

World Mission Sunday 2007

Key themes and background

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Thank you for taking the time to read these notes as part of your preparations for World Mission Sunday which we will mark on 21st October: I hope you find them useful and informative. This annual celebration – the highlight of the month of Mission – is a wonderful opportunity for us to celebrate that we are part of a universal family which is welcoming and inclusive of all people. We know only too well the danger of remaining closed in on ourselves.

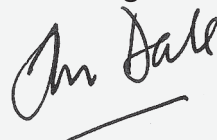
We need to remind ourselves that it is not Church which is the purpose and goal of mission; rather, the very purpose of the Church is mission. This reminder is more urgent than ever; our Church and world are changing rapidly and we know the message of Jesus must be at the heart of that change. The Holy Father in his recent document ‘Sacramentum Caritatis’ said, **‘Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make him known to others.’** (§84)

Mission is the visible sign of a Church which looks out towards others and not in on itself.

Impress this urgency on your parishioners and communities, encourage them to be part of the mission of the Church both universal and local – we can’t have one without the other! As we sustain each other in hope at home, let us expand our vision to include hope for the whole Church.

Please thank the parish and your community for their generosity – the mission of the Church is impossible without their kindness.

Yours in missionary unity,



Mgr John Dale, APF National Director England and Wales

All the Church for all the World

The Holy Father’s message for this year’s celebration is All the Church for all the World – all local Churches supporting and encouraging each other in pursuit of world mission. The APF is the only organisation which provides regular support for EVERY mission diocese in the world.

The poster chosen for this year reflects this message. The image of Christ the Redeemer (Rio de Janeiro) casts his loving gaze on all peoples and opens his arms to welcome all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

On World Mission Sunday we can explicitly celebrate and share Jesus’ mission at a local level, and with all people of the world, as it is celebrated in every parish worldwide.

Every parish and every diocese in the world contributes towards this fund of Universal Solidarity which is then shared out ‘from each according to their resources, to each according to their need’. The monies from England and Wales go directly to the bishops in the mission territories – local church directly helping local church!

The APF – Association for the Propagation of the Faith – works through local bishops, churches and missionary congregations to ensure that resources are distributed fairly – on the basis of need rather than particular links or ‘twinning’.

Mission Sunday unites Catholics all over the world in prayer, mutual friendship and support, both spiritual and material.

World Mission Sunday established in 1926 is celebrated in 159 countries around the world



Your prayers and contributions

Your prayers and contributions make possible the day-to-day service of the Catholic Church in the world. In addition to providing places of prayer and worship, health and education and supporting missionaries, your contributions also enable training and support for thousands of catechists who teach the Catholic faith and provide spiritual support in their own communities.

Catechists help bring faith to life

In mission countries, catechists have an essential role in the Church's mission. They teach the Catholic faith, prepare the community for the sacraments and witness to Christ's message; they show how a Christian life can be lived fully, rooted in local culture and responding to local needs. For communities which are far from the parish centre or priest, catechists keep the faith alive by their pastoral concern, practical help and teaching.

The APF is the only organisation which helps every bishop in the world to train and support their catechists.

How has the APF money been spent so far this year?

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|---|--------------------|
| Ghana (8 dioceses including Accra and Cape Coast) | \$1,037,402 |
| India (18 dioceses including Dibrughah, Jamnu-Srinagar and Madras) | \$1,724,434 |
| Pakistan (3 dioceses including Faisalabad) | \$ 265,900 |
| South Africa (10 dioceses including Durban and Rustenburg) | \$ 681,385 |
| Tanzania (3 dioceses including Arusha and Bukoba) | \$ 248,433 |
| Zimbabwe (8 dioceses including Bulawayo, Mutare and Harare) | \$ 622,054 |

As well as monies raised by World Mission Sunday, our only other sources of income are the 'Red Boxes' and legacies; we receive no grants or subsidies from any other source.

Focus on Pakistan

Dear Mgr Dale

As we prepare to celebrate World Mission Sunday once again and motivate our people to give their share for the universal mission of the Church, my thoughts go out to all the good people who have been contributing to help us in Pakistan.

I would like to thank in particular the Catholics of England and Wales whose help has been reaching us through the PMS. Your help is much more than financial support – it is a great encouragement for us to know that, in spite of all the trials and sufferings we face here, our brothers and sisters from around the globe care for us and are with us with their prayer support as well.

The concrete expression of your generosity and love strengthens our sense of belonging to the Universal Church. It also reminds us that we too have to contribute our share, however small, to the Church's universal mission of love.

I would like to convey to you the gratitude of the priests, religious and faithful of the Diocese of Faisalabad for all the help we have received, without which we would not be able to meet our various needs. We will be united with you in thought and prayer on World Mission Sunday in a special way, but also, beyond that, as we continue to witness Christ's mission of love in our own countries.

Sincerely and gratefully yours in Christ

+Joseph Coutts (Bishop of Faisalabad, Pakistan)

Pakistan is a predominantly Muslim country. There are however over one million Catholics in Pakistan, which represents less than 1% of the total population.

In Pakistan this year, APF in England & Wales will support eighteen projects including schools, catechist training centres, a crisis management centre, and the building of small chapels in the remote areas.

Last year, Bishop Peter Doyle of Northampton, visited Pakistan and met Bishop Coutts. He said: 'The Catholic Church in Pakistan is small, poor and persecuted. It is also happy and vibrant, keen to be of service in the name of Christ to people who have nothing and who have no one to stand up for them. The parishes and the mission schools were a joy to visit as was the base camp providing relief to the region devastated by the earthquake.'

The visit to Pakistan was a welcome expression of solidarity with our brothers and sisters. Being there put a face on the essential and wonderful spiritual and financial support which you provide through your prayers and contributions to the APF and which the Catholic community in Pakistan appreciates so much. Please continue to support the APF in all its work.'

Message from the Holy Father for Mission Sunday 2007

All the Church for all the World

Dear brothers and sisters

On the occasion of World Mission Sunday, I ask the whole People of God to reflect together on the urgency and the importance of the Church's missionary activity. In the demanding task of evangelisation we are sustained and accompanied by the certainty that Christ, the Lord of the harvest, is always with us and never ceases to guide his people.

Urgency of missionary work

All the Church for all the World is the theme for this year's World Mission Sunday. I call on local Churches on every continent to rediscover together the urgent necessity to re-launch missionary activity and so face the multiple serious challenges of our times.

Missionary co-operation unites all Churches

Christ continues to call first of all the Churches of 'old' tradition, which in the past supplied priests, religious and lay people for the missions. This co-operation has produced abundant apostolic fruits but, faced with the advance of a secularised culture and decreasing numbers of vocations, these Churches are in danger of focusing only on themselves and slackening in their missionary endeavour. However, now is precisely the time to be open with confidence to the Providence of God and work towards the accomplishment of His eternal plan of salvation.

Churches of recent evangelisation

Churches of recent evangelisation, too, are called by the Good Shepherd to dedicate themselves generously to mission *ad gentes*. Fortunately some have abundant numbers of priests and consecrated persons, many of whom, despite great local need, are sent elsewhere to exercise their pastoral ministry and apostolic service, even to lands of ancient evangelisation. And so we see a providential 'exchanging of gifts' which abounds for the benefit of the whole mystical Body of Christ.

Fidei Donum

Fifty years since the historic appeal of my predecessor Pius XII with the encyclical *Fidei Donum* for co-operation among Churches at the service of the mission, I reaffirm that the proclamation of the Gospel maintains its urgency and relevancy.

Continuing relevance of missionary endeavour

Missionary endeavour is still the foremost service which the Church owes to humanity. The Church cannot shirk this universal mission; it is an obligation. As Christ entrusted the missionary mandate first to Peter and the Apostles, so now it falls first of all upon the Successor of Peter and the bishops. I therefore urge all bishops to share their endeavours for the proclamation and spread of the Gospel. This was the intention which led Pius XII to ask Churches of ancient evangelisation to send priests to help Churches of recent foundation.

Fruits of missionary cooperation

We give thanks to God for the abundant fruits of this missionary co-operation. Hosts of priests, many men and women religious and lay missionaries have worked to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Let us ask God that their example may give rise everywhere to new vocations and deeper missionary awareness among Christians. In fact, every Christian community is by nature missionary, and it is precisely the courage to evangelise which is the measure of believers' love for their Lord.

Missionary mandate involves all

The missionary mandate which Christ entrusted to the Apostles truly involves us all. May World Mission Sunday be, therefore, an opportunity to foster co-operation among the Churches and the formation of more missionaries to spread the Gospel. However, let us never forget that the primary contribution we are called to offer for the Church's missionary activity is prayer.

Young and vulnerable

And so I appeal especially to children and young people, ever ready for generous missionary activity. I address the sick and the suffering, mindful of the value of their mysterious and indispensable collaboration with the work of redemption.

Religious

I ask consecrated persons, especially enclosed orders, to intensify their prayers for the missions. May effort on the part of every believer weave a spiritual network of prayer to sustain evangelisation throughout the Church.

Dedication to Our Lady

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, who accompanied the beginnings of the Church with her maternal care, guide our steps in our time, and obtain for us a new Pentecost of love. May she help us realise that we are all missionaries, all sent by the Lord to be His witnesses in every moment of our life.

With affection I impart my Apostolic Blessing to all.

Benedict XVI

27th May 2007, Solemnity of Pentecost

Benedictus PP XVI

This is an abridged version of the Pope's message. The full text is available from the APF at the address below and at: www.missio.org.uk
APF, 23 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1NU
Tel: 020 7821 9755

Practical information

For your celebration of World Mission Sunday

Here are some suggestions on how to involve your parish/community in the celebration of World Mission Sunday

- ♦ Prepare the parish/community for Mission Sunday by using the suggested inserts in your Parish Newsletter
- ♦ Involve the local school or youth/parish group in creating a display on missions or presenting a story/role play during the celebration of Mass
- ♦ Create a multi-lingual welcome for Mission Sunday Mass. Ask members of the various nationalities to greet the congregation in their own language
- ♦ Invite APF members to create a display and encourage parishioners to take 'Red Boxes' home
- ♦ Involve parishioners of different nationalities to take an active part in the liturgy and music

GIFT AIDING

We are now able to Gift Aid donations for World Mission Sunday. This could increase total donations by more than £30,000 and means we can fund even more mission projects. The inserts provided for your parish bulletin mention the Gift Aid envelopes and where the money will go. **Could you please announce this at Mass.**

To avoid waste we have sent you a limited number of envelopes; however please let us know if you **need extra Gift Aid envelopes.**

Tel: 020 7821 9755

email: missionsunday@missio.org.uk

Those not wishing to Gift Aid do not need to use the envelopes to make their donation

Guidelines are enclosed in this pack for parish counters.

WHERE TO SEND THE MONEY

Please send a cheque for the money collected and any completed Gift Aid envelopes in the **Freeport envelope provided or to:**

**APF Mission Sunday
23 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1NU**

Website version

All of these materials are available on our website. This will make it easier for those who wish to copy directly on to newsletters etc. The documents will be downloadable in Word format.

You may also wish to download the Children's Liturgy.

www.missio.org.uk

MASS STIPENDS

Lives depend on them

Very many local diocesan priests as well as missionaries serving parishes and communities in Africa and Asia are totally dependent on Mass Stipends for their income and sustenance.

Please accept Mass offerings from those who wish to offer them and send any you can spare to:

**Mgr John Dale
23 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1NU**

**Please make cheques payable to:
PMS Mass A/C**

We will make sure they are distributed to priests and bishops working in areas of hardship.

Cheques: any cheques from parishioners made out to the APF or World Mission Sunday can be sent directly to us together with the parish collection.

Please note: by sending the money collected directly to us you ensure that we can reclaim the Gift Aid on your parish or community donations.