

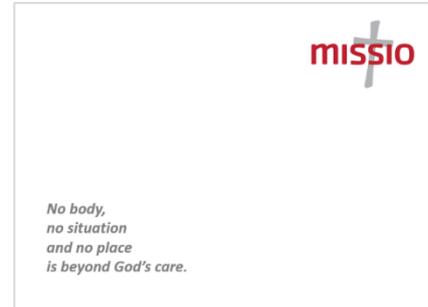
# Discipleship & Mission Workshop Notes



## HOLDING SLIDE

This workshop lasts up to 50 minutes. We recommend you deliver the whole workshop but please use the slides and script as time and circumstances allow.

**To reduce time, omit extension suggestions. Slides 4 and 5 are also optional.**



## INTRODUCTION

This workshop has been prepared by Missio, the Catholic Church's official charity to support overseas mission. In it we will:

1. Develop our understanding of discipleship and mission.
2. Consider our call to be missionary disciples.
3. Find out about the work Missio does to support modern day missionary disciples.

## SLIDE TWO

Let's begin by looking at this quotation.

*'Dear young people... Jesus invites us to build together the civilization of love, as His disciples and missionaries, here and now.'* Pope Francis



## EXTENSION QUESTION

- What do you think Pope Francis means by a 'civilization of love'?
- With whom and how do we build this 'civilization of love'?

These questions can be discussed in pairs /small groups first and responses shared with the class.

This quotation is taken from a speech given by Pope Francis ahead of a special meeting of young people in Rome in October 2018.

Pope Francis called this meeting because he recognises that young people will not only determine the future of the Church, but as modern day disciples can determine the future of the world.

[\*Click to reveal photos of teenage St Mother Theresa and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.\*](#)

If you're thinking it is unlikely that young people can determine the future of the world, let's consider the impact these teenage disciples had.

This is **Agnes** Gonxha (Gonya) Bojaxhiu (Boyatcha). Agnes left her home in Albania at 18, to become a missionary nun in Ireland. Here she changed her name to Sr Theresa.

Later she moved to India where she witnessed terrible suffering. Moved with compassion she determined to spend her life serving the poor and the sick, as Jesus did. Due to the love she gave to many, in time she become known as..? **Mother Theresa.**

As a disciple of Christ, the now Saint Mother Theresa would go on to change the lives of millions.

Or consider this teenage boy, born in Germany in 1906. Around the age of 12 he believed that God was calling him to become a pastor. He didn't ignore this call but followed it and went on to study theology (the study of God) at college. In his early twenties became...? **Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer.**

**Question** – Can anyone tell us about Pastor Bonhoeffer and what he did in Germany in the 1940s?

**Answer** - Pastor Bonhoeffer spoke out bravely against Hitler. He saved the lives of hundreds of Jews and reminded thousands that being a disciple of Christ means defending the dignity of every person whatever their background, whatever their faith and whatever the cost.

Because of his opposition to the Nazi party, Pastor Bonhoeffer was executed in 1945.

### SLIDE THREE

Saint Mother Theresa and Dietrich Bonhoeffer are examples of modern day disciples who read the Bible as young people, reflected on what God was saying to them, recognized the needs around them, and chose to become missionary disciples.

It is possible that amongst the Bible passages that influenced them both are those we will look at now.

Let's think about these passages might be saying **to us today** about discipleship.



**'As he was walking along by the Lake of Galilee he saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew casting a net in the lake - for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Come after me and I will make you into fishers of people.'"** *Mark 1: 16-17(NJV)*

**Question** – Who is calling whom in this passage?

In Jesus' day, Rabbis (religious teachers) were greatly honoured. A person would approach a Rabbi and ask to be their disciple, knowing that they could be turned down if the Rabbi didn't consider them worthy.

Jesus turns this Jewish custom around. He gives honour to these simple fishermen – who many would consider unworthy – by seeing in them the potential to be great disciples.

They are to start where they are, sent out by Christ to share God's love with their family, friends and neighbours.

**EXTENSION REFLECTION** – to be discussed in small groups or undertaken as a private reflection.

- Can you recall a time when someone has seen potential in you and invited you to do something you'd not done before e.g. plan an event, join a team, read at Mass?
- Did you trust in the faith they had in you?
- What did you learn from doing / not doing it?

**SLIDE FOUR – To shorten the workshop omit slides 4 & 5**

***'He summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs, giving them authority over unclean spirits.'*** *Mark 6: 7*

In this passage Jesus invites his disciples to push out of their comfort zone. To move beyond their home region so as to share God's love with strangers.



**Question** – Why do you think Jesus sends his disciples out in pairs?

Every task is made easier when we work with others and God's kingdom in particular can never be built alone. God's kingdom isn't a physical place, but the world we create when we live as Christ taught - in relationship with others.

We catch glimpses of the kingdom when we are in environments where others treat one another with respect, when people are forgiving, seek justice, are kind and build peace.

**EXTENSION REFLECTION** – to be discussed in small groups or undertaken as a private reflection.

- Thinking of the definition of God's kingdom cited above, have you ever caught a glimpse of God's kingdom?
- If so, what (or who) made it a place of respect, forgiveness, justice, mercy and peace?

## SLIDE FIVE

**'And he said to them, "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation."' Mark 16:15 (NJV)**

**Question** – Why is this instruction more of a challenge than the previous two?

In this passage Jesus sends his disciples way out of their comfort zone so as to share the message of Christ and the love of God with the whole world and with all creation.

But after three years learning from Jesus and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, they now have the confidence and faith to do just that. They have become missionary disciples.

The words **'missionary, mission'** originally comes from the Latin word **'mittere'** which literally means **'to send out'**.

As he did with his first disciples, God sends each one of us out into the world to be missionaries of love to all people, everywhere.



**EXTENSION REFLECTION** – to be discussed in small groups or undertaken as a private reflection.

- Have you been asked to do something, or would like to do something, that is way out of your comfort zone?
- What or who could help you achieve it?
- Could prayer and faith strengthen you?

## SLIDE SIX

The world needs and will always need of missionary disciples like St Mother Theresa and Pastor Bonhoeffer, sent out to challenge and change injustices.

**Question** - What situations can you think of that need changing today? Think close to home and far away.

**Click to reveal examples: bullying, homelessness, loneliness, poverty.**

**Question** - If you were able to create a modern day disciple to change and challenge situations like these, what are values and attributes that person would need e.g. justice, compassion.

Work with your neighbour(s) to come up with at least five.

**Unless you are undertaking the activity (next page), invite responses and list on a whiteboard.**



**EXTENSION ACTIVITY - Drawing out discipleship:** *needs flip chart / whiteboard and pens. On the flip chart / whiteboard draw a large outline of a figure.*

This is going to be your modern day disciple. What I'd like you to do is to provide this disciple with the values and attributes you feel they'll need to change today's world.

*Invite one student to come forward to write the values and attributes students have listed around or inside the disciple. Each suggestion wins the chance to add an accessory to the figure.*

*Invite another student to add accessories / symbols that illustrate the value given - e.g. ears for a good listener, heart for kindness. The class can suggest ideas.*

*By the end of the activity the 'disciple' may resemble a man / woman or look quite a state! Emphasize that a disciple's appearance is irrelevant - it is by their love that they are known.*

- Take a good look at the values and attributes you've listed. How many of them do you recognise in yourself?
- Reflect upon those you possess. Now for a few seconds bring to mind a challenging situation going on around you, e.g. a friendship fall-out.
- Think about how that situation could be changed if you employed your values and attributes.
- Think about how the world could be changed if, as disciples and missionaries, you employed your values, your attributes and your faith.

## SLIDE SEVEN

Missio supports the work of modern day disciples who are changing the world in areas of poverty or turmoil.

Missio is the Pope's official charity for overseas mission and this (on screen) is Missio's collection box.

Through prayer and donations, Missio's supporters help missionary priests, nuns and lay people who are committed to sharing God's love by providing spiritual and practical care to all in need, regardless of background or belief.

***Read out the examples below, or skip the list and use the extension resource.***

On screen are some missionaries and projects, supported by Missio (clockwise from top left):



- **Sr Ruby** – provides medical and food supplies to those living in poverty on tea plantations in the remote highlands of Sri Lanka
- **Fr Henry** – provides young men living in poverty with safe accommodation, daily meals, and access to education. For more information see the Missio Film ‘Pirimiti Boys’
- **Sr Sonia** – helped set up and run a health clinic and feeding programme in rural Malawi
- **Fr Frans** – lives and works in India’s slums. With the help of Missio, Fr Frans set up a health centre, community garden and school, to support those living in poverty
- **Sr Eulie** - set up and manages the Lindalva Centre for children living in Phnom Penh’s slums, Cambodia.

**EXTENSION RESOURCE – Film:** exploring the life-changing work of a missionary sister.

Sr Eulie (on screen, to the right of the Red Box), is a missionary nun who set up and manages the Lindalva Centre for children living in poverty in Cambodia. We can find out more about Sr Eulie and her work as a missionary by watching this short film.

<https://youtu.be/RuQQw9UHbKA>

## SLIDE EIGHT

You could be a missionary disciple too, by sharing God’s love with those around you and with those far away. Supporting Missio enables you to do this.

By offering what we can at home, we can help Sr Eulie and other missionaries care for those most in need overseas.

Prayer is also an important part of being a missionary disciple.

It reminds us that even if a situation seems beyond our control we don’t turn away, we turn to God, trusting - as Mother Theresa and Pastor Bonhoeffer did - that with God’s grace change can happen.

It’s apt then, that we conclude our workshop by saying the prayer on screen together:

**Have one voice lead the prayer and ask students to respond with the text in bold italics.**

Lord Jesus, you call us to be missionary disciples.

Guide and strengthen us - ***to share your love with all we meet.***

Give us courage - ***to reach out to help others.***

Give us wisdom - ***to know how best to care.***

And give us hope - ***to believe we can make a difference.***

Bless all missionaries who bring your compassion and mercy to the poor and marginalised.

***Together, may we make known your love on earth. Amen.***

