



POSADA

**SERVES:
POOR**

**TIME:
NOV-DEC**

PRESENTING THE NEED TO MY TEAM

- I am sure you are looking forward to Christmas. We all look forward to traditions such as gift-giving. You have some certainty that these things will happen but many kids live with doubt regarding their Christmas dreams. In our town, there are many “familias pobres” (poor families) who wish they could have a great Christmas party this year but the parents simply may not have the money.
- How can we help these kids enjoy a real Christmas?
- Do you know what a “Posada” is? It is a traditional Christmas party from the Hispanic culture.



**MANY KIDS LIVE WITH DOUBT
REGARDING THEIR CHRISTMAS
DREAMS.**

OUR CALL TO SERVE

Let's organize a Posada! We can have just as much fun as these kids and help them at the same time!!

PROJECT OVERVIEW

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WEEK	STEPS	QUESTION OF THE WEEK
1	<p>Plan: Review the posada schedule (Appendix), and plan out which boy will get each of the items.</p> <p>Find a Parish: Identify a poor parish where you will do the posada and ask the pastor if you could arrange this for the parish children.</p>	
2	<p>Call: Contact the Pastor or parish secretary to arrange the schedule for the posada. You should also give them a flyer and bulletin insert that a boy wrote to insert in the parish bulletin. See if they will help promote it. If not, get the boys to prepare some promo material and help out as they request.</p>	
3	<p>Plan: Determine the means to obtain all the required items.</p>	
4	<p>Ask: Thanksgiving will usually be this week or next. People will tend to be generous and the boys can ask extended relatives for donations of toys, candy and money for the posada.</p> <p>Receive: Each group obtains its items.</p>	

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WEEK	STEPS	QUESTION OF THE WEEK
5	Rehearse: Rehearsal of the nativity play and song should be this week. The boys should work out all the details to make sure it runs smoothly. They should figure out what costumes or props are needed. It is best to get one boy's sister to play Mary and use her doll for Jesus.	
6	Toy Drive: If needed, the boys should organize a small toy and candy drive this week. Go to a mall or public place and ask for toys, candy, and monetary donations. If they do not need this, they can have an integration event. Review: Review final details.	
7	Prep: The posada should be this week. The boys need to arrive one hour before the kids from the parish to have time to set up and review roles so it runs smoothly. Split them: Ideally you will have kids age 4-10 attending, but the boys need to plan to split these into older and younger groups.	
8	Party: Christmas party for the group. You should be able to present your Christmas play again to the other Conquest boys. Type: Type up a page summary / story with pictures of the event for benefactors and national office to post on the national website to inspire other Conquest groups.	

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TACTICS BY AREAS

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LOCATION

- This project needs to be done in a poor parish that is largely Latino since you are providing a Latino tradition to these kids. A community center will also work, but is usually more challenging. This must take place close to Christmas.
- When fundraising for toys, and food, try local businesses or wealthy individuals.

PROVISIONS

- Statutes: If the parish has statues for the procession this is great, otherwise make them out of papier-mâché with Mary on the donkey. Have song-sheets for the posada song.
- Snack: try to find someone to make posole and ponche or try a local Mexican store (sometimes they will donate it). Otherwise just get something like Coke, hot dogs and chips (don't forget hot sauce).
- Costumes: if you are doing a play, middle-eastern costumes can be made with towels and sheets that you tie or safety-pin on.
- Piñatas: buy or make these (papier-mâché again) and fill them with candy.
- Decorate the hall where it is held with red, white, and green "paper snowflakes" out of tissue paper.

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TACTICS BY AREAS



RESPONSIBILITIES

- Boys should work in small groups (2 or 3) to obtain all the different provisions for a proper posada. One or two of these groups may be constructing stuff out of papier-mâché.
- If you re-enact the Bethlehem story, as many boys as possible should have roles even if a few of them are sheep or cattle.
- One boy who is very cordial should be in communication with the pastor or parish secretary where you will do the posada to make sure both sides are expecting the same event.
- During the event the boys should man different stations such as serving posole and watching over each piñata. They need to pass on the joy of Christmas to these kids and help them see that Jesus is the reason for the season.
- Photographer and writer who make a one page summary with pictures after the posada for benefactors.

CONTACTS

- Pastor of the poor parish: the pastor needs to know that you are able to run it well. You need to be flexible to his guidelines as there are sometimes local variations of posadas so he may not expect exactly what is listed here.
- People you ask for toys, candy or cash: people are often willing to donate a little but they want to be assured that it will get to the poor kids. It is good to cultivate those who gave significant gifts for future donations by giving them a one page summary of the event that includes a few pictures.
- Poor Hispanic kids: They will be really excited and you will need to direct that excitement towards Bethlehem and not some paltry human reward.
- Live out charity with them so they are able to see Christ in you.
- Parents at the poor parish: the most important contact with them will be indirect through the pastor and other parish personnel. At the event you can direct those who stay around to help out with directing the kids to the right place and translations (if needed)..

PROJECT OVERVIEW

DEBRIEFING

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SPECIAL OPS

- The team leader should probably get a few older boys (or dads) to help with the direction of this project.
- Make sure you restrict the ages of the kids coming to the posada to 10 or less. The posada needs to be smooth, quick and structured. The boys need to be convinced about long-term planning either before this project or at its beginning. If they try to do everything in a few weeks it will not be professional as it should.
- Often the simple faith of the Mexicans (parents and kids) will be an example for the boys. It may help them see how they can live their faith more simply and truly.
- Make sure the boys prepare some substantial snack; kids will be antsy if they do not eat and hyper if they only eat candy.
- If the boys have gone to help these same kids before they will be more deeply impacted by their experience of their Christmas celebration.

CONTINGENCY PLAN

- If there is not a poor Hispanic parish nearby, it is best to throw a Christmas party for poor kids in the area with a Christmas play, hot chocolate, cake, and candy.
- If your team is large or super-dynamic, it is possible to help out two parishes with posadas during different weeks in December.
- Some Latin American countries have huge celebrations surrounding the epiphany which they call the celebración tres reyes (three kings celebration).
- You can organize this for a parish. This often includes a procession of kings on real animals (donkeys, horses, or even camels) towards the Holy Family, includes the giving of gifts, and usually concludes with a special bread that tastes like a hot cross bun but which contains a plastic statue of baby Jesus.



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APPENDIX

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POSADA SCHEDULE EXAMPLE:

1. A Posada should be brief (between 1 and 2.5 hours) but make sure all the time is filled with fun.
2. Sing the Posada song. This song is the way of asking for the Posada as one group represents Mary and Joseph who are trying to find a home for Jesus while the others keep saying "no." Sometimes they process statutes of Our Lady, St. Joseph, and the donkey. The Conquest boys could make simple papier-mâché statues to process.
3. Several piñatas are broken. For this you should separate the kids by age to avoid injuries and lack of charity. Spin and blindfold each kid then give him a stick to break the piñata; you can employ pulley systems to adjust their height if you wish.
4. It is good here to re-enact the Christmas play for the kids. This part is not absolutely necessary but helps teach the kids if there is time. A play on the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe may also work.
5. Make sure you give the kids a snack. The traditional Mexican snack for this occasion is posole (a thick pork soup), and ponche (a drink). If you cannot obtain these items, any substantial snack will do.
6. If you got toys donated you can raffle them off, or give one to every kid. Having several big toys (a bike for instance) and raffling usually works best.
7. Give each kid a bag filled with candy.
8. Departure. You can have several small games like pin the tail on the donkey to conclude and while you await parents who are picking up their kids.



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PROJECT NOTES:

