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Youth quizzing ignites France District

Quizzers thrive in Bible memorization, competition and fellowship



By Erin Ketchum ***What can make a child excited about being part of a church, and passionate about studying God's word?***

In the France District, it's Bible Quizzing.

"A mother came up to me at church on Sunday and shared that her son came up to her earlier that morning and asked if they were going to church," Yacine said. "When the mother answered that they were, the son let out an enthusiastic 'YES!'"

As France is a very secularized country, it is rare for kids to meet other believers outside of their local church. It would be unlikely that any of them have another believer in their grade, or even in their whole school. Through quizzing they are meeting other Christian kids and building relationships beyond their local church, while also memorizing scripture and learning more about the truths and promises of God within the Bible.

Implementing Bible quizzing

At the beginning of the school year, Yacine Monteiro, Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries president for the France District, proposed holding a district-wide quizzing

competition. It had been more than 15 years since the France District had done anything like this. Yet, the Sunday School representatives excitedly embraced the proposal, confident the kids were ready for the challenge.

Six out of the district's nine churches have participated in the quiz meets so far. The quizzers' ages range from three to 19. Teams from each participating congregation were organized as "Petits," "Moyens" and "Grands" groups (or Small, Medium and Big). Each team has three to six contestants. The youngest group of 3- to 5-year-olds participate by memorizing a specific verse, while the other groups are asked to have in-depth knowledge of verses memorized from the assigned chapters.

The leaders are grateful for the quizzing material that the Wesleyan-Holiness Digital Library (<https://www.whdl.org/>) has available in French. Yacine provided quizzing coaches with a copy of *Discovering John: Bible Study and Quizzing for Youth*.

Enthusiasm about quizzing

The Paris 17th congregation hosted the first competition on 19 October 2018. Much to everyone's surprise and delight, more than 70 kids filled the room. Parents and coaches alike were amazed at how the kids answered



Photo right: Yacine Monteiro, France District president of Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries, rallied the district to her vision to launch children and youth quizzing. Photo above: The quizzers excelled beyond the leaders' expectations. Better yet, relationships on the district strengthened.

questions and recited verses without hesitation. It affirmed the vision to reintroduce quizzing on the district.

The Versailles congregation hosted the second competition, also well attended, on 23 February 2019. The Egyptian congregation in Paris hosted the most recent competition on 30 May 2019.

The robust participation included a new team from one of the Paris congregations. For this final meet, Yacine asked that the kids be prepared for five additional bonus questions, in which they would have to complete Bible verses from certain chapters of the book of John. The kids would hear the reference and a beginning part of the verse, and the first to stand would have to complete the verse from memory.

A team member from the Egyptian congregation in the "Moyens" group was unstoppable. Rather than waiting to hear the first words of the bonus verse question, the boy would jump when hearing the verse reference and recite the entire verse from memory.

Announcer Brian Ketchum later said, "This 6-year-old boy had basically memorized two entire chapters of John, word for word. There was no way he knew what verses were going to be used for the bonus questions. He was quite impressive!"

The participating churches demonstrate the pride they take in hosting the meets by decorating their meeting halls and preparing little bags of candy for each child. Yacine provided trophies and medals to award the winning teams and participants for all the hard work they had put into learning Scripture.

Safira Patrascu, mother of two of the quizzers from the Versailles congregation, said that having her kids participate in quizzing "was a really good thing. The kids were able to interact with other churches, usually so isolated. Moreover, they were eager to learn the Word. It was very positive."

Advice for districts considering quizzing

Yacine wants to encourage other districts that are similarly still in process of developing their Sunday School programs with some advice on starting a quizzing program: "The first thing to do is to make the local Sunday School presidents aware of the merits of quizzing. You need to be surrounded by people who share this vision. Then you have to make the young people aware of the playful and competitive side of the ministry. And finally, start with an



exhibition match."

Each competition has come along with its own learning curve. While working hard to follow all the official quizzing procedures and rules they have also learned that they have had to adapt it to the small and diverse district.

Everyone leaves the competition encouraged by what they have accomplished, and eagerly anticipating the next quiz meet.

The main goal is being accomplished: kids are working together in a joyful atmosphere, and excited to learn the word of God. □



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INV  S  BLE
— WORLD —

The sick will be made well

Chumi is among 19 children in Bangladesh to receive medical treatment funded in part by kids' mission offerings

By Bangladesh Nazarene Mission
and Gina Grate Pottenger

***Chumi was unable to move her right arm properly.**

When she was 7 years old, she accidentally burned her arm in a mud oven.

The injury was serious. Her parents tried to arrange surgery, but they failed because they did not have the money to pay for it. They nearly lost hope of ever seeing their daughter's burned arm cured.

But her arm is healed, thanks to kids around the world who raised offerings through the Nazarene Kids Reaching Kids program, of Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International (SDMI).

Chumi (photo right) is one of 19 sick or disabled children in Bangladesh who were chosen for medical treatment or surgery under the Sick and Disabled Children Project.

Chumi was chosen to receive funding for surgery and physical therapy after she had enrolled in her local Nazarene child development center (CDC).

"[Before the surgery], I couldn't move my hand normally. I couldn't do any work with my burnt hand," Chumi said.

She could not play with her friends. And people in her community rejected her. They were repelled by the sight of her poorly healed injury.

"People didn't want to meet my daughter," said her mother. "We also didn't bring her with us when we went to a relative's house to attend any social program or family event, like a religious festival or wedding. But now we can take her to any program."

When the district SDMI listed her name as a potential child for the treatment from this project, a specialist surgeon performed the procedure. Now she can move her hand



much more easily. The doctor gave her some exercises to do regularly, and medicine to take, adding that her recovery will take some time.

Chumi said that people are no longer afraid of her, and she has been accepted in her community and extended family.

Currently she is in the 11th grade. Her dream is to finish her studies and get a good job. She wants to be the light in the darkness of her impoverished family. She expressed gratitude to the Church of the Nazarene and SDMI for their generosity and support for her treatment.

Besides Chumi, six other children received surgeries, including heart surgery and a surgery for cleft lip. All of the 19 chosen children have visited a doctor and many are receiving medicine for diseases, with follow-up doctor visits or treatments included.

"Before starting the treatment of those children we took the signature from their parents/guardians on their consent for their sick child's treatment," said a BNM leader. "We also involved local church leaders and local government representatives with this project." □

**Name changed to protect security*

Not just surviving, but thriving

A child friendly space in Bangladesh provides Rohingya refugee children continued schooling, counseling, nutritious meal

By Bangladesh Nazarene Mission
and Gina Grate Pottenger



*Seven-year-old
*Arpan draws
a sketch of his
grandfather at
the Child Friendly
Space (CFS) he
attends in Cox's
Bazar, Bangladesh.*

*He sketches
his grandfather
because he misses
him so much.*

Arpan is one of more than 400,000 Rohingya children living in one of the world's largest refugee camps, near Bangladesh's border with Myanmar.

When the violent conflict started in the Rakhine region of Myanmar in August 2017, Arpan's family lost their home and everything their family owned when, reportedly, government soldiers burned down their house in an attack on their community. Worse still, Arpan says the soldiers killed his beloved grandfather.

Arpan's parents fled in terror with the boy and his siblings across the border into Bangladesh, like nearly a million other members of the Rohingya people. It took them seven days to reach safety.

"We ate leaves of trees and drank river water to survive," he said.

Arpan misses his school days back home, and he hopes that one day his family can return. However, for now he is able to attend informal school in the camp, through the Bangladesh Nazarene Mission's Child Friendly Space Project, where Arpan experiences care, purpose and hope for each day.

"There is a daily routine in CFS that helps children to regain a sense of normalcy and

recover from the upheaval and violence they have experienced in the conflict," said a BNM leader. "They get the psychosocial support they need to process their grief and loss in their childhood. The children also have been taught basic health and hygiene and life skills, including morality, in a safe and fun environment."

BNM established the project by working with government authorities to secure permissions and land, and to decorate the space with child-friendly materials, furniture and accessories. Then they assessed refugee families to identify 200 children most at risk to enroll in the CFS. BNM screened and hired local, qualified staff to run the CFS, because they speak the refugees' language.

The CFS involves three major interventions. The first is the informal education, designed to keep the children, including Arpan, in regular learning so that when they are allowed to settle permanently, they will be able to re-enroll in mainstream, formal education. Second, health, nutrition and hygiene awareness sessions are offered to the children and adolescent girls. Third, counseling services, with a focus on Christian values and worldview, are available to children who experienced trauma and emotional or mental distress.

"Arpan says that he enjoys drawing, moral stories and rhymes in the CFS," said a BNM leader. "He also likes the meal. It is very rare he misses classes at CFS." □

**Name changed for security reasons.*

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Who are Nazarenes?

We are a Christian people

As members of the Church Universal, we join with all true believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in affirming the historic Trinitarian creeds and beliefs of the Christian faith. We value our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage and believe it to be a way of understanding the faith that is true to Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience.

We are a holiness people

God, who is holy, calls us to a life of holiness. We believe that the Holy Spirit seeks to do in us a second work of grace, called by various terms including "entire sanctification" and "baptism with the Holy Spirit"-cleansing us from all sin, renewing us in the image of God, empowering us to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, and producing in us the character of Christ. Holiness in the life of believers is most clearly understood as Christlikeness.

We are a missional people

We are a sent people, responding to the call of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to go into all the world, witnessing to the Lordship of Christ and participating with God in the building of the Church and the extension of His kingdom (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:1). Our mission (a) begins in worship, (b) ministers to the world in evangelism and compassion, (c) encourages believers toward Christian maturity through discipleship, and (d) prepares women and men for Christian service through Christian higher education.

Learn more at: www.nazarene.org/articles-faith

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."
-- 2 Timothy 1:7 KJV

Prayer requests

Please pray for the leaders and churches across the France District that are investing in their children and youth through Bible quizzing. Pray that the churches and district would continue to be energized by the growth opportunities provided by district quizzing. Pray that the youth will grow closer to God and love Him more.

Pray for Chumi and the other children in Bangladesh who recently received medical interventions through compassionate ministries projects funded partially through an SDMI Kids Reaching Kids Mission Offering. Ask God to help these children and their families respond to God's love, demonstrated in this tangible way and to receive full healing and recovery.

Pray for Arpan and the thousands of Rohingya children who fled violence in their home country of Myanmar to find refuge in Bangladesh. Pray that they will experience the healing love of God and others as they seek purpose and international help in starting a new life. Pray that more resources will facilitate education, health support and counseling.

Where Worlds Meet

is the monthly newsletter for the Eurasia Region of the Church of the Nazarene.

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