



WHAT IS WORLD MISSION SUNDAY?

World Mission Sunday is a call to local Churches on every continent to rediscover the urgent necessity to face the multiple serious challenges of our times in the light of the Gospel. The Lord addresses the missionary call to every baptized Christian. Established Churches have consistently supplied material means, priests, religious and lay believers for service in overseas missions. This has benefited not only the struggling mission Church, but also those who shared and served. Today, considering the crisis of the family, the decreasing number of vocations coupled with the progressive aging of clergy and religious, and questionable financial security, there is danger of looking with less hope to the future and slackening in missionary endeavor. For precisely these reasons it is time to show our confidence in God who accomplishes his plan of salvation.

Newly evangelized Churches are also called to mission. Many young dioceses are rich with great numbers of seminarians and religious which they exchange as gifts to the traditional, established churches. World Mission Sunday raises the awareness of the universal nature of Christ's call to spread his Kingdom to the ends of the earth. "The Church is missionary by her very nature," John Paul II writes in his Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*. "For Christ's mandate is not something contingent or external, but reaches the very heart of the Church. It follows that the universal Church and each individual church is sent forth to the nations."

Your ongoing support of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith is vital to the missionaries serving in 1,111 dioceses throughout Asia, Africa, parts of Latin America and Europe, and on the Islands of the Pacific. Your generosity makes it possible for local priests, religious, and catechists to reach out to communities, families and children in desperate need, bringing the light of Christ to the darkest of circumstances.