

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY 18 October

Many thanks to Norbert Pittorino OFM for his contribution to the Update.

World Mission Sunday encourages prayer and financial support for the mission outreach of the Catholic Church in a world where millions are thirsting to hear of God's love for them and longing for the light of Christ in their lives.

Why celebrate World Mission Sunday?

Mission Sunday unites Catholics all over the world in prayer, mutual collaboration and support. Celebrated all over the world, Mission Sunday is a powerful symbol of a mission and a Church at the service of the whole world. We are all missionaries sharing in the mission of Christ. The Church has been given this mission by Christ and we are those called by Christ to be the "Church" active in the world.

This year's World Mission Month theme is inspired by the missionary life of Father Damien of Molokai who was canonized on 11 October 2009. He worked among lepers on the island of Molokai in Hawaii from 1873 to 1889, a time where there was no cure for leprosy (Hansen's disease). He lived and worked in the colony for 16 years and died as a result of contracting leprosy.

Father Damien's work was courageous and filled with faith and love for his fellow human. Understanding that death by leprosy was inevitable and describing the island as 'hell on earth', he committed his life to the people of Molokai. For many years, Father Damien was the only one to bring the people the comfort they needed. After twelve years of service he discovered in himself the first symptoms of the disease. He suffered for four years and finally succumbed. His message to the whole world was that no person should be ostracised.

In our world today, marked by the desire for material gain but also full of personal tragedy and human suffering, the life of Damien of Molokai and those inspired to continue his mission throughout the world, holds up a powerful message. *One single life, properly motivated and devoted to the needs of others really can make a life altering difference.*

This World Mission month we are called to reach out and give life to all across the globe. Whether it be the poor of our own nation, those suffering from HIV/AIDS or the world's population of refugees and asylum seekers, we do not lack for mission for those who have a giving heart.

Not everyone can be a Mother Teresa, Damien of Molokai or Saint Francis but we can all put the Gospel into action and do something more to help those in need.

Province of the Holy Spirit

As Franciscans, we join in Francis' missionary vision in spreading the message of the Gospel to all peoples. He gave all his followers this mission in union with the Church to be a vanguard in this missionary effort following the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who carries out this work.

One instrument of outreach is the Franciscan Missionary Union which looks to assist all Franciscan missionaries especially in Papua New Guinea as well as East Timor. It helps to respond to their needs and to relieve their burdens especially by encouraging prayer and works of mercy by those more materially blessed.

We are grateful for the missionary work of all in this Province, particularly those who have worked (and continue to work) in PNG. This outreach and spiritual support is important for the comfort of those suffering.

*May your love be upon us, O Lord,
as we place our hope in you.
May your love be upon us, O Lord,
as we go out to be missionaries in our world.
May your love be upon us, O Lord,
in the struggles and joys of our daily life.
May your love be upon us, O Lord,
as we go out in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen*

Dates to remember:

24 October United Nations Day
27 October Day of Prayer in the "Spirit of Assisi"

Source:

<http://www.catholicmission.org.au/wmd/index.asp>