

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

21 OCTOBER 2018

The Holy Father's Message & Prayer Intentions

An abridged version of the Holy Father's Message
for World Mission Sunday 2018

Together with young people, let us bring the Gospel to all

The Christian faith remains ever young when it is open to the mission that Christ entrusts to us. 'Mission revitalises faith' (*Redemptoris Missio*, 2), in the words of Saint John Paul II.

Life is a mission

Every man and woman *is* a mission; that is the reason for our life on this earth. To be *attracted* and to be *sent* are two movements that our hearts, especially when we are young, feel as interior forces of love; they hold out promise for our future and they give direction to our lives. When I think back to my youth and my family, I remember the strength of my hope for a better future. We are all called to reflect on this fact: '*I am a mission on this Earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world*' (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 273).

We proclaim Jesus Christ

The Church, by proclaiming what she freely received, can share the way and truth which give meaning to our life on this earth. Jesus Christ, who died and rose for us, appeals to our freedom and challenges us to seek, discover and proclaim this message of truth and fulfilment. Do not be afraid of Christ and his Church! For there we find the treasure that fills life with joy. I can tell you this from my own experience: thanks to faith, I found the sure foundation of my dreams and the strength to realise them.

I have seen great suffering and poverty mar the faces of so many of our brothers and sisters. And yet, for those who stand by Jesus, evil is an incentive to ever greater love. To be set afire by the love of Christ is to be consumed by that fire, to grow in understanding by its light and to be warmed by its love (cf. 2 Cor 5:14). I invite you never to stop wondering: 'What would Christ do if he were in my place?'

Transmitting the faith to the ends of the earth

By your Baptism you have become living members of the Church; together we have received the mission to bring the Gospel to everyone. The freshness and enthusiasm of the young makes them a source of support and hope for those nearing the end of their journey. In this blend of different stages in life, the mission of the Church bridges the generations; our faith in God and our love of neighbour are a source of profound unity.

This transmission of the faith, the heart of the Church's mission, comes about by the infectiousness of love. The spread of the faith 'by attraction' calls for hearts that are open and expanded by love. And that expansion generates encounter, witness, proclamation; it generates sharing in charity with all those far from the faith, indifferent to it and perhaps even hostile and opposed to it. Human, cultural and religious settings still foreign to the Gospel of Jesus and to the sacramental presence of the Church represent the extreme peripheries, the 'ends of the earth', to which Jesus' missionary disciples have been sent, with the certainty that their Lord is always with them (cf. Mt 28:20; Acts 1:8). This is what we call the *missio ad gentes*. The most desolate periphery of all is where humankind, in need of Christ, remains indifferent to the faith or shows hatred for the fullness of life in God.

The ends of the earth nowadays are quite relative and easily 'navigable'. The digital world – the social networks that are so pervasive and readily available – dissolves borders, eliminates distances and reduces differences. However we could have countless contacts but never share in a true communion of life. To share in the mission to the ends of the earth demands the gift of oneself in the vocation that God, who has placed us on this earth, chooses to give us (cf. Lk 9:23-25).

Bearing witness to love

Many young people find in missionary volunteer work a way of serving the 'least' of our brothers and sisters (cf. Mt 25:40), promoting human dignity and witnessing to the joy of love and of being Christians!

Missio was created as a means of supporting the preaching of the Gospel to every nation and thus contributing to the human and cultural growth of all those who thirst for knowledge of the truth. The prayers and the material aid generously given and distributed through Missio enable the Holy See to ensure that those who are helped in their personal needs can in turn bear witness to the Gospel. No one is so poor as to be unable to give what they have, but first and foremost what they are.

Dear young people, this coming October, the month of *World Mission Sunday*, we will hold the Synod devoted to you. It will prove to be one more occasion to help us become missionary disciples, ever more passionately devoted to Jesus and his mission, to the ends of the earth.



The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions 2019

Please include these in your Parish Newsletter and in the Sunday Prayers of the Faithful at least once a month.

Join with the Holy Father in praying:

January May young people, especially in Latin America, follow the example of Mary and respond to the call of the Lord to communicate the joy of the Gospel to the world.

February For a generous welcome of victims of human trafficking, of enforced prostitution, and of violence.

March May Christian communities, especially those who are persecuted, feel that they are close to Christ and have their rights respected.

April For doctors and their humanitarian collaborators in war zones, who risk their lives to save the lives of others.

May May the Church in Africa, through the commitment of its members, be the seed of unity among her peoples and a sign of hope for this continent.

June May priests, through the modesty and humility of their lives, commit themselves to an active solidarity with the poorest.

July May those who administer justice work with integrity, and may the injustice present in the world not have the last word.

August May families, through their life of prayer and love, become ever more clearly 'schools of true human growth'.

September May politicians, scientists and economists work together to protect the world's seas and oceans.

October May the breath of the Holy Spirit bring about a new missionary 'dawn' in the Church.

November May a spirit of dialogue, encounter, and reconciliation emerge in the near east, where diverse religious communities share their lives together.

December May every country take the necessary measures to make the future of the very young, especially those who suffer, a priority.

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