



The Missionary Spirituality, Mind and Heart of the Priest

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**Archdiocese of Los Angeles
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Upcoming Beatification of Fulton J. Sheen



- Today, May 12, is the 131st anniversary of the most important day of Fulton J. Sheen's life, his baptism.
- Former National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies (1950-1966). He is to mission promotion and support what St. Francis Xavier is to the missions.
- "My greatest love has always been for the missions of the Church."
- Raised \$200 million for the missions, gave \$10 million from his media earnings and 40 percent of his estate.
- His study, teaching, preaching, writing, convert making were all directed toward making disciples of everyone.
- His priestly life shows in an exemplary way the missionary dimension of the priesthood.



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



- “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)



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 Leo XIV: A Pope From the Missions



- We are living in a special missionary moment in the history of the Church.
- 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 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



- “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)



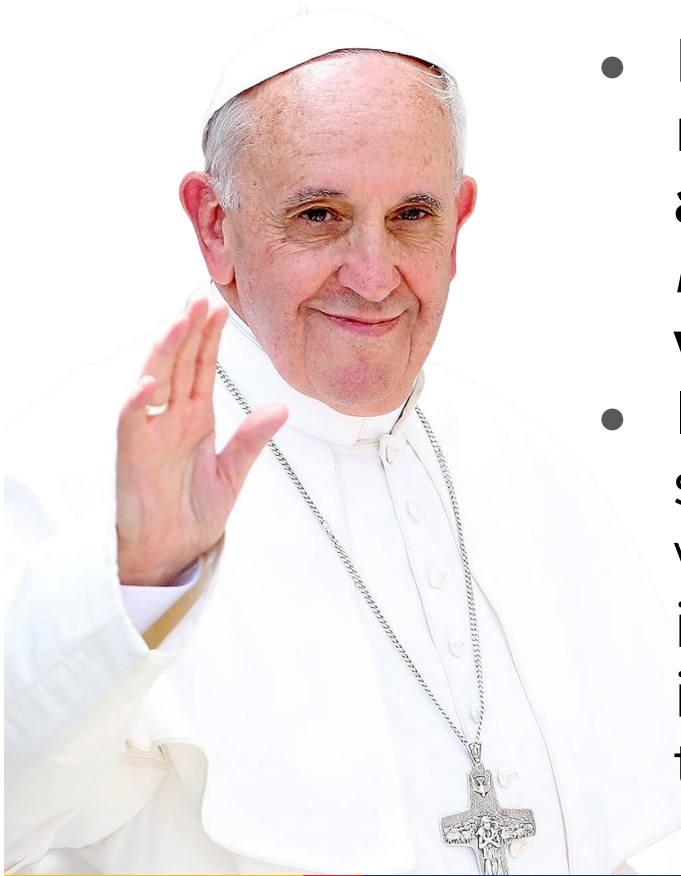
Pope Francis and Priestly Identity and Spirituality



- 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.



The Consecration of the USA to the Sacred Heart



- This missionary moment is intensified for American priests because of the upcoming consecration of the USA to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- This consecration will take place during the summer meeting of the US Bishops, June 11, 2026 at the Basilica of Mary Queen of the Universe in Orlando.
- June 11 is not only the vigil of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart but the day in 1899 when Leo XIII consecrated the world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.



The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- In 1999, on the exact 100th anniversary of Leo XIII's consecration of the world to the Sacred Heart, St. John Paul II, said: "The consecration of the human race in 1899 represents **an extraordinarily important step on the Church's journey** and it is still good to renew it every year on the feast of the Sacred Heart. ... The words of Leo XIII still ring true: 'We must have recourse to him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.' ... Is this not the program of the Second Vatican Council and of my own Pontificate?"
- Leo XIII's consecration was not just for the Catholics of the world, but for separated Christians and for "all those deprived of the Catholic faith."



The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- Leo XIII underlined the missionary dimension of the consecration. Jesus, he said, had given himself as a ransom for all and by this action, the Church was uniting the whole human race to herself and entrusting us to his redeeming love. Jesus, he continued, came to save the lost and “shed His blood for the salvation of the whole human race.” Missionaries have been sent into the world for them, and “now, in pity for their lot with all our soul we commend them, and as far as in us lies, we consecrate them to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.” In this way, this act of devotion, which We recommend, will be a blessing to all.



The Sacred Heart and the Missions



- From 2023-2025, we marked the **350th anniversary** of Jesus' most significant apparitions about the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary.
- Pope Francis took advantage of the anniversary to publish an encyclical on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, on October 24, 2024, which he entitled *Dilexit Nos*, "He has loved us" (Rom 8:37).
- At the end of the encyclical, 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,**" he said, "**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. ... **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).



The Fields Remain White and Ripe



- Of the 8.1 billion people alive today, nearly 2,000 years after Jesus' saving life, passion, death and resurrection, 5.5 billion are not Christian.
- It's a time for a new missionary age.
- A time for more intense prayer to the Harvest Master for laborers.
- A time for more missionary saints
- A time for greater support.



The Fields Remain White and Ripe



- Across the globe, there are presently 1,130 Missionary dioceses and territories — so defined as places of first evangelization where the Church is too young, too poor or too persecuted to be self-sustaining:
 - 530 in Africa
 - 483 in Asia
 - 71 in America
 - 46 in Oceania
- They are a mix of Archdioceses (195), Dioceses (802), Military Ordinariates (6), Apostolic Vicariates (75), Apostolic Prelatures (38), Apostolic Administrations (4), Territorial Abbeys (1) Territorial Prelatures (1), and Missiones Sui Iuris (8).



The Formalization of the Church's Mission



- **In responding to the needs of the missions, Propaganda Fide** was established by Pope Gregory XV in 1622.
 - 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.
- Over the centuries, the name was changed by Pope Paul VI, to the **Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples** (1967)
- In 2022, Pope Francis changed the name again to the **Dicastery for Evangelization** (2022), with the First Section for First Evangelization (Cardinal Luis Tagle) and the Second Section for New Evangelization (Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella), incorporating the Dicastery for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, founded in 2011.



The Church Universal Seeks to Help By:



- In carrying out the missions, there have been:
 - Many missionary religious orders, male and female (Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, Vincentians, Comboni, Holy Ghost, Society of African Missions (SMAs), Divine Word, LaSalette, OMI, Sacred Hearts, Scalabrinians, White Fathers (MAfr), Marists, Salesians and many others).
 - Priestly Missionary Societies (like the Missions Étrangères de Paris (**MEP**, 1658), Pontificium Institutum pro Missionibus Exteris (PIME, 1850, Italy), Maryknoll (1911 USA), St. James (1958).
 - Programs like **Fidei Donum** (1957).



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 and the Floridas (Florida Keys to Canada) as well as Bardstown, Kentucky and to China.
- Continues to support 1,130 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.



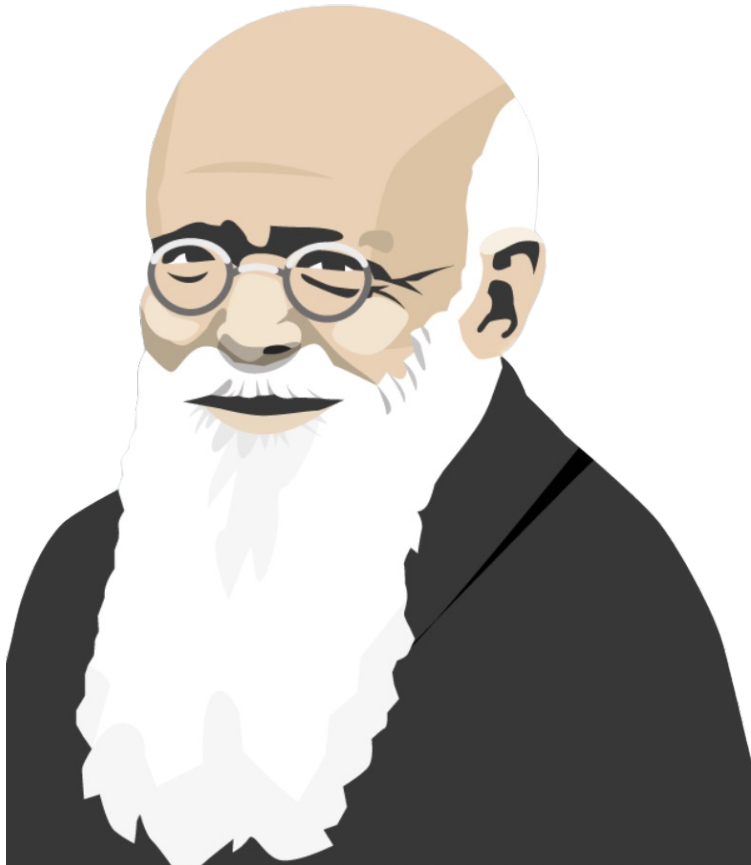
The Society of St. Peter the Apostle



- In the late 19th 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 82,498 seminarians in Africa, Asia, Oceania and other missionary fields are supported with an 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 122 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, called 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** in the Church's global mission and help them to live out their baptismal missionary identity.
- To encourage **prayer, sacrifice, and financial support** for missionaries.
- To organize and promote **World Mission Month**, the peak of which is **World Mission Sunday**.
- 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**.



Centenary of World Mission Sunday



- On April 14, 1926, Pope Pius XI responded to a request from the Society of the Propagation of the Faith (SPOF) for a **“a day of prayer and propaganda for the missions** to be celebrated on the same day in **every Catholic diocese, parish** and institute **in the world.**” This was to “foster **understanding of the greatness of the missionary task,** encourage **zeal among the clergy and the people;** offer an opportunity to make **SPOF ever more widely known** and encourage **offerings for the missions.**”
- This is World Mission Sunday, which will take place this year on October 18.



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “Now the Catholic Church is ... by far the most generous country in the world in terms of supporting the missions. The Church in the US pastored by you **underwrites each year about 30-40 percent of all the Church universal’s missionary endeavors.** This is addition to all that’s given through the Missionary Cooperative Program in most dioceses as well as through the adoption of missionary dioceses and parishes at the local level....



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “That having been said, let’s get a little more somber here. **As the needs have grown, our support overall has not.** Just 20 years ago [2004], we raised nationally, in hard dollars, 63 million for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. That was about three times what we raised last year to care for those dioceses that are too young, poor or persecuted to be self-sustaining. **We’ve gone down by two-thirds what we were doing 20 years ago....**



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “We’re experts on what that’s been so. **Mass attendance** is down. Many are giving electronically and **electronic services** often don’t specify what the second collection is for, and people aren’t as generous to generic second collections. **Some pastors**, you know this, **have made the decision** — and most of us haven’t stopped them — **not even to take up any second collections**, whether mandated by canon law, decreed by the Holy Father, or decided by this Conference of Bishops, or even promulgated by their local bishop, and instead they might just tithe a certain percentage of the first collection. No wonder the collection is down.....



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “We wonder if one of the most important reasons why generosity has gone down is that maybe **we have lost some of our focus on the missions, especially the *missio ad gentes***, what we used to call the foreign missions...
- Even when we have committed ourselves to mission over maintenance, **often we’ve understood that in narrower parameters of the New Evangelization. How much time and energy have we dedicated to the *missio ad gentes*, the foreign missions?** For us bishops in America, how can we not examine ourselves on the words of Jesus, “To whom much is given, more is to be expected?”



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “Can I conclude by getting down to a few very specific items that would make a big difference in continuing and enhancing our historic generosity to the missions?”
- “First, **Canon 791** requires each bishop to appoint a priest as diocesan mission director, and especially as director of The Pontifical Mission Societies. There are some dioceses that don’t yet have one. There are others who have given it to a priest with 15 other jobs who can’t adequately do this important work. Can we, your brothers, urge you to take similar care with this appointment as you do the other very important positions in your Diocese and set the director up so that he can really prioritize on your behalf?”



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “Second, the same canon likewise mandates that a collection be taken up for the missions. **It’s the only collection mandated in canon law.** In many other countries, including in the foreign missions, the poorest nations of the world, **the World Mission Sunday collection is the only one taken that day, prioritizing the missions even over the obvious local needs of the own parish.** Can I ask you to consider reinforcing that mandate within your dioceses? Even if pastors are not going to have a second collection for the missions as is expected in canon law, can you urge them to ensure that the first and only collection go entirely to the missions? I can’t think of a more pointed way to prioritize that evangelical mandate. ...



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “Thirdly, in some dioceses there are **accounting practices** that are just unfair to the missions. For example, sometimes all the overhead of the Missions office is taken exclusively from the World Mission Sunday collection rather than a proportion taken from the Missionary Co-op or the funds raised for other missionary endeavors. In other places, where the mission director also runs the diocesan Catholic Relief Service office or other similar responsibilities, the salaries and expenses are all still taken from World Mission Sunday collection. **This is simply not fair to the missions and it’s not respecting the intentio dantis** (the intention of the donor).



Cardinal Dolan to US Bishops last November



- “Next year will be the **100th anniversary** of Pope Pius XI’s decision to establish World Mission Sunday as a day for the whole Church to pray to the Harvest Master for missionaries and those to whom they are trying to bring the Gospel as well as to take up a collection to assist them in that saving work. ... **Wouldn’t it be great if we set an all-time record and return to our pedigree of two decades ago?** Wouldn’t it be sterling if we could really fulfill the hopes of those in the missions everywhere, in those places of first evangelization where the Church is too young and fragile, too poor or too persecuted to be self-sufficient? Wouldn’t it be great if we could do even more for the world than what the Pontifical Mission Societies did for us until 1908, when we stopped being considered a missionary country. ... **Wouldn’t it be great, brothers, now with an American pope, if we could help him much more care for all of the faithful in missionary lands?**”



The Importance of the Papal Video for WMS 2026



- Last year we were able to secure the first papal World Mission Sunday video in history. Just over a minute, recorded in three languages, subtitled in two others, it was perfect to play before Mass.
- Many priests who showed the video in their parishes — or just played the audio — said that it doubled, trebled and quadrupled their typical WMS collections.
- The issue is that many priests never knew there was a papal video....



The Importance of the Papal Video



- The distribution system for the video overall didn't work. In many places, despite US efficiency and organizational abilities, the video simply did not get from diocesan mission offices to parishes in six days so that it could be used on WMS, as well as put in Flocknotes, transcripts in bulletins, webpages, social media and more.
- **I'm convinced we can get there if we can just succeed in getting the video played before Mass and getting parishes to follow canon law and take up the WMS collection, we can set an all-time record.**

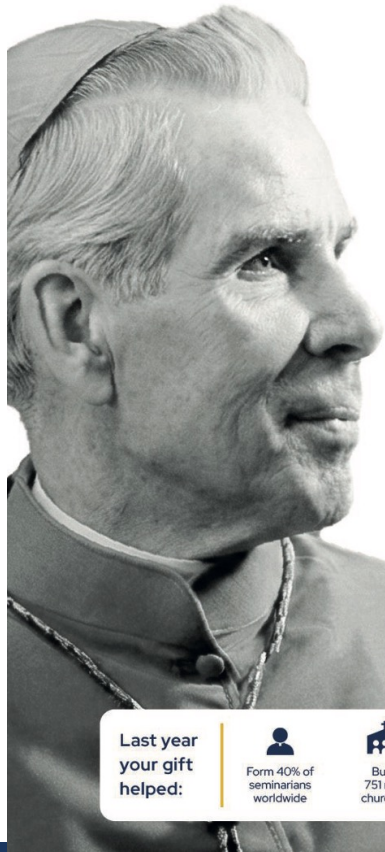


The Importance of the Papal Video





World Mission Sunday 2026



ONE IN CHRIST,
United in Mission

100 YEARS OF WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

World Mission Sunday
October 18th, 2026

"Let us be charitable about the missions, remembering that the Lord who said: 'Go teach all nations' is the same Lord who bewailed: 'I have mercy on the multitudes.'"

— Blessed Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

National Director
The Pontifical Mission Societies USA
(1950 - 1966)



Last year
your gift
helped:

 Form 40% of
seminarians
worldwide

 Build
751 new
churches

 Sustain
1,130 mission
dioceses

 Train 843,785
missionary
catechists

 Support 50%
of all religious
sisters worldwide

GIVE BY TEXT
"MISSIONS26"
TO 53555





World Mission Sunday 2026



- What is asked for World Mission Sunday:
 - **Prepare your parishioners** by marking World Mission Sunday and letting people know that World Mission Sunday is coming on October 18.
 - **Play** the Message of the Holy Father
 - **Preach** on the missions on World Mission Sunday. Teach in Catholic schools and religious ed.
 - **Take up the collection** and make it easy for people to give electronically
 - **Pray for the Missions** by praying the World Mission Rosary, having a holy hour for missions, or other similar means.



Materials for World Mission Sunday 2026



- Visit pontificalmissions.org/wms for free downloadable materials (or <https://missionsla.org/parish-resources-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**
 - Pope Leo's **message for World Mission Sunday 2026**
 - **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



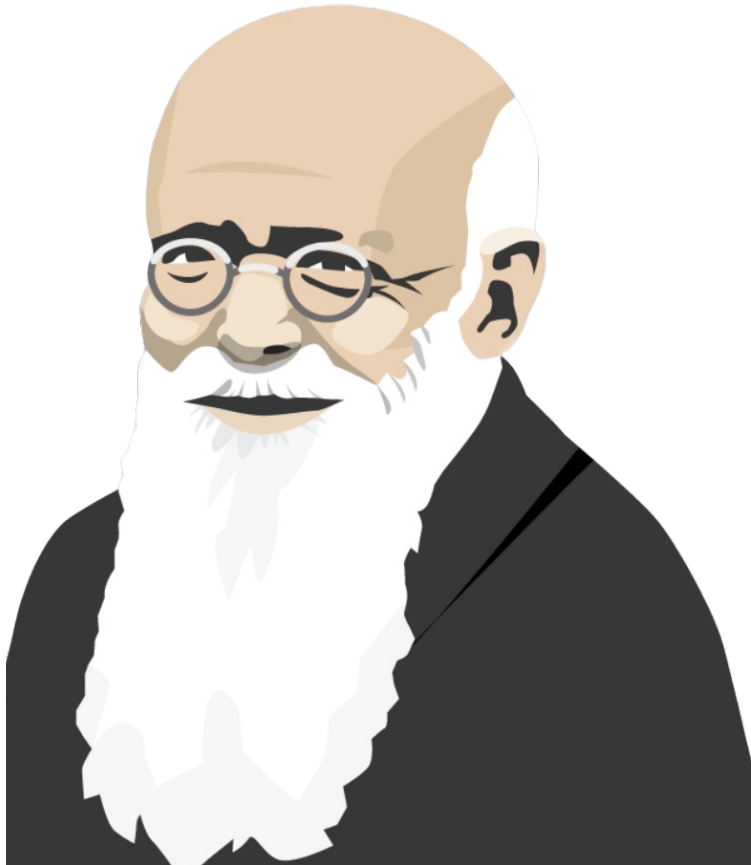
Practical Ideas on Praying for the Missions



- **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



- The Sundays and Weekdays of **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, the Birth and Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist, Good Shepherd Sunday, The Sacred Heart, 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, the Martyrs of Georgia, St. John Neumann, Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos, Bl. Stanley Rother, St. Damien of Molokai, Bl. Fulton Sheen (soon), 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 1,130 Missionary territories and lands
 - Administered by The Pontifical Mission Societies
- **Missionary Cooperative Appeal**
 - 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 more than \$100,000 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 (\$1,000 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**



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- He served as National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies from 1950-1966.
- Through his media work on the radio (the Catholic Hour, 4 million listeners a week) and on television (especially Life is Worth Living, 1952-57, 30 million viewers a week), he brought great attention to the work of the missions.
- To spread word of the missions, he founded *Mission* magazine in 1951 (75 years ago), *Worldmission* magazine in 1952, and wrote three newspaper columns a week, including two on the missions.



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- To foster praying for the missions through the intercession of the Queen of Apostles, he created the World Mission Rosary 75 years ago in 1951.
- He traveled extensively to bring attention to the missions and help inform American Catholics about them.
- He gave about \$10 million of his media earnings to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. Under his 16 years, the Society raised about \$200 million (\$2.1 billion in today's money).
- He left the copyrights to his books and audio recordings to the Society as well as 40 percent of all his effects.
- He got special permission from Pope St. John XXIII to help out evangelizing efforts in South America.



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- About the Great Commission, he wrote in his *Life of Christ*:
 - “If this commission were given solely for the time span of the Apostles, it is evident that they could not possibly go to all nations. The dynamism or current that was passed into the Apostles under the headship of Peter was to continue until Christ’s Second Coming. No doubt was left concerning the authority and the work of the Church when the Master would leave the earth. **That day the Propagation of the Faith came into being.**”
 - “Nor were they merely to teach; for He Who gave the commission was not just a teacher. They were to make disciples in every nation.”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- In his great books on the priesthood, *The Priest is Not His Own* (1963) and *Those Mysterious Priests* (1974), he wrote extensively about the missionary dimension of the priesthood. Here are some of his thoughts.
- “A survey among three hundred young men to determine what kind of priest inspired them most revealed that **foreign missionaries ranked first**.... The point is that **the young prefer the heroic or sacrificial priest**.”
- “Our Lord’s preaching and miracles were restricted to a very small part of the world. His mission on earth was confined to Galilee and Judea. But after His Ascension and the coming of the Spirit, **His priesthood** was exercised even to the ends of the earth.”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “We could simultaneously edify and win the Lord’s blessing if we ourselves gave generously to every collection to which we ask the people to contribute. **Why should we be exempt from a sacrifice for the Propagation of the Faith on Mission Sunday?** ‘Be as generous as possible’ is idle talk if the generosity of the pastor has not preceded the generosity of his flock.”
- “Two things always seem to go together in a bishop or a priest: **love of conversions and love of the foreign missions.** The Catholics close to us we must indeed sanctify, **but souls in distant lands who have never heard the good tidings must also be redeemed.**”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “**Clinging to the chasuble of every priest** are six hundred million souls in China who as yet know not Christ. When the priest takes the host in his hand, he is looking at fingers gnarled from slavery in the salt mines of Siberia. As he stands before the altar, his feet are the bleeding feet of refugees tramping westward toward barbed wire, beyond which lies freedom. ...**The stole is a sling in which the priest carries on his shoulder** living stones, the burden of the churches, the missions of the entire world. **He drags the whole of humanity to the altar**, where he joins heaven and earth together.”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- **“Why specifically does God call a man to the priesthood?** It is not easy to justify the placing of a priest in insurance, building, accountancy, banking, publicity and promotion **when the need is so grave for convert makers, for missionaries to search out the lost sheep and lead them gently to the fold of Christ.** If the Lord was so particular about the fragments of bread, which He ordered gathered up, **then will He not insist jealously that His priests do precisely that for which He called them?”**



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “To all bishops and priests through the ages, [Mary] gave the lesson that we are not to wait for the lost to come back; **we must go in search of them.** And her intercession will help in the most desperate cases. ... Through Mary’s example and influence, there comes a moment in the priest’s life when he recognizes that he does not belong to his family, his parish, his diocese, his country. **He belongs to the missions and to the world;** he belongs to humanity. The closer the priest gets to the mission of Christ, the more he loves every soul in the world. As Mary ‘mothered’ all men at the Cross, **so the priest ‘fathers’ them.** ... The priest is not ordained for a diocese; he is ordained for souls.”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “The mission of Christ is the pattern for the mission of the priests. The Father sanctified Him and sent Him into the world (John 10:36); **so now He prays for their sanctification as He sends them into the world.** ‘As You have sent Me into the world, I have sent them into the world, and for their sake I now consecrate Myself, that they too may be consecrated by the Truth.’”
- “Once there are saintly priests who have **withdrawn to the Tabernacle to receive power**, then there will be a wide sense of victimhood in the sense of **accepting a mission to the world.** Too long have we been locked up in ourselves with our retreat houses for the sanctification of the sanctified, **instead of opening them to everyone to hear the Word of God and be drawn closer to His Love.**”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “The appearances of the Risen Lord were not a capitalizing of His Glory, as the disciples did at the Transfiguration; **they were a summons to mission, to evangelization and service.** As the Apostles watched the Lord ascend into heaven, the angels asked: ‘Men of Galilee, why stand there looking up into the sky?’ **They had work to do; namely, to preach the Gospel to all nations** and wait for the second coming of the Lord.”
- The dignity of an ambassador is measured by the grandeur of the power whom he represents and by the nobility of the mission with which he is entrusted. On both these counts, **no vice-gerent has a higher post.** Christ sends us, and our mission is to reconcile the human family to God.”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “The priest does not belong to himself; he belongs to Christ. He need never worry who he is; **he is not his own. He is Christ’s.** The ambassador gives his human nature to Christ as **an instrument to continue until the end of time the teaching, ruling and sanctifying mission of Christ for the sake of humanity.** The spiritual gift which priests received at their ordination prepares them not for any limited and narrow mission **but for the widest scope of the universal mission of salvation** ‘even to the very ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:8). ... **No priest who understands his mission would ever say, “I gotta be me.” Rather, “I must be His.”** The latter is not only better grammar; it is sounder theology.”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



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Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- In *Missions and the World Crisis: Unless Souls Are Saved, Nothing Is Saved*, Sheen published a series of his columns on the missions, from *Worldmission* and other sources. We can benefit from looking at a couple of sections.
- The first is from a chapter “America was once a foreign mission,” in which he wrote: “**America was once a missionary country or a ‘foreign mission.’** The United States was under the Propaganda and, therefore, was regarded by the Holy See as a ‘foreign mission’ until 1908...”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “While the United States was a ‘foreign mission,’ **the bishops of America begged, pleaded, implored, and pressed The Society for the Propagation of the Faith** to come to their relief to build churches, seminaries, convents in exactly the same way the bishops of the ‘foreign missions’ of Vietnam, Japan, India, Africa, Marshall Islands, Burma, Pakistan, etc., implore the bishops of the United States today, through The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, to come to their aid.
- **The bishops “promised** during those days that if aid were forthcoming then, someday, thanks to the blessings of Providence, **they would aid other ‘foreign missions’** even more bounteously than they themselves were aided....



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- “**The bishops of the United States have kept their promise.** Like the faith of the Romans, their generosity is now spoken of throughout the world. ...
- “One hundred years ago, France contributed 60 percent of the total amount received by The Society for the Propagation of the Faith for the foreign missions of the world. **Today, the United States contributes over 60 percent** of the total received by The Society for the Propagation of the Faith for the foreign missions of the world. ...
- “The generosity of the American Church is due to the fact that **we are conscious of our Christian responsibilities.**”



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- The second theme is about missionary promotion, from a chapter on the “Apologetics of Holiness.”
- **“Too long have the missionaries of the world looked to the United States as the *Ecclesia pagans*, which is a bad Latin way of saying "the paying Church" or "the Church that foots the bills."** Whenever money is needed, or a new hospital, or a new jeep, it is always to the Church of the United States that the missionaries look. **There is something right and meet and just about this**, for the Lord has blessed the United States as no other country in the world has been blessed. **The superfluities of the United States are the necessities of the poor. ...**



Archbishop Sheen, Priests and the Missions



- Finally, some autobiographical reflections from *Treasure in Clay*.
- **“It was very consoling to have a universal mission and to consider the world as my parish.** I can very well imagine how Our Blessed Lord must have felt restrained when His Heavenly Father restricted Him to Israel. He had come to be a “ransom of sin” for all men in the world, **but He left that universality of evangelization to His Apostles.** ... But when He hung naked on the Cross, He became the Man of the world.”
- We pray that his beatification on Sept. 24 will be a reawakening of missionary identity and spirituality among all Catholics and particularly priests.



The Mind and the Heart of Missionaries



- We began by focusing on priests' having the "true Christian spirit" and the "mind and the heart of missionaries."
- Sheen always focused on the fact that in ordination we are conformed to Christ as priest and victim, as men who not only celebrate the sacraments and preach the Gospel but who, united to Christ, make our lives commentaries on the words of consecration, giving our body, blood, sweat, tears, earnings, all we are and have to God for the completion of his saving mission, to imitate what we celebrate, to do "this" in memory of him.
- We pray through his intercession that we might imitate his missionary mind, heart and spirit!

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Welcome!

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

During my diaconal 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, Google Podcasts and iHeart 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,
Msgr. Roger J. Landry



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Thank **you!**