

Good morning/evening. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm pleased to have this opportunity to share with you about the global celebration of World Mission Sunday.

On World Mission Sunday, every Catholic community in every country sends a powerful message of faith, hope, and love. We come together in prayer and solidarity as a parish community, and also with the worldwide Catholic community, to bear witness to God's love.

Parish collections for World Mission Sunday are taken up across the world and your donations support churches, hospitals, schools, and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young, or poor. The collection, coordinated by Missio – the Pope's charity for world mission – brings the Church together in compassion and communion. It provides mission dioceses with the support they need to become self-sufficient: local church directly helping local church!

World Mission Sunday is also a time when we remember all the brave missionaries who in situations of conflict or natural disasters are often the first to respond. Like the Sisters of the Rosary who are staying with the people who are sheltering in the only Catholic Parish in Gaza. The Sisters are staying with those who are too weak or old to flee. They are praying fervently for peace and offering God's love and consolation.

As we join Pope Francis in praying for peace in the Holy Land, today we also remember our sisters and brothers in other parts of the world who need our prayers and support. One such community is in Kibera, the largest 'slum' settlement in Kenya, and indeed the whole of Africa.

Kibera is home to scores of people living without basic necessities. It's overcrowded, with no fresh water, and little sanitation, electricity, or employment.

Inspired by her friendship with Jesus, Sister Mary has chosen to live in Kibera where she befriends people, listens to their sorrows and joys, and helps them to live out and strengthen their faith. She explains: 'People come to our house, or our church, and we sit down and talk. When I can't help them, because sometimes they are so damaged, I contact doctors or Sisters in the hospitals. **So, it's friendship, but a friendship that means you can't just sit and watch; that something has to be done... If I am tired or down-hearted I find strength in the heart of Jesus.**'

Sister Mary has been a great support to Linet, another woman with a great missionary spirit. Linet courageously expresses her faith by rescuing and fostering children who have been abandoned, orphaned, or trafficked: a mission which often places her in real danger.

Linet is determined to help as many children as possible. But with her own three children, and another 12 foster children, Linet struggles. She shares: 'We have so many challenges. I have people looking to me not only for food, but for all basic things. It's a challenge to find all of it. I need clothes. I need to pay for school. It's difficult.' But she says: 'Sister Mary has done so much. Sister is always there for me with support – mental, physical, everything. She has always been there for me.'

Sister Mary and devoted missionaries like her throughout the world depend on your support and the World Mission Sunday collection to continue their mission.

We are all facing challenges this year. Anything you can give will be so gratefully received. The Gift Aid envelopes include different ways to give, such as online and by credit or debit card.

This World Mission Sunday, please pray for the people of Kibera – especially the children – and for all missionaries throughout the world who are setting hearts ablaze with God's love.

Thank you!