



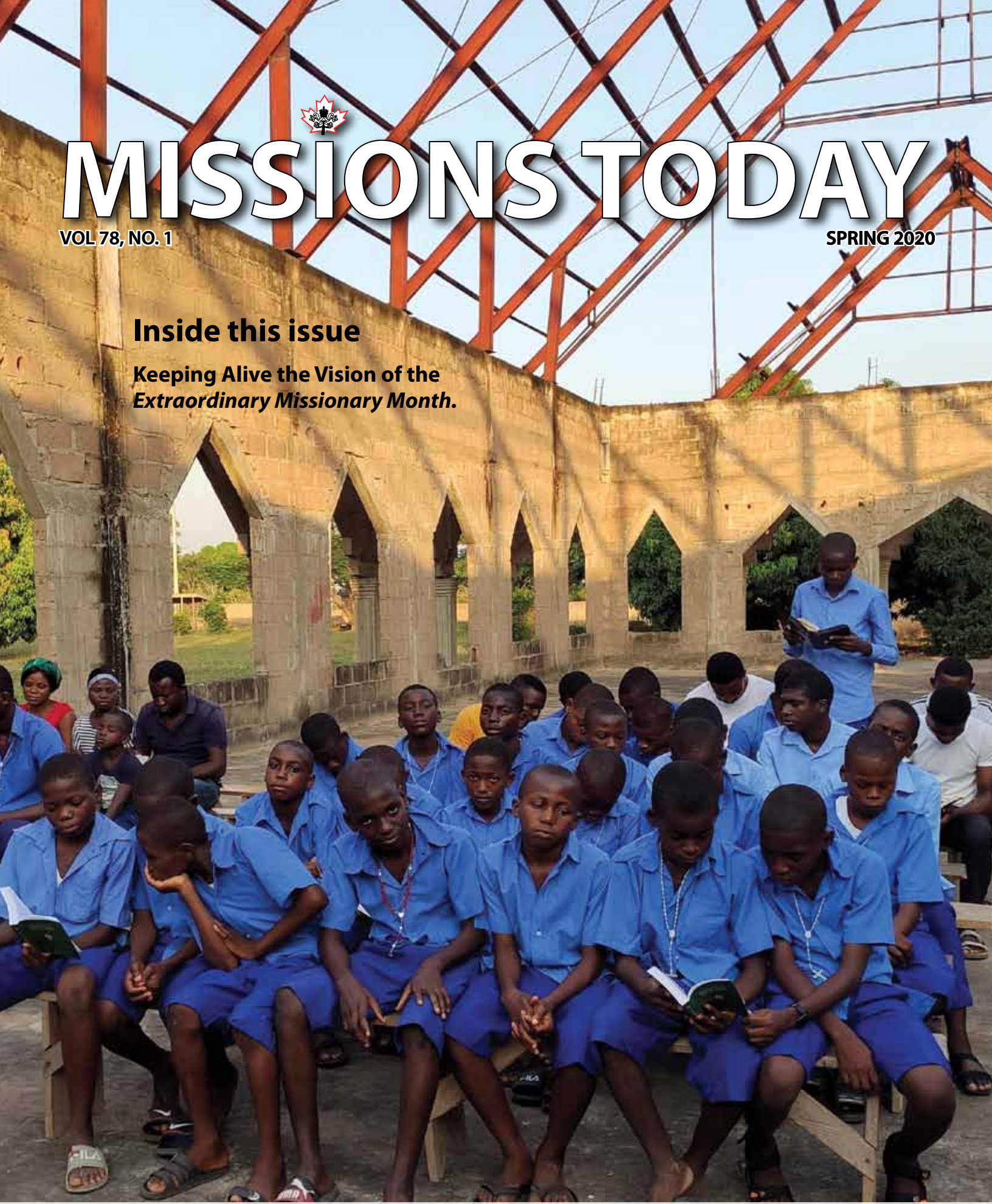
MISSIONS TODAY

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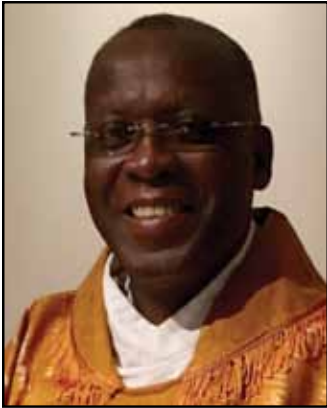
**Keeping Alive the Vision of the
*Extraordinary Missionary Month.***



The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

National Director's Message

Mission Today magazine 2020



2020! The dawning of a new year, a new beginning. A new year brings new life, new chances and new hope. It is a time to remember that missionary activity is only beginning. As Catholics, we are confident that God through the intercession of Blessed Mother Mary, will give us as much blessing and protection.

This year, Pontifical Mission Societies welcome Deacon Dr. Dominic Pullano, the Diocesan Director of Archdiocese of Toronto as our new Mission Today Editor with the retirement of Mr. Paul Coady. We are grateful to Paul for all that he did as editor and a great team player in the office. The decrease of funds is felt strongly in the Pontifical Mission Societies. Yet it is also an opportunity to discover new areas of work. We can not forget that one of the purposes for which the societies were founded was precisely the financial support of the young churches. This year, again, we have engaged the services of Mrs. Foronda in the area of fundraising for the societies.

At the beginning of this year 2020, Pope Francis invites Catholics across the world to deepen their appreciation, love and faithful witness to God and His Word. The message of the Holy Father this year is particularly meaningful for us: “Peace as a path of Hope: dialogue, reconciliation and ecological conversion.” The title of the message speaks precisely of a “path of hope” we can therefore say that we want to place ourselves there, on that path of hope, which is the vocation proper to the Church and must lead to Peace.

In this Winter issue, the editor brings us to reflect more on our missionary calling by reading the Pope’s message on World Mission Sunday and share with us in page 8 the missionary month reflection on the Baptism of Jesus and our own Baptism while page 9 shares the Extraordinary Missionary Month report from Prince Albert Diocese. This issue carries project reports from some countries we supported with your donations. Read more about the Editor on page 18. You will find at the back of the magazine our Charitable Gift Annuities and current rates for your consideration.

Rev. Fr. Alexander Osei, C.S.Sp
National Director.

This year, the Church continues the celebration of our baptism, a call to mission. To be on mission means to move out from one’s comfort zone and open to encountering people on the road. The Holy Father has chosen the theme for the World Mission Sunday 2020 as “Here I am send me” which is our response to the “Yes” at our Baptism. Over two thousand years of the Church’s history, the question that has accompanied the Church to mission territories through out the world is, “What does mission mean to the Church?” Though we understand that the very nature and characteristic of the church is missionary, how this is translated into action has varied over the years. Pope Francis in Evangelii Gaudium calls for a mission that is transformative rather than for the self preservation of the Church.

The Pope’s Monthly Prayer Intentions:

Each year, the Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month. You are invited to answer the Holy Father’s request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this intention each month.

JANUARY: Promotion of World Peace

We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

FEBRUARY: Listen to the Migrants’ Cries

We pray that the cries of our migrant brothers and sisters, victims of criminal trafficking, may be heard and considered.

MARCH: Catholics in China

We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

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The New Students for the 2019/2020 academic session at Holy Ghost College, Sankera, Nigeria. The school’s motto is “Evangelizing through Education.” The cover shows the students of Holy Ghost College praying the divine office in their as yet unfinished chapel. Photo by: Fr. Kuha Indyer, CSSp, Principal of the School.



PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES

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Across the Globe

*The Pontifical Mission Societies host their own web news service called **agenzia fides**. The news service is updated daily and allows us to keep current about events around the world and within Catholic missions. Below are three articles from the website and other news can be found at fides.org.*



■ AFRICA/ZAMBIA: Education and professional opportunities for the disabled: the commitment of missionaries

TLusaka (Agenzia Fides) - Assisting disabled people in Zambia means offering them physical and psychological support but, above all, it means helping them to overcome the social stigma that surrounds them. These are the objectives of the Pope John XXIII Association and of the Franciscan missionary Sisters of Assisi who, in collaboration with the NGO Celim, have created a project that looks to the world of the handicap. The plan, called “Disability”, aims to improve the educational offer, ensuring quality education, adequate structures and trained teachers, and aims to increase job opportunities for the disabled, offering adequate health care.

In Zambia, according to WHO data, two million people are affected by disabilities, about 15% of the population. The data show that in this percentage there is a prevalence of women over men, with a greater concentration in rural areas than in city areas. State laws are limited. There is a law in the country (Disability Act 2012) which should help families and disabled people. The lack of funds means that this rule is completely disregarded and therefore means, infrastructures and specific training are lacking.

For years, Catholic missionaries have been offering care and assistance to the disabled. In Zambia, as in much of Africa, the stigma against the world of handicap is still strong. Disability is seen as the fruit of a curse, of a sort of witchcraft. So families tend to hide disabled children. “The average Zambian - says Tommaso Sartori of Celim to Fides - does not discriminate against the disabled. I have often seen men and women approaching disabled people, talking with them, having a peaceful relationship with them. Having said that, “there is still a sense of shame, perhaps of discomfort in families, which means that disability is not talked about and that people with disabilities are relegated to the world of the home”.

The effort to improve the living conditions of the disabled is therefore indispensable, but to this must be added a continuous awareness-raising work in the family and community context to reduce the prejudices and discrimination that still weigh on the disabled.

To overcome this situation, the project involves a collaboration with the Ministry of Health to carry out awareness activities also

through conferences. A series of meetings are also taking place in various neighborhoods through parishes. The goal is to pass a different image of disability, promoting the idea that those who live with a handicap is a resource for the whole community and not a shame to hide.

The missionaries have gone further. “Periodically - explains Tommaso Sartori - we organize moments in which disabled people meet with street children. These are days in which, between games, sports and recreational activities, realities come together that, for various reasons, are excluded from society. It is a serene and friendly way to build bridges of friendship and mutual understanding”. “Recreation is a good moment. Children integrate naturally. Street children show a unique sensitivity. They see disabled people as vulnerable people to whom we must be close”, he concludes Sartori. (EC) (Agenzia Fides, 23/12/2019)

■ AFRICA/KENYA - Good management of Creation at the center of the Lenten campaign

Nairobi (Agenzia Fides) - “We believe that everything God created is good. Man was created in the image and likeness of God and was commanded to govern creation rationally to bring forth fruit from the earth”, said His Exc. Mgr. John Oballa Owaa, Bishop of Ngong, and Chairman of KCCB – Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of Kenya, in presenting this year’s Lenten Campaign, whose theme is “Stewardship for a Transformed Nation... My obligation”. The Lenten initiative is part of the campaign for the fight against corruption launched on 5th, October, 2019 at Subukia in Nakuru, (see Fides 6/11 / 2019). The Chairman of “Justice and Peace” recalled that those who are baptised have a special responsibility to share the kingly, prophetic and priestly life of Christ.

“Our stewardship must imitate that of Christ. Everything we have and are belong to God. We are simply managers or administrators acting on His behalf”, said Mgr. Oballa.

For the next five weeks beginning 22nd, February 2020, Christians will be expected to reflect on weekly topics: Responsible Farming, Youth and Development, how people have handled the natural resources and how they can be improved.

The campaign promoted by the Bishops of Kenya wants to be a response to Pope Francis’ invitation in his encyclical *Laudato Si’*, taking care of ‘Our Common Home’ – the Earth

In Week Five and final week, Sanctity of Life and Dignity shall be discussed as every human person is created in the image and likeness of God. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides, 22/1/2020)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/67279-AFRICA_KENYA_Good_management_of_Creation_at_the_center_of_the_Lenten_campaign

■ ASIA/PAKISTAN - The celebrations for the 800th anniversary of the encounter between St. Francis and the Sultan comes to an end: a peace commitment in Pakistan

Lahore (Agenzia Fides) - With a joint reading of passages from the Holy Bible and the Koran, the closing ceremony of the cel-



ebrations commemorating the 800 years since the conversation between St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan Al was held in recent days in Lahore-Kamil, which took place in 1219: the eighth centenary of that historic meeting had wide echo in Pakistan throughout 2019. The closing of the special Jubilee was celebrated in Lahore, in the presence of numerous Christian and Muslim leaders.

As Fides learns, among those present, Archbishop Christophe Zakhia El-Kassis, Apostolic Nuncio in Pakistan, stressed that “the encounter of St. Francis of Assisi with the Sultan occurred in an atmosphere of fear and danger, but that fear turned into dialogue which led to peace and friendship”. “We can learn to promote peace and coexistence from Saint Francis of Assisi and the Sultan”, he added, promising “support for the promotion of peace, harmony, tolerance in society”.

Beside him, Mgr. Sebastian Francis Shaw, Archbishop of Lahore and President of the National Commission for Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism, within the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Pakistan, agreed stating that “it is necessary to accept each other in society as Saint Francis of Assisi and Sultan Al-Kamil did, to promote peaceful coexistence”.

Among the civil authorities, Ijaz Alam Augustine, Provincial Minister for Human Rights and Minorities and Minister of Interreligious Dialogue in Punjab, said he “appreciated the significant ceremony” by noting that “the government promotes tolerance and harmony in society and intends to continue developing a policy of inter-religious peace and harmony in order to promote the spirit of coexistence in society”.

Numerous Muslim and Hindu religious leaders attended this ceremony, ensuring their commitment “to support the cause of humanity for a prosperous and harmonious society in Pakistan, bearing in mind the peace initiative experienced centuries ago by St. Francis of Assisi and of the Sultan”.

In the assembly there were students from different schools who presented a theatrical performance inspired by the prayer of peace of Saint Francis of Assisi and the Pakistani song “Is percham k saye talay eik hain - We are one thing”. The youth of the Capuchin Franciscan student residence in Lahore presented a dramatization of the encounter of Saint Francis of Assisi and the Sultan. The ceremony ended with a solemn commitment by all those present to be “instruments and peacemakers in Pakistan”. (PA) (Agenzia Fides, 20/1/2020)

HOLY MASS FOR WORLD MISSIONS DAY

PAPAL CHAPEL HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS

Vatican Basilica: *29th Sunday of Ordinary Time, 20 October 2019*

{In 1926, Pope Pius XI decided the Church needed a special day on which to pray for missionaries, and to renew her commitment to the missions. Today, World Mission Day is celebrated on the penultimate Sunday in October, all around the globe, as a sign of support and solidarity for missions and missionaries everywhere.}



Photo by: Pixabay

I would like to reflect on three words taken from the readings we have just heard: a noun, a verb and an adjective. The noun is the mountain: Isaiah speaks of it when he prophesies about a mountain of the Lord, raised above the hills, to which all the nations will flow (cf. Is 2:2). We see the image of the mountain again in the Gospel when Jesus, after his resurrection, tells his disciples to meet him on the mount of Galilee; the Galilee inhabited by many different peoples: “Galilee of the Gentiles” (cf. Mt 4:15). It seems, then, that the mountain is God’s favourite place for encountering humanity. It is his meeting place with us, as we see in the Bible, beginning with Mount Sinai and Mount Carmel, all the way to Jesus, who proclaimed the Beatitudes on the mountain, was transfigured on Mount Tabor, gave his life on Mount Calvary and ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives. The mountain, the place of great encounters between God and humanity, is also the place where Jesus spent several hours in prayer (cf. Mk 6:46) to unite heaven and earth, and to unite us, his brothers and sisters, with the Father.

What does the mountain say to us? We are called to draw near to God and to others. To God, the Most High, in silence and prayer, avoiding the rumours and gossip that diminish us. And to others, who, from the mountain, can be seen in a different per-

spective: that of God who calls all peoples. From on high, others are seen as a community whose harmonious beauty is discovered only in viewing them as a whole. The mountain reminds us that our brothers and sisters should not be selected but embraced, not only with our gaze but also with our entire life. The mountain unites God and our brothers and sisters in a single embrace, that of prayer. The mountain draws us up and away from the many transient things, and summons us to rediscover what is essential, what is lasting: God and our brothers and sisters. Mission begins on the mountain: there, we discover what really counts. In the midst of this missionary month, let us ask ourselves: what really counts in my life? To what peaks do I want to ascend?

A verb accompanies the noun “mountain”: the verb to go up. Isaiah exhorts us: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord” (2:3). We were not born to remain on the ground, to be satisfied with ordinary things, we were born to reach the heights and there to meet God and our brothers and sisters. However, this means that we have to go up: to leave behind a horizontal life and to resist the force of gravity caused by our self-centredness, to make an exodus from our own ego. Going up requires great effort, but it is the only way to get a better view of everything. As mountain-climbers know, only when you arrive at the top can you get the most beautiful view; only then do you realize that you would not have that view were it not for that uphill path.

And as in the mountains we cannot climb well if we are weighed down by our packs, so in life we must rid ourselves of things that are useless. This is also the secret of mission: to go, you have to leave something behind, to proclaim, you must first renounce. A credible proclamation is not made with beautiful words, but by an exemplary life: a life of service that is capable of rejecting all those material things that shrink the heart and make people indifferent and inward-looking; a life that renounces the useless things that entangle the heart in order to find time for God and others. We can ask ourselves: how am I doing in my efforts to go up? Am I able to reject the heavy and useless baggage of worldliness in order to climb the mountain of the Lord? Is mine a journey upwards or one of worldliness?

If the mountain reminds us of what matters – God and our brothers and sisters – and the verb to go up tells us how to get there, a third word is even more important for today’s celebration. It is the adjective all, which constantly reappears in the readings we have heard: “all peoples”, says Isaiah (2:2); “all peoples”, we repeated in the Psalm; God desires “all to be saved”, writes Paul (1 Tim 2:4);

“Go and make disciples of all nations”, says Jesus in the Gospel (Mt 28:19). The Lord is deliberate in repeating the word all. He knows that we are always using the words “my” and “our”: my things, our people, our community... But he constantly uses the word all. All, because no one is excluded from his heart, from his salvation; all, so that our heart can go beyond human boundaries and particularism based on a self-centredness that displeases God. All, because everyone is a precious treasure, and the meaning of life is found only in giving this treasure to others. Here is our mission: to go up the mountain to pray for everyone and to come down from the mountain to be a gift to all.

Going up and coming down: the Christian, therefore, is always on the move, outward-bound. Go is in fact the imperative of Jesus in the Gospel. We meet many people every day, but – we can ask – do we really encounter the people we meet? Do we accept the invitation of Jesus or simply go about our own business? Everyone expects things from others, but the Christian goes to others. Bearing witness to Jesus is never about getting accolades from others, but about loving those who do not even know the Lord. Those who bear witness to Jesus go out to all, not just to their own acquaintances or their little group. Jesus is also saying to you: “Go, don’t miss a chance to bear me witness!” My brother, my sister, the Lord expects from you a testimony that no one can give in your place. “May you come to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life... lest you fail in your precious mission.” (Gaudete et Exsultate, 24).

What instructions does the Lord give us for going forth to others? Only one, and very simple: make disciples. But, be careful: his dis-



Photo by: Hermann Traub from Pixabay



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ciples, not our own. The Church proclaims the Gospel well only if she lives the life of a disciple. And a disciple follows the Master daily and shares the joy of discipleship with others. Not by conquering, mandating, proselytizing, but by witnessing, humbling oneself alongside other disciples and offering with love the love that we ourselves received. This is our mission: to give pure and fresh air to those immersed in the pollution of our world; to bring to earth that peace which fills us with joy whenever we meet Jesus on the mountain in prayer; to show by our lives, and perhaps even by our words, that God loves everyone and never tires of anyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, each of us has and is “a mission on this earth” (Evangelii Gaudium, 273). We are here to witness, bless, console, raise up, and radiate the beauty of Jesus. Have courage! Jesus expects so much from you! We can say that the Lord is “concerned” about those who do not yet know that they are beloved children of the Father, brothers and sisters for whom he gave his life and sent the Holy Spirit. Do you want to quell Jesus’ concern? Go and show love to everyone, because your life is a precious mission: it is not a burden to be borne, but a gift to offer. Have courage, and let us fearlessly go forth to all!

{The homily by Pope Francis on World Mission Sunday 2019 was accessed on the Vatican Website (http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2019/documents/papa-francesco_20191020_omelia-giornatamissionaria.pdf) on Wednesday January 29, 2020.} From the Vatican, 9 June 2019, Solemnity of Pentecost

The Baptism of Jesus and our own Baptism:

A Reflection on the EMM 2019

The PMU wants to meditate on Holy Scripture to understand God's plan of universal salvation and know the missionary nature of his Church. Given the baptismal theme of the recent Extraordinary Mission Month, let us reflect on the Biblical account of Jesus's baptism in relationship to our own.

The solemnity of the Baptism of Jesus follows immediately after the solemnity of the Epiphany. No sooner have we celebrated Jesus as a baby being visited by three wise men from the East than, one week later, Jesus is thirty years old and being baptized by his relative John the Baptist. There is this thirty-year jump in time because the Gospels do not tell us much about Jesus's life between his birth and baptism. We can surmise that Jesus lived a typical, ordinary life in the small town of Nazareth in Galilee. Living in the family home, Jesus was most likely a carpenter like his father. But this quiet life, as the life of Jesus between his birth and baptism is often referred to, is altered forever when he undergoes the



Photo by: HollyGirl18 from Pixabay

baptism of John the Baptist. Similarly, when we were baptized our lives changed forever in many of the same ways that Jesus' life changed. It is, therefore, instructive, considering the theme of the Extraordinary Mission Month 2019, "Baptized and Sent," to compare our own baptism with the Baptism of Jesus.

The baptism of Jesus marks the beginning of his mission here on earth. As Jesus indicates at the Wedding feast of Cana (John 2:4), his time had not yet come. But at his baptism, his time has now arrived, and he is called by name to be the Messiah, the saviour of the world. It is precisely at his baptism that Jesus recognizes that the mission that he came down from heaven to accomplish is now to commence. Immediately after his baptism, Jesus will go into the wilderness to prepare for his mission with prayer and fasting and then begin the work of the Messiah, preaching about the Kingdom and healing the sick. (Mark 1: 9-15)

In our own baptism, we too are similarly called by name for a specific mission here on earth. In our own baptism, we become disciples of Jesus and we are all called to continue the mission of Jesus in our own lives. By virtue of our baptism, we were all sent on mission. Some members of the body of Christ are called to give their lives in a specific vocation, such as priest, religious sister, Catholic teacher, or medical doctor. Most disciples of Christ have a vocation to family life and are called to continue the mission of Jesus in the domestic church. Many will fulfill their vocational responsibilities by volunteering at the parish level. But whatever our situation in this life might be, as members of the body of Christ, we are all called to further the mission of Jesus and spread the joy of the Gospel.

To support Jesus in his work as the Messiah, God the Father sends the Holy Spirit to remain with Jesus. At his baptism the Holy Spirit comes down on Jesus in the form of a dove and will remain with Jesus throughout his ministry here on earth. Jesus will be guided, supported, and strengthened in his role as the Messiah by the presence of the Holy Spirit that the Father sends to Jesus at his baptism.

In the same way, the Holy Spirit is our constant companion as well. The Divine life of God was also given to us in our baptism and the Spirit is also our constant companion through this life, to eternal life. More specifically, the Holy Spirit is given to us to assist us in our vocations. We are not asked to accomplish our mission simply by our own efforts. We are given the Holy Spirit to be our guidance, support, and strength for the mission that we have been given in baptism.

Finally, at the baptism of Jesus, the voice of the Father is heard, saying to Jesus, "You are my beloved Son, with you I am well



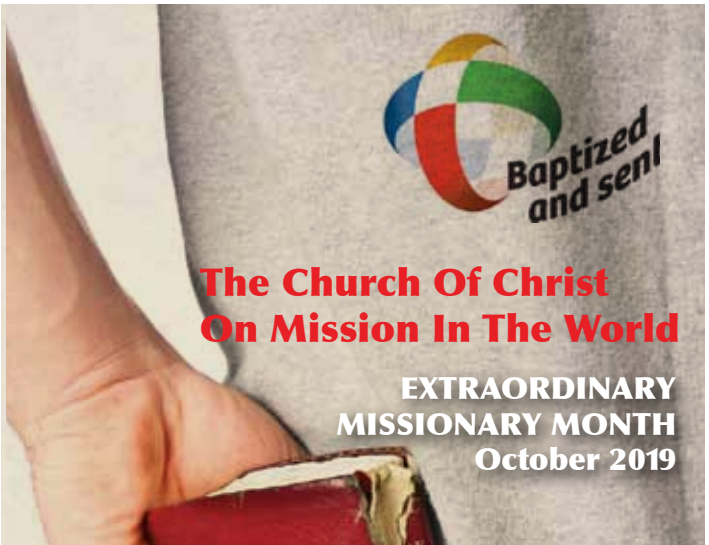
Photo by: Pixabay

pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17) These words will confirm for Jesus both his identity and his mission. The Father confirms that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, sent down from heaven, and the Father declares the love and pride that He has for His only begotten Son.

On the day of our baptism, God the Father speaks to our heart as well. We too are made sons and daughters of God. We receive the best title and status that anyone of us could ever receive. We are children of God, who are loved by God beyond all measure. Moreover, the love that God has for us does not derive from the fact that God is perfect and thus God must love everyone. God loves us because when God looks at what God has created, God sees someone very lovable. God sees our many talents and great capacity for love, compassion, and mercy and cannot but love us. God loves us not despite who we are but precisely because of who we are. On days that we can slow down and have a few minutes to listen to our hearts, we will hear those words that were spoken to us by our Father in heaven at our baptism, always encouraging us, and reaffirming us: we are God's beloved children with whom He is well pleased.

In Baptism, we were indeed called as Jesus was, to a specific mission here on earth. But we were also given the tools that we would need to accomplish our mission – the same tools that were given to Jesus at his baptism – the courage of the Holy Spirit and the encouragement of God the Father. Let us pray that we may always hear the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the affirmation of God the Father.

(Submitted by Deacon Doctor Dominic Pullano, editor of Missions Today.)



EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH REPORT:

DIOCESE OF PRINCE ALBERT, SK

October was the month of mission in the Prince Albert Diocese. The month started with the launch of the Bishop's Annual Appeal which focused on the mission of the church in our diocese.

Preparations then began for World mission Sunday with prayer cards, posters and all the other material that PMS had sent to us for distribution. Parishes were encouraged to pray the prayer of mission during the weekend Mass celebrations in October.

World Mission Sunday saw a "Sending Forth" Mass celebration at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Prince Albert. Bishop Thévenot M.Afr presided. Two Sisters from two congregations were sent forth by Bishop Albert to their mission work, one in South America and one in Africa.

The month concluded with a Diocesan Pastoral Conference with attendees from all parts of the diocese. One of the topics that the keynote speaker addressed was the importance on Christ' mission in our lives, here in our community and in other parts of the world.

A special celebration was held at the Sacred Heart Cathedral on November 26, 2019 celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Missionaries of Africa. Bishop Albert Thévenot M.Afr, Bishop of Prince Albert, presided at the celebration. Bishop Albert being a member of Order of the Missionaries of Africa, spoke of his personal experiences as a missionary and of he also spoke of the importance of missionaries and the work that they do all over the world. The Mass celebration was followed by a gathering in the church hall where displays were set up on the Missionaries of Africa and others.

(Submitted by Louis Hradecki, PMS Diocesan Director)

Catholic Church Statistics

EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH OCTOBER 2019

VATICAN - WORLD MISSION DAY - CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS 2019

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – As every year, in view of World Mission Day, which this year celebrates its 93rd anniversary on Sunday, October 20, within the context of the Extraordinary Missionary Month of October 2019, announced by Pope Francis to mark the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV’s Apostolic Letter ‘Maximum Illud’, Fides News Service offers some statistics chosen to give a panorama of the missionary Church all over the world. The tables are taken from the latest edition of the “Church’s Book of Statistics” published (updated to 31 December 2017) regarding members of the Church, church structures, healthcare, welfare and education. Please note that variations, increase or decrease, emerging from our own comparison with last year’s figures, are marked increase + or decrease – in brackets

World population

To 31 December 2017 the world population was 7.408.374.000 with an increase of 56.085.000 units compared to the previous year. Population growth, almost half compared to the previous year, was registered on every continent, including Europe, in its third year of growth after the decrease in previous years: increases were registered above all in Africa (+ 33.572.000) and in Asia (+ 11.975.000), followed by America (+ 8.738.000), Europe (+ 1.059.000) and Oceania (+ 741.000).

Catholics

On the same date, 31 December 2017, Catholics in the world numbered 1.313.278.000 units with an overall increase of 14.219.000, almost the same as the previous year. The increase affects all continents, including Europe (+ 259.000), after a decrease for three consecutive years. Increases were registered above all in Africa (+ 5.605.000) and in America (+ 6.083.000) followed by Asia (+ 2.080.000) and Oceania (+ 191.000).

The world percentage of Catholics increased by 0.06 %, settling at 17.73%. By continent: increases were registered in America (+ 0.05) and Asia (+ 0,03), decrease in Africa (- 0,07), Europe (- 0,02) and Oceania (- 0,01).

Persons and Catholics per priest

This year the number of persons per priest in the world increased by 132 units, average 14,468. The distribution by continent: increase in Africa (+ 49), America (+ 69), Europe (+ 75) and Oceania (+ 337). The only decrease, also this year, in Asia (- 887).

The number of Catholics per priest in the world increased by 38 units, average 3.168. There are increases in America (+ 48), Europe (+ 29), Oceania (+ 87). As in the previous year, a decrease was registered in Asia (- 15) to which is added Africa (- 9).

Ecclesiastical circumscriptions and mission stations

The number of ecclesiastical circumscriptions is 1 more than the previous year to 3,017 with new circumscriptions created in Asia (+2), while in America the number decreased by one (-1), the other continents unvaried.

Mission stations with a resident priest number 2,659 (+ 519). Decrease was registered, for the second consecutive year, in Africa (- 47), to which is added Europe (- 44) while and an increase was registered in America (+ 460), Asia (+ 133) and Oceania (+ 17).

Mission Stations without a resident priest decreased in all continents, by 4.696. The distribution by continent: in Africa (- 1.448), in America (- 1.333), in Asia (- 1.899), in Europe (- 13), and Oceania (- 3).

Bishops

The total number of Bishops in the world increased also this year, to 5,389. Diocesan Bishops and Religious Bishops also increased in numbers this year. Diocesan Bishops number 4,116 (26 more), while Religious Bishops number 1,273 (10 more).

The increase in diocesan Bishops is registered in all continents, with a slight decrease in Africa (- 1): America (+ 18), Asia (+ 1), Europe (+ 5) and Oceania (+ 3). The number of religious Bishops increased in Africa (+ 7) and America (+ 5), while a decrease was registered in Asia (- 2) and unvaried in Europe and Oceania

Priests

The total number of priests in the world also decreased this year, to 414.582 (- 387). The continents which registered a major decrease was again Europe (- 2.946), to which is added Oceania (- 97). Increases were registered in Africa (+ 1.192), America (+ 40) and Asia (+ 1.424) unvaried.

Diocesan priests decreased by 21 units, reaching a total of 281.810 with a decrease again in Europe (- 2.048), to which is added Oceania (- 36). Increases were registered in Africa (+ 959), America (+ 404) and Asia (+ 700).

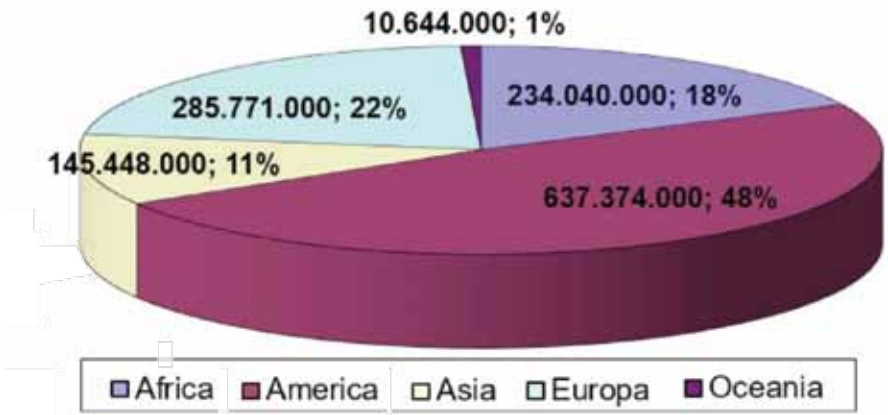
The number of Religious priests decreased by 366 units to a total 132.772. Increases were registered as in recent years in Africa (+ 233) and in Asia (+ 724), whereas numbers dropped in America (- 364), Europe (- 898), Oceania (- 61)

Permanent Deacons

Permanent deacons in the world increased by 582 units to 46.894. The highest increase was registered again in America (+ 408) followed by Europe (+ 142), Asia (+ 28) and Oceania (+ 11). The only decrease this year was Africa (- 7).

Permanent Diocesan deacons in the world are 46.192, with an overall increase of 583 units. They increased on every continent

WORLD POPULATION – CATHOLICS



except in Africa (- 3): America (+434), Asia (+5), Europe (+140) and Oceania (+7).

Religious permanent deacons number 702, with a decrease by one unit compared to the previous year. Decreases in Africa (- 4), America (- 26), increases in Asia (+23), Europe (+2) and Oceania (+4).

Men and women religious

The number of non-religious priests decreased for the fifth consecutive year by 1.090 units to 51.535. Situation: a decrease was registered in all continents except in Africa (+ 48): America (- 403), Asia (-127), Europe (-525) and Oceania (-83).

Even this year there is an overall decrease in the number of women religious by 10.535 units to 648.910. An increase was registered in Africa (+1.489) and Asia (+1.118), decrease in America (- 4.893), Europe (- 7.960) and Oceania (-289).

Members of secular institutes, male and female

Members of male secular institutes number 585 with a decrease of (-33) for the second consecutive year, in all continents except Oceania unvaried also this year: in Africa (- 8), in America (- 6), in Asia (- 7) and Europe (- 12).

The members of female secular institutes decreased this year, by 343 units to a total of 22.057 members. Increase in Africa (+37) in Asia (+58), while a decrease was registered in America (-51), in Europe (- 385) and in Oceania (-2).

Lay missionaries and catechists

The number of lay missionaries in the world is 355.800 units, with an overall increase of 1.057 units, in particular in Europe (+836), America (+691), Asia (+454) and Oceania (+23). The only decrease was registered in Africa (- 947)

Catechists in the world increased by 34.032 units to a total of 3.120.321. The only decrease was registered in Europe (- 2.897). An increase was registered in Africa (+ 11.405), in America (+ 22.532), Asia (+2.699) and Oceania (+293).

Major seminarians

The number of major seminarians, diocesan and religious also decreased this year, they are globally 832 units, reaching a total of 115.328. Increases occurred in Africa (+786) and Oceania (+

21). While a decrease was registered in America (- 853), Asia (- 385) and in Europe (- 401)

Major diocesan seminarians number 70.706 (- 411 compared to the previous year) and Religious major seminarians 44.622 (- 421). Diocesan seminarians increased in Africa (+505) and Oceania (+17), decreases are in America (- 376), Asia (- 202) and Europe (- 355)

Religious Seminarians increased in Africa (+281) and Oceania (+4), while decreased in America (- 477), Asia (-183), Europe (- 46).

Minor seminarians

The number of minor seminarians, diocesan and religious this year decreased for the second consecutive year by 835 units to 100.781. Overall decrease on all continents except Asia (+82) and Oceania, unvaried: Africa (- 403), America (- 347), Europe (-167).

Minor diocesan seminarians number 78.336 (- 33) and religious seminarians number 22.445 (-802). The number of diocesan minor seminarians increased in Asia (+ 367) and Oceania (+7). Decrease in Africa (- 18), America (- 269), Europe (- 120),

Religious minor seminarians decreased in number in Africa (-385), America (- 78), Asia (- 285), Europe (- 47) and Oceania (- 7).

Catholic schools and Education

In the field of education, the Catholic Church runs 71.305 kindergartens with 7.303.839 pupils; 101.527 primary schools with 34.558.527 pupils; 48.560 secondary schools with 20.320.592 pupils. The Church also cares for 2.345.799 high school pupils, and 2.945.295 university students.

Catholic charity and healthcare centres

Charity and healthcare centres run in the world by the Church include: 5.269 hospitals, most of them in America (1.399) and Africa (1.367); 16.068 dispensaries, mainly in Africa (5.907); America (4.330) and Asia (2.919); 646 Care Homes for people with Leprosy, mainly in Asia (362) and Africa (229); 15.735 Homes for the elderly, or the chronically ill or people with a disability, mainly in Europe (8.475) and America (3.596); 9.813 orphanages, mainly in Asia (3.473); 10.492 creches, mainly in America (3.153) and in Asia (2.900); 13.065 marriage counselling centres, mainly in Europe (5.676) and America (4.798); 3.169 social rehabilitation centres and 31.182 other kinds of institutions.

Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions dependent on the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

The ecclesiastical Circumscriptions dependent on the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (Cep) are 1.115. Most of the ecclesiastical circumscriptions are in Africa (511) and in Asia (484), followed by America (74) and Oceania (46).

Propagation of the Faith

Project Report: NIGERIA - Promoting the Formation of Lay Catechists

Propagation of the Faith: The Society of the Propagation of the Faith has the goal of opening every believer's heart to the vastness of the missionary horizon through spiritual and material support for the proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

Spreading the Gospel requires the passion and commitment, not only of priests, but of the laity as well. The laity, just as much as clergy, are called to bring the message of the Gospel to others. In the Catholic Diocese of Issele-Uku in Nigeria, the laity are fulfilling this call by becoming catechists. Catechists are parish workers who provide faith formation opportunities primarily to other adults of the community. In the Diocese of Issele-Uku, there are now 86 full or part-time catechists in the 92 parishes across the diocese.

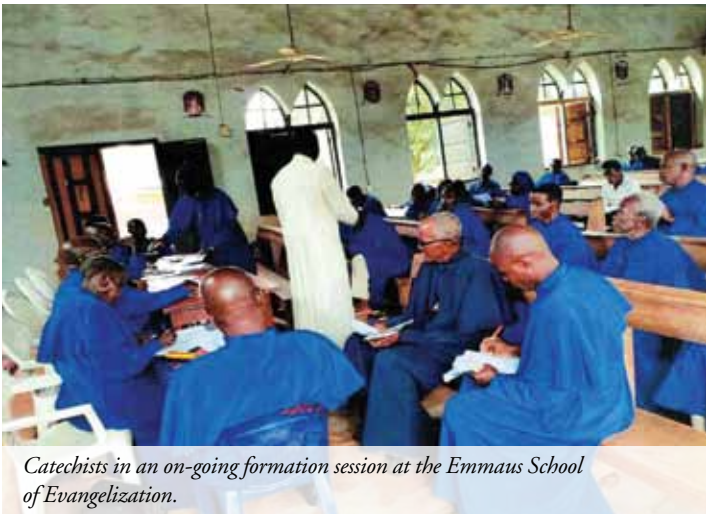
In order to become a catechist, interested laity must undergo a year-long educational program where they are taught the latest methods of catechesis and evangelization. The diocese operates the Emmaus School of Evangelization and the classes are conducted by experts in the field of catechesis and church teaching/theology. Running from January to December, the new catechists are usually commissioned in December on the feast of the Immaculate Conception during their annual diocesan pilgrimage celebration. The Emmaus School of Evangelization also offers on-going formation programs for catechists. These week-long pro-



The Catechists of the Diocese of Issele-Uku

grams provide the participants with the opportunity to hone their skills as catechists, discuss any challenges, and to support each in this critical ministry of making the Gospel message come alive for others.

In order to keep these formation programs operational, the Diocese of Issele-Uku requires financial support. Not only is there a cost for the formation programs, the Diocese must also look after the salaries of the catechists. The costs for this catechist program are partially subsidized by the Canadian Pontifical Mission Societies. The Bishop of Issele-Uku, Most Rev. Michael Elue, commented that “the subsidy from your office (i.e. the Canadian PMS) ... contributed immensely to our ...formation and remuneration of my catechists for that year.” In his letter of appreciation sent to our office, Bishop Michael expresses his heart-felt gratitude: “May I thank you for your continued support to the missionary activities of the Church in Issele-Uku.”



Catechists in an on-going formation session at the Emmaus School of Evangelization.

Society of Saint Peter the Apostle

THE ROLE OF THE BAPTIZED CATHOLIC IN THE NEW EVANGELIZATION



Rev. Fr. Matthias Y.K. Amuzu

The church has taught and has preached the gospel message for over 2000 years; it worked and continues to work. If this is the case, what is the New Evangelization about?

The New Evangelization calls all baptized Catholics to deepen their personal faith, believe in the gospel message and be determined to go out to proclaim it

without fear or shame. As St. Paul writes to Timothy: “For this reason, I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God...” (2 Timothy 1:6-8).

The term “New Evangelization” is said to be first propounded by St. John Paul II in 1983, in his address to the bishops of Latin America; and later, he used it for the entire church. In his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, no.3, St. John Paul II said: “I sense that the moment has come to commit all the Church’s energies to a New evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples.” From the above quote, one can easily see the importance and the urgent need of disseminating the gospel by all.

In the same encyclical quoted above, St. John Paul II gave three different circumstances for evangelization, namely;

1. *Missio ad Gentes*: – Latin word for “Mission To the Nations”. This means this is the situation where the “Christ and his gospel “are not known.
2. *Christian Communities*: In these communities the church carries out her activities and pastoral care. This is the ongoing evangelization of those “fervent in the faith”.
3. *New Evangelization*: This is focused on those Catholics who have fallen-away from the Church. These group of people are very common and are found everywhere in our countries and the entire world and hear many of them with so many reasons why they no longer go to church.

The focus of the New Evangelization is the call to all the baptized

Catholics both the laity and the clergy to be evangelized and then go out to evangelize others, particularly those who have fallen away. This calls for serious formation in every level of the Catholic faith. It is time to read Scripture and know and understand the Word of the Lord, believe it and practice it and then share it with others. Learn to live for Christ, not just in words but in deeds as well. We must believe what we read, teach what we believe and practice what we teach. This is the sure way we can bring people back to the faith and God. This is what the New evangelization is calling us to focus on, the “Re-Proposing” of the gospel to those who have experienced a crisis of faith.

By virtue of our baptism all the members of the people of God have become missionary disciples of Christ Jesus (Matt 28:19). All the baptized irrespective of their position in the church or their level of instruction in faith, are “agents of evangelization”, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by “professionals”, while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients.

In conclusion my dear people of God, we are called to actualize our faith. Let’s get involve in our parish life and see what we can do to encourage the weak in our churches, societies, towns, cities and in our country. The New Evangelization calls each one of us to establish a deeper personal relationship with the Lord Jesus.

Look forward to Part two:

Rev.Fr. Matthias Kotoka Amuzu
National Secretary

A MISSIONARY PRAYER

God, your love extends to all the earth and your will is that people of all nations join in this love.

You call all your baptized faithful to share the love that they have experienced with everyone they meet. You call all your disciples to be missionaries of love, spreading the message that all may be one in Christ who is the font of love.

May we always have this missionary fervour to spread your love to everyone. May your church always be a community of love, bringing all peoples together and being a sign of mercy to all who are broken in this world. May we be a church who builds your Kingdom of love here on earth and continue to proclaim that God’s Kingdom is indeed within our reach for the King is among us. Amen.

Society of Saint Peter the Apostle

Project Report Ghana – St. Paul’s Catholic Seminary (Sowutuom)

The Society of St. Peter the Apostle promotes awareness in the Christian communities regarding the need to develop the local clergy and consecrated life in the recently founded missionary churches.

In order to grow and flourish, Church communities need to produce an indigenous clergy and their own consecrated religious. The health of a community can be measured by the number of men and women who accept the challenge to faithfully serve God’s people. The training for an indigenous clergy and consecrated religious requires many material resources, such as a seminary or convent. These material resources may not always be readily available in developing countries. Supporting the work of the St. Peter the Apostle society will allow younger Catholic communities to develop their own leadership and spread the Gospel message from a better sense of the local environment. Canadian efforts to support the mission of St Peter the Apostle have included the following seminaries.



Seminarians of St. Paul’s Seminary waiting for class to begin.

St. Paul’s Catholic Seminary (Sowutuom)

Seminarian Population -241

Resident Formators – 8

Non-resident Lecturers – 11

Matron and Administrative Assistant –
2 religious sisters

Fr. Francis LeMaire, the acting rector of the seminary, stated that “the sense of collaboration and dedication is very strong” among the seminarians and staff of the seminary.

Fr. LeMaire also expressed his appreciation for the funds that were received by the seminary from the Society of St. Peter the Apostle Canada. He suggested that “our support will go a long way to enhance our administrative, academic, spiritual and social activities.”



St. Paul’s Seminary: Seminarians participate in a day of recollection.

A Legacy Gift that gives long after we are gone!

Be the instrument that helps bring the Bread of Life and the Blood of Christ to our brothers and sisters at the missions.

Through a donation of \$425.00, you may purchase a chalice, have it engraved, and forwarded to a mission priest. This chalice can be inscribed with your name or with the name of a living or deceased relative or friend. A souvenir plaque will attest to your involvement as a partner in mission.

Yes! I want to “put a chalice in his hands”. I enclosed \$425.00
Name _____
Address _____
Province _____ Postal Code _____ Tel. no. _____
Chalice inscription:
In memory/honour of _____ Or
Please pray for _____
(Please print clearly)

The Society of St. Peter the Apostle (A Pontifical Mission Society) 416-699-7077 | 800-897-8865 | mission@missionsocieties.ca

Society of Saint Peter the Apostle

Project Report Ghana (2018-2019) – St. Cyprian Minor Seminary and Senior High School

St. Cyprian Minor Seminary and Senior High School

Enrolment: 122 students

Recollections: 8 which centred on the call to holiness drawing inspiration from the Holy Father’s Apostolic Exhortation Gaudete et Exsultate. The seminarians were helped to appreciate the fact that they are being called in their youthful state to cherish holiness. These reflections were appreciated by the seminarians.

Catholic Education Week Celebration: January 27, 2019.

103 students from two high schools gathered for the day’s programme. The students reflected on the importance of holiness and on examples of holy Christian living. They were divided into small discussion groups where they reflected on issues pertaining to youth and holiness.

Formational Programme: continued with topics relevant to seminarians.

Academic Life: Building a culture of reading in the seminary. Seminarians are not to wait till exam time before studying hard. Teachers and formators have been giving more assignments to students to keep them studying.

Self-Reliance Initiatives: The seminary continues to invest in bee hives, piggery, and cashew. The seminarians are actively involved in these initiatives.

Presbytery: The seminary received funds from Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle Canada for the construction of a presbytery for the priests living on campus. The rector of the seminary, Fr. Nicholas Kwame Apetorgbor, wrote in a thank you letter, “This kind gesture of yours will help provide the formators of St. Cyprian Minor Seminary with a good accommodation, which will enable them to render more effective service to the seminarians and to the people of God. We are grateful for all you do, especially for the vulnerable in our world.” CHa



Notre Dame Minor Seminary: Students assemble for mass.

The BURSE Program

for the formation of priests and religious brothers and sisters will ensure a vibrant and solid Catholic Faith!

A Burse is a pledge of \$10,000 towards the education of seminarians and religious in mission countries.

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The Society of St. Peter the Apostle

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Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood: Project Report: ZAMBIA

Diocese of Chiang Mai - Provision of Community Services to Children Living With HIV and AIDS

Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood: The Association exists to meet the spiritual and material needs of all children so that they can live worthily as real children of God and to raise children's awareness of their neighbor's needs and teach them the value and power of solidarity and reciprocal support.

There may not be a more sacred endeavour than providing for the needs of children. Children are certainly the hope, not only of society, but of our Catholic Church as well. Thus, all that we can do to support the healthy growth and maturation of our children is a sacred obligation indeed. Certainly, the work of the Holy Childhood Association contributes to this sacred task. With its special focus of assisting our children to become members of Christ's vineyard, our children can contribute to the support of children in the missions. The importance of the Holy Childhood Association was reflected in the following correspondence by Bishop Moses Hamungole, Bishop of Monze Diocese in Zambia.



Fr. Luigi and the Children Helping Children group of St. Anthony's Church in Thunder Bay, ON., who have taken on the mission of the Holy Childhood Association.

Fraternal greetings from the Diocese of Monze! I wish to convey my sincere thanks and gratitude to PMS Canada – Holy Childhood towards the help you have continued to render the Diocese of Monze. PMS Holy Childhood funds have really benefited and helped the diocese especially at this time when the world is experiencing global economic crisis.

We appreciate your efforts and we promise to keep you close in our prayers. Through your funds, the diocese has made it possible to evangelize the word of God. We are also promoting missionary awareness to children in different parts of the diocese. Your funds have not only met the objectives of our church but also complemented government efforts in social development of our nation Zambia.

Thanks once again PMS Canada – Holy Childhood, I wish you well in your sacred task of animating, educating, encouraging and providing financial assistance. Continue tirelessly in the task you have undertaken. Keep on working hard in convinced service to the church's mission, and you will build one family in mission.

Let's make our Missions a Priority!

An easy way to help our missions is to set-up pre-authorize monthly donations from your bank account or credit card.

To join this plan, please sign and send the forms available from our website
<http://www.missionsocieties.ca/ways-to-give/pre-authorized-giving/>
or by giving us a call.

Should your situation change, you can cancel or change the donation amount at any time by sending us a note.

Pontifical Mission Societies
416-699-7077 | 800-897-8865 | missions@missionsocieties.ca

Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood: Vatican Report.

The Holy Childhood Association attempts to provide children with opportunities to help other children with financial and prayerful support. The International Secretariat of the Holy Childhood Association, the central office at the Vatican, has distributed the following charts to inform all donors of where their support will be going this year. As these charts attest, the children who have donated through the Holy Childhood Association have risen to the occasion and have done a phenomenal job at reaching out to other children in need. Let us pray that our children will continue to be instilled with a passion for the missions and that they will always remember that, by virtue of their baptism, they too have been sent to make a difference in the world.

PONTIFICIUM OPUS A SANCTA INFANTIA
Secretariatus Internationalis
Città del Vaticano

NUMBER OF PROJECTS APPROVED IN 2019

Projects	Africa	America	Asia	Europe	Oceania	Total
Pastoral care of children (ordinary subsidies for mission dioceses)	312	16	119	0	4	451
Missionary animation and formation	40	12	13	1	1	67
Christian formation	300	6	78	7	6	397
Pre-school education	85	2	49	6	1	143
Scholastic education	518	19	618	1	7	1.163
Protection of life	376	20	241	6	6	649

DISTRIBUTION TABLE OF SUBSIDIES APPROVED IN 2019

Projects	Africa	America	Asia	Europe	Oceania	Total
Ordinary subsidies for mission dioceses	2.496.000	128.000	952.000	0	32.000	3.608.000
Extraordinary subsidies	8.232.850	319.550	4.794.700	68.700	124.500	13.540.300
Total	10.728.850	447.550	5.746.700	68.700	156.500	17.148.300
%	62,57	2,61	33,51	0,40	0,91	100,00

Rome, 22nd January 2020

The Editor's Point of View



As the new editor for Missions Today, the magazine of the Pontifical Mission Society in Canada, allow me the opportunity to introduce myself. Of the many hats that I wear, my most important ministry is that of a husband and father. I am married to a wonderful woman, Gina Pullano, currently a Catholic school, elementary principal. I have two children, Alexandra, a lawyer working for the federal government in Ottawa and a son, Daniel, a graduate student at Carleton University, both of whom I am extremely proud. After 31 years in Catholic education, I recently retired from the Durham Catholic District School Board where I ministered as the Adult Faith Animator. I am also a permanent deacon for the Archdiocese of Toronto, where I serve at St. David's Parish in Maple, Ontario. I also hold a Doctor of Ministry Degree in adult faith formation from the Catholic University of America in Washington DC.

This past October 2019, the Catholic Church celebrated an Extraordinary Missionary Month, with the theme *“Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World.”* The purpose of this Extraordinary Missionary Month was to reaffirm that every baptized Catholic has a role to play in the mission of the church. All baptized Catholics are called to bring the Gospel message to wherever their life journey may take them and whatever their life situations may be. This extraordinary month was intended to ignite a new missionary fervour in the church. This month was to be a catechetical exercise where all Catholics are reminded that by virtue of their baptism, they are all called by name to participate in the ministry of the church – hence the theme “Baptized and Sent.”

The purpose of this month was also to help all Catholics appreciate the missionary nature of the church and that the very essence of the church is to bring the Gospel to the world, as Jesus commissioned his disciples at his ascension (see Matthew 28: 16-20). Moreover, this proclamation of the Gospel is not always accomplished through words. Rather, the church is called to spread the Gospel through the quality of their lives. The Gospel is never more attractive to others than when it is lived faithfully by its followers with a deep compassion and love for one's neighbour. Finally, this proclamation of the Gospel is not so much about ideas as it is about a Person, the person of Jesus Christ. Missionary activity consists of creating favourable circumstances for an encounter with the risen Lord.

The Extraordinary Missionary Month was also intended to emphasize the work of the missions. Missionary activity is not restricted to a select few who travel to foreign lands to proclaim the Gospel. Missionary work is similarly a call of all baptized Catholics. All baptized Catholics are called to support the church's missionary activity. Where the church is too young or too poor, all Catholics can support these communities, not only with donations, but with their prayers as well. One way that baptized Catholics can support the work of the missions is through the Pontifical Mission Societies. In particular, the Pontifical Mission Societies assist baptized Catholics to help the church grow and mature in those parts of the world where the need is the greatest.

The enduring impact that the Extraordinary Missionary Month should, therefore, have on all Catholics is this universal call to mission. The very essence of the Church of Christ is to be missionary and all baptized Catholics are called to be missionary disciples. When we have turned the page on this special month, may we all never forget that we are called to be missionary disciples and that we have all been “Baptized and Sent.”

The purpose of this month was also to help all Catholics appreciate the missionary nature of the church and that the very essence of the church is to bring the Gospel to the world, as Jesus commissioned his disciples at his ascension (see Matthew 28: 16-20). Moreover, this proclamation of the Gospel is not always accomplished through words. Rather, the church is called to spread the Gospel through the quality of their lives. The Gospel is never more attractive to others than when it is lived faithfully by its followers with a deep compassion and love for one's neighbour. Finally, this proclamation of the Gospel is not so much about ideas as it is about a Person, the person of Jesus Christ. Missionary activity consists of creating favourable circumstances for an encounter with the risen Lord.

Missions Today is always interested in hearing from you. If you have any comments on the articles we have used; the new structure of the magazine; or anything you would like to see us explore in future issues, please get in touch with us!

Contact the Editor via email at: editor@missionsocieties.ca

Or write us at: Editor - Missions Today Magazine
2219 Kennedy Road Toronto,
Ontario M1T 3G5

Don't forget to visit our web-site.

www.missionsocieties.ca offers: access to feature stories from our magazine, Missions Today, child activities and news from Holy Childhood, and direct links to World Mission TV (RomanCatholicTelevision) where you can find stories of mission work from across the globe in documentary formats complete with teacher/student guides and activities. Our site also makes it easy to donate in a safe and secure way. Visit us today!

In Remembrance

Our Deceased Donors

Please remember in your prayers the recently deceased members of the Pontifical Mission Societies:

Powell Dorothy F.	Yarmouth, NS	Cunningham Fred	Hamilton, ON
Paul Carlton	Toronto, ON	Grohs Canadina	Guelph, ON
Costello Frank E.	Victoria, BC	Makarenko Michael	Surrey, BC
Sumbera Blanka	Surrey, BC	Mahoney James	Guelph, ON
Ashmore Ronald C.	Calgary, AB	Jefferies Tony	Fort St. John, BC
Stewart Beatrice M.	Winnipeg, MB	Santos Joana	Kingsville, ON
Ellis Francis	Mount Hope, ON	Marchesan Carlo	Hamilton, ON

Dear Supporter of Missions Today:

Keeping the Message Alive!

Because of your generous financial support over the years, Pontifical Missions Societies (English Canada) has encouraged and nourished missionary vocations around the world.

Missions Today provides a unique insight and view into the world of missionary activities for our Canadian readers. With your support you make happen many benefits that:

- help spread the papal missionary zeal to our parishes and to our many readers and contributors,
- sustain a Catholic voice in today's world when so many counter voices are seeking to raise their views,
- show solidarity to fellow Christians in mission countries as they develop their faith communities,
- inform Catholics about the churches worldwide missionary work,
- boost our theme of children helping children to advance a “WE” attitude, that we are all connected, as the Holy Father states *Laudato Si* '42.



Unfortunately, with rising publication costs, we are facing escalating pressures to provide superior communications in a more efficient manner. Moreover, technology changes are forcing us to re-examine how we do our work in order to create products that will meet the demands of a digital world! These changes are expensive. That is why I am writ-



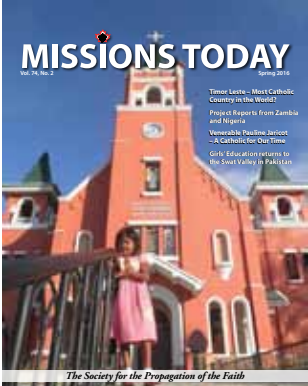
ing to you today to seek your help to continue our work in evangelizing and communicating the message of Jesus in 2019!

Your financial support could take the form of a suggested donation of \$50.00 to be directed to defraying the cost of publishing. You may also choose to direct your donation to assisting us in moving to a digital publishing and evangelizing format. I leave the gift amount to you.

You may also use the envelope attached to this issue. Simply write on the back of the envelope that you wish your donation to be directed to support: PMS Publications/Missions Today Magazine.

Please consider making an offering to help us continue to bring Catholic news of our missionary projects and endeavors to Catholics across Canada. Rest assured that you are in our prayers and please continue to keep us in mind with yours.

Rev. Father Alex Osei, C.S.Sp.
National Director



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90	9.02%	8.99%
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Rates posted as of January 31, 2020

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www.missionsocieties.ca



Located now within the walls of the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, Italy, the Portiuncula is one of the small churches that St. Francis restored after he heard God calling him to rebuild his church. Eventually, St. Francis will realize that the call to rebuild the church was more than just a vocation to restore buildings. It was a call to spiritually nourish the People of God. May we who have been baptized and sent hear this same call today to build God's church throughout the earth and be missionary disciples in the world today.