

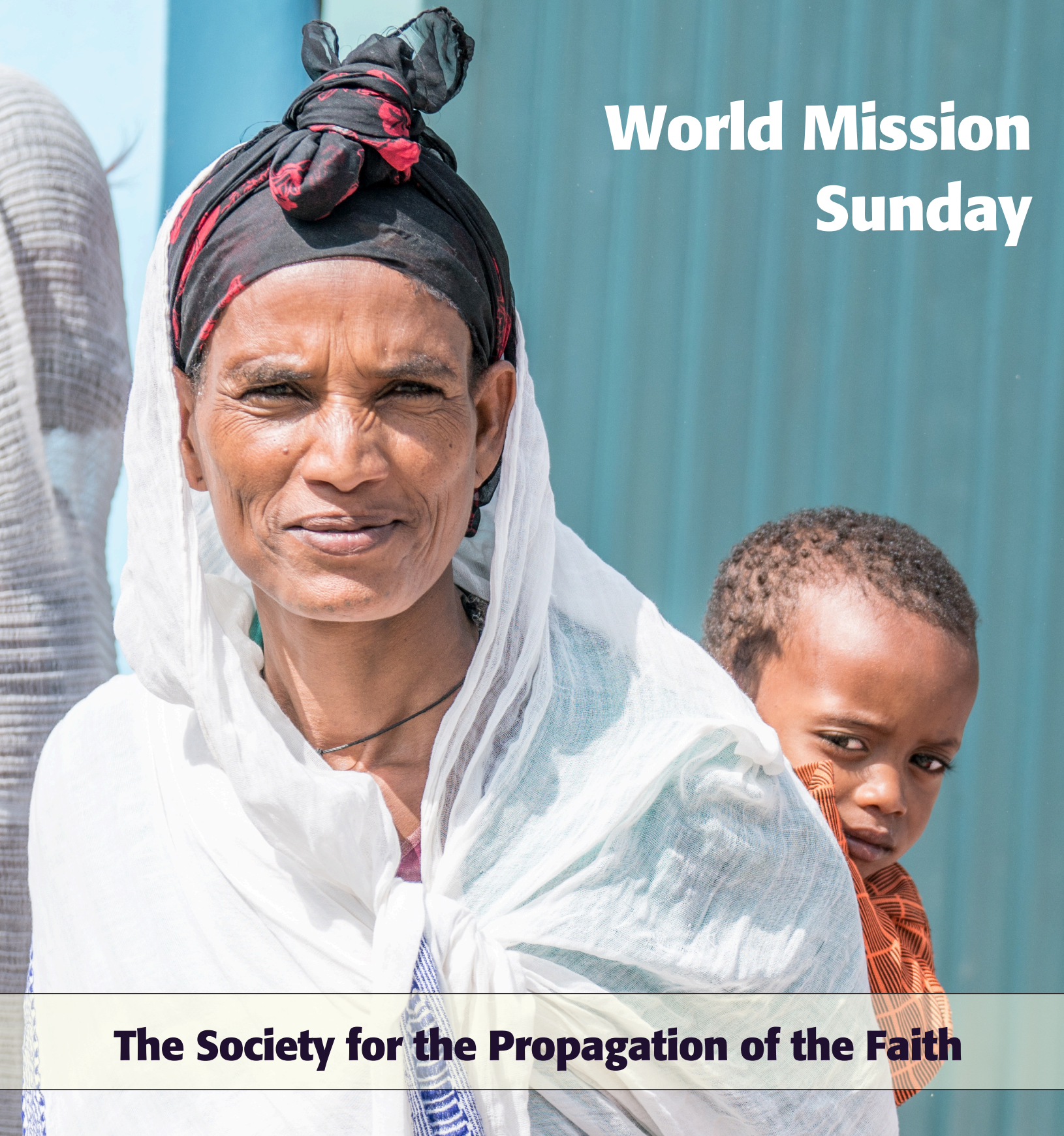


Vol. 82, no. 4

MISSIONS TODAY

Fall 2024

**World Mission
Sunday**



The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Welcome Bishop John Boissonneau

Missions Today fall issue 2024



The Pontifical Mission Societies of Canada welcome the new English-sector director, Bishop John Boissonneau. Cardinal Luis Antonio G. Tagle, the Vatican’s Pro-Prefect of the Section for the First Evangelization and New Particular Churches of the Dicastery for Evangelization, announced the appointment of Bishop Boissonneau on August 20, 2024.

Bishop Boissonneau was born in Toronto and was ordained to the priesthood in 1974. He served many years as a faculty member and, later, as rector at St. Augustine’s Seminary of Toronto. He was ordained Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto by Pope John Paul II in 2001.

As bishop, in addition to his various regional responsibilities, he has served as the Vicar for Christian Education and the Archdiocesan Liaison with the Catholic Faculties of Theology.

Bishop John A. Boissonneau is currently responsible for the Northern Region that includes 52 parishes in the York Region and Simcoe County, a ministry he will maintain in addition to his new role as director.

The Pontifical Mission Societies of Canada look forward to Bishop Boissonneau’s leadership as we continue our mission together, to live out Christ’s call in the Great Commission here in Canada and around the world.

“Every baptized person has a mission.”

- Pope Francis

Join us in support of new and young dioceses around the world.

Invite your friends and family to learn more about the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and support the Church’s mission today.



COURTESY OF PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES AUSTRALIA

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COURTESY OF PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES AUSTRALIA

“... with closeness, compassion and tenderness”

From Pope Francis’ message for World Mission Sunday 2024

Make a lasting impact on their lives. Let them know and grow with Jesus.

Holy Childhood Association

Thank you for your prayers and financial support.

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Papal missionary message

Understanding our salvation through the ‘wedding banquet’

**GO AND INVITE
EVERYONE**
to the banquet



“While the world sets before us the various “banquets” of consumerism, selfish comfort, the accumulation of wealth and individualism, the Gospel calls everyone to the divine banquet, marked by joy, sharing, justice and fraternity in communion with God and with others.”

In his message for World Mission Sunday, the Holy Father’s reflection on the wedding feast reveals that the feast in the parable is meant to help us to understand our own salvation. Pope Francis says that the feast in this parable is an eschatological banquet” – it foreshadows our feast with God in heaven. As the Holy Father explains, “It is an image of ultimate salvation in the Kingdom of God, fulfilled even now by the coming of Jesus, the Messiah and Son of God, who has given us life in abundance (cf. Jn 10:10).”

He invites us to consider how God’s banquet compares to the “banquets” that the world offers. As we go out in mission to invite our brothers and sisters, we do not offer them the things of this world, but rather the treasures of the next. The first Christians understood this, and that knowledge gave them zeal and urgency in their evangelization.

The Holy Father challenges us to capture that same zeal and urgency in our own missionary work by remembering that “the Lord is near.”

“This fullness of life, which is Christ’s gift, is anticipated even now in the banquet of the Eucharist”

The wedding feast of the parable is open to us even now through the Eucharist, the source and summit of our Christian life. At the Eucharistic table, “the Lord feeds us with his Word and with his Body and Blood.”

Every Eucharistic celebration is a gathering just like the wedding feast – a joyful reunion of all the people of God. The Eucharist not only unites us with Christ, but it also unites us the entire communion of saints.

Pope Francis reiterates the words of Pope Benedict XVI in *Sacramentum Caritatis*, “We cannot approach the Eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission which, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people.” Considering the wedding banquet as a Eucharistic feast, it becomes evident that the call to “go and invite” applies to us today.

The Holy Father concludes his reflection on this part of the theme with an invitation. He encourages us all to use our prayerful preparations for the Jubilee of 2025 to deepen our commitment to participate in the celebration of Mass and to pray unceasingly, especially for the Church’s mission of evangelization.

To read the full text of the Pope’s message, visit missionsocieties.ca/world-mission-sunday-2024

Spiritual reflection

St. Thérèse of Lisieux: Missionary through prayer

St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower, was declared Patroness of the Missions in 1927 by Pope Pius XI, despite never leaving her cloister. Her intense desire for the salvation of souls, cultivated from a young age, and her contemplative life of prayer and sacrifice made her a spiritual force in missionary work. Once in Carmel, she understood her vocation as one of spiritual motherhood, supporting missionaries through prayer rather than physical presence. She writes, “I had declared at the feet of Jesus–Victim, in the examination preceding my profession, what I had come to Carmel for: I came to save souls and especially to pray for priests. When one wishes to attain a goal, one must use the means; Jesus made me understand that it was through suffering that he wanted to give me souls, and my attraction for suffering grew in proportion to its increase.”

This understanding resonates with Jesus’ parable about a king who asked his servants to go to the street corners and invite everyone to the banquet (Matthew 22:9). Like the king’s invitation, Thérèse’s mission extended beyond physical boundaries, reaching souls through her spiritual dedication.

In her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*, Thérèse expresses her understanding that prayer and contemplation are crucial for missionary work. She stated, “Here are Jesus’ words: ‘Lift

your eyes and see. See how in heaven there are empty places. He asks you to fill them. You are my praying Moses on the mountain; request workers of me, and I will send them. I only wait for a prayer, a sigh of your heart! The apostolate of prayer, is it not so to say, higher than that of preaching?

Our mission, as Carmelite, is one of forming evangelical workers that will save millions of souls whose mothers we will be.”

St. Thérèse of Lisieux, with her co-patron of the missions St. Francis Xavier, exemplify how the missionary call can be fulfilled both through active evangelization and prayer. Both calls are to the mission... the mission of saving souls.

St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, pray for us as we answer Jesus’ call to mission.



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ANNETT KLINGNER/PIXABAY

The Pope’s monthly prayer intentions

Each month, the Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention. You are invited to join the whole Church as we pray:

October: For a shared mission

We pray that the Church continue to sustain in all ways a Synodal lifestyle, as a sign of co-responsibility, promoting the participation, the communion and the mission shared among priests, religious and lay people.

November: For anyone who has lost a child

We pray that all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter find support in their community and receive peace and consolation from the Holy Spirit.

December: For pilgrims of hope

We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

World Mission Sunday 2024: October 20

Every year, on the penultimate Sunday in October, the Church comes together to pray and support the missions. Donations will be collected at Masses worldwide, with the entirety of the funds going to support churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or in great need of financial support.

Pray with the Global Church

World Mission Sunday is our opportunity to show love and solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world . In offering our prayers, we join in communion with missionaries everywhere who spread the Good News, and by giving a donation we respond to Christ’s call to participate in the Great Commission.

Why WMS is so important

The Pontifical Mission Societies coordinate World Mission Sunday and, with the help of local bishops, churches and missionary congregations, ensures that resources are distributed on the basis of needs. The money goes directly from Canada to the bishops in mission territories – our local Church helping other local Churches in need – to provide these dioceses with the essential support they need on their journey to becoming self-sufficient.

2023 Contributions to the missions

More than \$2.5 million in aid was distributed from 2023 collections

Ghana



\$1,196,309.00

Gambia



\$117,023.00

Burundi



\$268,982

Madagascar



\$281,292

Thanks to the collections, as well as other fundraising efforts and programs, we were able to send the following subsidies in 2023:

English-speaking Canada’s contribution (CAD)

Ghana	\$1,196,309.00
Gambia	\$117,023.00
Domus Missionalis Foundation–Italy	\$364,210.00
Pontificium Opus A Propagatione Fidei	\$125,568.00
TOTAL: \$1,803,110	

French-speaking Canada’s contribution (CAD)

Fondazione Domus Missionalis -Italy	\$140,699.00
Burundi	\$268,982.00
Madagascar	\$281,292.00
Pontificium Opus A Propagatione Fidei	\$48,539.00
Mass stipends	\$2,615.00

TOTAL: \$742,127

TOTAL CANADIAN CONTRIBUTIONS: \$2,545,237.00

Donations to Holy Childhood Association and Society of St. Peter the Apostle - English and French Sectors, 2023

Œuvre pontificale de Saint-Pierre Apôtre	\$1,498,737.00
Society of St. Peter the Apostle	\$440,752.00
Œuvre pontificale de l’enfance missionnaire	\$172,543.00
Holy Childhood Association	\$199,599.00

TOTAL: \$2,311,631

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

2023 World Mission Sunday collections in Canada

English-speaking Canada’s collection

DIOCESE OF ANTIGONISH	\$7,929.00
DIOCESE OF CALGARY	\$112,050.58
DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTETOWN	\$6,759.00
DIOCESE OF CHURCHILL-HUDSON BAY	\$1,500.00
DIOCESE OF CORNER BROOK AND LABRADOR	\$5,184.25
ARCHDIOCESE OF EDMONTON	\$67,225.98
DIOCESE OF GRAND FALLS.....	\$3,885.22
DIOCESE OF HALIFAX - YARMOUTH.....	\$5,000.00
DIOCESE OF HAMILTON.....	\$45,425.00
DIOCESE OF KAMLOOPS.....	—
DIOCESE OF GROUARD-MCLENNAN	\$16,868.65
ARCHDIOCESE OF KEEWATIN-LE PAS	\$733.50
ARCHDIOCESE OF KINGSTON	\$29,952.42
DIOCESE OF LONDON.....	\$20,416.60
DIOCESE OF MACKENZIE-FORT SMITH.....	\$1,706.25
R.C. MILITARY ORDINARY OF CANADA.....	—
DIOCESE OF NELSON.....	\$26,151.30
DIOCESE OF OTTAWA-CORNWALL	\$40,345.72

DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE	\$9,841.55
DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH.....	\$20,837.20
DIOCESE OF PRINCE ALBERT.....	\$4,602.03
DIOCESE OF PRINCE GEORGE	\$10,398.65
ARCHDIOCESE OF REGINA.....	\$40,816.17
DIOCESE OF ST. CATHARINES	\$27,138.90
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S, NL	\$8,384.00
DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN, NB	\$19,360.33
DIOCESE OF SASKATOON	\$21,958.25
DIOCESE OF SAULT STE-MARIE.....	\$15,849.50
DIOCESE OF THUNDER BAY.....	\$5,000.00
ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO	\$436,135.25
DIOCESE OF VANCOUVER.....	\$163,282.11
DIOCESE OF VICTORIA.....	\$12,297.00
DIOCESE OF WHITEHORSE	\$1,230.75
ARCHDIOCESE OF WINNIPEG.....	\$13,862.57

TOTAL: \$1,202,127.73

French-speaking Canada’s collection

DIOCESE OF AMOS	\$4,940
DIOCESE OF BAIE-COMEAU	\$1,179
DIOCESE OF BATHURST	\$5,237
DIOCESE OF CHICOUTIMI	\$2,207
DIOCESE OF EDMUNDSTON.....	\$5,121
DIOCESE OF GASPÉ.....	\$3,643
DIOCESE OF GATINEAU	\$700
DIOCESE OF HEARST – MOOSONEE	\$2,638
DIOCESE OF JOLIETTE.....	\$7,912
DIOCESE OF MONCTON	\$17,809
DIOCESE OF MONTRÉAL	\$81,905
DIOCESE OF NICOLET	\$5,876
DIOCESE OF OTTAWA – CORNWALL.....	\$16,623
DIOCESE OF QUÉBEC	\$26,680
DIOCESE OF RIMOUSKI	\$4,606
DIOCESE OF ROUYN-NORANDA	\$3,437
DIOCESE OF SAULT-SAINTE-MARIE	\$7,175
DIOCESE OF SHERBROOKE	\$11,606
DIOCESE OF SAINT-BONIFACE	\$13,617
DIOCESE OF SAINT-HYACINTHE	\$1,645
DIOCESE OF SAINT-JEAN – LONGUEUIL.....	\$1,835
DIOCESE OF SAINT-JÉRÔME - MONT-LAURIER	\$22,059
DIOCESE OF SAINT-PAUL	\$9,296
DIOCESE OF SAINTE-ANNE-DE-LA-POCATIÈRE	\$3,653
DIOCESE OF TIMMINS	\$4,933
DIOCESE OF TROIS-RIVIÈRES	\$7,040
DIOCESE OF VALLEYFIELD	\$5,211
OTHER DIOCESES	\$730

TOTAL: \$279,313

TOTAL CANADIAN DONATIONS COLLECTED: \$1,481,440.73

A view from the pew...

Inviting all to the banquet: our mission as disciples of Christ



By Lori Lisi

and in particular the gaze and heart turned heavenward to invoke the Lord’s help.”

Pope Francis tells us that this tireless mission is to be carried out by following the example of Jesus, "not by pressuring, coercing or proselytizing, but with closeness, compassion and tenderness, and in this way reflecting God’s own way of being and acting." The theme for this year’s World Mission Sunday comes from a verse in the Gospel of Matthew: ‘Go and invite everyone to the banquet’ (Mt 22:9). The symbolism of the ‘banquet for everyone’ resonates with our own spiritual lives. Jesus is our King, and we are His servants. He has sent us to invite everyone to His banquet: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, ...” (Mt 28:19)

So, what can we do, as missionary disciples of Jesus, to ‘invite everyone to the banquet’, in ways that reflect God’s way of being and acting? Asking others to come to

Online home for the missions!

Missionsocieties.ca offers access to updated feature stories and news from the missions, the digital version of Missions Today Magazine, and a simple and secure way to donate. Visit us today and help us to spread the word.

As we approach World Mission Sunday, let us focus on the words of Pope Francis that highlight our universal baptismal call to be missionary disciples of Jesus. World Mission Sunday affords all Catholics the opportunity to reflect and respond, with the aim of deepening our commitment through prayer and sacrifice, to the ecumenical Christian mission which, “...requires great generosity

“The mission of the Christian in the world is a mission for all, a mission of service, which excludes no-one ...”

- Pope Francis

Mass with us on Sundays is just one simple way to extend the invitation to the banquet. We must remain ready, willing and able to recognize the opportunities to do so. There was a time when someone I knew had stepped away from the Church. He had endured tragedy and loss, and his heart was no longer open to invitation. Recognizing that he was drifting further and further away, I prayed for an opportunity to invite him back. Then, in my role as the youth ministry administrator, my prayer was answered. The Cross for our Passion drama needed repair and knowing that my friend was a skilled carpenter, I asked if he would help us. He attended our Friday night meeting and was greeted by dozens of children preparing for the Passion drama. After making the necessary adjustments to the Cross, the children gathered around him and thanked him for his work. They invited him to the Passion drama on Palm Sunday and, not wanting to disappoint them, he agreed. That evening, the children wanted to acknowledge him and his work, and when they did, tears welled up in his eyes and his heart was open. From that moment on, he became a member of the Passion drama crew. He went on to join the Knights of Columbus and become a regular usher at Sunday Mass. The invitation had opened his heart and he was able to feel God’s love and grace.

Our own spiritual preparation is necessary to fulfill our mission to invite everyone to experience the infinite love and grace of God. We must reflect, with a true sense of mission and commitment, on our own most sacred invitation to partake in the banquet of the Lord. Empowered through prayer and our participation in the Mass, we embody the spirit of the banquet of God and become fully equipped to extend the invitation to ALL.

In this year of prayer, we continue to be challenged to deepen our spiritual lives: **As we journey into the Jubilee Year of 2025, what can we do to prepare ourselves to become witnesses of God’s inclusive love and invite others to do the same?**

No greater love

Holy Land: Peace is our hope

In the midst of uncertainty and conflict so prevalent in our world today, we can yet again look to Nazareth to find an example of unity, courage and faith. A recent summer camp organized by the priests of the local Melkite Greek Catholic Church , with the support of Italian friends, is a testament to this resilience. Under the theme "Peace is our hope," more than 50 children and young people gathered every weekend from mid-July to mid-August, engaging in activities that provided much-needed respite from the harsh realities of daily life in the region.

Despite the looming presence of conflict, these young participants, along with their dedicated animators, found joy in football, basketball, and other outdoor games. These moments of play were intertwined with prayer and reflection, offering a sense of community and hope amidst the chaos.

Archimandrite Simaan Jaraisi, vice-parish priest of the Melkite community, described the challenges faced by the Nazarenes, highlighting the constant uncertainty brought about by the conflict. Yet, in the face of such adversity, the summer camp served as a powerful reminder of the importance of hope, community, and faith.

Visits to holy places in Jerusalem were also planned for the young participants. These pilgrimages offered them a rare opportunity to leave their city and experience the broader world of their faith.

The Melkite Greek Catholic Church, deeply rooted in Nazareth, continues to play a pivotal role in the lives of its faithful and the broader community. Despite the challenges



COURTESY OF FIDES

of emigration and a declining Christian population, the Church remains a beacon of hope, striving to provide spiritual and material support to its community.

In a world where peace often seems so elusive, the efforts of Father Simaan and his community stand as a powerful reminder that hope endures. Their prayer is simple yet profound: may peace come to the hearts of rulers and to all of us.

To read more, visit fides.org/en/news/75209

Did you know?

According to data published in December 2023 by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, Christians represent approximately 1.9% of the population in the State of Israel.

In Nazareth, it is estimated there are approximately 20,800 Christians out of a total of almost 78,000 inhabitants.

Across the globe

Spotlight on Indonesia and Papua New Guinea

In September, the Holy Father visited several Asian countries, including Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.

Papua New Guinea

Christianity is relatively new to Papua New Guinea. The first missionaries, Marist missionaries, arrived in 1847. The Pontifical Mission Societies arrived in Papua New Guinea about 40 years ago. Since then, the societies have coordinated evangelization activities and financial aid for all of the country's dioceses. The societies also coordinate donations that are collected for World Mission Sunday, Vocation Sunday for Seminaries, and the Holy Childhood Day.

Missionaries in Papua New Guinea are also offered training in Kerygma evangelization. The Pontifical Mission Societies invest in leaders from each diocese. They study the history of salvation, history of the Catholic Church, bible and the Catholic Church, apologetics, summary of the Catholic Faith, explanation of the steps of the Mass, structure of the Catholic Church, and priests and religious. The course concludes with a retreat themed, "Anointed and Sent."



Courtesy of VaticanMedia

Indonesia

The Pontifical Mission Societies have a robust and dynamic presence in Indonesia.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith works with partners to organize retreats, devotional TV programs and rosaries all in support of the missions. The society offers missiology courses and, as it does around the world, programming for world missionary month.

The Pontifical Society of Holy Childhood reaches children across the region with regular events, teaching materials and activities for special commemorations and days like Holy Childhood Day, the Day of the Sick, the Day of the Prayer for Vocation and World Mission Sunday. The Society also offers programs for sports, music and camping. Some of these activities include Muslim children as the children are encouraged to value a "spirit of dialogue" from a young age.

Seminarians in Indonesia receive instruction at the School of Missionary Animator — an institution supported by the Society of St. Peter the Apostle. The program develops a missionary commitment in all of the seminarians, regardless of where they will go to serve. The society also promotes and organizes a host of activities for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, including group projects, sharing vocation testimonies and vocation prayer.

The society in Indonesia has also published a module for developing vocational awareness in parishes, called "Panggilan dan Perutusan," or "Vocation and Mission."

To learn more about mission work in Indonesia, visit karyakepausanindonesia.org.

Editor's reflection



In August, Bishop John Boissonneau was appointed by the Vatican's Dicastery for Evangelization to serve as the new Director for English-speaking Canada. We're thrilled to welcome him to this important role!

A heartfelt thank you to Fr. Alex Osei for his many years of dedicated service to the missions and kindling a missionary awareness among Canadian Catholics. As he said, "Life is full of new beginnings." We pray that his future endeavours continue to be guided by the same spirit of love and service to the Lord that he has shown us. Thank you, Father Alex!

October is the month that the Church dedicates to promoting and praying for our missionary calling and nature. Jesus commissioned us to go and make disciples, spreading the Good News, and each year we emphasize this call – to all corners of the globe. We take this time to thank all missionaries, both at home and abroad, for their tireless work.

In his message for World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis reflects on the parable of the wedding feast, where the Master invites everyone to the banquet. This banquet is an image of the celestial banquet already prepared for us through the ultimate salvation awaiting us in God's Kingdom, but already

made available to us in this life. The Second Vatican Council reminds us that "the time for missionary activity extends between the first coming of the Lord and the second," and we are all called to be missionaries until that day.

Through the offerings of her daily sacrifices in her convent as a nun, St. Therese of the Child Jesus sought to save souls. She reminds us that one can be a missionary without leaving his or her home or country, showing us how to serve through prayer and sacrifice.

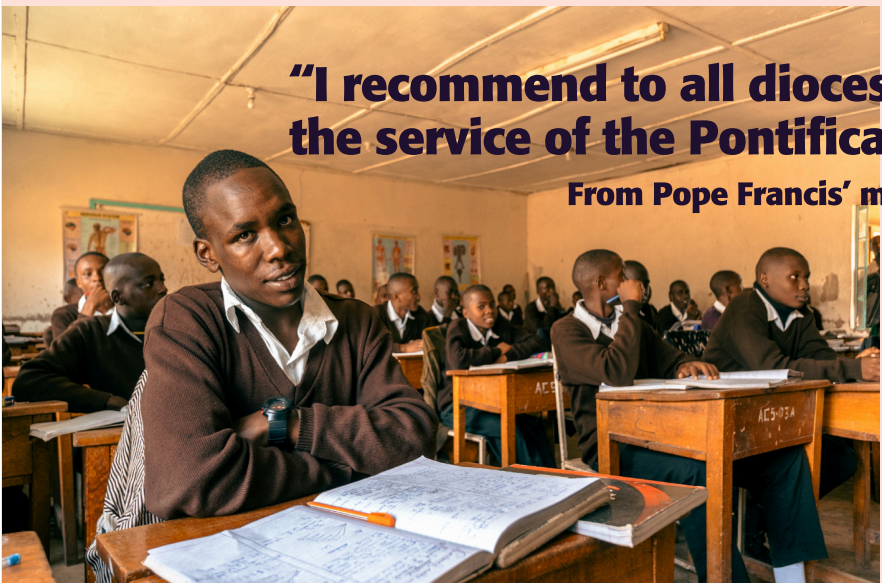
We rejoice with the many examples of missionaries in the fields where the seed of God's Word is being planted or is already flourishing with lives being transformed, hope being restored in the midst of hardships and vocations being discovered. In the Holy Land, marked by ongoing conflicts, the Melkite church has been able to offer young people an oasis of peace and hope through summer weekend camps. In places like Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, the Pontifical Mission Societies have played a vital role in spreading the Gospel.

Your generous support, in prayer and donations, has allowed this vital mission work to continue and we thank you! This October, let us again renew our missionary spirit, inviting all – especially the marginalized, God's special guests – to the divine banquet.

God bless you.
Aline.

"I recommend to all dioceses throughout the world the service of the Pontifical Mission Societies."

From Pope Francis' message for World Mission Sunday 2024



COURTESY OF PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES AUSTRALIA

Join us in proclaiming the Gospel, inviting everyone to the wedding banquet.

Learn more about the Society of the Propagation of the Faith and become missionary through your prayer and your donation.

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Support the mission through legacy planning

Through a legacy gift to Pontifical Mission Societies, you and your family can help spread the Word of God, changing lives and building up the kingdom of God through new churches, funding vocations and delivery of other pastoral and humanitarian efforts – all driven by our Lord's call to missionary discipleship.

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Remember the missions in your will.**

missionsocieties.ca/ways-to-give/legacy-gifts-will

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We want to hear from you

Missions Today is interested in hearing from you. If you have any comments on the content or structure of the magazine, or if there is anything you would like to see us explore in future issues, please get in touch.

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

Or write to us at:

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