

GO OUT AND PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS

World Mission Day - also known as World Mission Sunday -- was established by Pope Pius XI in 1926. World Mission Sunday is a day set aside for the Catholic Church throughout the world to publicly renew its commitment to the missionary movement.

On October 24, 2021, we will be celebrating Mission Sunday. At Mass that Sunday, we recommit ourselves to our common vocation through Baptism to be missionaries, through prayer, participation in the Eucharist, and by giving generously to the collection for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

Before He ascended to Heaven, in what is described as the Great Commissioning, Jesus issued a command: “*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...*” (Matthew 28:19). The commissioning wasn’t just for the benefit of the 11 apostles (and other disciples present); it was spoken directly to you and me. Jesus commissioned all Christians to spread the Good News of God’s kingdom – to be evangelists. We are all, through our baptism, called to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel.

Jesus commissioned His disciples to go out and carry on the work He began. He chose ordinary people – people like you and me. He entrusted us with His work and empowered us with His Spirit.

Pope Francis’ message for World Mission Sunday 2021 reflects on the theme: “**We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard**” (Acts 4:20). He reminds us that, “as Christians, we cannot keep the Lord to ourselves,” as we “recall with gratitude all those men and women who, by their testimony of life, help us to renew our baptismal commitment to be generous and joyful apostles of the Gospel.”

The Pope warned Catholics not to succumb to the temptation of justifying indifference on the basis of COVID-19 restrictions. "In these days of pandemic, when there is a temptation to disguise and justify indifference and apathy in the name of healthy social distancing, there is urgent need for the mission of compassion, which can make that necessary distancing an opportunity for encounter, care and promotion," he says.

On World Mission Sunday, we join our Holy Father in supporting the missions. In a world where so much divides us, World Mission Sunday rejoices in our unity as missionaries by our Baptism, as it offers each one of us an opportunity to support the life-giving presence of the Church among the poor and marginalised in mission dioceses.

Our prayer, reflection and material help are a lifeline to missionaries in all continents who are striving to preach and live the Good News that God loves us.

World Mission Sunday is vital to the growth of the Church and the spread of the Gospel in predominately poor and remote areas. Masses and collections will happen in every (Arch)diocese across the world, and every single donation supports churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or poor.

Quoting from his latest encyclical, *Fratelli tutti*, Pope Francis added: "Always, but especially in these times of pandemic, it is important to grow in our daily ability to widen our circle, to reach out to others who, although physically close to us, are not immediately part of our 'circle of interests.'" "To be on mission is to be willing to think as Christ does, to believe with Him that those around us are also my brothers and sisters. May His compassionate love touch our hearts and make us all true missionary disciples."

Questions for discussion:

1. Why do we celebrate Mission Sunday? Why is it important?
2. Whose responsibility is it to proclaim the Good News?
3. Pope Francis’ theme: “**We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard**” (Acts 4:20), was the experience of the Apostles. What is your personal experience of the Risen Lord in your life?
4. How can we concretely contribute toward the Mission?
5. How can we reach out to others during these pandemic times, thus proclaiming Christ?

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