

# Princes and princesses -- Mission Sunday thoughts

*By Maryknoll Father William Grimm*

**TOKYO** : Even in Japan, the books and movies of C.S. Lewis' "The Chronicles of Narnia" series are popular. Japanese translations of the books have been available for many years and the recent film versions of two of them have been box office successes.

One of the books, "The Horse and His Boy," is about Shasta, a boy who thinks he is the son of a poor fisherman in the cruel country called Calormen. However, he is really a prince from another land. The book tells of his adventures and how he discovers his true identity and family.

Most of the world's people are like Shasta. They think they live in a cruel world. They think that injustice, pain and death are the real story of the world.

Of course, they have reasons for thinking so. There is much injustice, poverty and suffering in the world. We suffer the physical pain of injury and illness. We suffer the emotional pain of loneliness and lost friendship. We suffer the spiritual pain of facing an unknown future. We and everyone we love will die.

But there are people who know otherwise. They know that they are beloved children of God. They know that this universe is a gift to God's children. They know that God loves them with an unlimited love. They know that not even death is stronger than God's love. They know that they are princes and princesses of the Kingdom of God. They are Christians. They also know that every other human being who has ever lived is also a prince, a princess.

The world suffers because people either do not know or allow themselves to forget who they really are. If we realized who we are and among whom we live, could we continue to treat others and ourselves the way so many do? Would the world be so marred by sin, fear and selfishness as it is?

All people have the right to know who they really are. We Christians have the duty to show them. It is the ultimate demand of justice.

Mission Sunday, which falls on Oct. 18 this year, is a day to recall that wherever a Christian may be, that is a place to do evangelization. It may be in a foreign land or in our own homeland. It may be in Church institutions or in our own homes.

Wherever I am, I can treat others as princes and princesses. I can show them the love of their Father and invite them to believe that they really are princes and princesses of the Kingdom.

In his message for Mission Sunday 2009, Pope Benedict XVI says: "The goal of the Church's mission is to illumine all peoples with the light of the Gospel as they journey through history towards God, so that in Him they may reach their full potential and fulfillment. We should have a longing and a passion to illumine all peoples with the light of Christ that shines on the face of the Church, so that all may be gathered into the one human family, under God's loving fatherhood."

The mission of the Church is to be the evidence of the "full potential and fulfillment" of each person. In our prayer, in our teaching and in our service we must live as confident children of God. Our confidence must be attractive and contagious. We live with joy and hope because we know that just as Shasta's story ends with finding his true family, all people are called to know their true family, the children of God the Father.

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