

Hearts on Fire

FEET ON THE MOVE



The Society for the
Propagation of the Faith
A Pontifical Mission Society



26M
Children



38,140
Seminarians



12,000
Clinics



258,540
Sisters



844,000
Catechists



8,750
Shelters

2023

**WORLD
MISSION
SUNDAY**

OCTOBER 22ND



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On October 22, World Mission Sunday, we join Catholics worldwide to share in the Word and the Eucharist that the Lord may set our hearts aflame within us, filling us with enthusiasm to bring the Good News to all corners of the world.

Pope Francis chose this year's theme: "Hearts on fire, feet on the move." Inspired by the story of the disciples on the way to Emmaus, the Holy Father invites us to reflect on these three images from the story: "their hearts burned within them as they heard the Scriptures explained by Jesus, their eyes were opened as they recognized him and, ultimately, their feet set out on the way." As missionary disciples, we must be illumined by Scripture and recognize Jesus in the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church's mission so we too can set out with urgency to evangelize.

As we celebrate World Mission Sunday, we call to mind a missionary disciple whose heart burned with the Gospel, French laywoman Blessed Pauline Jaricot, foundress of the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith. When Pauline founded the Society in 1822, she recognized that all the baptized are called to participate in the missionary work of the Church through spiritual and material offerings. Pope Francis reiterates that the Pontifical Mission Societies are the "privileged means" of encouraging missionary cooperation, and it is for this reason that the World Mission Sunday collection is taken for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

Offerings from the World Mission Sunday collection assist the Holy Father in proclaiming the Gospel and celebrating the Sacraments in over 1,100 mission dioceses and territories that are young and in need of resources. Financial aid supports such essential work as the formation of seminarians and religious men and women, the training of catechists, the construction of schools and orphanages, and the building of churches in remote and resource-limited areas.

Embodying this year's theme, I urge you to keep your hearts aflame and your feet moving this World Mission Sunday so that everyone may come to recognize Jesus in the Word and Eucharist. Your prayers are invaluable, and your financial support provides life-giving aid to our brothers and sisters around the world.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski
Archbishop of St. Louis

CELEBRATE WORLD MISSION SUNDAY WITH US!

This year's World Mission Sunday Mass will be celebrated by Archbishop Rozanski at 10:15 am at Immaculate Conception, Dardenne Prairie Parish!

All are invited to join this special celebration at Immaculate Conception Parish in Dardenne Prairie, or to celebrate at their home parish, as every parish in the world is called to participate in this special Eucharistic celebration, united as one Church.



WORLD MISSION SUNDAY: A CALL TO COMMUNION

Every year, something special happens on the next-to-last Sunday of October: **World 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, one of the four Pontifical Mission Societies.

As we pray and respond on World Mission Sunday here at home, we share in those celebrations taking place in every parish and school throughout the world. Together, through our prayers and financial support, we support the life-giving presence of the Church in more than 1,100 mission dioceses.



AN EXCERPT FROM POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

Dear brothers and sisters!

For this year's World Mission Sunday, I have chosen a theme inspired by the story of the disciples on the way to Emmaus, in the Gospel of Luke (cf. 24:13-35): "Hearts on fire, feet on the move". Those two disciples were confused and dismayed, but their encounter with Christ in the word and in the breaking of the bread sparked in them the enthusiastic desire to set out again towards Jerusalem and proclaim that the Lord had truly risen. In the Gospel account, we perceive this change in the disciples through a few revealing images: their hearts burned within them as they heard the Scriptures explained by Jesus, their eyes were opened as they recognized him and, ultimately, their feet set out on the way. By meditating on these three images, which reflect the journey of all missionary disciples, we can renew our zeal for evangelization in today's world.

1. Our hearts burned within us "when he explained the Scriptures to us". In missionary activity, the word of God illumines and transforms hearts.

On the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus, the hearts of the two disciples were downcast, as shown by their dejected faces, because of the death of Jesus, in whom they had believed (cf. v. 17) ... Then, "as they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them" (v. 15). As when he first called the disciples, so now, amid their bewilderment, the Lord takes the initiative; he approaches them and walks alongside them. So too, in his great mercy, he never tires of being with us, despite all our failings, doubts, weaknesses, and the dismay and pessimism that make us become "foolish and slow of heart" (v. 25), men and women of little faith.

So, "let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of hope!" (Evangelii Gaudium, 86). The Lord is greater than all our problems, above all if we encounter them in our mission of proclaiming the Gospel to the world. For in the end, this mission is his and we are nothing more than his humble co-workers, "useless servants" (cf. Lk 17:10).... So let us always be willing to let ourselves be accompanied by the Risen Lord as he explains to us the meaning of the Scriptures. May he make our hearts burn within us; may he enlighten and transform us, so that we can proclaim his mystery of salvation to the world with the power and wisdom that come from his Spirit.

2. Our eyes were "opened and recognized him" in the breaking of the bread. Jesus in the Eucharist is the source and summit of the mission.

Here it should be remembered that breaking our material bread with the hungry in the name of Christ is already a work of Christian mission. How much more so is the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, which is Christ himself, a work of mission par excellence, since the Eucharist is the source and summit of the life and mission of the Church.

As Pope Benedict XVI pointed out: "We cannot keep to ourselves the love we celebrate in the Sacrament [of the Eucharist]. By its very nature, it asks to be communicated to everyone. What the world needs is the love of God, to encounter Christ and believe in him. For this reason the Eucharist is not only the source and summit of the life of the Church; it is also the source and summit of her mission: 'An authentically Eucharistic Church is a missionary Church'" (Sacramentum Caritatis, 84).

3. Our feet set out on the way, with the joy of telling others about the Risen Christ. The eternal youth of a Church that is always going forth.

After their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus "in the breaking of the bread", the disciples "set out without delay and returned to Jerusalem" (cf. Lk 24:33). This setting out in haste, to share with others the joy of meeting the Lord, demonstrates that "the joy of the Gospel fills the heart and the whole life of those who meet Jesus. Those who allow themselves to be saved by him are freed from sin, from sadness, from inner emptiness, from isolation. With Jesus Christ, joy is always born and reborn" (Evangelii Gaudium, 1). One cannot truly encounter the risen Jesus without being set on fire with enthusiasm to tell everyone about him. Therefore, the primary and principal resource of the 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.

Today more than ever, our human family, wounded by so many situations of injustice, so many divisions and wars, is in need of the Good News of peace and salvation in Christ. I take this opportunity to reiterate that "everyone has the right to receive the Gospel. Christians have the duty to announce it without excluding anyone, not as one who imposes a new obligation, but as one who shares a joy, signals a beautiful horizon, offers a desirable banquet" (Evangelii Gaudium, 14).

Just as the two disciples of Emmaus told the others what had taken place along the way (cf. Lk 24:35), so too our proclamation will be a joyful telling of Christ the Lord, his life, his passion, his death and resurrection, and the wonders that his love has accomplished in our lives.

**Scan to read
Pope Francis'
full message for
World Mission
Sunday!**





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- Online at www.archstl.org/wms
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