

You will notice that we have swapped the *Mission Today* wrapping with an envelope: better both for our planet and our resources.

August 2023

## Desperate but not despairing

When walking through ‘slum’ areas like Kibera in Kenya, I have asked myself whether I would survive in such challenging conditions. Overcrowded, little sanitation, no fresh water supply, sporadic power, without money or food, hungry children crying, with widespread violence and criminality, I think I would soon sink into a dark pit of despair! I can fully understand why people living through unbearable situations might conclude that God has abandoned them.

**However, my own experience is that while the situation in which many live is desperate, most people are not despairing. The vast majority do not lose their faith in a God who loves and cares for them.**

Working in Africa as a missionary strengthened my faith in God – who is always good, ever present, never tiring of us, and greater than all our problems. In these situations, God’s presence is palpable in people’s faith and visible in those whom God has sent to accompany them in their suffering.

To the shame of humanity and the ‘anger of God’, there are thousands of slum areas around the world. And there are many good people **with hearts on fire** – people like Sr Mary and Linet in Kibera – and **feet on the move**, who walk alongside those who struggle to survive to bring them the light of Christ, **turning despair into hope.**

These are the people the Holy Father speaks about in his message to us on this year’s World Mission Sunday – entitled ‘**hearts on fire, feet on the move**’, based on the Road to Emmaus in the Gospel of Luke.

In his message Pope Francis writes, ‘The primary and principal resource of mission are those persons who have come to know the Risen Christ in the Scriptures and in the Eucharist, who carry his fire in their heart and his light in their gaze. They can bear witness to the life that never dies, even in the most difficult of situations and in the darkest of moments.’

**Please read about how Sr Mary and Linet work together in Kibera on pages 12-15 of *Mission Today*.**

Sr Mary and Linet share their faith and work together to overcome the dangers of rescuing children who have been abandoned, orphaned, or trafficked. They find their passion for justice and the strength to take action to help and heal those around them in the person of Jesus Christ, who gave his life to save us and is now living at our side every day to enlighten, strengthen, and free us.

World Mission Sunday is a lifeline for missionaries, like Sr Mary, who bring the love and hope of Jesus to situations of extreme poverty and injustice. By supporting the World Mission Sunday appeal, you will be making sure that missionaries continue their life of service to share God's love with some of the most remote and troubled communities of our world.

Missio has been tasked by the Holy Father to encourage everyone to respond to Christ's command to reveal God's infinite love and compassion to everyone, everywhere in the world. Together we live out our call to mission by proclaiming the coming of God's Kingdom, serving those in need, promoting justice with peace, and bringing people to know God's goodness.

**Through World Mission Sunday you can celebrate being part of one global family and help create vital infrastructure in impoverished and remote areas. Together we can help local communities build chapels, schools and clinics which serve as beacons of hope and welcome everyone of all faiths and none. If you can, please consider directly helping those in greatest need, today.**

I would like to personally thank you for your ongoing support and assure you that your gifts and prayers on World Mission Sunday are crucial. If you have recently sent us a gift – thank you! These are challenging times and any gift you give, large or small, is gratefully received.

Be assured of my prayers for you and your loved ones. Please send me your prayer intentions, which will be brought to the Lord during Mass in our Missio chapel, by returning the enclosed form, calling **020 7821 9755**, or emailing me at [director@missio.org.uk](mailto:director@missio.org.uk)

Thank you. By supporting Missio, with prayer and charity, **you** are witnessing to the Risen Christ and the new life he offers all people now and for all eternity.

*Father Tony.*

Fr Anthony Chantry  
Missio National Director

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*It is a great way to hear about the difference you are making throughout the year.*

**P.S.** I hope you find that the stories, updates, and reflections in *Mission Today* inspire you to take part in local World Mission Sunday celebrations. Your prayers and your gifts will have a huge impact on the lives of countless people throughout the world. Let's set hearts ablaze with God's love this World Mission Sunday!

