



CARDINAL RIGALI CENTER  
20 ARCHBISHOP MAY DRIVE  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63119  
P) 314.792.7841  
F) 314.792.7842  
WWW.ARCHSTL.ORG

ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

October 1, 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis, has shown himself to be a great teacher with the heart of a missionary. Like Jesus, he teaches by word and example, keeping the poor, the troubled and the vulnerable in clear view at all times. In that spirit I write to you today. Our Catholic Church, at every level and by its very nature, is missionary. Its origin is in the very mission of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit. It is in Christ alone that *“salvation is offered to all people, as a gift of God’s grace and mercy.”* (see *Ephesians 2:8; Romans 1:16*).

World Mission Sunday will be observed in every nation on the weekend of October 19-20, 2013. This essential observance is an experience in learning for us all. It is a time to be inspired by the heroes of our Church who serve God’s beloved children in places of poverty, injustice and even outright persecution. The priests, religious and lay missionary groups make it possible for the most needy to encounter Christ, the Sacraments, and living Word of God, and thereby to live in hope of heaven.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith is the Holy Father’s chief missionary arm, providing resources for more than 1,150 mission territories the world over. No work of the Church is more central to her reason for being. So, I ask that every parish and all the Faithful experience the fullness of World Mission Sunday. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith oversees the worldwide celebration of this most important day, representing and acting in the name of the Pope himself. In his address for World Mission Sunday Pope Francis wrote:

*“The Church – I repeat again – is not a relief organization, an enterprise or an NGO, but a community of people, animated by the Holy Spirit, who have lived and are living the wonder of the encounter with Jesus Christ and want to share this experience of deep joy, the message of salvation that the Lord gave us. It is the Holy Spirit that guides the Church in this path.”*

The theme for the United States’ observance of this day is: “Do good on earth.” This is taken from the words of St. Therese of Lisieux, the young Carmelite Sister who is the Patroness of the Missions. It is a call to put faith into action! An example of this is a Salesian Sister in Chennai, India, Sister Clara. She rescues young girls like 10-year-old Vandoosha. Sister Clara gave Vandoosha a home at Marialaya Children’s Home in Chennai. The work of Sister Clara and thousands of other Catholic Missionaries worldwide depends on our support through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

Please make a sacrificial gift in the special collection for World Mission Sunday on the weekend of October 19 and 20. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church instructs us: *“It is by what they have done for the poor that Jesus Christ will recognize his chosen ones.”* (CCC, 2443).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson  
Archbishop of St. Louis