message still applies to us in 2025:

***"It is time to pause in prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister. Slow down, then, and pause!"***



Pope Francis begins SE Asian tour September 2024 (Al Jazeera)

### Catholic Lenten Prayer

Almighty and Everlasting God, You have given the human race Jesus Christ our Saviour as a model of humility. He fulfilled Your Will by becoming Man and giving His life on the Cross. Help us to bear witness to You by following His example of suffering and make us worthy to share in His Resurrection.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.

(lords-prayer-words.com)



Pope Francis has declared that 2025 will be a **Jubilee Year** for the Catholic Church. The Jubilee will be a special year to celebrate, hope and pray for our world. In recent times, Jubilees have occurred every 25 years.

*The logo shows four stylized figures, representing all of humanity, coming from the four corners of the earth. They embrace each other to indicate the solidarity and fraternity which should unite all peoples.*

There will be special events to celebrate the Jubilee all over the world. We will look forward to learning what will occur in Canada.

It is significant that in this year of Jubilee we will say **FAREWELL** to Fr. Osei as Director of the English sector (Canada) of the Pontifical Mission Societies and **WELCOME** Bishop Boissonneau as our new Director. After 12 years of service, Father Alex Osei (C.S.Sp.)'s term as Director of the Canadian English sector of the PMS has ended. We wish him well as the Pastor of St Boniface Catholic Parish in Scarborough.



Fr. Alex Osei, C.S.Sp.  
(Archdiocese of Toronto)



Bishop John A. Boissonneau  
(Archdiocese of Toronto)

The new Director of the English sector of the PMS is Bishop John A. Boissonneau. Bishop Boissonneau is well known as the Auxiliary Bishop for the northern Region of the Archdiocese of Toronto. He comes from Toronto, worked in the Chancery Office after ordination and spent time educating future priests at St Augustine's Seminary. He will continue his role in the Toronto Archdiocese as well as assuming the responsibilities as PMS Director. We wish him well in this new role.