


**WORLD MISSION SUNDAY**

October 18

**We Celebrate 100 Years of World Mission Sunday!**

**What is World Mission Sunday?**

Each year, on the second-to-last Sunday of October, Catholics throughout the world celebrate World Mission Sunday—a day of prayer, solidarity, and support for the Church's mission in more than 1,300 mission territories.

In 2026, this celebration takes on special significance as the Church marks the **100th anniversary of World Mission Sunday**, established by Pope Pius XI in 1926 as a universal expression of the Church's missionary identity.

World Mission Sunday is unique. It is the one day each year when the entire Catholic Church— every parish, in every country—comes together to pray for and support the missions. On this day, the faithful participate directly in the Church's evangelizing work, responding to Christ's command to "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).

The collection taken up on World Mission Sunday is entrusted to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, one of the four Pontifical Mission Societies. These offerings are distributed, in the name of the Holy Father, to sustain the Church in places where it barely exists yet, where it is young, growing, and often facing poverty, isolation, or persecution.

More than a collection, World Mission Sunday is a visible sign of the unity of the Church. It is the best way by which we can share in the universal mission of the Church to spread the faith through prayer and sacrifice. We may not be able to GO to the missions, but we can SEND to the missions both our prayers as well as the material means they need so much.

**What is the Society for the Propagation of the Faith?**

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith was founded in 1822 by Blessed Pauline Jaricot, a young laywoman in Lyon, France, who sought to support missionaries through a simple but powerful idea: invite ordinary people to pray daily for the missions and to give small, regular offerings.

Her vision spread rapidly, forming a global network of prayer and charity that continues to sustain the Church's missionary work to this day.

In 1922, Pope Pius XI recognized the importance of this work by establishing the Pontifical Mission Societies, placing the Society for the Propagation of the Faith under the direct care of the Pope and entrusting it with a central role in supporting the missions.

The Society remains at the heart of World Mission Sunday, ensuring that the offerings of the faithful are distributed equitably to mission dioceses throughout the world.

It is worth remembering that the Church in the United States was once a beneficiary of this generosity. Throughout the 19th century and into the early 20th century, American dioceses received substantial support through the Society—support that helped build parishes, schools, hospitals, and seminaries.

Today, that same spirit of missionary solidarity continues, as Catholics in the United States now support the Church in mission territories across the globe.

**Why Does World Mission Sunday Matter?**

World Mission Sunday is a profound expression of the Church's unity and her missionary calling. In many parts of the world, the Church is vibrant and growing, yet lacks the resources needed to sustain that growth. Communities may have limited access to the sacraments, rely heavily on catechists for formation, or face the challenges of poverty, conflict, or persecution.

Through the prayers and offerings of the faithful, World Mission Sunday helps ensure that these communities are not forgotten. It supports the formation of future priests and religious, the education of children in the faith, the care of the sick, and the life of parishes where the Gospel is still being proclaimed for the first time.

At its heart, World Mission Sunday is not simply about meeting material needs. It is about sharing the gift of faith. It is a participation in the Church's mission to make God's love known in Jesus Christ.

In this centenary year, we are reminded that mission is not the task of a few, but the responsibility of all the baptized. Each prayer offered, each sacrifice made, and each gift given becomes an act of missionary communion—helping to bring the light of Christ to every corner of the world.

**We are all called to be a part of this missionary work!**

Any donation helps extend the Church's evangelization work to missionary lands where the Gospel is being proclaimed for the first time, as well as to places where the Church barely exists, or is too young, too persecuted, or too poor to sustain herself. Special World Mission Sunday envelopes are available in the narthex. Thank you for responding to Pope Leo's call to help him help missionaries everywhere!

Information provided by The Pontifical Mission Societies USA • www.pontificalmissions.org/wms-2026