



Parish Manual
for
“Mission of Mercy”
A 3-NIGHT SYMBOLS MISSION

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Introduction

Our Redemptorist religious family was founded in Italy in 1732 by St. Alphonsus Liguori to "preach the Good News" to the poor and most abandoned that "With Him is Plentiful Redemption" (our motto, taken from Psalm 130). From our conception Redemptorists have been involved with the mission apostolate. God has given us a gift for this special ministry and we are happy to share the gift with you, members of our Church family.

You and others in your parish are considering the possibility of a mission because you wish to aid and renew your fellow parishioners and Catholics in their faith journey. Likewise, you would like as many people as possible to be a part of the experience. We share your desire and dream!

In this booklet we present to you from our parish mission experiences a proven method of preparation to assure high attendance and participation by both regular Church goers and inactive Catholics. Should you decide to invite us to preach a mission in your parish, we presume three months in advance of the mission you will have a Mission Committee in place as recommended in these pages and together we will work towards the achievement of the shared dream.

Should you have any questions or wish to secure dates for a parish mission, I will be happy to assist you.

Thank you for inquiring about having a Redemptorist mission in your parish.

Rev. Kevin MacDonald, C.Ss.R.
member, *The Redemptorists*

Excerpt from Pope John Paul II

With great emphasis, I repeat what I already wrote in the Apostolic Letter *Catechesi Tradendae*:

There is nothing which will replace the parish mission in the periodic and vigorous renewal of Christian life!

I exhort you: re-establish them; re-evaluate them; refurbish them with updated methods adapted to the parishes according to the needs of the local churches.

We must admit realistically and painfully that today many Christians feel confused, perplexed and even sometimes deceived. Ideas contrary to the revealed Truth of Scripture as always taught by the Church are being blatantly spread about, causing confusion and doubt in the realm of belief and morality. Immersed in the intellectual and moral relativism and the consequent permissiveness of our times, Christians are tempted to atheism, to agnosticism and to a vague form of Christianity with no definite doctrine and no objective morality. We must strike at the root of this with the preaching of salvation meant for all, provided God's mercy is not consciously and hard-heartedly rejected, a salvation that is indeed true and does indeed entail a definite style of living as disciples.

The Mission must be a time of encouragement. It must be effective in prayer and penance and conversion for those who have lost faith and God's grace through sin. It must call routine Christians to a life more in accord with the Beatitudes, with the full following of Jesus Christ.

I wish to tell all mission preachers to persevere in this magnificent work. It is necessary and urgent today. Blessed are you if you announce the truth of the Gospel, the hope that consoles, the certitude which gives joy now and forever. Blessed, too, those parishes and communities which welcome you in the celebration of a parish Mission, those who have ears to hear and eyes to see the good news of God's mercy in this life leading to unending happiness forever. To you, preachers and collaborators, to those in the pastoral ministry who cooperate with you and to all who are touched by God's Spirit through your efforts, I pledge my prayers and impart my blessing.

Joannes Paulus II

Mission Facts

What is a mission?

The mission is a preaching event. God's Word is proclaimed through the Bible and Catholic Doctrine. It is also proclaimed through the life, learning and personal experience of the preacher.

Usually, the mission begins Monday night and finishes Wednesday night. It could also begin Sunday evening and end on Tuesday.

The services are about sixty minutes in length. Services are in the evening at a time, usually 7 or 7:30, to be determined by the parish.

The weekend the mission starts, the missionary will preach at all the weekend Masses. The weekend homily is a last invitation to the mission.

Parish Priest(s), Deacon(s), Staff, and Pastoral Council:

Experience has taught us that it is necessary that the Pastor, Associates, Deacons, Staff, and Pastoral Council be involved in the preparation, planning and promotion of the Mission.

Parish People:

We consider it vital to the goal and purpose of the mission that lay leadership be involved in the preparation and promotion for the mission. Thus, we strongly suggest someone **not** on the staff or pastoral council be invited to chair the mission committee.

Involving as many people as possible on the different mission committees spreads out the work load, lessens the burdens and increases attendance and participation in the mission event.

These same people may cooperate with the Pastor, staff and council in any follow up programs that evolve from the mission experience (see page 38).

All parish activities that conflict with the evening mission services should be canceled. Rather than tell people there is no meeting, we suggest telling groups that "the meeting begins at 7 or 7:30 in the Church!"

Pre-Mission Meeting:

Distance and expense can preclude a meeting between the parish mission committee and the missionary before the mission begins. When such a meeting with the mission committee and missionary is not possible, communication via email and telephone is a ready alternative.

Fees:

The message of the Gospel is God's free gift to us. Still there are expenses. We want to be as helpful as possible to the parish as together we strive for good stewardship in this area.

The parish will only be asked to pay for transportation expenses. A statement of travel expenses will be given to the Pastor or Finance Manager on Monday of the mission week.

The parish is responsible for all other expenses related to the mission.

There is no particular stipend for the Mission. Instead, a free will offering is asked. This takes the form of a collection taken up prior to the presentation of gifts at the closing night's Mass. The missionary will announce this collection and envelopes will be distributed on Monday night (or Tuesday, if the mission begins on Monday evening).

There should be no other collections during the mission.

<p>We do not want the above expenses to be a barrier for parishes wanting a mission but cannot afford the expenses of travel, lodging and/or the advertising of the mission. If you are such a parish, please contact us to make appropriate arrangements.</p>
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Mission Committee Structure

This is an example of positions needed on your parish mission committee:

Chairpersons:	Jim and Irene Belen	555-5895
Transportation:	Greg Voyager	555-4532
Baby-sitting:	Pat Tyke	555-5884
Promotion:	Carolyn & John Goergen	555-5378
Mailings:	Brian Stamp	555-1235
Phone calling:	Florence Voice	555-0007
Refreshments (morning):	Betty Crocker	555-1234
Refreshments (evening):	Judy Pillsbury	555-2341
Liturgy and music:	Joyce Soprano	555-9640
	Sue Emblem	555-0469
	Roberta Flack	555-7662

As you gather people for your Mission Committee, keep in mind that you want to involve as many parishioners in the mission preparation and experience as possible. The key to good attendance is good promotion. Good promotion depends on high frequency of the message. Get the word out often and in as many ways as you can, remembering there are a number of parishioners who do not attend Mass regularly and have very little contact or knowledge of what is about to happen.

Mission Committee Job Descriptions

Please Note: The following list of mission job descriptions can be intimidating. Please read them with an open mind. They are not directives, merely suggestions. You may decide not to have babysitting, a letter writing campaign, or refreshments after the morning Mass. You may find alternative ways to reach the Catholics who do not attend Sunday Mass regularly. The following job descriptions are here to assist you if you decide you would like to move in this direction.

Chairperson:

To coordinate and oversee committee efforts and preparations as well as determine a theme or name for the mission with the assistance of your committee, the Pastor, the pastoral staff, and parish council.

Transportation:

To arrange transportation for those needing rides to and from the mission.

Method:

- Put notice in the bulletin requesting assistance
- Be sure to communicate to *promotion*, *mailing* and *phone calling* volunteers, the name and phone number that people should contact if they are in need of such assistance

Baby-sitting:

To provide baby-sitting during the evening mission sessions.

Method:

- Consult and work with present Sunday Mass Sitters
- Secure enough adult supervision for each night as well as enough adults so that ideally the adults would only have to miss one night of the mission
- Be sure to sign up whatever spaces are available and needed
- Secure cartoons/movies and a DVD player for younger children as well as toys and cribs
- Seek to provide quiet places for kids to do their homework

Promotion

To coordinate the publicity of the mission in the parish and local community.

Method:

Brainstorm about how you can make use of:

- TV and radio public service announcements
- newspaper advertisements and news releases
- public service marquees, e.g. banks, car washes
- bulletin fliers (see suggestions listed)
- bulletin announcements on a regular basis
- buttons
- posters
- a banner for the church (perhaps carried in procession at each Mass in the month before start of mission)
- outdoor sign
- a creative insert for the school and religious education programs at the start of their school year
- involvement of the kids in making posters and displaying them after Sunday Masses and around the school
- helium balloons with the mission theme and dates to be given to the kids or sold at the parish picnic, carnival, etc.
- divide up the parish by blocks/areas and ask parishioners to walk their street placing fliers on doors inviting people to attend the mission
- Ask around so that neighbors and friends might help you.
- Keep in mind that in-active Catholics will not hear Sunday announcements; they will not read the weekly bulletin. Ask yourselves: how can we reach out (i.e., evangelize)?

Mailings:

To prepare letters and fliers to be sent to all parishioners.

Method:

- Ask and assist pastor in preparing this letter
- Check with parish secretary for necessary supplies, use of equipment and information
- make copies, stuff, label, and sort letters for bulk mailing

Phone calling:

To reach out a week to ten days before the mission starts and personally invite parishioners to the mission.

Method:

- Obtain an updated list of parishioners and their phone numbers
- Secure people via bulletin announcements as well as personal invitation
- Get one caller for each 15 families or units in the parish
- Adapt Sample Telephone Message to meet your needs
- Meet with committee, review Sample Telephone Message and determine when calls will actually take place
- Make calls and be sure to keep trying until you reach each family or unit.

Refreshments - mornings:

To provide coffee, juice and goodies (coffee cake, donuts) after main morning Mass.

Method:

- Invite those who usually attend the Mass designated as the Mission Mass and gather others
- Organize volunteers and make sure to explain responsibilities
- Secure other amenities that will be needed: napkins, cups, utensils, and so on

Refreshments - evenings:

To provide refreshments after each evening service and create a comfortable, informal and inviting atmosphere for people to gather.

Method:

- Decide what you would like to have each evening (what would folks find inviting?), keeping in mind that the final evening's goodies should be extra special
- Secure people for each evening to serve refreshments, trying not to get the same people for each night
- Seek people to bring goodies such as the Legion of Mary, the Holy Name Society, the Parents and Teachers Association, Parish Council Commissions, and so on
- Avoid food lines by putting drinks (regular coffee, decaf coffee, punch, lemonade) in the room's corners and foods along the walls
- Make sure chairs are available, if not already set up, and perhaps even music playing as well as decorations in place so people will be enticed to come and get to know members of their parish

Liturgy:

To review and prepare for the mission and each evening service.

Method:

- Include intercessions for the success of the mission at all weekend Masses
- Determine a way to invite members of the parish to pray for the success of the mission at home as well as at church with informal holy hours and the like
- Encourage all parish meetings to begin with prayer and include the success of the mission in their intentions
- Review each evening's service and note the number of ministers needed as well as type and placement of songs
- Inform ministers to be in the sacristy (or back of church) a half hour before the start of the service to rehearse
- Contact musicians and choirs to arrange what nights they will each play and sing
- Work with the music ministry to arrange what nights they will each play and sing
- Work with musicians and choirs in determining music in light of the theme for each night of the mission and the parish's knowledge of music
- Each day of the mission check in with the missionary to review needs as well as the service itself
- Secure symbols for each night's service and determine where in the sanctuary these symbols will be enthroned. Also prepare such things as lectern stands, cloth and flowers that you may wish to use to adorn the place of enthronement
- Read pages describing the mission night's program thoroughly
- Give a list of ministers and music for each evening to the missionary by noon of the Sunday/Monday that the mission starts

Evangelization Efforts

According to Gallup, the largest Christian denomination in the United States is Roman Catholics. The second largest Christian denomination is in-active Catholics!

Pope Paul VI spoke about the Church's need to first evangelize our fellow Catholics. St. John Paul II spoke about this being the age of "new evangelization." Pope Francis has challenged us to create welcoming parishes, especially to the poor living in our midst. The American National Conference of Catholic Bishops in its pastoral letter, *Go and Make Disciples* (1992), offers a strategy for reaching out to both in-actives and unchurched people. It's in the spirit of the Holy Father and the US and Caribbean Bishops that we Redemptorists invite pastors and parishioners to join us in efforts to reach out to our in-active brothers and sisters and invite them to the extraordinary preaching event we call the mission.

The need to reach out is evident from studies. In the United States, for example, forty-four people out of every 100 are unchurched. There are sixty million Catholics in the United States. Of these sixty million Catholics, 25% celebrate Eucharist weekly, 50%-- or thirty million Catholics-- celebrate Eucharist occasionally, and 25% never go to church at all.

Since the in-actives are not at weekly Mass, they will not read or hear about the mission. We must look for other ways to announce and invite.

A study of a sales force had these results:

- 48% of the force quit on a potential customer after one phone call.
- 25% of the force quit after two calls.
- 15% quit after three calls.
- Summary: 88% of the sales force quit on a potential customer after making calls 1, 2 or 3.
- 12% of the sales force called a potential customer 4, 5 and 6 times.
- **Conclusions: 12% of the sales force did 80% of the business! 88% of the sales force did 20% of the business!**

Question: What can we learn about evangelization from this study? If we want to be successful in "selling" the mission to in-actives, we need to "call our customers" at least four, if not more, times.

We suggest the following strategy in the weeks preceding your mission.

- Week 10: Every household gets a letter from the Pastor about the mission.
- Week 9: A select phone committee follows up the pastor's letter with a phone call to in-actives inviting them to the mission.
- Week 6: A postcard about the mission is sent to in-active Catholics
- Week 5: The same folks call and follow up with the in-active Catholics about receiving the postcard and the mission.

- Week 2: In-actives get another postcard or flyer.
- Week 1: Everyone in the parish is called and invited to the mission while the same volunteers call the in-actives once again to invite and confirm their coming to the mission.

Chances are there are people on the staff who can help secure the names and addresses of the in-actives (some of the people who don't use or want envelopes and some of the parents of recently baptized children, First Communicants and Confirmandi). Consider announcing after communion at all the weekend Masses your intentions of reaching out to in-actives and inviting parishioners to submit the names, addresses and phone number of neighbors, co-workers, and friends they know who aren't going to Sunday Mass on provided forms and to return the completed forms the following weekend, placing them in the collection basket along with their contributions. When securing this information, also inform parishioners that it is a proven fact people return to a more active practice of the faith via the relationship they have with someone who is active. Ask parishioners if they would be willing to follow up mailings with a phone call to the people they submit. Finally, place the completed forms which people have submitted on the altar or another suitable place in the sanctuary and include in your weekend petitions God's blessings on your efforts to evangelize.

An additional way to reach out and invite in-active (as well as active) Catholics to the mission is through the school and religion educators. Encourage school and CCD teachers to attend the mission, even if they are not members of the parish, and talk up the mission with the kids. Make up a choir of CCD children (anyone can join) and a choir of school children (anyone can join) and have them sing at separate nights of the mission, hopefully early on in the mission rather than later. Teachers, have your students write a note asking their parents to bring them to the mission.

As you evangelize let the words of Jesus be your inspiration and strength when He stated the joy in heaven over the finding of one lost sheep. That lost sheep may be your spouse, your son or daughter, your brother or sister, a friend, a neighbor, or a coworker. These people are worth this effort.

Form for Inviting the Inactives

St. Joseph Parish Mission

Dec. 1-4

7 PM Each Night

Do you know of someone who is in-active in our Catholic faith that we may invite to our mission?

Name: _____ **Name:** _____

Address: _____ **Address:** _____

Phone # _____ **Phone #** _____

Name: _____ **Name:** _____

Address: _____ **Address:** _____

Phone # _____ **Phone #** _____

People who become active in the Catholic Church again state it was through the invitation of someone they knew and respected that greatly influenced them. If you receive a copy of all the planned mailings to the people you name above, would you be willing to follow up each mailing with a phone call inviting the people to our mission? If so, please give us your name, address and phone number.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please return completed forms in next weekend's collection.

Outdoor Sign

PURPOSE: An outdoor sign is meant as an attention-getter. It simply states:

- 1) a Mission is coming,
- 2) when, and
- 3) that all are welcome to be a part of this extraordinary parish event

TYPES: Generally the sign is made of wood. However, some parishes have used a mobile lighted sign or a banner. Both are very good.

STYLE: The sign should be large, the lettering bold and easily readable from a distance.

CONTENT:

what- Parish Mission

theme- "God's Mercy" (The parish is responsible for naming the mission. The focus of the mission is hope as spoken of by Pope Francis.)

when - Days and Dates (Sunday, Dec. 1 – Tuesday, Dec. 3)

time - 7:30pm (or whatever time suits the parish.)

who - All are welcome

PLACEMENT: Place the sign where it is visible to the greatest number of **non**-parishioners (your parishioners will have received the information in the bulletin, in the mail, etc.).

Parish Mission Prayer

Please use this prayer often- before meetings, after the Prayer of the Faithful or post-Communion prayer on Sundays, with the homebound, on Monday mornings in school, etc.

GOD, OUR FATHER, WE OFFER YOU PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING FOR ALL THE MANY GIFTS YOU HAVE GIVEN US THROUGH JESUS, YOUR SON. WE THANK YOU ESPECIALLY FOR THE GIFT OF OUR PARISH MISSION.

LOVING AND GRACIOUS GOD, QUIET OUR MINDS AND HEARTS, THAT WE MAY BE OPEN TO THE GIFT OF YOUR TRUTH. GRANT THAT OUR MISSION MAY BE:

**A TIME OF GRACE FOR ALL,
A TIME OF GROWTH FOR THE YOUNG,
A TIME OF REFRESHMENT FOR THE OLD
A TIME OF RENEWAL FOR FAMILIES,
A TIME OF HEALING FOR THE BROKEN,
A TIME OF JOY FOR THE SORROWING,
A TIME OF CHALLENGE FOR THE COMPLACENT,
A TIME OF FORGIVENESS FOR THE SINNER,
A TIME OF STRENGTH FOR THE HOLY,
A TIME OF HOMECOMING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN AWAY.**

GRANT, MOST LOVING GOD, THAT OUR MISSION MAY BRING DOWN YOUR RICHEST BLESSINGS ON EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY.

WE PRAY THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF MARY, OUR MOTHER, IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST WHO LIVES WITH YOU AND THE HOLY SPIRIT FOREVER.

AMEN.

Sample Letter from Pastor

Come to the Mission: “God’s Mercy”

Dear Parishioner,

Please accept this invitation as members of St Joseph's Parish to attend our "God's Mercy" Mission, conducted by the Redemptorists.

A Parish Mission is a series of presentations on the Word of God. Each evening is different, yet, each evening will consist of a proclamation of the Word, reflections, singing and praying together. It will be a grace-filled happening, an opportunity to experience in a special way the saving presence of God.

If you have abandoned the faith of your youth, the mission is for you. If you have been on-again, off-again in the practice of your Catholic religion, the mission is for you. If you have wondered what is going on in the Church today, the mission is for you. If you have been faithful to your Catholic duties, the mission is for you. If you feel you need to know more about how to pray, the mission is for you. If you judge yourself to be in need of spiritual growth, the mission is for you. If you are a sinner or a saint or somewhere in between, the mission is for you. The mission is for everyone, but especially for you.

To make it easier for entire families to attend, there will be baby-sitting every evening. Just call Sue Tyke at 555-5884 and let Sue know how many children you will bring and their ages. Sue is setting up quiet places for older children to do homework and needs to know how many rooms to have available.

If you need a ride to and from the evening services, call Fern Frisbee at 555-4532. Fern can arrange transportation for you.

Should you like to volunteer your own services to babysit or drive people, please give Sue and Fern a call.

Our "God's Mercy" Mission begins Sunday evening, Dec. 1st at 7:30 pm. There is a Mission service planned for Monday and Tuesday evenings at 7:30, too. Each service is about an hour in length. Each evening's service will be followed by a time for fellowship and refreshments.

Please join me in praying for the success of our mission for our parish family and plan now to share with me this very special grace-filled time.

In the love of Christ,

Sample Letter for Telephone Tree Committee

Dear Co-worker,

Thank you for volunteering to help us to contact the parishioners by telephone. The purpose is to make sure everyone hears about the upcoming Parish Mission. Most will welcome the phone call with enthusiasm; others will be surprised but delighted that a personal call was given to them. It may be the first time anyone from the Parish has ever called them.

Enclosed you will find a detailed sheet contained "the script and of course a list of the parishioners to be contacted.

I ask you to please make the calls during the week of _____ . You may find more people home in the evenings, but do not call after 9:30pm. Please return the calling sheet as soon as you finish.

You may learn that someone in the home is a shut-in or needs to talk to someone on the pastoral staff. Please let us know when you encounter this situation.

Your support and your time are truly received as a gift. I appreciate the generosity and willingness to help make this week of mission known throughout our parish family.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Coordinator of the Phone Tree

P.S. Feel free to call me with any questions at 555-1212.

Sample Telephone Message

When calling, be sure you are upbeat and inviting! Telephone calls should be made seven to ten days before the start of the mission. Keep trying to get in touch with the people you are assigned, should your first attempts fail to find anyone home. Remember- it might be your phone call that brings someone back to God! Please note: Most people will probably not be familiar with the word, "Mission." Be prepared to explain it or you might find it more helpful to substitute "revival" or "parish retreat."

Hello. My name is _____ . I'm calling on behalf of our Pastor, Father _____ , and the parishioners of _____ Parish to invite you to our parish mission entitled "God's Mercy."

The mission begins Sunday evening, Dec. 1st, at 7:30 and will last three consecutive nights.

We have also arranged to have baby-sitting available. If you need baby sitting or have any questions about baby-sitting arrangements, please call Sue Tyke at 555-5884.

Should you need a ride, we have transportation available, too. Just call Fern Frisbee at 555-4532 and Fern would be happy to assist you.

I'm really excited about the mission and hope you can join us. Hope to see you Sunday evening, February 16th, at 7:30.

Good bye! God bless you.

Minister Lists for Each Evening Service

First Night Ministers

Master of Ceremonies (M.C.):	C.Ss.R. Missionary
Greeters:	Marge Orton Stanley Kline Larry Sosin Ed and Maxine Hofeli Mary Ann Lukasil
Music People:	Fernando Reyes (Organist) Helen Reddy (Song Leader) Members of Youth Choir
Bible Bearer:	Mary Palaszewski
Censor and Boat Bearers:	Greg and John Aldin
Preacher:	C.Ss.R. Missionary
Presider:	Father Pastor
Additional People for the Bible Veneration:	Shirley Casey Bill Graves Mike Lilly Pam Lilly

NOTE: The number of additional people needed for the Bible Veneration will be dictated by the number of communion stations at Sunday Mass as well as sanctuary space. They should be told beforehand to bring their Bible from home to be used during the service.

Second Night Ministers

Master of Ceremonies (M.C.):

C.Ss.R. Missionary

Greeters:

Bro. Tom
Michael Path
Ryne and Cindy Stoeck
Lynne DeKreek
Jack and Mary Snodgrass

Music People:

Seals and Croft (Guitarists)
Carly Simon (Song Leader)

Bible Bearer:

Joan Kennedy

Candle Bearer:

Roger Nimble

Acolytes:

Steve and Patricia Carlson

Preacher:

C.Ss.R. Missionary

Presider:

Father Pastor/Associate

Third Night Ministers

Master of Ceremonies (M.C.):	C.Ss.R. Missionary
Greeters (and Ushers):	Sandy DeVito Bill and Cindy Schmitz Sr. Cathy
Music People:	Doc Seversen (Organist) Judy Collins (Song Leader) Folk Choir
Bible Bearer:	Dick Biandi
Candle Bearer:	Carl Rossato
Acolytes:	Ricky and Dave Nelson
Reader:	Sue Lipstick
Preacher:	C.Ss.R. Missionary
Concelebrants:	C.Ss.R. Missionary Father Associate
Deacon:	Dick Meyer
Celebrant:	Father Pastor
Altar Cloth Carrier:	Maggie Smith (will dress the altar during the Offertory)
Gift Presenters:	The Brady Bunch
Eucharistic Ministers:	Roy Rogers Dale Evans Gene Autry Cisco Kid

Parish Pre-Mission Preparation List

Things the Parish Community Should Do:

Secure a Mission Committee Chairperson and Committee Members

Determine a Mission Theme

Prayer and Fasting:

- Petitions at all weekend Masses for the success of the Mission
- Parish meetings include the mission in their opening prayers
- Individual and Group Prayer:
- Formal or Informal holy hours
- Set aside a special day a week for fasting
- Develop and circulate a Mission Prayer for people to use at home.

Promotion

Line up transportation

Recruit and Prepare for Baby Sitting

Prepare Mailings

Recruit people for a phone committee

Line up refreshments and servers for fellowship

Prepare for Mission Services

All Parish Meetings and Activities [including Bingo] that would conflict with the mission time should be rescheduled. Consider inviting the people to the mission.

Mission Topics Overview

First Night

Symbol: BIBLE, representing God's communication to all people.
Topic: SALVATION; God's dream for our happiness...and our response.
Goal: To deepen our acceptance of God's tremendous love for us.

Second Night

Symbol: EASTER CANDLE, representing the risen Jesus, who conquers sin/death.
Topic: SIN, RECONCILIATION AND HEALING; living the life of conversion.
Goal: To be freed of the burden of our sinfulness and of past grudges and pains.

Last Night

Symbol: ALTAR, representing Jesus pouring Himself out for us.
Topic: YOUR MISSION; our baptismal vocation and share in the work of Jesus Christ and the Church (parish).
Goal: To become more aware of how we need to go forth and proclaim the Good News.

FIRST NIGHT SERVICE

SYMBOL: Bible - the living, personal Word of God which proclaims salvation.

MINISTERS:	<u>In Procession</u>	<u>Others</u>
	Bible Bearer	Greeters
	Censor and Boat Bearer	Musicians
	Preacher (C.Ss.R.)	Master of Ceremonies: "MC"
	Presider: "PRES"	Additional Bible People

PREPARATION: Have ministers and ALL INVOLVED meet in the sacristy a half-hour before the start of the service for a rehearsal. Instruct the additional Bible people to BRING THEIR BIBLE FROM HOME. Have a large processional Bible and determine place to enthrone Bible in sanctuary.

WELCOME: *When the processional ministers are ready at the rear of the Church, the MC (the Missionary) welcomes the people and then, after introducing the ministers and symbol for the service, says:*

Master of Ceremonies

MC announces the entrance hymn. Congregation remains seated to better see procession and symbols.

ENTRANCE HYMN... PROCESSION... ENTHRONEMENT OF BIBLE: *While the entrance hymn is being sung, the ministers process in and the PRES enthrones the Bible. Once the Bible is enthroned, the hymn ends and the PRES, facing the assembly, begins...*

Presider

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Spirit. *R/: Amen.*

May the grace and peace of God Almighty, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

R/: And also with you.

Incensation Of Bible: *Having greeted the assembly, the PRES incenses the enthroned Bible while the MC says:*

MC

Ever since the Revelation of God's love to us, worshippers have made use of incense. Its pleasing smoke rises like prayer. When the Word made flesh first appeared, wise men offered him incense. We continue this act of homage.

Commissioning: *Then the MC kneels with the preacher of the evening on the steps of the sanctuary. The PRES holds up the mission crucifix and commissions the Redemptorist Missionary to preach to his people in these or similar words:*

Presider

Christ said: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Go forth and preach the Gospel to every creature." Preaching the Word of God is a most important task. Christ commissioned the apostles to preach, and the Church continues this saving mission.

In the name of Christ the Good Shepherd, I, as Pastor, hereby commission Father Kevin MacDonald to preach the Word of God here at _____ parish, in the manner of the apostle, Paul.

May the Lord bless our work and make it fruitful. We ask this in confidence through the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE PREACHER: *The MC moves to the lectern and explains this prayer. The PRES is joined by the evening's ministers and encircle the preacher, placing their hands on the preacher's shoulders. While hands are imposed, the PRES says in these or similar words:*

Presider

Loving God we thank you for the gift of your love in our lives. Tonight we ask that you pour that love into each of us. Open our minds and hearts so that we can truly hear your word this night. Bless our preacher who is your son and our brother. May the words of Father Kevin MacDonald touch our hearts and lead us to you. We pray this through Jesus Christ, who is our Lord and Savior forever and ever! R/:Amen.

SERMON: *The sermon is followed by a two or three minute period of reflection. Meditation music is welcomed at this time. However, NO congregational singing. A song by the choir or a soloist may be appropriate as well as instrumental music.*

Veneration of the Bible: *MC begins in these or similar words. After the MC finishes, the PRES goes to the place of Bible enthronement, processes with the Bible to a communion station, and allows the assembly to come forward and venerate the Word of God by a touch or bow. Should the size of the assembly warrant it, the night's preacher and the MC could secure additional bibles already in the sanctuary and tend other communion stations. During the veneration, an "Alleluia" may be chanted, another appropriate song sung, or an instrumental played.*

MC

Every weekend we, the People of God, gather to listen to God's Word and to share Eucharist. We welcome the Word of God, especially the Gospel, when we sing out "Alleluia" or another appropriate phrase. As a sign that we believe God is present in the scriptures, that God speaks to us through these sacred writings, and that we welcome God's message and commit ourselves to God's direction for our lives, we invite you to come forward now, just as at communion, when the Bible is brought to the communion station closest to you, and to venerate the inspired Word of God by touching or bowing to the Holy Scriptures.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL AND PETITIONS: *MC invites the congregation to stand and the musicians lead the assembly in singing an "Alleluia" or Lenten song appropriate to the liturgical season and in preparation for the reading of the Gospel. During the singing the PRES processes with the Bible to the pulpit. After the singing the PRES proclaims the Gospel reading*

and then leads the congregation in a Prayer of the Faithful:

Presider

My brothers and sisters, we have listened to God's Word. Tonight we want to respond to the Word that has been preached to us. To the following petitions respond: "Loving God, open our hearts."

- + **That all of us will come to believe that we are sacred and made in the image and likeness of God, we pray to the Lord.... R/**
- + **That God's unconditional love for us will inspire us to a deep life of faith, we pray to the Lord.... R/**
- + **That we may always love the written Word of God and allow it to ignite within us a passion for life, we pray to the Lord.... R/**
- + **That we may truly learn to love each other in joy and in sorrow, in the best of times and the worst of times, we pray to the Lord.... R/**
- + **For those who do not know God's love, and for anyone here tonight who might be hurting in any way, that they might experience the comfort of the Lord's love for them, we pray to the Lord.... R/**

Let us pray. Lord God, we thank you for the gift of your relentless love. Help us always to be open to your love and to love others the way you love. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. R/: Amen.

BLESSING: *After the Prayer of the Faithful, the Alleluia or Lenten verse is repeated. During the repetition of the verse, the PRES processes with the Bible to the center of the sanctuary, silently blesses the congregation with the Bible, and then returns the Bible to its place of enthronement.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS: *MC will make various announcements, among them, inviting people to the fellowship after the service and announcing the recessional hymn.*

RECESSIONAL: *At the end of the announcements, the PRES dismisses the assembly in the words below. After dismissing the assembly, the PRES gathers at the foot of the sanctuary with the other ministers, bows, and then processes down the center aisle.*

Presider

**God's living Word proclaims our salvation in Christ. Let us
take what we have heard tonight into our homes and work places.**

Now go in the peace of Christ. *R/: Thanks be to God.*

SECOND NIGHT SERVICE

SYMBOL: Easter Candle - the light of Christ dispels all darkness and creates harmony in our lives.

MINISTERS:	<u>In Procession</u>	<u>Others</u>
	Bible Bearer	Greeters
	Candle Bearer	Musicians
	2 Acolytes	Light Controller
	Preacher (C.Ss.R.)	Master of Ceremonies: "MC"
	Presider: "PRES"	

PREPARATION: Have ministers and ALL INVOLVED meet in the sacristy a half-hour before the start of the service for a rehearsal. Have Bible and Easter Candle ready as well as places of enthronement. Also, make sure individual candles are available to be distributed by greeters to the congregation as they arrive.

WELCOME: *When the processional ministers are ready at the rear of the Church, the MC (the Missionary) welcomes the people, makes necessary introductions, (all announcements could be made at this time instead of at the end of the service), and announces the entrance hymn, asking the congregation to remain seated during the opening procession.*

ENTRANCE HYMN... PROCESSION... ENTHRONEMENT: *The ministers process in while the entrance hymn is sung. The Bible is enthroned. Then the PRES together with the candle bearer (the Easter Candle is unlighted) enter the center of the sanctuary and turn towards the people.*

SERVICE OF LIGHT: *This service is conducted by the PRES along with the MC. The PRES begins...*

Presider

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Spirit. *R/: Amen.*

**May the Lord of life, who conquered sin and death, be always
with you.** *R/: And also with you.*

Friends in Christ, when our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, he scattered the powers of darkness, and by the light of faith enabled us to see the glory to which we are all called. We now ask God's blessing on these candles, and pray that God will inflame us with the hope that brings us to the feast of eternal light.

Let us pray...(pause) God of all life and light, through our faith in the Risen Christ, the Light of the world, we share in the light of your glory. Bless these candles + and make them holy. Fill our hearts with the light of faith so that we may walk clearly in the path of goodness. We ask this in the name of Jesus our Light. R/: Amen.

MC makes the following comments about the Easter Candle:

MC

The Easter Candle is a symbol of Christ. It is adorned with grains of incense to mark the wounds that Christ endured. The marks of Christ's sufferings are now the emblems of his victory. So shall he transform all our sufferings and reward those who are faithful to him. Now the Church lights will be turned off to allow the light of Christ to shine in our midst.

The church lights are dimmed or shut off and the PRES lights the Easter candle from the sanctuary lamp flame (or from a match/lighter) and then says:

Presider

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

After the Easter Candle is lighted, the acolytes and other processional ministers light their small candles and begin distributing the light to the congregation. While the light is distributed the choir either sings an appropriate song or an instrumental is played. During the song or instrumental, while the light is being distributed, the PRES enthrones the Easter Candle. Once all candles are lighted, the music concludes and the Missionary continues with a meditation, "Saying Goodbye to Loved Ones Who Have Died." The meditation takes about 10 minutes. Afterwards, the Presider comes to the pulpit and leads the following prayer...

Presider

My brothers and sisters, with joy in the Risen Christ, let us turn to our God in prayer. Please respond to each petition "We are the light of the World."

- + **That pastors may lead in faith and serve in love the flock entrusted to their care, we pray to the Lord... R/**
- + **That the entire world community may rejoice in the blessing of true peace, the peace, Christ promised we pray to the Lord... R/**
- + **That our suffering brothers and sisters may have their sorrow turned into lasting joy, we pray to the Lord... R/**
- + **That our parish community may have the faith and strength to bear witness to Christ's resurrection, we pray to the Lord... R/**
- + **Let each of us now, in the silence of our hearts, pray to our God, who knows the secrets of every heart. (Pause) We pray to the Lord... R/**

Loving and beloved Creator of all life and light, you offer to each of us the gift of faith. May we no longer live in darkness. Increase our faith so that we, who bear these candles, may walk in the light without fear of the darkness. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Light. R/: Amen.

The M.C. asks everyone to raise his or her candles and repeat a simple litany after him. The Church lights are turned back on and the MC asks people to extinguish their candles and to hold on to them until the wax hardens.

PRAYER OVER THE PREACHER: The preacher for the evening kneels in the center of the sanctuary and the members of the procession encircle him, placing their hands on his shoulders to pray for the Spirit's guidance. While hands are being imposed, the PRES invites everyone to silently join him in prayer as he says:

Presider

Heavenly God, your light is strength for us, your people. May your light fill Father Kevin's heart and mind to proclaim your forgiving peace and tender healing. Open our ears and hearts to hear and accept the gentle strength of your light and love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Light. R/: Amen.

SERMON: The sermon is followed by the reconciliation service. The Pastor may want to introduce the priests who are hearing confessions and where each will be located.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE: The Preacher in conjunction with the Pastor, will have determined ahead of time precisely how many extra confessors are needed and where they will be situated. During the actual period of confessions, it is recommended that the music ministry sing hymns or provide instrumental music. There should be no congregational music at his time. Because of the nature of this part of the mission service, there is no formal procession out of ministers.

THIRD NIGHT SERVICE

SYMBOL: Altar - We are God's servants; called into ministry and sent forth to proclaim God's Word and kingdom.

MINISTERS:	<u>In Procession</u>	<u>Others</u>
	Bible Bearer	Greeters & Ushers
	Candle Bearer	Musicians
	Acolytes	Master of Ceremonies: "MC"
	Lector	Altar Cloth Bearer
	Concelebrants	Gift Presenters
	Deacon (?)	Eucharistic Ministers
	Presider (Pastor): "PRES"	

PREPARATION: Have ministers and ALL INVOLVED (it is not necessary to have gift presenters and Eucharistic Ministers present since they do what they normally do at a weekend Mass) meet in the sacristy a half hour before the start of the service for a rehearsal. Have Bible, Easter Candle and Altar Cloths (altar is stripped and uncluttered) ready as well as places of enthronement. Since the Bible will be carried in procession, the Lectionary will not be carried in procession (duplication of symbols).

WELCOME: *When the processional ministers are ready at the rear of the Church, the MC (the Missionary) welcomes the people, makes introductions, announces the entrance hymn, and asks the congregation to remain seated throughout the opening procession.*

ENTRANCE HYMN... PROCESSION... ENTHRONEMENT: *The ministers process in while the entrance hymn is sung. The Bible and Easter Candle are enthroned one at a time. After all symbols are enthroned, the PRES, Deacon (?) and concelebrants enter the sanctuary, reverence the altar and go to appropriate places. When the clergy enter the sanctuary, all bearers move to a place in the assembly. The entrance hymn should conclude once the PRES arrives at his chair. Because of the length of the procession, Mass could begin with the Opening Prayer.*

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS: *After the readings and sermon and once the petitions are concluded, the Altar Cloth Bearer processes down the center aisle, enters the sanctuary and dresses the altar. During the dressing of the altar, the collection begins. By the time the altar is dressed, the collection should be completed and presented together with the bread and wine by the bearers of the same.*

POST COMMUNION: *After the Communion Prayer, the PRES may wish to express his gratitude for everyone's cooperation, participation, and hard work towards the success of the mission, etc.*

FINAL BLESSING:

PRESIDER: **The Lord be with you.** *R/: And a/so with you*

PRES or Deacon **Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.** *(Pause)*

+

Missionary gives special Redemptorist Blessing for the end of a mission.

+

R/: Amen.

DISMISSAL:**PRESIDER**

My friends in Christ, by the power invested in me by our Bishop _____, I commission you to go forth and to preach the Gospel by your words and actions to your family and relatives, your neighbors and friends, your co-workers and each other. Be a light for the world. Always be a witness to Jesus.

PRES or Deacon:

Our Mission has just begun: Go now in the peace and strength of Christ. *R/: Thanks be to God.*

Notes for The Presider

- Suggested Mass prayers are "For the Spread of the Gospel" and preface, or Unity of Christians
- Readings by choice of the preacher or seasonal.
- The homily will be about 20 minutes.
- Prayer of the Faithful may be done spontaneously OR prepared beforehand by the Presider, deacon, or missionary, reflecting the message of the homily and the overall mission.
- **The offering (collection) is for the Redemptorists and their missions.**

Daily Mission Check List of Items Needed*

First Evening:

- Large Bible for procession and enthronement
- A place to enthrone the Bible (An additional decorated lectern OR music stand)
- A Censor and Boat (incense)
- Ministers for the service
- People to do transportation and baby sitting
- People to provide and serve refreshments (optional)
- A typed list of ministers and songs for the service for the Missionary

Second Evening:

- Large Bible and Easter (Paschal) Candle
- Places for enthronement
- Individual candles for congregation
- Ministers for the service
- People to do transportation and baby-sitting
- People to provide and serve refreshments (optional)
- A typed list of ministers and music for the service for the Missionary

Third Evening:

- Large Bible, Easter Candle, and folded altar clothes (the altar needs to be stripped of everything prior to the service)
- Places for enthronement
- Ministers for the service
- People to do transportation and baby sitting
- People to provide and serve refreshments (optional)
- A typed list of ministers and music for the service for the Missionary (Preferably handed in by Sunday).
- Perhaps a Mission keepsake to be handed out on last night

* For the daily morning Mass, please ensure the participation of Music, Lector, and Eucharistic Ministers; refreshments afterwards (optional) would be desirable for interactivity and community building.

Guidelines for Music Ministers

Music greatly enhances worship. Your ministry contributes to the overall success of the mission experience. Know we count on your ministry as well as your knowledge and familiarity with the mission services.

A key element of each evening service is to involve the people, including the singing wherever such participation is mentioned and requested. In the spirit of evangelization, consider forming a choir of school children and a choir of CCD children to sing during the mission.

Please review the services for each night. Wherever music is desired, please choose music that both fits the service's symbol and theme and which people know and sing relatively well. On the next page is a **sample** of selections from some other parishes.

Soft music starting fifteen to ten minutes before the service is desirable. This will help to create a prayerful atmosphere for people as they arrive.

Because of the length of the entrance procession and the enthronement of symbols, please continue the congregational singing or music until the celebrant for the night is in place to begin the service. Likewise, there are times throughout services when the celebrant will pass through the assembly or the people will be coming forward or members of the congregation will be receiving something. At these times, please make sure there is music as instructed and outlined in each service throughout the duration of the movement until all ministers are in positions to continue the service.

After each night's sermon we request some meditative music. This music should not be congregational but either instrumental or a solo.

The last evening's Eucharistic celebration should compare musically to what the community is accustomed to at Sunday Mass, musically and otherwise.

Weekday morning Eucharistic liturgies should follow what the parish normally celebrates musically.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Mission Committee Chairperson, who will be in regular communication with one of the missionaries.

Thank you for all your good ministry. We look forward to celebrating the mission with you.

SUGGESTED MISSION SONGS

Service Night 1

Salvation * God's Living Word * Love

Beautiful Savior (Music: ST. ELIZABETH)
 Come to Me (Gregory Norbet)
 Gather us Together (Owen Alstott)
 Glory and Praise to Our God (Dan Schutte)
 God Is Love (Music: ABBOTT'S LEIGH)
 How Great Thou Art
 I Have Loved You (Michael Joncas)
 Isaiah 49 (Carey Landry)
 Lift Up Your Hearts (Roc O'Connor, S.J.)
 Love Divine All Loves Excelling
 O God You Search Me (Bernadette Farrell)
 Remember Your Love (Ducote & Daigle)
 Seek Ye First (Karen Lafferty)
 The Cry of The Poor (John Foley, S.J.)
 What Wondrous Love Is This
 Where Charity and Love Prevail
 Word of God (Bernadette Farrell)
 Word of God, Your Spoke Creation (Music:
 NETTLETON)
 You Are Mine (David Haas)
 Your Words Are Spirit and Life (B. Farrell)

Service Night 2

Sin * Reconciliation * Healing

Blest Are They (David Haas)
 Christ Be Our Light (Bernadette Farrell)
 Come to Us O God (Barbara Bridge)
 God Be in My Head (Grayson Warren
 Brown)
 Hosea (Gregory Norbet)
 I Will Be Your God (Gerard Chiusano)
 Loving and Forgiving (Scott Soper)
 O God You Search Me (Bernadette Farrell)
 Remember Your Love (Ducote & Daigle)
 Seek the Lord (Roc O'Connor, S.J.)
 Show Us Your Mercy (Mark Friedman)
 Turn to Me (John Foley, S.J.)
 We Are the Light Of The World (Grief)
 You Are Near (Dan Schutte)

Service Night 3

The Altar * Jesus pouring Himself out for us * Living for Others

Celtic Alleluia: Sending Forth (C. Walker)
 Gather and Remember (Music: FINLANDIA)
 Here I Am Lord (Dan Schutte)
 Lord Who At Thy First Eucharist (Music: UNDE ET MEMORES)
 One Spirit One Church (Music: Kevin Keil)
 Table of Plenty (Dan Schutte)
 Take The Word of God With You (C. Walker)
 The Church's One Foundation (Music: AURELIA)
 The Servant Song (Richard Gillard)

Suggested Ideas for After the Mission

Some older Catholics recall missions from days past. Chances are their recollection is not all pleasant! Many parishioners and committee members may not be familiar with what a parish mission is at all. Hopefully the pages of this handbook will help you and your Mission Committee better understand what happens at a mission.

Evidently people in the parish, the Pastor, Pastoral Council, Parish Staff, or groups of parishioners, believe a mission is something that would benefit your faith community. We encourage the Mission Committee and other preparatory committees to spend some time dreaming in response to the question of what each person would like to see happen in our parish as a result of the mission. Keep a record of these dreams. Then, experience the mission before reconvening and re-asking yourselves what you would like to see happen in your parish now as a result of the mission experience. The possibilities are endless and are only limited by the giftedness of each parishioner.

The following are some ways that other parishes have kept the mission alive:

- Form groups to share faith (Renew, Christ Renews His Parish and so on).
- Assist parishioners in giving special emphasis to matrimony, family life and prayer.
- Draw up a parish time-and-talent survey in a spirit of stewardship with a well-planned and clear implementation.
- Look at the possibility of some new and needed parish ministry for the period of a year.
- Organize retreats or days of recollection for parishioners and parish groups.
- Organize Bible Study groups (Little Rock, Share the Word, and so on) to deepen knowledge of Scripture.

Thank you for having a Redemptorist mission in your parish.

Rev. Kevin MacDonald, C.Ss.R.
The Redemptorists
www.redemptoristmission.com