

Quick
Reference

HCA

Program Guide

Lent | 2012

Ecuador



Beautiful Ecuador!

Located on the northwestern coast of South America, the Republic of Ecuador takes its name from the equator, which passes through the northern part of the country. Slightly larger than the state of Colorado, the country is bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the west, Colombia on the north, and Peru on the east and south. Its national territory includes the Galápagos Islands, located 600 miles west of the mainland.

Large disparities between rich and poor are a persistent fact of life in Ecuador. Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian children are more likely to grow up in poverty and face difficulties in access to education. While government efforts to address disparities have shown

some promising results, much of the country's budget is allocated to debt repayment, making it difficult to fund levels of social spending that might improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable families.

Following are some of the greatest challenges to children in Ecuador:

- Poor nutrition, particularly among indigenous children, results in “stunting” – or a lack of proper growth.
- Public schools operate on such limited budgets that families must cover the cost of books, teaching materials and utilities. These fees hinder poor families from sending their children to school.
- Trying to find work, many Ecuadorians have emigrated abroad, leaving children behind.



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The Pontifical Mission Societies of the United States

How Does HCA Help Kids in Ecuador?

Last year, multiple dioceses in Ecuador, including those serving indigenous groups, received help from the Holy Childhood Association. Contributions from your students – combined with those from children all over the world – supported:

- The purchase of 100 desks, two projectors and catechetical materials for children in several parishes throughout the Galápagos Vicariate (\$7,000).
- The renovation of a home for 300 pre-school children and infants in the Apostolic Vicariate of Napo* (\$15,000).
- The installation of a concrete floor for the safety of some 400 children at St. Mary's School in Napo (\$15,000).
- The formation of catechists who will teach some 500 children in the city of Zumba, an isolated and poor area near the border with Peru; these catechists will also develop local Holy Childhood Association groups (\$1,500).

**The province of Napo is minimally developed. The area consists primarily of thick rainforest. As of the year 2000, the province was the sole remaining majority-indigenous province of Ecuador, with more than half of the area either claiming indigenous identity or speaking an indigenous language.*

Activities

Rolling Away the Stone Bible Craft

+ Grades K-4

+ Matthew 28:1-8

Use this activity to help students recall what Jesus' followers saw when they went to His tomb three days after the Crucifixion.

Supplies: For each child, one white paper plate, cut in half; one half sheet of brown construction paper; one picture of an angel (drawn or copied). Also, black crayons, brown crayons, stapler, scissors, glue, masking tape, marker.

Preparation: Depending on the age of your students and the amount of time available, you may wish to pre-cut the paper plates. You may also wish to make a complete sample yourself to display for the class.

Read: Matthew 28:1-8

Directions for Craft:

- Tell students to cut a "doorway" out of one half of their paper plates (you may want to demonstrate this), and color this half brown
- Instruct them to color the other half of the paper plate black
- As the children color, walk around and make sure that each child's name gets written on both pieces of their "tomb"
- Staple the two pieces together at the top (outside edge) making sure that the black can be seen through the "doorway"
- Then ask the children to glue the angel inside of the door
- Next have each child crumple up the brown construction paper, and tape the crumpled construction paper "stone" to the outside of the tomb
- As the children are finishing their project, talk with them about what they are making, as it relates to the story they just heard. Ask them how they can continue to share the "Easter story" with friends and family, and with children in the Missions – especially through their prayers and support of those who tell young people the joy-filled Resurrection story!

Easter Acrostic

+ Grades 3-8

+ Matthew 28:1-8

Instruct students to write a mission-themed acrostic poem using the word, **EASTER**. See sample at right.

Everyone should know about Jesus, He is

Awesome, He is

Savior of the world,

Together

Everyone pray

Right now for the Missions!

Pentecost Window

Pentecost Sunday is a great missionary feast! With help, children can use their creativity to design a Pentecost-themed stained-glass window. Traditional Holy Spirit or Pentecost icons can center the window's background. To create a stained-glass window, begin with a piece of blue construction paper cut into an archway shape. Glue pieces of rectangular shapes in a variety of colored construction paper to the background. Add to the center a cut-out of a dove or flame. Search the Internet for ideas, pictures or templates that might be useful for the project.