



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples

**Msgr. Roger J. Landry**

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

**Day of Reflection • Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Mission Council**

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# The Korean Martyrs



- This Day of Reflection is taking place on Sept. 20, the **Memorial of the Korean Martyrs**.
- It's entitled "St. Andrew Kim Taegon and Companions," the 102 Koreans beatified with him in 1925 and canonized with him by St. John Paul II in 1984, but it's also a day on which we remember all Koreans who died for the faith: the 124 beatified by Pope Francis in 2014 and the nearly ten thousand Koreans gave their lives for Christ in six waves of intense religious persecution in 1791, 1801, 1827, 1839, 1846 and 1966.



# The Korean Martyrs



- Among these are:
  - **Foreign missionaries** from China and from the French Foreign Mission Society.
  - **The first indigenous Korean priest**, Father Andrew Kim Taegon, beheaded in 1846. Others Korean priests followed.
  - **Mostly lay people**, old and young, male and female, and kids.
- As we ponder our role as missionaries of hope among the people, it's key to remember how Korea was evangelized.
- It began when some educated **lay Koreans** in 1777 in southern China discovered some books of deceased Jesuits. Taking the books back, they studied them. One went to Beijing to be baptized in 1784 and then they began to baptize each other. When a Chinese priest secretly entered the country in 1789, there were already 4,000 Christians.



# The Korean Martyrs



- The community sent a delegation to Beijing, 750 miles away, to ask for priests to be sent. Two came, but didn't last long. Four decades later, in 1836, Fr. Maubant arrived from the French Foreign Mission Society, soon followed by Bishop Laurent Imbert and ten other French missionaries.
- **Many lay Koreans had already given their lives for the faith by then!**
- **Father Andrew Kim Taegon**, the first indigenous Korean, basically walked (and then sailed) to Macau to be trained as a priest until he returned at 25, being martyred in 1846 only 13 months after his ordination.



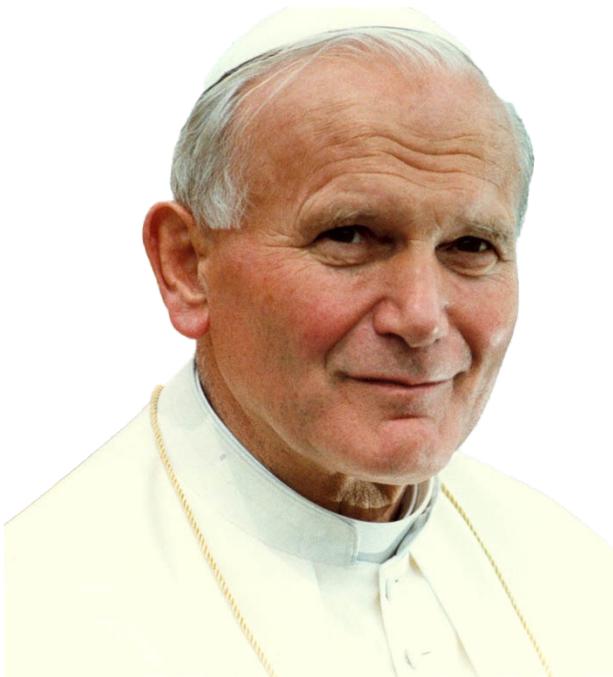
# The Korean Martyrs



- As he awaited execution, he wrote to those entrusted to them: “Our Lord Jesus Christ ... took innumerable pains upon and constituted the holy Church through his own passion and increases it through the passion of its faithful. ... Now, some 50 or 60 years since the holy Church entered into our Korea, the faithful suffer persecutions again. Even today persecution rages, so that many of our friends of the same faith, among whom I am myself, have been thrown into prison. ... However, as Scripture says, **God cares for the least hair of our heads**; therefore, how can persecution be considered as anything other than the command of God, or his prize, or precisely his punishment?... We are 20 here, and thanks be to God all are still well. ... Since we are now close to the struggle, **I pray you to walk in faith, so that when you have finally entered into Heaven, we may greet one another**. I leave you my kiss of love!”



# The Korean Martyrs

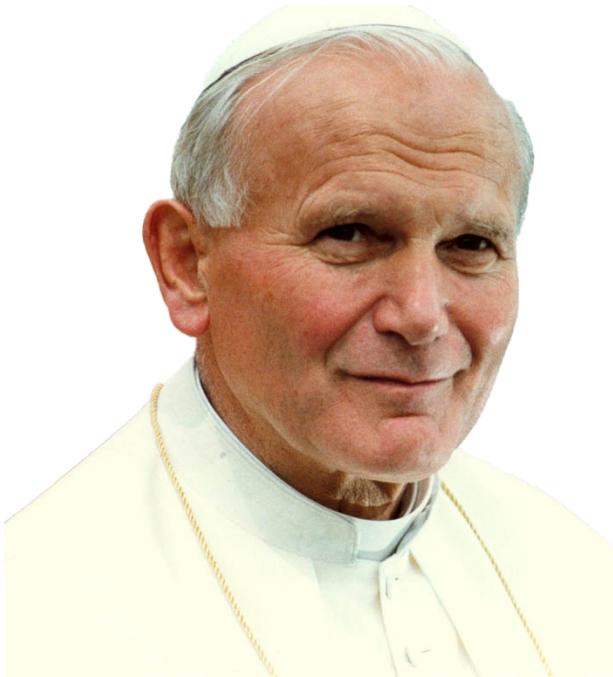


- **John Paul II** said about them in Seoul in 1984: “The truth about Jesus Christ reached Korean soil ... by means of books brought from China. ... Divine grace soon moved your scholarly ancestors first to **an intellectual quest** for the truth of God’s word and **then to a living faith** in the Risen Savior. Your ancestors sent one of their own in 1784 to Peking, where he was baptized. From this good seed was born the first Christian community in Korea, **a community unique in the history of the Church** by reason of the fact that **it was founded entirely by lay people**. This fledgling Church, **so young and yet so strong in faith**, withstood wave after wave of fierce persecution. Thus, in less than a century, it could already **boast** of some ten thousand martyrs. The years 1791, 1801, 1827, 1839, 1846 and 1866 are forever signed with the holy blood of your Martyrs and engraved in your hearts. ...





# The Korean Martyrs



- “Even though the Christians in the first half century had only two priests from China to assist them, and these only for a time, **they deepened their unity in Christ through prayer and fraternal love**; they disregarded social classes and encouraged religious vocations. And they sought ever closer union with their Bishop in Peking and the Pope in faraway Rome. After years of **pleading for more priests to be sent**, your Christian ancestors welcomed the first French missionaries in 1836. Some of these, too, are numbered among the Martyrs who gave their lives for the sake of the Gospel, and who are being canonized today in this historic celebration. The splendid flowering of the Church in Korea today is indeed the **fruit of the heroic witness of the Martyrs**. Even today, their undying spirit sustains the Christians in the Church of silence in the North of this tragically divided land.”



# The Korean Martyrs



- Pope Francis said about them in 2014 when he beatified 124: “The Christian faith **was not brought to the shores of Korea through missionaries**; rather, it entered through the hearts and minds of the Korean people themselves. It was prompted by intellectual curiosity, the search for religious truth. Through an initial encounter with the Gospel, the first Korean Christians opened their minds to Jesus. They wanted to know more about this Christ who suffered, died, and rose from the dead. **Learning about Jesus soon led to an encounter with the Lord**, the first baptisms, the yearning for a full sacramental and ecclesial life, and the beginnings of missionary outreach. It also bore fruit in communities inspired by the early Church, in which the believers were truly one in mind and heart. This history tells us much about the importance, dignity and beauty of the vocation of the laity.”



# The Korean Martyrs



- “Soon after the first seeds of faith were planted, the martyrs and the Christian community **had to choose between following Jesus or the world**. They had heard the Lord’s warning that the world would hate them because of him; **they knew the cost of discipleship**. For many, this meant persecution, and later flight to the mountains, where they formed Catholic villages. They were willing to make great sacrifices and let themselves be stripped of whatever kept them from Christ ... for ... **Christ alone was their true treasure**. We today can find our faith challenged by the world, and in countless ways we are asked to compromise our faith, to water down the radical demands of the Gospel and to conform to the spirit of this age. **The martyrs call out to us to put Christ first** and to see all else in this world in relation to him and his eternal Kingdom. They challenge us to think about what, if anything, **we ourselves would be willing to die for.**”



# The Korean Martyrs



- “If we follow the lead of the martyrs and take the Lord at his word, we will understand the **sublime freedom and joy with which they went to their death**. We will see today’s celebration as embracing **the countless anonymous martyrs**, in this country and throughout the world, who, **especially in the last century**, gave their lives for Christ or suffered grave persecution for his name. **May the prayers of all the Korean martyrs**, in union with those of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, **obtain for us the grace of perseverance in faith and in every good work, holiness and purity of heart, and apostolic zeal in bearing witness to Jesus in this beloved country, throughout Asia, and to the ends of the earth.**”



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- The Korean Martyrs, together with the French and Chinese Missionaries, were all apostles of the hope that comes from Christ Jesus our Hope.
- We are now just about one month from World Mission Sunday, which is dedicated to the same theme as our Day of Reflection: **Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples**.
- This theme was chosen by Pope Francis before he died and this focus is now being enthusiastically carried forward by Pope Leo.
- It's taken, obviously, from the context of the **Jubilee of Hope**, which began on Christmas Eve last year and will continue through the Epiphany in 2026.



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- Pope Francis wrote in his **Message for World Mission Day 2025**: “For World Mission Day in the Jubilee Year 2025, the central message of which is hope, **I have chosen the motto: ‘Missionaries of Hope Among all Peoples.’** It reminds individual Christians and the entire Church, the community of the baptized, of **our fundamental vocation to be**, in the footsteps of Christ, **messengers and builders of hope**. I trust that it will be for everyone **a time of grace** with the faithful God who has given us new birth in the risen Christ ‘to a living hope’ (cf. 1 Pet 1:3-4).”



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- “I would like to mention **some relevant aspects of our Christian missionary identity**, so that we can let ourselves be guided by the Spirit of God and burn with holy zeal for a new evangelizing season in the Church, **which is sent to revive hope in a world over which dark shadows loom.**”
- He describes first how **Jesus**, through his preaching and healing “**restor[ed] hope** in God to the poor and needy.”
- Then he says, “**Through his disciples**, sent to all peoples and mystically accompanied by him, **the Lord Jesus continues his ministry of hope for humanity.**”



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- He prays that we will all “feel inspired **to set out in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus to become**, with him and in him, **signs and messengers of hope for all, in every place and circumstance that God has granted us to live**” and that “**all the baptized, as missionary disciples of Christ, make his hope shine forth** in every corner of the earth!”
- The Church, he says, is called to relate to the “joys and hope, the grief and anguish, of the people of our time (GS 1).”



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- Pope Francis thinks especially of the missionaries *ad gentes* (“to the nations”) whom he calls “signs of the universal vocation of the baptized to become, by the power of the Spirit and daily effort, **missionaries among all peoples and witnesses to the great hope given us by the Lord Jesus.**”
- He speaks of the “**great hope**” that “**transcends the passing things of this world** and opens up to those **divine realities** in which we share even now,” meaning heaven.



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- He calls us to become “**harbingers of a new humanity**” to those in “human crisis” through drawing near and caring for those in need, especially the “poorest and weakest, the sick, the elderly and those excluded,” whom, he says, often “are the ones who teach us how to live in hope.”
- “Faced with the **urgency of the mission of hope** today,” he says, “Christ’s disciples are called first to discover how to become “**artisans**” of hope and restorers of an often distracted and unhappy humanity.”



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- To be these missionaries of hope, he says **we need to be renewed in hope**, “the Easter spirituality experienced at every Eucharistic celebration” and thereby become a “springtime people,” “**brimming with hope** to be shared with all.”
- “Missionaries of hope,” he says, “are men and women of prayer,” citing the Venerable Cardinal Francis Xavier Van Thuan. “Prayer is the **primary missionary activity** and at the same time **the first strength of hope.**”



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- So the renewal of the mission of hope begins in prayer, he says, and cites praying with the word of God and particularly the Psalms. “By praying, **we keep alive the spark of hope lit by God within us, so that it can become a great fire**, which enlightens and warms everyone around us, also by those concrete actions and gestures that prayer itself inspires.”
- He underlines that the **mission of the Church, “like Christian hope itself,”** is a **communitarian process** of all the baptized that builds the Church.



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples



- As part of evangelizing communion, he emphasizes “the importance of this ... service rendered by the **Pontifical Mission Societies** in promoting the missionary responsibility of the baptized and supporting new Particular Churches” and **urges Catholics of all ages “to participate actively in the common evangelizing mission of the Church** by your witness of **life and prayer**, by your **sacrifices** and by your **generosity**” and invokes the invocation of “Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ our Hope”



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- In this year in which we're focused on the whole Church becoming "missionaries of hope among the peoples" we had **the election of the first Pope since St. Peter who has served as a missionary *ad gentes***, through his 22 years as a missionary priest and bishop in Peru and 12 years as a missionary Prior General of the Augustinians, visiting its 3,000 members in 50 countries.
- Every pope is called to be apostolic, a successor of Peter as a "fisher of men" "putting out into the deep," but that is **part of the deepest identity** of the 267<sup>th</sup> Peter.



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- On the night of his election, he said: “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



- The next day, in his first homily as Pope, he spoke about 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, he spoke about the priority to “return to the **primacy of Christ in proclamation**; the **missionary conversion** of the entire Christian community.”



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- On May 22, he welcomed to a private audience the National Directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies. There he was able to build on the theme of this Day of Reflection and World Mission Day.
- He said, “Our celebration of this Holy Year **challenges all of us to be ‘pilgrims of hope.’** Taking up the words that Pope Francis chose as the theme for this year’s World Mission Day, I [encourage] you to continue to be **‘missionaries of hope among all peoples.’**”



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- He praised the work of **The Pontifical Mission Societies** whose efforts, he said, are “**indispensable to the Church’s mission of evangelization**, as I can personally attest from my own pastoral experience in the years of my ministry serving in Peru.” He added, “The Pontifical Mission Societies are **effectively the primary means of awakening missionary responsibility among all the baptized** and supporting ecclesial communities in areas where the Church is young.”



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- Among TPMS' priorities, he said: “**The promotion of apostolic zeal** among the People of God,” he stated, “remains an **essential aspect of the Church’s renewal ... and is all the more urgent in our own day.**”
- “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



- “In this regard,” he concluded, “I would like to thank you and your associates for your efforts each year in **promoting World Mission Sunday on the second-to-last Sunday of October**, which is of **immense help to me** in my solicitude for the Churches in areas which are under the care of the Dicastery for Evangelization.”
- World Mission Sunday is **October 19** this year.



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- Since then, Pope Leo has spoken about the importance of this missionary spirituality many times. We will focus on just one of those occasions.
- On June 7, speaking to the representatives of the new movements, he said, “**The Church’s mission** has been an important part of my own pastoral experience and **has shaped my spiritual life.**”
- He went from his own experience to theirs.



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- “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.”



## Pope Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- **“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.**”



# What Does It Mean to Be Missionaries of Hope?



- **To be missionaries of hope, we have to be men and women of hope.** *Nemo dat quod non habet*, as St. Thomas Aquinas used to say: we can only give what we have. That's why in this Jubilee we need to respond to God's graces to become men and women of hope.
- The present Jubilee is geared toward our becoming **"pilgrims of hope."**
- The Church is a "pilgrim Church on earth," but to become pilgrims of hope, we first need to have a clear idea of what hope is.



## What Is Hope?



- Pope Francis doesn't define hope in his Bull for the Jubilee, because he says, "Everyone knows what it is to hope" namely, "the desire and expectation of good things to come." But that's easily confused with optimism.
- Pope Benedict doesn't define hope either in his 2007 Encyclical "Saved in Hope," but, basing himself on St. Paul's insight that the Ephesians before the Gospel were "without hope" because they were "without God in the world" (Eph 2:12) suggests that **hope is "living with God in the world."**



## What Is Hope?



- The Catechism (1817) defines 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.”
- It describes that hope involves our **relationship to God**: our **desire to be with him** in this world and forever and **our choice to trust in him** and **rely on him**.



# An All-Weather Anchor of Hope for the Church



- Hope is traditionally depicted as an **anchor**. Catholics are meant to be an eschatological anchor for the whole of humanity.
- Heb 6:18-20: “Hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an **anchor of the soul**, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner.”
- Pope Francis: “The image of the anchor ... helps us to recognize **the stability and security that is ours amid the troubled waters of this life**, provided we entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus. ”



# An All-Weather Anchor of Hope for the Church



- “The storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are **firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ** and to overcome sin, fear and death. This hope, which transcends life’s fleeting pleasures and the achievement of our immediate goals, **makes us rise above our trials and difficulties, and inspires us to keep pressing forward, never losing sight of the grandeur of the heavenly goal** to which we have been called.”
- On the pilgrimage of earthly life, Catholics help everyone stay “grounded” in the heavenly Jerusalem.



# Catholics as Missionaries of Hope



- As “pilgrims of hope” subjectively as disciples, and “missionaries of hope” objectively as apostles, Catholics are called to exemplify for the Church what St. Peter urged the first Christians: **“always to be ready to give an explanation for the reason for our hope to anyone who asks”** (1 Pet 3:15).
- We are called to be those capable of witnessing to **“Christ Jesus our Hope”** (1 Tim 1:1).



# Catholics as Missionaries of Hope



- That mission involves helping others to realize that God is with us in the world, to help them trust in him and his promises, to rely on him, to desire him, have life with and in him, to structure life with him as its source, summit, root and center, and to long to be with him forever.
- The history of the Church in the United States is full of missionary saints who traveled so far from home to share their grounded hope with others.



# Catholics as Missionaries of Hope



- We see it in the heroically virtuous lives of 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, St. Mother Theodore Guerin, St. Damien, St. Marianne Cope and perhaps the greatest of them all, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, who showed us the meaning of hope in her motto: “I can do all things in him who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13).
- They were all compelling witnesses to hope.



# Catholics as Missionaries of Hope



- St. John Paul II, when he came to the United Nations in 1995, said he had come as a “**witness of hope**” against modern fears about the future. He showed how much the world today needs hope to journey the arduous path of peace, reconciliation and justice against the cynicism and distrust that can enervate people’s — and leaders’ — moral energy. “Hope and trust,” he said, “are the premises of responsible activity.”
- As missionary disciples in communion, we’re all called to that witness, that testimony, that literal “martyrdom,” giving hope to the world.





# Catholics as Missionaries of Hope



- We have a particular role to bring that hope to the USA at a time in which many are pessimistic about the future and checking out of public involvement.
- As we prepare for the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of our country in 2026, **the Catholic Church in America is called anew to be leaders in hope.** It's one way we become salt, light and leaven. We are supposed to give witness to that salt that hasn't lost its flavor, that unhidden light, that yeast that can leaven all of society.



## Catholics as Missionaries of Hope



- Pope Benedict spoke about this summons to give hope in his 2008 visit to the USA.
- He said at the White House: “**Americans have always been a people of hope:** your ancestors came to this country with the expectation of finding new freedom and opportunity, while the vastness of the unexplored wilderness inspired in them the hope of being able to start completely anew, building a new nation on new foundations. ... **Hope, hope for the future, is very much a part of the American character.**”



## Catholics as Missionaries of Hope



- He continued about Catholics in particular: **“The Christian virtue of hope ... has also marked, and continues to mark, the life of the Catholic community in this country. ... I urge you to continue to be a leaven of evangelical hope in American society, striving to bring the light and truth of the Gospel to the task of building an ever more just and free world for generations yet to come. ... Those who have hope must live different lives!”**



## Religious as Missionaries of Hope



- “By your **prayers**, by the witness of your **faith**, by the fruitfulness of your **charity**, may you point the way towards that **vast horizon of hope that God is even now opening up to his Church**, and indeed to all humanity: the vision of a world reconciled and renewed in Christ Jesus, our Savior.”
- This hope is meant to continue to be the characteristic of US Catholics and **our great “import” and “export.”** We are called to bring that hope to our neighbors and to the world.



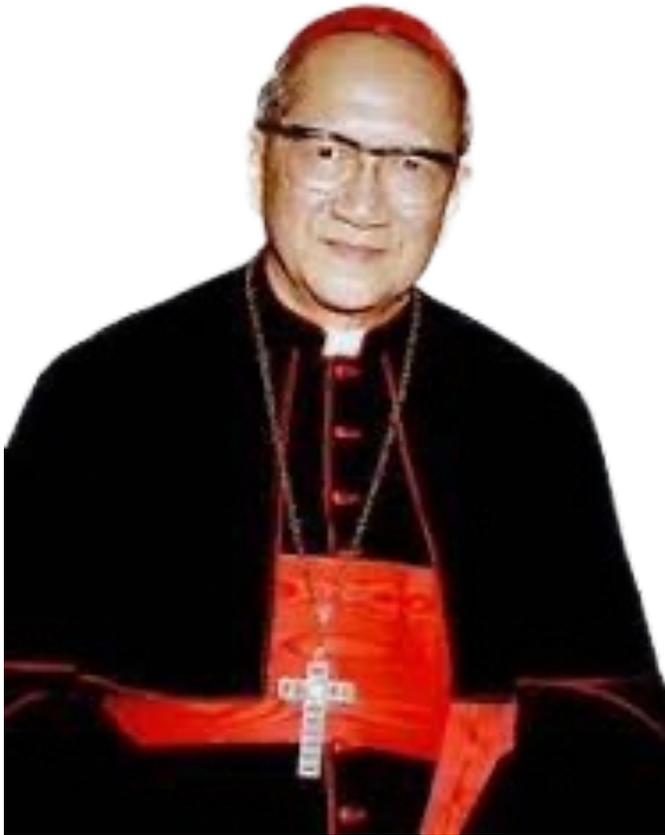
# Cardinal Van Thuan and the Road to Hope



- One of the great contemporary figures of hope is Vietnamese Venerable **Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan** (1928-2002), whose 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary was Tuesday, Sept. 16. He was imprisoned for 13 years, 9 in solitary confinement.
- He preached Great Jubilee retreat on hope to St. John Paul II and the Vatican Curia.
- He was mentioned by Pope Benedict in his encyclical on hope as “**a witness to hope for people all over the world**—to that great hope that does not wane” and called his insights on hope “precious.”
- As I mentioned earlier, Pope Francis referenced him, and particularly his prayer, in his World Mission Day Message this year.



# Cardinal Van Thuan and the Road to Hope



- Thuan said, “**The Road of Hope** is paved with **small acts of hope** along life’s way. **A life of hope** is born from **every minute of hope** in one’s lifetime.”
- His life became **one long prayer of hope**.
  - “Hope is particularly needed in our prayer. The patience, persistence, and perseverance that the Master tells us must accompany fruitful prayer all spring from the virtue of hope: to trust that God is listening even when there is no response; to hope that he is there when it seems he has abandoned us; to trust that our efforts at prayer are producing some invisible fruit when all visible signs of success are not there. ... **The person of hope is a person of prayer.**”



## Means to Grow in Hope



- As pilgrims of hope walking and running the race with heroic hope (part of the universal call to holiness) on the road of hope, we are called to **grow in hope**.
- There are several means we can specific by which we can grow in hope and lead others:
- **Prayer** — prayer in general, prayer for hope, meditation on the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.
- **Gratitude** — God's past goodness is a grounds of trust for future care. Ps 136. Mary's Magnificat.



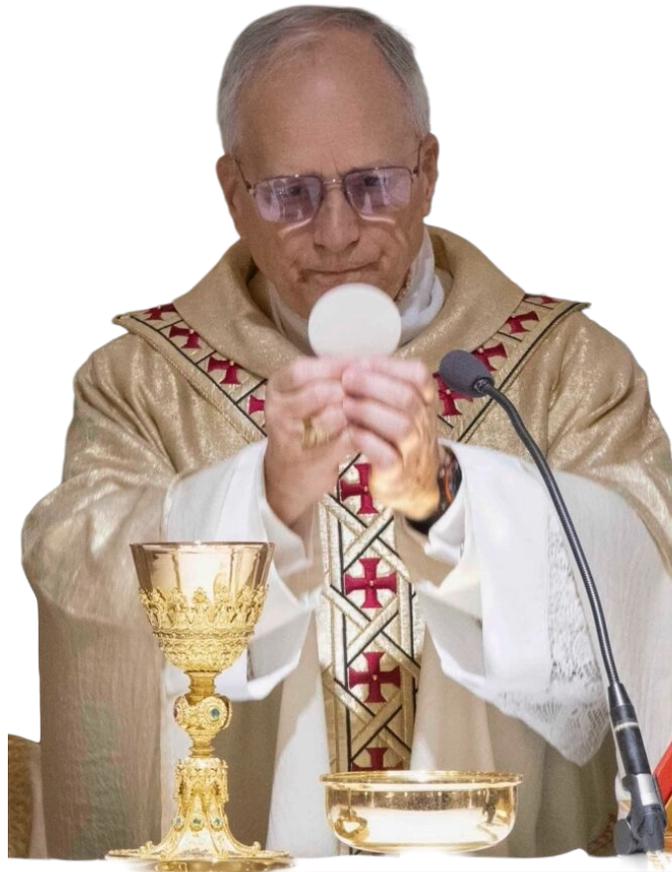
## Means to Grow in Hope



- **Sound Teaching** — We must know the *logos* of our hope. It must be reasonable. We must know what we believe and why.
  - **Pope Benedict** in USA: “**Only by ‘holding fast’ to sound teaching** will we be able to respond to the challenges that confront us in an evolving world. ... Like the early Christians, **we have a responsibility to give transparent witness to the ‘reasons for our hope,’** so that the eyes of all men and women of goodwill may be opened to see that God has shown us his face (cf. 2 Cor 3:12-18) and granted us access to his divine life through Jesus Christ. **He alone is our hope!**”



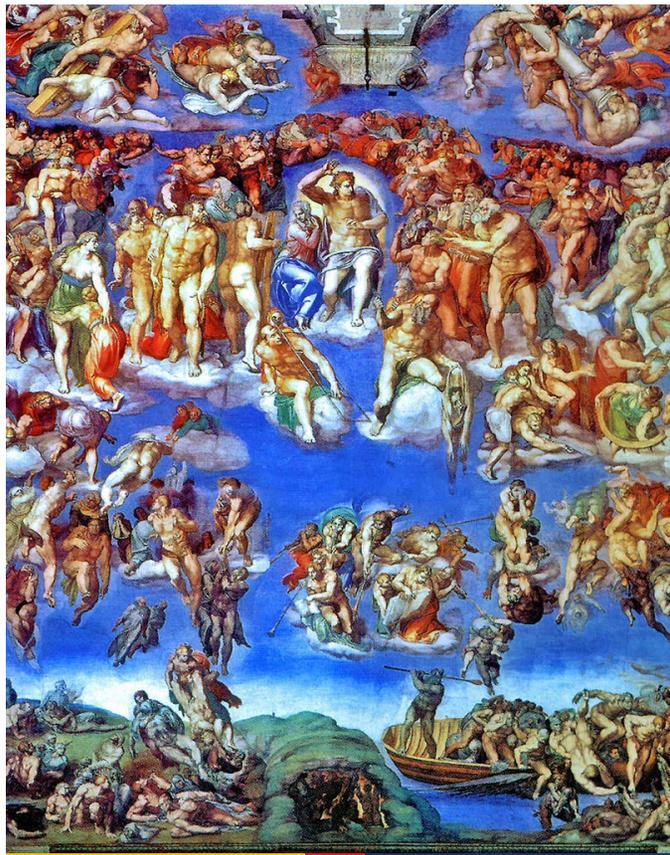
## Means to Grow in Hope



- **Participation in the Sacraments** — These are efficacious signs of the presence and action of God in our life. If Jesus remains with us in the **Holy Eucharist**, will he not give us everything besides? The Sacrament of **Confession** is a means to trust always with hope in his merciful love.
- **Patience** — One of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, patience sustains our hope and strengthens it as a virtue and a way of life. It leads to perseverance in co-redemptive suffering.



## Means to Grow in Hope



- **Just Action** — Pope Benedict stresses action is a school of hope. “All serious and upright human conduct is hope in action” as we thereby “strive to realize our lesser and greater hopes” and “work towards a brighter and more humane world.”
- **Meditation on the Last Things** — Pondering **judgment**, especially in the case of having suffered injustice, strengthens us in hope. The more we pray about the call to **heaven**, the great hope, the more we are sustained on the journey.



# Means to Grow in Hope



- **Devotion to Mary and the Saints**
  - Pope Francis: “Hope finds its **supreme witness** in the Mother of God. In the Blessed Virgin, we see that **hope is not naive optimism but a gift of grace** amid the realities of life.”
  - Pope Benedict: “We need witnesses—martyrs—who have given themselves totally, so as to show us the way—day after day. ... The saints were able to make the great journey of human existence in the way that Christ had done before them, because they **were brimming with great hope.**”



# The Ways To Lose Our Hope



- **Self-reliance** — We place our trust in ourselves and not in God. This is one of the great dangers of modern times: overreliance on ourselves, science, technology, “progress.” Hence the importance of the religious vow of obedience.
- **Materialism** — We begin to place of faith, hope and love in money and what money can provide. Hence the importance of the vow of poverty.
- **Presumption** — We proudly believe we can save ourselves by our own actions and will have the chance to ask God for help “later,” self-assured that God will save me regardless of my cooperation with his grace.



# The Ways To Lose Our Hope



- **Despair** — This comes from a practical denial, out of fear or sadness, that God's promises apply to me. This is normally sown in pessimism and a lack of gratitude for all that God has given.
- **Sin** — All sin weakens our relationship with God and serious sin can rupture our bond and take the spiritual wind out of us. The evil one wants to leads us from one sin, to habitual sin, to presumption, to discouragement, lukewarmness, avoiding confession, to great distance from God.



# The Stakes Involved & the Urgent Need for Hope



- In 2023 the CDC's *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary* for 2011-2021 showed the rapidly worsening situation of the mental and spiritual health of U.S. high school students. It showed:
  - **42%** of U.S. high school teens in 2021 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
  - **10%** actually tried to carry out that plan (and thankfully failed).



# The Stakes Involved & the Urgent Need for Hope

## YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

DATA SUMMARY &  
TRENDS REPORT



2011-2021

- For high school girls the situation was much worse:
  - **57%** felt **persistently sad or hopeless**
  - **30%** seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous year
  - **24%** had come up with a concrete plan on how they would end their life
- Each was a **60 percent increase since 2011.**
- The CDC showed that bullying, drug use, promiscuity, sexual violence, housing, family communication, & school connectedness all had decreased or remained the same.



## We See the Loss of Hope In:



- **High rates of despair** flowing from loneliness, isolation, individualism, fear and anxiety, lack of meaning, broken friendships and families, and suffering.
- The push for **Physician Assisted Suicide**.
- **Addictions** to drugs, social media, gaming and other escapes.
- Loss of the desire to **transmit life** due often to despair or fear of the future.
- The **failure** of progressivism, materialism and consumerism to deliver.
- Various personal struggles and concerns.



# The Stakes Involved & the Urgent Need for Hope



- These are all reasons why giving an explanation for the reason of our hope is not just a “good thing” but something **“urgent” with enormous stakes**. That’s why the Church must read the signs of the times and become living signs, witnesses, and missionaries of hope, inviting others to join us on the pilgrimage of hope, following and journeying with Christ Jesus Our Hope in the pilgrim Church on earth.
- The grace of this Jubilee is to help us grow in hope and in this common service and much-needed witness to hope.



# Crossing as Pilgrims the Threshold of Hope



- In 1994, St. John Paul II gave a book length interview to journalist Vittorio Messori. It was entitled “**Crossing the Threshold of Hope.**”
- Messori asked questions about how the Pope could have hope in the face of all of the challenges confronting the world and the Church, how he could proclaim the “good news” in the context of so much “bad news.”
- John Paul II patiently answered his questions, repeatedly returning to the **God revealed by Jesus Christ** who is “**the primary source of joy and hope** for man.”





# Crossing as Pilgrims the Threshold of Hope



- At the end of the book, he said, “**It is very important to cross the threshold of hope, not to stop before it, but to let oneself be led.** I believe that the great Polish poet Cyprian Norwid had this in mind when he expressed the **ultimate meaning of the Christian life** in these words: ‘Not with the Cross of the Savior behind you, but with your own cross behind the Savior.’ There is every reason for the truth of the Cross to be called the Good News.”
- The Cross, whose triumph we celebrated on Sunday, is the sign of the love of God that spared nothing to lead us to eternal life and love.





## Crossing as Pilgrims the Threshold of Hope



- The crucified and risen Christ wants to lead us in his Church across the threshold of hope. The **Jubilee Door**, now open, is a symbol of that threshold of mercy won on Calvary.
- In this Jubilee of Hope, we seek to cross it as pilgrims, spiritually and physically, and seek to bring as many people as we can — so many of whom are “living without hope, [because they’re] living without God in the world” — with us on that journey, which is an image of the **pilgrimage of life to cross the threshold of our “blessed hope,”** the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem.



# Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples

**Msgr. Roger J. Landry**

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

**Day of Reflection • Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Mission Council**

**St. Bartholomew Church, Fort Worth • September 20, 2025**



# The Formalization of the Church's Mission of Hope



- **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 Formalization of the Church's Mission of Hope



- 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 her 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 and the Two Floridas (Florida keys to Canada) as well as the Diocese of Bardstown, 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 French missionary 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 (of the 200,000 seminarians worldwide) 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.
- His feast day was Monday, Sept 15.



# The Pontifical Mission Societies



- There are 120 national offices worldwide.
- Each diocese, like the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, is supposed to appoint a diocesan director
- Every local church is part of the TPMS network and participates 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 supervise, 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**.



# 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. TPMS-USA will be leading this each pm in October.
- 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



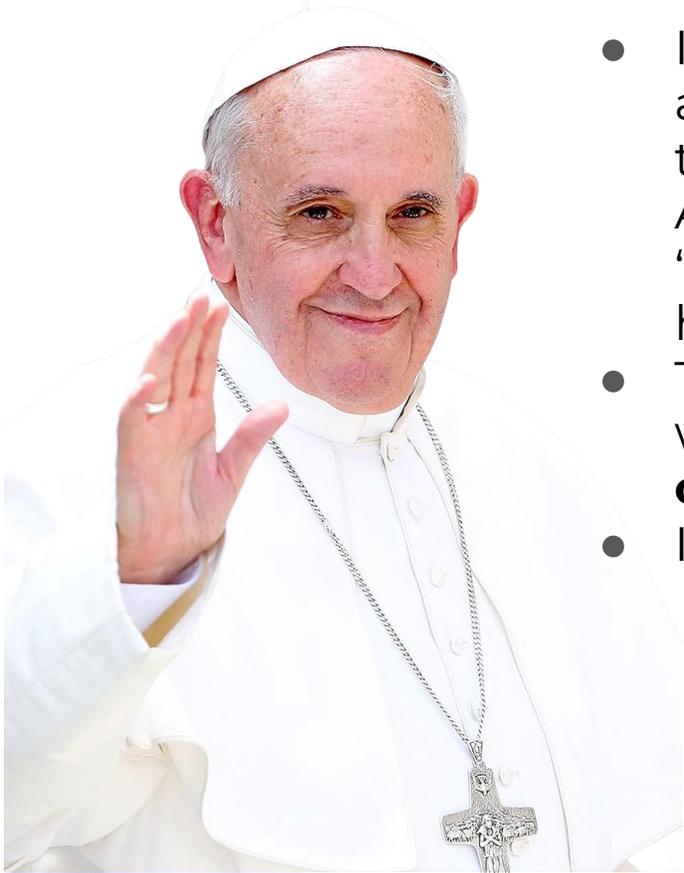
# Practical Ideas on Forming for the Missions



- 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 Forming for the Missions



- In terms of formation for mission, or “missionary animation,” the greatest playbook in the history of the Church was given in 2007 by the bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, in what is called the “Aparecida Document.” The drafting committee was headed by the future Pope Francis.
- The goal of everything the Church does, the bishops wrote, is to form “**missionary disciples in communion.**”
- It described the five stages of missionary training:
  - **Encountering Jesus Christ**
  - **Conversion;**
  - **Discipleship;**
  - **Communion;** and
  - **Mission.**



# Practical Ideas on Sharing About the Missions



- World Mission Month
- World Mission Sunday, this year October 19, dedicated to “Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples.”
- 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 Sharing About 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 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
  - Originated in the Archdiocese of Newark in 1931
  - Funds raised go to the missionary congregation or mission diocese.
- Diocesan and Parish Mission Partnerships



# 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, 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

# 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.



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.  
(TPMS USA/Margaret Murray)



# MISSIONARIES OF HOPE

*among the Peoples*



## World Mission Sunday 2025 October 19th

SHARE:  
GIVE NOW

YOUR GIFT HELPS SUPPORT:					
	38,137 Seminarians	8,749 Shelters and Orphanages	11,992 Health Centers	843,785 Catechists	258,540 Religious sisters

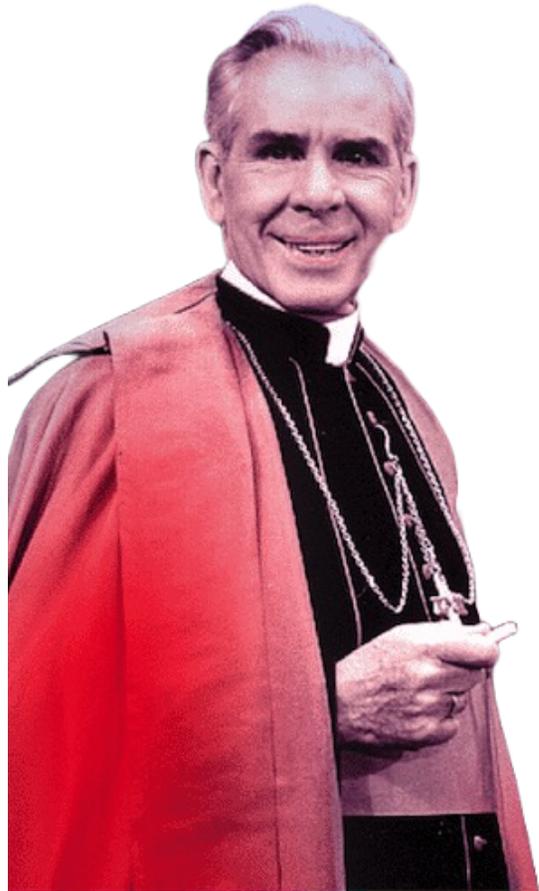


TEXT  
"MISSIONS25"  
TO 53555





## Venerable 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.



# The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- We celebrated this year, 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.
- 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).

## Welcome!

I warmly welcome you to this website, put together at the insistence and with the assistance of friends.

During my diocesan ordination, Cardinal Edmund Szoka gave me the following instruction from the Ordination Rite as together we gripped the Book of the Gospels:

*"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are. Believe what you read. Teach what you believe. Practice what you teach."*

Those words have never lost their resonance.

Since that day -- October 8, 1998 -- I have tried to live up to that commission to be a "herald of the Gospel," by striving to teach what the Church believes, to practice what I preach to others, and to spread with joy and enthusiasm the truth Christ has entrusted to His church -- in and out of season, in and out of the pulpit.

This website is a chronicle of those attempts. You may also follow postings of articles, homilies and teachings on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube.

You can also subscribe to the podcast of daily homilies, lectures and talks through Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts.

It constitutes the "five loaves and two fish" (or even less!) that I have placed into the hands of the Lord as an attempt to feed a hungry crowd, confident that, if He wishes, He can multiply and supplement that meager offering to nourish many more (Jn 6:1-14).

In Christ,  
Fr. Roger J. Landry



### Most Recent Homilies

God's Comfort and the Conversion Required to Receive It, Second Sunday of Advent (B), December 6, 2020  
Accepting, Following and Announcing Jesus without Offense, Second Sunday of Advent (EF), December 6, 2020  
Walking the Way of the Kingdom Jesus Indicates, First Saturday of Advent, December 5, 2020  
Running to Meet Our Light, Strength and Salvation, First Friday of Advent, December 4, 2020  
Listening to and Acting on the Long Awaited One's Words, First Thursday of Advent, December 3, 2020  
Going Hungry to Meet Christ in a Three-Fold Banquet, First Wednesday of Advent, December 2, 2020  
Childlike Eyes to See, First Tuesday of Advent, December 1, 2020  
Singing the Song of the Lamb, 34th Wednesday (H), November 25, 2020  
Turning to the Lord Who Comes to Judge the Earth, 34th Tuesday (H), November 24, 2020  
Following the King and Lamb Wherever He Goes, 34th Monday (H), November 23, 2020

### Most Recent Articles

Our Duty and Salvation, The Anchor, November 27, 2020  
Living the Reality of the Kingdom of Christ, National Catholic Register, November 19, 2020  
The Knights Our Age Needs, The Anchor, November 13, 2020  
Remembering Andrew Walther, November 7, 2020  
Just a Parish Priest, The Anchor, October 30, 2020  
Coming to Know the Original Three-Dimensional Carlo Acutis, The Anchor, October 16, 2020  
A Good Shepherd Full of Christian and Priestly Virtues, The Pilot, October 5, 2020  
Returning to the Sacrament of Divine Love, The Anchor, September 18, 2020  
The Pastoral Malpractice of Liturgical Abuse, The Anchor, September 4, 2020  
The Chosen, The Anchor, August 21, 2020

### Most Recent Talks

Receiving the Lord Jesus as Mary and Joseph, Advent Day of Recollection for the Leonine Forum, December 5, 2020  
Novena in Preparation for the Immaculate Conception, Leonine Forum, November 28 to December 8, 2020  
Blessed Michael McGivney and the Call to Holiness, McGivney Festival Young Adult Prayer Vigil, October 31, 2020  
Apprenticeship in the Art of Living, Duc in Altum Virtual Schools Summit, October 28-30, 2020  
Preaching on Marital Love and Accompanying Couples toward the Full Embrace of the Church's Teaching, Diocese of Gary Clergy Convocation, October 20, 2020  
The Divorced and Remarried, Challenges and Triumphs in Pastoral Care, Diocese of Gary Clergy Convocation, October 20, 2020  
The Heart of the New Evangelization: Meeting, Knowing and Loving Jesus Back, New Zealand Evangelion's in his Name Virtual Conference, October 10-11, 2020  
Christian Anthropology: The Human Person in the Modern World, Leonine Forum Opening Lecture, October 8, 2020  
Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching, UNSRC Catholic Club, August 27, 2020  
Making Better Confessions, Catholic Information Conference, July 24, 2020



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Thank **you!**