

Assembly: St Francis Xavier – Patron of Missionaries

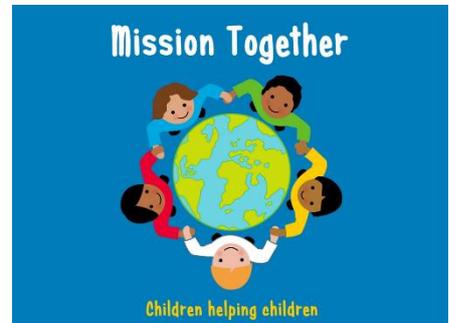


LEADER'S NOTES & HOLDING SLIDE

As Christians, we all have a mission: to share God's love with the whole world. No one is too young or too small to take part. Through Mission Together, children everywhere pray for and share with one another in a unique exchange of love and friendship. By praying for one another and sharing what we have, we belong to God's worldwide family.

This assembly focuses on St Francis Xavier, who fulfilled his mission to share the message of God's love around the world and serve those most in need. By following his example children can become missionaries of God's love, too.

This assembly contains animations. It is advisable you run through the presentation, using the slides, before delivering the assembly.



SLIDE TWO

Does anyone recognise the painting of the saint on the slide?

Answer: It's St Francis Xavier.

If we look carefully at this painting, we can learn a few things about St Francis. What can you see?

We can see that St Francis is looking up to the sky and there are flames near his heart. This is to show us that Francis loved Jesus dearly – his heart burned for him – and he looked up to God our Father in heaven for guidance and strength.

The painting also shows St Francis pointing to a map with one hand, with the other he's gesturing to the sea. This is to show us that St Francis was a great missionary.

A missionary is someone sent out with the important job of sharing God's love around the world.

When St Francis was alive, 500 years ago, travelling around the world wasn't as easy as it is today.

Click to reveal image of ship.

To travel overseas people had to journey by ship, and ships in St Francis Xavier's day looked like this. Sailing could be very dangerous and slow. Journeys could take weeks or even months!

Travel was also difficult because 500 years ago some parts of the world hadn't been discovered. That means that maps were not accurate and sometimes people like St Francis were travelling into lands that very few people had visited before.



What kind of qualities do you think Francis had?

Suggestions could include: brave, adventurous, faithful, generous.

Let's find out more about brave St Francis with a few facts that can help us become mini missionaries too.

SLIDE THREE

FACT ONE: 'Francis Xavier became a saint with the help of his friend, Ignatius.'

As a boy Francis loved sports and he loved to learn. He wanted to be an athlete or a professor when he grew up. As a young man he went to university to pursue his ambitions and there he met another student called Ignatius.

Francis and Ignatius became firm friends. Ignatius could see all that was good within Francis and encouraged Francis to use his knowledge and faith to share God's love in the world.

Ignatius believed that he and Francis could do great things with God's help. So much so that Ignatius set up a special club called the Society of Jesus, and he asked Francis and five other students to join.

The members of the society of Jesus all became priests and dedicated their lives to telling people about Jesus, caring for the sick, and helping the poor.

Francis and Ignatius dedicated the rest of their lives to sharing God's love with people around the world. For this reason, they both became saints.

A saint is somebody that lets God's light shine through them by devoting their lives to loving God and serving others.

Click for question.

How will you encourage your friends to share God's love with others?

Suggestions could include: encouraging someone to share, to be kind, to forgive those who've caused hurt.

SLIDE FOUR

FACT TWO: 'St Francis taught people about Jesus through song.'

Soon after the Society of Jesus was formed, Ignatius asked Francis to travel to Africa and then India to tell people about Jesus and help those in need.

Francis didn't hesitate to make the long and difficult journey over the seas, but when he arrived he faced another obstacle. He couldn't speak foreign languages.

Francis cleverly came up with a solution. He would teach the people, and especially children, through song.



Mission Together

FACT ONE

'Francis Xavier became a saint with the help of his friend, Ignatius.'

How will you encourage your friends to share God's love with others?

missio



Mission Together

FACT TWO

St Francis taught people about Jesus through song.

How can you use music and song to share the message of God's love?

missio

[Click for question.](#)

How can you use music and song to share the message of God's love?

Suggestions could include: singing hymns and carols at school, in church, and at home.

SLIDE FIVE

FACT THREE: 'St Francis asked children to help him share God's love.'

Francis saw that the children wanted to learn about Jesus through songs and by following his example.

The children watched how Francis cared for sick people and how he helped others understand how special all people are to God.

Francis wasn't in a place long before there were too many sick or lonely people asking for his help. So he would ask children to help.

St Francis would ask children to visit the sick and encourage family members to take care of poorly relatives.

Saint Francis taught the children to have a special care for sick people and to remind them how close God was to them.

[Click for question.](#)

The children wanted to learn more about Jesus. How will you find out about God today?

Suggestions could include: we can find out about God by reading Bible stories, saying our prayers, and listening to stories about Jesus from our teachers, parents, grandparents and priests.



Mission Together

FACT THREE
St Francis asked children to help him share God's love.

How will you find out about God today?

missio

The slide features a blue header with the title 'Mission Together'. On the left is a colorful illustration of St. Francis holding a staff and a bird. On the right, there is a small illustration of a woman sitting on the ground with several children around her. The 'missio' logo is in the bottom left corner, and a small circular logo is in the bottom right corner.

SLIDE SIX

FACT FOUR: 'St Francis cared for the poor and oppressed.'

Following the example of Jesus, St Francis lived alongside the poor and those treated unfairly. Francis used to stand up for the slaves when he saw them being bullied by their slave masters and he cared for them when they were hurt.

In this way St Francis reminds us that all people should be treated with respect and care, because in God's eyes we are loved and valued beyond measure.

[Click for question.](#)

How can we show respect to the people we meet?



Mission Together

FACT FOUR
St Francis cared for the poor and oppressed.

How can we show respect to the people we meet?

missio

The slide features a blue header with the title 'Mission Together'. On the left is a colorful illustration of St. Francis holding a staff and a cross. On the right, there is a small illustration of a boy and a girl standing together. The 'missio' logo is in the bottom left corner, and a small circular logo is in the bottom right corner.

Suggestions could include: by being welcoming, listening carefully to what people have to say, being polite, using good manners.

SLIDE SEVEN

In just over ten years St Francis Xavier had shared God's love in Europe, Africa, Indonesia, India and Japan.

In all those places he helped people to discover that they can be missionaries too: by becoming friends with God, through prayer, by following the example of Jesus, by respecting and caring for others.

St Francis believed that no one is too young or too small to play their part in fulfilling their mission.

These are the reasons Francis Xavier was made patron saint of missionaries by the Pope in 1927

What is your mission?

Suggest the children can pray for children around the world to be safe, happy and healthy. Prayer is not just talking to God. It also involves listening. Perhaps the class can have a regular moment of silence to get into the habit of listening to God; that way the children will better understand what their mission is. Tell them not to expect to hear a voice but, rather to have a sense of God's presence.

Many children around the world follow in St Francis Xavier's footsteps. They are fulfilling their mission to love God and serve others by being part of Mission Together.

Through Mission Together they pray for, and share with, other children living in poverty overseas. Children like:

SLIDE EIGHT

Eight-year-old Sandra had to leave her home in Iraq because there was fighting there. Now she lives in Jordan while she waits to find a new home in a country that is safe and peaceful.

Mission Together helped to buy her a daily drink and snack and school books.

[Click to show photo and cartoon of Johannes.](#)

Johannes lives in South Africa. He needs special care, so he lives in a care centre with other children.

Thanks to Mission Together, Johannes is looked after by three religious Sisters. The Sisters make sure the children stay healthy and teach them about God's love for the world and all the people in it.

[Click to show cartoon and photo.](#)



Eunice lives on a remote coffee plantation in Kenya. In the past she often didn't get to school because she had to work with her mum, picking coffee beans to earn money to buy food for the family.

Now that Mission Together has helped to set up a feeding programme at school, Eunice can go to school and learn how to read and write.

Click to show cartoon and photo.

In Cambodia, some parents are too poor to send their children to school. This means that while their parents are at work, children are locked in their homes or left to wander the streets. This puts the children at risk.

Mission Together helped Sr Eulie to set up the Lindalva Centre. At the centre Sr Eulie gives the children lunch and teaches them how to read and write. She also tells them about God's love for them and for us.

Click to show photo.

There are many children like you in England and Wales, who live out their mission to love God and serve others by praying and by sharing what they have through Mission Together to help children living in poverty overseas.

SLIDE NINE

Let's follow in the footsteps of St Francis Xavier now by finishing our time together with a prayer.

It is the Mission Together prayer that children all over England and Wales say for children everywhere.

May all children

In the world

Share love

Share friendship and live

In the peace

Of God's love.

Now and forever.

Amen



The image of St Francis Xavier on slide 5 is used courtesy of the artist, Jen Norton.

www.JenNortonArtStudio.com

Catholic School Posters and more: www.zazzle.com/jennortonartstudio