



# **The Missionary Identity and Spirituality of The Priestly Life**

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**June 11-12, 2025**

# Lessons from Saint Barnabas



The June 11 feast of Saint Barnabas reminds us of various dimensions of priestly life and mission:

- “Son of Encouragement”
- All in — sold his field and laid proceeds at the feet of the apostles
- Courageously befriended and defended Paul
- Brought him from Tarsus to Antioch
- Set out with Paul from Antioch to share the Gospel



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- While every pope is a successor of the apostles and called to be apostolic, Pope Leo is the first Pope since St. Peter who served as a missionary ad gentes.
- 22 years as a missionary priest and bishop in Peru.
- 12 years as a missionary Prior General of the Augustinians visiting its 3,000 members in 50 countries.



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- Night of his election: “I thank my brother Cardinals, who have chosen me to be the Successor of Peter and to walk together with you as a Church, ... ever seeking to act as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, in order **to proclaim the Gospel without fear, to be missionaries. ... Together, we must look for ways to be a missionary Church.**”



# Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- First homily on May 9 on how the whole Church has the duty to confess Jesus as the Messiah and Son of the Living God.
- To the Cardinals on May 10: “I would like to highlight several fundamental points: the return to the **primacy of Christ in proclamation**; the **missionary conversion** of the entire Christian community...”
- Meeting with TPMS National Directors on May 22: “Hence we see the importance of fostering a **spirit of missionary discipleship in all the baptized** and a sense of the **urgency of bringing Christ to all people.**”





# Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



To new movements on June 7:

- “**The Church’s mission** has been an important part of my own pastoral experience and **has shaped my spiritual life.**”
- “Your encounter with the Lord and the new life that filled your hearts gave rise to your **desire to make him known to others...** sharing the Gospel in the most distant places, in the most challenging environments, enduring difficulties and failures. **Always keep this missionary zeal alive** in your midst: today as always, movements have a fundamental role in the work of evangelization.”
- “**Place your talents at the service of the Church’s mission,** whether in places of first evangelization or in your parishes and local ecclesial communities, in order to reach those who, albeit distant, are often **waiting, without being aware of it, to hear God’s word of life.**”



# St. John Paul II & the Primacy of Missio ad Gentes



- Redemptoris Missio 67: “Priests are called by virtue of the sacrament of Orders to share in concern for the Church's mission: **The spiritual gift that priests have received in ordination prepares them, not for any narrow and limited mission, but for the most universal and all-embracing mission of salvation 'to the end of the earth'** (PO 10).
- “For **every priestly ministry shares in the universal scope of the mission that Christ entrusted to his apostles** (OT 20).



# St. John Paul II & the Primacy of Missio ad Gentes



- “For this reason, the **formation of candidates to the priesthood** must aim at giving them the **true Catholic spirit**, whereby they will learn to transcend the bounds of their own diocese, country or rite, and **come to the aid of the whole Church, in readiness to preach the Gospel anywhere.**
- **All priests must have the mind and the heart of missionaries** — open to the needs of the Church and the world, with concern for those farthest away, and especially for the non-Christian groups in their own area. **They should have at heart, in their prayers and particularly at the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the concern of the whole Church for all of humanity.”**





# St. John Paul II & the Primacy of Missio ad Gentes



- “Especially in those areas where Christians are a minority, **priests must be filled with special missionary zeal and commitment.** The Lord entrusts to them not only the pastoral care of the Christian community, **but also and above all the evangelization of those of their fellow-citizens who do not belong to Christ's flock.**”
- “Priests will not fail to make themselves **readily available to the Holy Spirit and the bishop, to be sent to preach the Gospel beyond the borders of their country.** This will demand of them not only **maturity in their vocation,** but also an **uncommon readiness to detach themselves** from their own homeland, culture and family, and a special ability to adapt to other cultures, with understanding and respect for them.”



# St. John Paul II & the Primacy of Missio ad Gentes



- There is a diversity of activities in the Church's one mission (RM 33):
  - **Mission proper** — Ad gentes, to those where Christ is not known or the ecclesial structures are immature to incarnate the faith and proclaim it.
  - **New Evangelization or Re-Evangelization** — Re-proposing the faith to the non-practicing baptized who have lost a living sense of the faith.
  - **Pastoral care of the faithful** — The work to help those practicing to growth in faith, hope and love.



# St. John Paul II & the Primacy of Missio ad Gentes



- RM 34: “The boundaries between pastoral care of the faithful, new evangelization and specific missionary activity are not clearly definable, and it is unthinkable to create barriers between them or to put them into watertight compartments.
- **“Nevertheless, there must be no lessening of the impetus to preach the Gospel** and to establish new churches among peoples or communities where they do not yet exist, **for this is the first task of the Church, which has been sent forth to all peoples and to the very ends of the earth.**
- **“Without the mission ad gentes, the Church's very missionary dimension would be deprived of its essential meaning and of the very activity that exemplifies it.”**

# Christ's Calling of the First Priests



- Jesus called his first priests “that they might **be with him** and **send them forth to preach**” (Mk 3:14).
- “As you have sent me into the world, so **I have sent them into the world**” (Jn 17:18).
- “This is eternal life, **that they may know you**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (Jn 17:18).
- “As the Father sent me, **so I send you**” (Jn 20:21)
- “Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations**” (Mt 28:20).
- “**Go into the whole world** and **proclaim the Gospel to every creature**” (Mk 16:15)



# Diaconal and Priestly Ordination



- Diaconal Ordination: “Receive the Gospel of Christ **whose herald you have become**. Believe what you read, **teach what you believe** and practice what you teach.”
- PO 4: “Priests ... have the **primary duty of proclaiming the Gospel to all**. In this way they fulfill the command of the Lord (Mk 16:15) and they establish and build up the people of God.”
- Our prophetic *munus* by baptism and Holy Orders.
- “Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16)
- **“I am a mission on this earth.** This is the reason why I am here in this world” (EG 273)





# From Maintenance to Mission

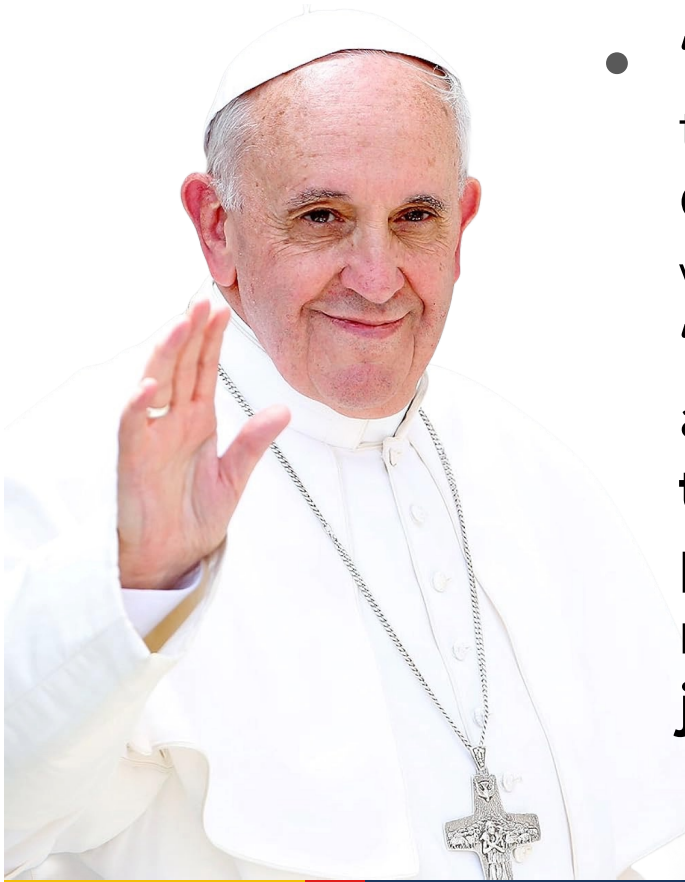


- This phrase from a 2005 book of Paulist Father Robert Rivers has almost become trite. Everyone recognizes it; few implement it.
- Most conceptualize it narrowly, referring to shifting from parochial *ad intra* concerns to a focus on going out and sharing our faith with others. Often, however, the focus can be principally on strengthening the parish.
- Pope Francis spoke of a “missionary impulse capable of transforming everything” and poignantly asked, **“What would happen if we took these words seriously?”** (EG 27, 15).
- What would happen if we went from maintenance to the **full meaning of mission** as given to us by Christ in Mt 28 and Mk 16?





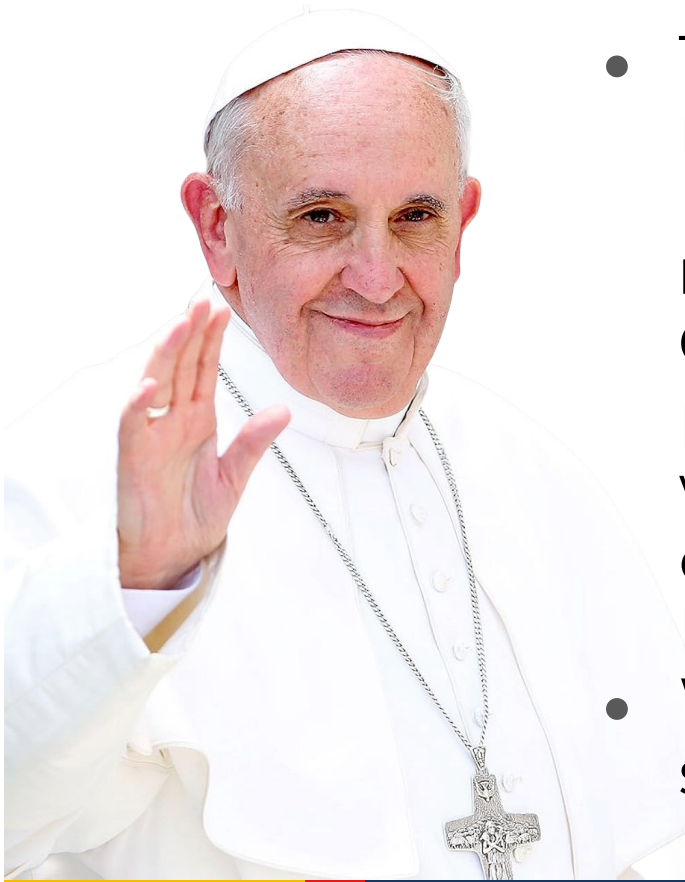
# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- **“The next Pope,”** Cardinal Bergoglio would tell his brother Cardinals in their 2013 General Congregation meetings six days before they would elect him the 266th Peter, had to be a “man who, from the contemplation and adoration of Jesus Christ, **helps the Church to go out of herself to the existential peripheries**, who helps her to be **a fruitful mother** living off the **sweet and comforting joy of evangelizing.**”



# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- The most important qualification for the new pope, the-then Archbishop of Buenos Aires argued, was to be a **missionary** who could **lead the whole Church on mission**, someone whose prayer would drive him joyfully to share with others the fruits of his contemplation and the ultimate love of his life.
- What does this mean for the identity, spirituality and mission of priests?



# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- Pope Francis clearly took seriously that summons to bring the Gospel to the peripheries. Despite age and frailty, he regularly left the Vatican to bring the Gospel to the peripheries, visiting 74 countries, 44 Italian cities, and hundreds of Roman parishes, charitable works and even private homes to share the joy of the Gospel.
- He did more than exemplify that missionary impulse. He tried to spur the whole Church to take up the missions in his programmatic apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, published eight months after his election.



# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- “I dream,” he wrote, “of a ...**missionary impulse capable of transforming everything**, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures, **can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today’s world** rather than for her self-preservation” (27).
- He tried to codify that missionary impulse in his new Apostolic Constitution for the Church, which he entitled, *Praedicate Evangelium* (“Preach the Gospel”)



# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- It was not a new concern for him.
- Prior to the papacy, perhaps his greatest achievement was to lead the bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean in the formulation of *The Aparecida Document*, a 2007 pastoral plan for the re-evangelization of their vast territories. It's the most thorough and probably greatest document on the missions the Church has ever produced.
- Cardinal Bergoglio was president of the drafting committee.





# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- The goal of everything the Church does, the bishops wrote, was to form **“missionary disciples in communion,”**
- They described the stages in that formation:
  - **Encountering Jesus Christ**
  - **Conversion;**
  - **Discipleship;**
  - **Communion;** and
  - **Mission.**





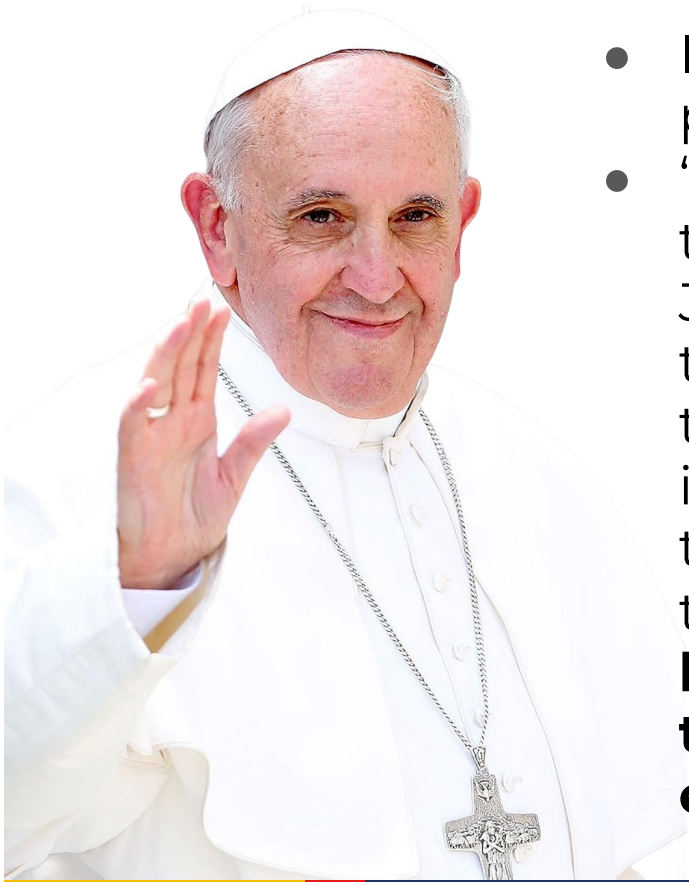
# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- “The primary reason for evangelizing,” he wrote in *Evangelii Gaudium*, “is the **love and salvation of Jesus** that we have received.”
- He asked, “**What kind of love** would not feel the need to speak of the beloved, to point him out, to make him known?”
- He emphasized that the Church’s missionary work is a response to that love life: “**We have a treasure of life and love that cannot deceive, and a message that cannot mislead or disappoint**” (264)



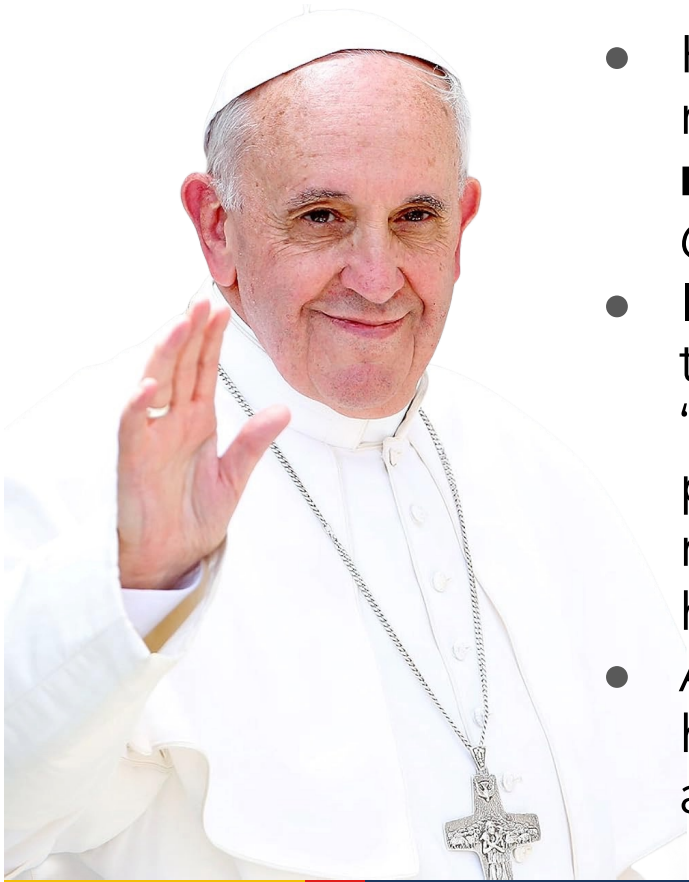
# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- In one of the most eloquent passages of all his papal writings, he wrote:
- “We are convinced from personal experience that **it is not the same thing** to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to walk with him as to walk blindly, not the same thing to hear his word as not to know it, and not the same thing to contemplate him, to worship him, to find our peace in him, as not to. ...**We know well that with Jesus, life becomes richer and that with him it is easier to find meaning in everything. This is why we evangelize**” (265-66).



# Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- He has underlined that none of us *has* a mission, but each of us *is* a mission: **“I am a mission on this earth,”** he wrote in *Evangelii Gaudium*. **“This is the reason why I am here.”**
- It’s clear that Pope Francis, as the successor of the Galilean fisherman whom Jesus made a “fisher of men,” identified himself and his whole priestly identity and spirituality with the mission to share the faith. He indeed went from his adoration of Christ to the ends of the earth!
- And, as we entrust him gratefully to God, we hope he is praying for us to make that same apostolic exodus.



# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- We are now half-way in the Jubilee of Hope.
- It was originally expected to be the Jubilee of Faith, for the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Nicaea.
- Pope Benedict, in the 2007 Spe Salvi, and Pope Francis by this Jubilee both thought that what the world needs most is hope.



# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- We see the need for hope in high rates of despair, flowing from loneliness, isolation, individualism, fear and anxiety, lack of meaning, broken friendships and families, the problem of suffering and more.
- We see the consequences of a lack of hope in all those pushing, and taking advantage of, what is euphemistically dubbed Medical Assistance in Dying, Physician Assisted Suicide, and other forms of euthanasia.



# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- We see the need for hope in the drug epidemic and other addictive behaviors, whether games, porn, or social media, all of which are escapes from reality.
- We've seen it in the despair among young people that the world was imminently to cease because of climate catastrophes.
- We've seen it in collapsing birthrates.





# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- In the US, we've seen it in the results of the CDC's biennial *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary and Trends Report* for 2011-2021, which showed the truly alarming, and rapidly worsening, situation of the mental and spiritual health of high school students in the United States.
- 42% of U.S. high school teens in 2021 said they felt persistently sad or hopeless, 22% seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous year, 18% had come up with a concrete plan on how they would end their life, and 10% actually tried to carry out that plan.



# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- It's worse for girls. 57% of high school girls felt persistently sad or hopeless, 30% of girls seriously contemplated suicide in the previous year, and 24% had a suicide plan.
- Since 2011, persistent sadness and hopelessness among girls had grown from 36 to 57%, suicidal thoughts from 19 to 30, and suicide plans from 15 to 24, a 60% increase in each category in a decade.



# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- The CDC looked at some factors that might be contributing causes to the crisis, but noted that, over the course of the last decade, bullying, drug use, promiscuity and sexual violence all decreased or stayed about the same. It likewise looked into students' sense of connectedness in school, their housing situation, and communication with their family, but none of these situations correlated to the swiftly growing problem.

# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- It's obvious that there is a crisis of hope underneath the persistent sadness and the consideration of ending one's life.
- This is linked to a crisis of meaning, of the “why” of living, of what gives motivation to be able to change own circumstances for the better, not to mention change one's environment and the world.



# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- This crisis of hope is linked to a crisis of faith. Gen Z, those born between 1999 and 2015, are experiencing a rapid decline of faith in God.
- Since 2010, religious practice among high schoolers has dropped 27 percent.
- Thirteen percent now define as atheist, 16 percent as agnostic.



# The Jubilee of Hope and the Church's Mission



- These are all reasons why we need a Jubilee of Hope.
- It's a time in which we are called to grow in hope, to rejoice in hope, and to give others, always, the reason for the hope we bear.
- It's a time for us to be priests, master-teachers and missionaries of hope.





# The Meaning of Hope and the Church's Mission



- Pope Francis, in his “Bull of Indiction” for the Jubilee, entitled *Spes Non Confundit* or “Hope does not disappoint,” wrote, “Everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come.”
- He really doesn’t define it because, he believes, everyone has some sense of what it is already.



# The Meaning of Hope and the Church's Mission



- Pope Benedict, in his 2007 encyclical called “Saved in Hope” (*Spe Salvi*) didn’t define hope either, but he gave us a clear indication of what it is based on St. Paul’s words to the Ephesians. St. Paul said that prior to the Gospel, those in Ephesus were “living without God and without hope in the world.” To be hopeless is to live without God.
- Therefore, he argued, **hope is really to “live with God in the world.”**



# The Meaning of Hope and the Church's Mission



- We know that, no matter what we're facing, when we confront the situation with Christ, everything changes. Everything is possible for him.
- When we see Jesus visibly at our side, smiling at us, telling us not to be afraid, your our world is totally different.
- That's what it means to live with hope.  
**It's to live with "Christ Jesus our Hope,"** as St. Paul defines him in his first letter to St. Timothy



# The Meaning of Hope and the Church's Mission



- The Catechism does define hope as “the theological virtue by which we **desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness**, placing our **trust in Christ's promises** and **relying** not on our own strength, but **on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit**” (1817).



# The Meaning of Hope and the Church's Mission



- The *Catechism* focuses our attention, first, on **our trust in Christ's promises**. That's why Pope Benedict, for example, links hope to faith, saying they're almost the same thing, because when we really believe in Jesus, we trust in his words and works, and therefore place our hope in him and in them.
- Second, the *Catechism* focuses us on **God's help in ordinary circumstances**. We trust in the God the Holy Spirit helping us. We no longer rely on ourselves or on other human beings but on God



# The Meaning of Hope and the Church's Mission



- Third, the Catechism turns us to the kingdom of heaven and eternal life. The kingdom of heaven is not just something later, but it **means living with Christ the King here and now**, living by the virtues and values of the kingdom he describes in his Parables and other teachings.
- **The Kingdom of God is ultimately God**, that he's the most decisive reality of our life, one that gets us to look at everything differently.
- This hope leads us to desire heaven.





# The Meaning of Hope and the Church's Mission



- Pope Benedict said one of the reasons why many begin to lose hope is by substituting this **“great hope” of eternal life** with God by lots of **lesser hopes**, short-term, and worldly.
- These hopes are not necessarily bad in themselves, but even if we get them, the joy we receive can be fleeting.
- Either way, our appetite for the great hope wanes.



# Being Priestly Missionaries of Hope



- Missionaries bring Christ Our Hope to the world.
- We help others to realize that God is with us in the world.
- We help them to trust in him and to rely on him.
- We inspire them to desire God, to have the fullness life with and in him, to structure our life with him in its center, and to long to be with him forever.



# Being Priestly Missionaries of Hope



- We help people ground their life in God.
- Hope is the “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul . . . that enters . . . where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf” (Heb 6:19).
- **Hope is the anchor thrown into the clouds** that keeps the eyes of our mind and of our heart focused on God and heaven, no matter the storms of life.
- As fishers of men in the Church’s worldwide and ceaseless fishing expedition, we need to make sure that Anchor is firm!



# Being Priestly Missionaries of Hope



- The missionary saints are the great witnesses of how to do this, who traveled so far from home to share our grounded hope with others.
- The history of the Church in America is filled with these great missionary saints: St. John Neumann. Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos. St. Junipero Serra. The Martyrs of Georgia. The North American Martyrs. St. Katherine Drexel. St. Rose Philippine Duchesne. Mother Theodore Guerin. St. Damien. St. Marianne Cope and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini.



# Being Priestly Missionaries of Hope



- To be declared a saint it must be proven that one lived the virtue of hope — like the other theological and cardinal virtues — to an heroic degree.
- We are all called to be heroes of hope, messengers, and missionary disciples of hope in communion with the Church.



# The 1700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Council of Nicaea



- During this Jubilee, from May to August, we have the great celebration of the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and the Nicene Creed. Huge not just ecumenically.
- This is the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Church's response to "living without God in the world" because of the heresy of Arianism.





# The 1700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Council of Nicaea



- We mark the Creed's focus on the Trinity. The Church's mission flows from the missions of the Son of God and the Holy Spirit, seeking to bring everyone into communion with the loving communion of Persons who is the Blessed Trinity.
- There is also a clear missionary dimension to the Creed's focus on Creation, on the Incarnation and birth of Jesus, on his Passion, Death and Resurrection, and on Holy Spirit, all sources of hope.
- We celebrate our belief in baptism, the forgiveness of sins, Jesus' resurrection and ours, and life everlasting — the great hope.



# The Marks of the Church



- But we also celebrate the Church's four marks, as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, which need to mark the Church's mission work.
  - **One** — United with God and with each other, not just intentionally but sacramentally.
  - **Holy** — Holy because God is holy. Christ's holiness. We are called to be holy as we are doing our work.
  - **Catholic** — Universal. We're interested in bringing the Gospel to everyone to the ends of the earth.
  - **Apostolic** — The Church is not just built on the foundation of the apostles but is missionary.



# The Missionary Nature of the Church



- The Church is the Bride and the Body of Christ our Hope.
- We are called to “be always ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.”
- Christ-with-us is that reason and giving witness through, with and in him is the essence of the Church’s identity, life and mission, and of the priest’s identity, spirituality and work.



Thank **you!**



# **The Missionary Identity and Spirituality of The Priestly Life (Part II)**

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**National Director, The Pontifical Mission Societies USA**

**Diocese of San Angelo, Texas**  
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# The Formalization of the Church's Mission



- **Propaganda Fide** (1622), established by Pope Gregory XV
  - An eye to the Protestant Lands of Europe, Missions in Americas and Asia, and the Orthodox Churches.
  - Canonizations of 1622
  - Pontifical Urban College (1627)
  - The United States was mission territory until 1908.
- Pope Paul VI, **Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples** (1967)
- Pope Benedict XVI and the **Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization** (2010)
- Pope Francis and the Dicastery for Evangelization (2022)
  - Section of First Evangelization (Cardinal Luis Tagle)
  - Section of New Evangelization (Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella)





# The Four Pontifical Mission Societies



- The **Society of Propagation of the Faith** (1822) by Blessed Pauline Jaricot (1799-1862)
- The **Missionary Childhood Association**, also known as Holy Childhood. by Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson (1785-1844)
- The **Society of St. Peter the Apostle** (1889) by Jeanne (1859-1934) and Stephanie Bigard.
- The **Missionary Union** (1916) by Blessed Father Paolo Manna, PIME (1872-1952)
- In 1922, the first three societies received the title “Pontifical” and their central offices were moved to Rome. The Missionary Union was named Pontifical in 1956.



# The Society of the Propagation of the Faith



- Blessed Pauline Jaricot (1799-1862), a spiritual directee of St. John Mary Vianney.
- Letters from Brother Phileas
- Dream of Oil Lamps
- Small groups of ten women in father's silk mill to pray for missions and contribute a *sou* — penny — a week.
- First contributions went to care for the Diocese of Louisiana (Florida keys to Canada) as well as Kentucky and China.
- Continues to support 1,124 missionary dioceses across the globe.



# The Missionary Childhood Association



- In 1843, Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson (1785-1844) of Nancy and Toul, who helped found the Fathers of Mercy to help re-evangelize France, talked with Pauline Jaricot about his long-term hope to work with the world's poorest children in the missions, especially in China.
- She suggested he appeal to the children of France to help children around the world.
- As a consequence of the meeting, the Missionary Childhood Association, "children helping children," was born.
- He went on appeals to New York, New Orleans, Dubuque, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Montreal, Quebec City and places in between.
- Each year MCA helps more the 2 million children in religious and catechetical programs and with other basic human and educational needs.



# The Society of St. Peter the Apostle



- In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jeanne Bigard (1859-1924) and her mother Stephanie, in Caen, France received a letter from Bishop Jules-Alphonse Cousin in Nagasaki, asking for financial help to expand his seminary.
- They began gathering funds to support those seminarians and in 1889, they founded the Society of St. Peter the Apostle to support mission vocations, both priestly and religious.
- In its first year, it supported 2,700 seminarians. Today nearly 82,500 seminarians in Africa, Asia, Oceania and other missionary fields are supported with a \$700 annual stipend, as well as tens of thousands of religious novices.



# The Missionary Union



- In 1916, Blessed Paolo Manna, PIME (1872-1952), who had worked for a decade as a missionary in East Burma before having to return to Italy for health reasons, established the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious.
- He spent the rest of his life stimulating missionary zeal among the clergy and faithful. His idea was that if the clergy were zealous for the missions, all the faithful would be.
- At the request of the Vatican, he established a seminary for missionaries in Ducenta, Italy. In 1926, at the instigation of Pius XI, he established the Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions (PIME).
- He was beatified in 2001 by St. John Paul II, who said, "In Father Paolo Manna we perceive a special reflection of the glory of God. He spent his entire life promoting the missions."
- The Missionary Union became Pontifical in 1956.
- It focuses on missionary spirituality and formation of clergy, religious, and through them the whole people of God.





# The Pontifical Mission Societies



- There are 120 national offices worldwide.
- Each diocese is supposed to appoint a diocesan director
- Every local church is part of the TPMS network by participating in World Mission Month each October, encouraging missionary spirit in the hearts of the baptised through prayer, formation, and almsgiving.
- The funds raised by the National Directions throughout the world do not go to the Vatican but form a pool of money, which we call the Universal Solidarity Fund, which the national directors govern, choosing recipients every May. The funds are given to the beneficiaries through the Nuncios.









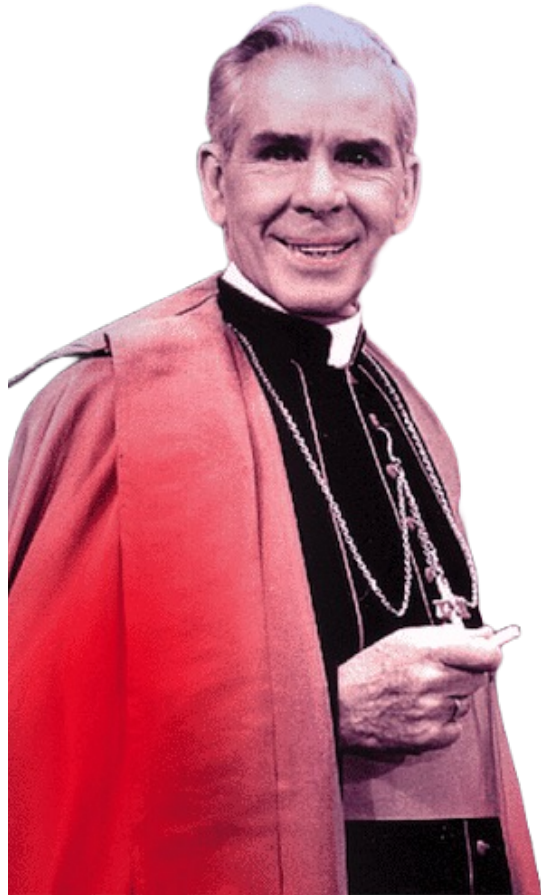
# The Work of The Pontifical Mission Societies USA



- To educate and engage **Catholics in the United States** about the Church's global mission.
- To encourage **prayer, sacrifice, and financial support** for missionaries.
- To organize and promote **World Mission Month**, the peak of which is **World Mission Sunday**, the annual worldwide collection supporting the Pope's Missions celebrated on the second to last Sunday of October.
- To collaborate with **bishops, priests, religious, and lay leaders** to foster missionary discipleship.
- To provide resources for dioceses, parishes, and schools to **cultivate a missionary spirit**.



## Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (1895-1979)



- National Director of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith in the USA from 1950-1966.
- He raised hundreds of millions of dollars and donated \$10 million of his own earnings.
- He designed in 1951 and promoted the World Mission Rosary, praying for the missions on five continents.
- He founded Mission Magazine in July 1951.
- Left all his books and 40 percent of his effects (the most of any recipient) to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. It was his real passion in life and approaching death.



# Practical Ideas on Praying for the Missions



- Mass for the Evangelization of Peoples (Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions #18, A and B)
- Prayers of the Faithful at Mass for the Church's missionary work, for missionaries, for the suffering Church in missionary areas (like in Nigeria, where more Christians are killed every year than in all other countries combined).
- World Mission Rosary created by Archbishop Sheen.
- Holy Hours for the Church's Missions, either in World Mission Month, on Thursdays, or on other opportune occasions
- Parish missions or Days of Recollection led by missionaries on missionary themes



# Practical Ideas on Forming for the Missions



- World Mission Month
- World Mission Sunday
- Study of the Annual Message for World Mission Day
- Mission Trips
- Mission Magazine subscriptions and reading groups.
- MCA Modules in Religious Education Programs
- Study of the great missionary documents of the Church: *Ad Gentes* (1965), *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975), *Redemptoris Missio* (1990), *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013).
- Book studies on great missionaries or on accessible missiology.
- Use and catechesis on the blessing and dismissal: “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.” What “*Ite, missa est*” means.

# Practical Ideas on Preaching the Missions



- World Mission Month
- World Mission Sunday
- When the Gospel Passages are about the Church's mission — when Jesus sends out the 12 or the 72 or the Great Commission.
- A regular focus on missionary discipleship.
- On the major feasts of mission, like Easter, the Ascension, Pentecost, Epiphany, the Visitation, Birth and Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist, Good Shepherd Sunday, Christ the King.



# Practical Ideas on Preaching the Missions



- On the feast of missionary saints, including applications on Sundays. For example: St. Paul, St. Barnabas, SS. Timothy and Titus, St. Peter, any of the apostles, any of the evangelists, St. John the Baptist, St. Francis Xavier, St. Therese, St. Francis de Sales, St. Dominic, the North American Martyrs, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, St. John Neumann, St. Junipero Serra, St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, St. Mother Theodore Guerin, St. Peter Claver, St. Peter Chanel, St. Peter Canisius, SS. Cyril and Methodius, St. Philip Neri and others.

# Practical Ideas on Preaching the Missions



- Preaching plays a major role in the Church's mission.
- Our preaching is a sign of our missionary zeal.
- Pope Francis gave us a whole primer on effective missionary preaching in *Evangelii Gaudium*.
- Catholic preachers should be the best preachers of all time, with the gift of the Holy Spirit, with the message we've been given, with the integration with the Word made Flesh.
- We must prioritize it and not give in to the idea that the Word of God doesn't have the power to change people and the world.



# Practical Ideas on Supporting the Missions



- World Mission Sunday
  - Only collection in the Code of Canon Law (791)
  - Supports Pope's 1,124 Missionary territories and lands
  - Administered by The Pontifical Mission Societies
- Missionary Cooperative Appeal
  - Started in the Archdiocese of Newark
  - Funds raised go to the missionary congregation or mission diocese.
- Diocesan and Parish Mission Partnerships
  - 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year of the Hermamiento between San Angelo and Tyler with San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba in Honduras.



# Practical Ideas on Supporting the Missions



- Mass Stipends for the Missions
  - Many priests survive only on a daily Mass stipend, from which they also support their parish and poor families.
  - TPMS USA gives hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to bishops for the survival of their priests.
- St. Peter the Apostle
  - Many take up a collection on Good Shepherd Sunday.
  - Adopt a priest (\$3,650 a year, or more)
  - Adopt a seminarian (\$700 a year)
- Missionary Childhood Association
  - Many countries take up a collection on the Epiphany
  - Others give on October 1
- Wills, Trusts, Annuities, Qualified Charitable Distributions, DAFs, Life Insurance, Real Estate

# World Mission Sunday 2025

## **“Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples”**

The theme chosen by Pope Francis for October 2025.

## Sunday, October 19th



World Mission Sunday is the pinnacle moment of World Mission Month.

It is a day dedicated to publicly renewing the Church's commitment to the missionary movement by taking up the only canonically (c. 216) mandatory second Sunday collection.

It has a direct impact in the Church in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific Islands, much like the first collections of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith helped build the Church in the United States.



# World Mission Sunday, October 19, 2025



- Visit **[pontificalmissions.org/wms](https://pontificalmissions.org/wms)** for free downloadable materials:
  - Poster
  - Homily helps for all the Sundays of October
  - Parish announcements for each Sunday of October
  - Bulletin announcements for each Sunday of October
  - Prayers of the Faithful for each Sunday of October
  - A pamphlet explaining how to pray the World Mission Rosary
  - Resources explaining why World Mission Sunday matters
  - The message for World Mission Sunday 2025
  - Music to animate the World Mission Sunday liturgical celebrations
  - Social media assets ready for you to share with your followers, including videos, pictures, and suggested copy





Kon Tum, Vietnam, April 7, 2025.  
(TPMS USA/Margaret Murray)

# MISSIONARIES OF HOPE

*among the Peoples*



World Mission  
Sunday 2025  
**October 19th**

YOUR GIFT  
HELPS  
SUPPORT:



38,137  
Seminarians



8,749  
Shelters and  
Orphanages



11,992  
Health  
Centers



843,785  
Catechists



258,540  
Religious  
sisters

SHARE:  
GIVE NOW



TEXT  
"MISSIONS25"  
TO 53555





Kon Tum, Vietnam, April 7, 2025.  
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# The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- We are approaching on June 16, the **350th anniversary** of Jesus' most significant apparition to St. Margaret Mary and then on June 27, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is the patronal feast of the Diocese of San Angelo's cathedral.
- In his encyclical on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, published last October 24, Pope Francis wrote extensively about the connection between devotion to the Sacred Heart and the missionary dimension of Christian life.
- "The enduring relevance of devotion to the heart of **Christ is especially evident in the work of evangelization.**"

# The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- He cited the example of Saint Daniele Comboni, founder of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus, whom the Holy Father said “discovered in the mystery of the heart of Jesus **the source of strength for his missionary commitment**” (160).
- Pope Francis added, “The flames of love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus **expand through the Church’s missionary outreach**, which proclaims the message of God’s love revealed in Christ.” He quoted Saint Vincent de Paul, who taught that “the heart of our Lord ... disposes us to go as he went.... He sends us, like [the apostles], **to bring fire everywhere**” (207).

# The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- Mission, Pope Francis eloquently continued, is **“a radiation of the love of the heart of Christ”** and “requires missionaries who are themselves in love and who, enthralled by Christ, **feel bound to share this love that has changed their lives**” (209).
- “The **greatest desire of every missionary of souls**,” he added, is “to be able to speak of Christ, by witness or by word, in such a way that others seek to love him. For a heart that loves, this is not a duty but an irrepressible need” (210).



# The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- We cannot help but make our own, he underlined, St. Paul's words, "Woe to me if I do not proclaim the Gospel!" (1 Cor 9:16) as well as Jeremiah's "Within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones" (Jer 20:9).
- He concluded: "**Jesus is calling you and sending you forth** to spread goodness in our world. ... Wherever you may be, you can hear his call and realize that he is sending you forth to carry out that mission. **He himself told us, 'I am sending you out'** (Lk 10:3). It is part of our being friends with him. For this friendship to mature, however, it is up to you to let him send you forth on a mission in this world. ... Never forget that Jesus is at your side at every step of the way. ... **He will always be there to encourage and accompany you.** He has promised, ... 'For I am with you always, to the end of the age' (Mt 28:20) (215).





Thank **you!**