

**MODERN WITNESSES TO THE POWER  
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** |



Paul, Timothy, Stephen and Lydia were witnesses to the Good News of the Gospel in the early days of the Church.

In today's world, there are those who, with the power of the Holy Spirit, are prepared to be witnesses to God's love.

When Pope Benedict XVI came on a State Visit to the United Kingdom in 2010, outside Westminster Cathedral he met up with representatives of the young people from England and Wales.

A young man, Paschal Uche, was chosen to speak on behalf of the youth. Read his speech on the next slide.

Dear Holy Father,

It is a privilege and a great pleasure to welcome you on behalf of young Catholics from England, Wales and Scotland. Your visit brings us together – it is like a family reunion - and we are very pleased to see you.

My name is Paschal Uche and I am from St Francis' Parish in East London. Gathered here today are two and a half thousand young people representing almost every parish in the country. Like many here I have been actively involved in the Church serving the elderly in Lourdes and going on retreat.

I know that others help in Confirmation sessions, parish music groups, youth groups, and projects serving those who are disadvantaged.

We are a truly living Church that offers great opportunities for young people to encounter the love of Christ and share it.

Pope John Paul II said that our faith is a “noble and authentic adventure” and we really want other young people to experience this.

It is our prayer that your visit inspires us to be “saints of the third millennium.”

Holy Father we would like to ask you to bless for us a candle stand, which we hope will be a symbol for Catholic Youth Ministry. It has been thoughtfully designed for use in prayer, teaching and meditation.

For many of us before today you were a face on the television or a picture in a Church but today we behold you face to face and on behalf of the Catholic youth of this great nation I would like to express my profound and heartfelt gratitude for your visit.

May God Bless you.


## **Mrs. Maricho is a witness**

Mrs. Maricho is a modern missionary, who grew up in the capital city of the Philippines, Manila. She had a good job in the city, but she wasn't completely happy. She remembered that, as a young girl, she had been part of an organisation called Mission Together, and she remembered its motto of '*Children helping Children*'. As an adult, she thought about this a lot and decided that she still wanted to help children. So, she gave up her job, trained as a teacher, and moved to an island called Natandol where many of the children needed help.

On the island, you will often see children and women around, but not many men. Some of the men have travelled overseas to work, while others are fishermen and are out at sea during the day. The island is very green, with lots of trees, so the people can grow some fruit, but not enough for everyone. There is no electricity or fresh water supply on Natandol. Men from the island go by boat to the neighbouring island to collect water, and it is then shared around the island by a man on a bike.

This is the school on the island where the children have all of their lessons. Mrs. Maricho is the only teacher and there is only one classroom. The children attend school in shifts. Around 600 children go to school here, so they have lessons for about forty at a time. There are three shifts per day (7.30- 10.30, 11:00-1:00, 2:00-5:00) and each child might only attend one shift per week.

A group of missionary Sisters helped Mrs. Maricho to set up the school. Mrs. Maricho and the children make everything in the school themselves, from their toys to the posters on the classroom walls. The toys are often made from rubbish the children find on the island. It might not have many resources, but before Mrs. Maricho came to the island, there was no school at all. Mrs. Maricho gave up everything she had to help others and is truly an inspirational person.



Discuss the words 'modern witness'. What do you understand by this?

What impressed you most in what Paschal Uche said?

Why do you think he was chosen to speak?

How do you think he felt speaking in Westminster Cathedral?



What impressed you most about Mrs. Maricho?

How is she a witness?

What would be the most difficult thing Mrs. Maricho would have to cope with?

What difference has her courage and witness made to others?

What do you think gives Mrs Maricho and Paschal Uche their courage?

# TASK

- Mrs Maricho is a modern missionary. Explain how she shares her faith with the community and how it shapes their lives.
- Lydia, Paul and Mrs Maricho all made sacrifices because of their beliefs.
- Identify similarities and differences between their responses to their belief in the message of the Spirit and the courage and risk involved.