Mission Awareness Week

October 14, 2019 – October 20, 2019

The Church of Christ on Mission in the World

World Mission Sunday was instituted in 1926 by Pope Pius XV. He asked for prayer, animation, celebration and offering for the Missions. This day was to be observed in every diocese, parish and institute. It was to be a true World Mission Sunday.

On Sunday October 20th, 2019 all over the world we are going to be celebrating World Mission Sunday. The theme given to us this Sunday is Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World.

This year we are celebrating the Extraordinary Month of the Missions. Pope Francis reminds us all that God has entrusted a mission to all of us. Therefore making each of us a mission on this world. Mission that was entrusted to us through our baptism.

Since the moment of our Baptism we are all called to be part of the mission of the church: to evangelize and encounter Christ in our brothers and sisters. This is the mission that Pope Francis is speaking about. He is saying that each of us is called to answer this call to mission.

This is what is being celebrated all over the world. On this Sunday we are all praying for those who have left their home and families to go and serve in other parts of the world. A lot of the times they go to places where another language is spoken, the way of living is different from what they know. As they go they need our prayers so the Holy Spirit may give them strength and the right words to take the love of Christ everywhere they go.

On this Sunday we are also giving monetary help. Like the Missionary Childhood Association there are other Pontifical Societies that give aid in other aspects of mission. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith benefits from the funds collected on World Mission Sunday. They are able to provide support for the life-giving and hope-filled work and witness of priest, religious and lay pastoral leaders in mission churches. Helping with catechist formation to continue the evangelization, building of churches, schools, hospitals, and homes for the elderly.

Here in the United States we are also remembering the life of Sr. Dorothy Stang, SNBdeN. She is a missionary martyr who gave her life defending the rights and dignity of the indigenous people of the Amazon. Read her biography in the MCA monthly material for October.

Meaning of Logo for the Extraordinary Month of the Missions

The primary colors of the cross refer to the five continents: red for America, green for Africa, white for Europe, yellow for Asia and blue for Oceania. Red recalls the blood of the American martyrs, seeds of a new life in the Christian faith. Green is the color of life and symbolizes growth, fertility, youth and vitality. It is also the color of hope, one of the three theological virtues. White is the symbol of joy, the beginning of a new life in Christ: this is the challenge facing old Europe, so that it can recover the evangelizing force that was generated thanks to so many churches and saints. Yellow is the color of light, which is nourished by light invoking the true light. Blue is the color that symbolizes the water of life that quenches out thirst and restores us along the path to God. It is the color of the sky, a sign of God, who dwells with us.

"Each of us a mission to the world, for each of us is the fruit of God’s love"

- Pope Francis, Message for World Mission Day 2019

Mission Awareness: World Mission Sunday

The Church of Christ on Mission in the World
**Mission Awareness: Prayer Service**

As you prepare the prayer space include a bible, crucifix, a globe or world map, a world mission rosary and flowers or a plant.

This prayer service is adapted from the one made by Sr. Joan Krimm, SNDdeN to honor the life of Sr. Dorothy Stang, who gave her life defending the right of the indigenous people of the Amazon. You can find the full prayer service on our website at www.missionsla.org.

**In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

**Leader:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the peace of the Holy Spirit be with us.

**All:** We ask that our hearts be open to the voice of God.

**Leader:** In his apostolic exhortation, *Gaudete et Exsultate* on the call to holiness in the contemporary world, Pope Francis calls the Beatitudes our “Christian Identity Card” and “Life plan.”

**Reader 1:** Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Leader:** We commit to living more simply, learn to distinguish between our wants and our needs and live the prophetic nature of the Gospel.

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Reader 2:** Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth.

**Leader:** Let us recognize our own gifts and talents and see ourselves as an integral thread in the tapestry of creation. Learning humility and trust.

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Reader 1:** Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted.

**Leader:** Let us accept the pain in our own lives and that of others. Allowing ourselves to become empty that we might be open to God’s love. To truly understand the meaning of “the common good.”

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Reader 2:** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be satisfied.

**Leader:** Let us be just in our decision-making, work for the most vulnerable in our midst and allow ourselves to be transformed.

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Reader 1:** Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

**Leader:** Let us give without counting the cost, being merciful in our actions and bring hope and peace into our world.

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Reader 2:** Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God.

**Leader:** Let us make time for prayer in our daily lives and desire what is good for all God’s people. To see clearly the beauty in all of creation.

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Reader 1:** Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God.

**Leader:** Our mission work for peace right where we are, reaching out to people different from ourselves. To help build the kingdom of God.

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Reader 2:** Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Leader:** Let us stand by the poor and vulnerable in society, speaking for those who have no voice. Letting go of our fear of what others may think and do.

**Response:** (All) We open our hearts to do your will, Lord.

**Leader:** Transform us Oh Lord and help us to be the light of Christ for others. Transforming the world by starting with ourselves.

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**Mission Awareness: Missionary Speaker**

Mission awareness is about becoming aware of how we are called to participate in the mission of the church to evangelize others. Evangelizing is about sharing our faith with others but it is also about helping others live with dignity and love.

Invite a missionary speaker to share with your students the work that they do all over the world. To share the stories of how they are helping transform the lives of children and adults with the work they are doing.

You can also share this video with your students so they can see how Harriet, a child, that lives in Bujuni lives. This video comes from the Pontifical Mission Societies of Australia and it allows the students to have a 360° vision of the community Harriet lives in. This interactive video allows the students to explore the surroundings while listening to what a typical day in the life of Harriet is like.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa23clGcQ

*Mission in 360° Experience Bujuni with Harriet*

Have the students answer the following questions:

How is the community where Harriet lives different from mine?

How far has Harriet had to travel to get water?

What is her house made of?

What do you have in common with Harriet?

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**Mission Awareness: Mass for the Missions**

**MCA Youth Appreciation Mass**

There is no greater prayer than when we celebrate mass together. This week on Wednesday, October 16th we will gather in the Cathedral for the MCA Youth Appreciation Mass. During this mass we offer our intentions for all the missionary work being done by the universal church in the world and those of us here in our community at home.

If you are unable to join us for mass at the cathedral please include the mass intentions at your school mass or church mass at your parish.

**Intentions:**

- For a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, who is alive in the church, may the Holy Spirit light in us love for the Church mission, which is passion for Jesus and a passion for His people ‘grow ever stronger.’ Let us pray to the Lord.
- For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, the first missionary of the Church, and all missionaries and martyrs of our Church. Let us pray to the Lord.
- For the witness of missionary saints, that they may intercede for the fervent missionary spirit of the faithful of Our Universal Church, both near and far away. Let us pray to the Lord.
- For an increase in missionary charity, that our spiritual and financial sacrifices help the message and love of our Lord be known to the ends of the earth. Let us pray to the Lord.

We will keep all those who are part of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in our prayers, especially all those children who are part of MCA and who very generously give and pray for all their brothers and sisters all over the world.

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**Prayer Proposed by Pope Francis for the Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019**

Heavenly Father,

when your only begotten Son Jesus Christ rose from the dead,

he commissioned his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations” and you remind us that through our Baptism we are made sharers in the mission of the Church.

Empower us by the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be courageous and zealous in bearing witness to the Gospel, so that the mission entrusted to the Church, which is still very far from completion, may find new and efficacious expressions that bring life and light to the world.

Help us make it possible for all peoples to experience the saving love and mercy of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.
Mission Awareness: Universal Church

Pray, Give, and Serve

We are always talking about how we are called to serve, give and pray for missionaries. That means everyone of us that is giving testimony of faith. However we also have those among us who leave their home and family to serve, give and pray for others. As part of the Universal Church we are called to see each other as brothers and sisters. Read the story of Fr. Luis Montes and how he has answered to the mission God gave him.

Risking Everything for Christ

Fr. Luis Montes, IVE, was born in a little town in the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina, the sixth of seven brothers. There are priests in the Institute of the Incarnate Word (IVE), “My brother Jose is a priest in Ukraine. My brother Enrique is in Egypt. I am in Iraq.” Within months after his 1996 ordination as a priest in the IVE’s contemplative branch, Fr. Luis was sent to a town outside of Bethlehem to help found a monastery there. “It is thought that this was the place where King Solomon wrote the Song of Songs,” he says. “It was a beautiful valley full of water, full of beautiful trees.”

A providential place to fall in love with the people of the Middle East. Through the years, Father has also served in Jordan and Egypt, but the people of Iraq hold a special place in his heart. After the 2003 invasion and war in Iraq, the number of Iraqi Christians went from 1.5 million to about 200,000. “The country was suffering more or less 20 terrorist attacks every day in Baghdad,” he says. “We’re speaking about thousands of martyrs, hundreds of thousands of refugees. It was not uncommon that terrorists would enter into Christian houses during the night and kill everyone in the family, from the elders to the babies.” While many Christians died or fled, those who remain in Baghdad today continue to risk everything for Christ. “To our parish, we don’t have the freedom to do whatever we want so we do everything inside, no processions outside and not a lot of things. The parishioners have to be very careful. Also, the main day for activities is Friday, not Sunday. Because Sunday is a day of work.” Yet even in the midst of their own struggles, Fr. Luis and his parishioners are helping 70 Syrian Catholic and Orthodox families who have come to Baghdad seeking refuge after losing everything in ISIS attacks up north.

“This makes a special relationship between these families and our church. We are visiting them in the refugee camps. We are consoling them, listening to their problems, trying to find help for them.” Father says this experience in Baghdad is “a great one.” “I see more joy in these refugee camps sometimes than in the cities of the West,” he says.

“We see the devil’s work trying to destroy the Church, but at the same time, we see how God gives strength to the weakest. These Christians, they are giving us a great lesson on how it’s worth it to serve Jesus Christ. How it is worth it to die because of him, how life is short. And we have to use the little time we have to be saints.”

Profiles in Mission is a recurring portrait of the Washington-based missionaries sponsored by the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Archdiocese of Washington.

Mission Awareness: World Mission Rosary

Pray, Give and Serve

Plan a living rosary with the families at your parish or students in the school. With the World Mission Rosary we are asking and praying for each part of the world and the mission work being done there.

Make stations for each of the mysteries and include something representing the part of the world you are praying for during each mystery. Each station can include a picture of the different cultures and people that live in that part of the world. Perhaps a picture of a Marian devotion they might have there.

You can break up the students into groups and assign each group a station to put together.

Here are some suggestions for each station

**First Station: Africa.** put a green tablecloth to represent the green. Marian devotion: Our Mother of Africa.

**Second Station: Asia.** put a yellow tablecloth to represent the rising sun in the East. Marian devotion: Our Lady of China.

**Third Station: Americas.** North and South America, tablecloth could be red to represent the fire of faith the missionaries felt as they were coming to do mission in the Americas. Marian devotion: Our Lady of Guadalupe.

**Fourth Station: Europe.** tablecloth can be white to represent the part of the world where the Pope lives. Marian devotion: Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

**Fifth Station: Oceania or the Pacific Islands.** the table cloth can be blue to represent the ocean that surrounds all those islands. Marian devotion: Mary, Help of Christians.

(You can find more information about these different Marian devotions in the MCA material published in May 2019. Download the handout Mary, Mother of the Missions at [https://missionsla.org/materials-lesson-plans/](https://missionsla.org/materials-lesson-plans/) )

Each of the stations can be placed in a circle. Almost like the shape of a rosary. Place a sixth station with a cross to begin and end the rosary.

As you are praying the Rosary begin at the station with the cross and then walk around to each of the stations as you pray each mystery. Have the students take turns reading the mysteries of the rosary you will be praying for each decade.

If you have a large group of children participating in the rosary each of them can say a Hail Mary and the Our Father.

You can do a World Mission Rosary bracelet for the students, so they can pray and follow a decade of the rosary.

Pamphlets in English and Spanish are available for free to help teach children how to pray the rosary.

Contact our office and we will be happy to mail these to your school or parish.
Mission Awareness: Witness
Mission Starts at Home

Each of us was made to go on in Mission in the world. The theme given to this Extraordinary Month of the Mission if Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World.

As baptized Catholics we are asked to go and be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Pope Francis reminds us that each of us is a mission in the world, put here by God and that when we answer to our missionary call (given to us through our baptism) we are putting that mission God gave us.

First let us talk a little of what is a mission. Did you immediately think that mission is like a task that is given to you? Like when we think of superheroes who have a mission to save the world. We don’t have to save the world because God has already saved it through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our mission is more along the lines of helping others to know about Jesus Christ and help build the kingdom of God here in the world. We are a little like superheroes because through our actions we are changing the world. Also just like superheroes when we accept to take on this mission we are taking on the responsibility of keeping up with our mission. We are not alone and there are many others just like us doing their best to do their mission.

Read the article about the children in Malawi. What did they do? What motivated them? How did those in the receiving end feel?

The children are living the motto of the Missionary Childhood Association of “children helping children.” The donations given to MCA are given to projects that help children get basic things like clothing, food, shelter, an education.

We are all called to help others and God gives us the tools that we can use.

Brainstorm of things that you can do to help others in your community. Can you think of a group of people that might need some kind of help. Or an organization in your community that helps people in your community.

Perhaps there is something that can be organized at your school or parish. Just like superheroes have special skills, we have gifts that God has given us so that we can help others.

Make a commitment of what you will be doing to answer or be that mission that God has entrusted us.

Considering what was just read of the students in Malawi. Have each child think of one thing they can do here at home. They may already be doing something to help others. Help them to see that their action is mission, because they care and show their love for others.

Print a card for each child and have them fill it out. Completing the sentence “My mission is” and also ask others to think of what their mission is. You can place these cards in the classroom mission corner or set up a special bulletin for the Extraordinary Month of the Missions. You can find the card available to print on our website at https://missionsla.org/materials-lesson-plans/ under the MCA October material download.

Mission Starts at Home
Malawi: Missionary Children at an Outstation donated blankets to fellow poor children

Missionary Children at Kamwendo Outstation of Guilleme Parish in the Archdiocese of Lilongwe in Malawi donated 130 blankets to fellow underprivileged children in the same parish early July 2019.

The gesture is in the spirit of living Missionary Charity as Holy Childhood members and living the fourth dimension of the Extraordinary Missionary Month of October 2019. The Missionary Children are animated and encouraged to live like Christ, in sharing love to those in the periphery of the society.

In this regard, the Missionary Children of Kamwendo Outstation in Malawi raised about USD $500 to buy the blankets, which they donated after a Eucharistic Celebration at Kamwendo Catholic Church.

One of the group members, Alinafe Tobias, disclosed that they raised the money through contributions amongst themselves from the money they get from piece works as a group and individuals and solicited the support of their parents or guardians and other adults of good will in their outstations. She said that though they are also poor, but they felt obliged to help fellow children who have no blankets and this cold season in Malawi the needy children suffer with cold because they use light cloth locally called “chitenje” (a wrapper) to cover themselves at night.

“We want to inculcate a culture of love and giving in our fellow children so that we should also learn to help others even from the little resources we have,” said Alinafe. She added that as holy childhood, one of their activities they are encouraged [by animators] to do is reaching out to their fellow children who are suffering in order to show and teach them love and many other good Christian values.

Rodah Jere is one of the children who received their blankets and she did not hide her excitement, saying she would now be able to sleep with the warmth the blanket would give her. “I am inspired by my fellow children for this gesture and I am spired to join Tilitonse (the Holy Childhood children in the Archdiocese of Lilongwe) so that I become one of the children that is promoting love and giving,” she said.

Head of the PMS in Malawi, Father Vincent Mwakhwawa, commended members of the Holy Childhood of Kamwendo Outstation in the Archdiocese of Lilongwe, stressing that they demonstrated a unique spirit of missionary charity, which is lacking among people in the society in Malawi. “I am impressed with these children. It shows that they are managing to live what they are learning from Holy Childhood classes, the Bible and their teachers about a Christian life in the Catholic faith. It is not easy for many people to live what they read in the Bible,” observed Mwakhwawa.

“This gesture is an example of what a human being should be, especially children. It is sad that, we, adults underrate children, thinking that they cannot love, give and donate. Moreover, because these children are from poor families, people think they cannot share the little they have.”

“The children at Kamwendo Outstation have just proved to us that they have the capacity to love and express it much better than most of us and they can give from their poverty because they understand their baptismal obligation as young missionaries,” he added.

Mwakhwawa further stated that love and sharing are core human and Christian values. This missionary charity from children to fellow children has come at the right time when it is a cold season in Malawi and many families cannot afford blankets.

Therefore, these missionary children have addressed a real need of fellow children who suffer in cold season.

Malawi
July 2019
By Watipaso Mzungu