

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On October 21-22, the Universal Church celebrates World Mission Sunday. It is an opportunity to remind us of our own call to be missionary disciples.

Pope Francis reflected on this year's theme: "Hearts on fire, feet on the move," inspired by the story of the disciples on the way to Emmaus in the Gospel of Luke (cf. 24:13-35). The Holy Father invites us to kindle the fire of Christ's love in our hearts and to actively share this warmth with the world around us. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we go forth and bring the Good News to all corners of the world.

On World Mission Sunday we assist the Holy Father to support the Church in the missions by praying for our missionaries and financially supporting their ministry.

Founded by French laywoman Blessed Pauline Jaricot in 1822, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith is an essential source of aid for the Church's missionary work, assisting Pope Francis in this task. For the past 201 years, it has extended its arms to support growing Churches globally, reaching more than 1,100 mission dioceses across Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands, Latin America, and parts of Europe. This assistance bolsters the proclamation of the Gospel, the building of the Churches, support the formation of seminarians, religious men and women, service to the poor and to meet essential works to proclaim the Gospel and celebrate the Sacraments.

Let us echo this spirit in our parishes, inspiring our congregations to contribute both prayer and sacrifice to these causes.

Embodying this year's theme, I urge you to keep your hearts aflame and your feet moving this World Mission Sunday. Your prayers are invaluable, and your financial support provides life-giving aid to our brothers and sisters in the world's most vulnerable communities.

With gratitude for the generosity you embody for the missions,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert Cardinal McElroy
Bishop of San Diego