**Mound Key Story**

Mound Key is an island in Florida built by Native Americans out of shells and fish bones. It is called mound key because it really is just a big mound of stuff. The tribe that built Mound Key was called the Calusa. They started a really long time ago, 1150 BC. Before Jesus was even born. Mound Key was the biggest island they built, and it had the palace and temple on top of it. There the king would live and they would kill people as human sacrifices. When America was being discovered in the 1500s, the Calusa tribe was discovered. Franciscan missionaries started a mission there to try to prevent the human sacrifices, but they were killed quickly. Not long after, the Jesuits, another branch of priests, started a mission there too. The Jesuits had more success. They converted some of the Calusa tribe to Catholicism and made the temple where they offered human sacrifices into a Church. Can you imagine having the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on a giant hill of shells that are stained red with the blood of all the humans killed there? However, soon the Calusa grew suspicious of the Jesuits and all the priests left before they were killed. The Calusa tribe eventually died off or moved, but Mound Key is still there. It is only accessible by boat, and no one lives there anymore. In 2016, a group of missionaries and a Jesuit priest kayaked over to Mound Key. They hiked up the steep mound of shells and fish bones until they reached the top, the place where the human sacrifices took place so long ago. They set up a rock, and the Jesuit priest celebrated Mass there for the first time since the 1500s. After 450 years, the island was again claimed for Christ. What will you claim for Christ? Where are you willing to go? Maybe across the world to a strange land?