

Level: High School/Adult

Bible Verse: "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" (Isaiah 6:8)

Objectives:

- Identify what it means to be sent by God
- Explore how one person has answered God's call to be sent to evangelize
- Challenge students to participate with OCMC to send missionaries
- Act by collecting funds in the Mission Coin Boxes throughout Great Lent to support this work

Overview:

- Opening Prayer
- Icebreaker - Volunteer for the Unknown
- Activity #1 - Read and discuss the Bible Verse, Isaiah 6:8
- Activity #2 - Read and discuss the story of Sending Savas
- Activity #3 - Assemble OCMC coin boxes

Materials: Items for icebreaker (see Icebreaker activity section)

Pray: *God of truth, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, hear our prayer for those who do not know You, that they may come to a saving knowledge of the truth and that Your Name may be praised among all peoples of the world. Sustain, inspire, and enlighten Your servants who bring them the Gospel. Bring fresh vigor to wavering faith; sustain our faith when it is still fragile. Continually renew missionary zeal in us and in the Church, and raise up new missionaries who will follow You to the ends of the world. Make us witnesses to Your goodness, full of love, strength, and faith for Your glory and the salvation of the entire world. Amen.*

Icebreaker: Volunteer for the Unknown

Ahead of time, gather a few items, one of which would be a "treat" for the students to receive (ex. candy) and one which would be less desirable (ex. packet of mustard).

Ask for a student to volunteer, but don't tell them what they are volunteering to get. Select one volunteer, thank them for volunteering, and give them the undesirable item. Then ask for a second volunteer. The students will likely need some coaxing this time around. This time, thank the new volunteer and give them the treat item.

Explain that when we volunteer to serve the Church through missions, we don't know what we will get. No matter what, though, our service to others is needed.

Activity #1: Bible Verse

"I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" (Isaiah 6:8)

Read the verse together. If desired, you may also wish to read chapter 6 of Isaiah in its entirety.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Isaiah answered God's call? How do you think you would react if you were in Isaiah's place?
2. Why might God call us to His service? How can we hear His call?
3. What does it mean to be sent as a missionary?

Note that missionaries around the world have answered God's call to be sent to bring His message to people.

Activity #2: Sending Savas

God calls all of us to live out our Christian faith in different ways. When we answer His call, amazing things can happen! This is exactly what is happening today with a young man named Savas, from the country of East Timor.

Timor is an island in Southeast Asia. The west part of the island is part of Indonesia. The east part is its own country, East Timor. The island is about the same size as the US state of Maryland. Over 3 million people live on Timor.

Savas grew up in East Timor as a shepherd and took care of buffalo and goats there. He also loved playing soccer, even though he usually lost. As a child, Savas wasn't involved in church. He was never interested in praying or reading from the Bible. This all changed, however, thanks to a friend of his who taught him how to pray.

With his friend's help, Savas started to pray every day. Once he began praying, he noticed that his life was changing. He began winning every soccer competition he entered. After that, he decided to dedicate his life to prayer and serving God.

Savas wanted to serve the Church in Timor, and so he started helping with the local Orthodox mission. Savas felt that God was calling him to this work, and, just like Isaiah the Prophet, Savas answered God's call.

He realized that he needed to learn more about Orthodoxy, however, and so in 2014 he traveled to the city of Medan, Indonesia. There, he studied the Orthodox Christian faith at the theological school. Finally, in 2018, he graduated from that school, was ordained a deacon and then a priest, and came back to his home country of East Timor, where he is building up the Church.

When he first started to pray, Savas had no idea that he would someday become a priest and help share his faith with the people on his home island. Amazing things happen when we follow God's call and go where He is sending us!

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important for people like Savas to share his faith?
2. How can we participate along with the missionaries whom God sends into the world?

Activity #3: Assemble the OCMC Coin Boxes

Discuss how these funds will be used to support the ministries of the Mission Center to send people who have answered God's call. Send the boxes home with the students and ask them to fill them and return the boxes at a time you decide upon. Encourage the students to pray for OCMC missionaries and mission priests regularly.