



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

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Dear Friends in Christ,

It is remarkable that we celebrate the 90th anniversary of World Mission Sunday in this, the Year of Mercy. The Gospel calls us to bring the Good News to all nations, showing mercy and offering salvation to all humanity. In his message for World Mission Sunday, celebrated this year on October 23rd, Pope Francis wrote:

“When mercy encounters a person, it brings deep joy to the Father’s heart; for from the beginning the Father has lovingly turned towards the most vulnerable, because his greatness and power are revealed precisely in his capacity to identify with the young, the marginalized and the oppressed (cf. Deut 4:31; Ps 86:15; 103:8; 111:4)... All peoples and cultures have the right to receive the message of salvation which is God’s gift to every person. This is all the more necessary when we consider how many injustices, wars, and humanitarian crises still need resolution. Missionaries know from experience that the Gospel of forgiveness and mercy can bring joy and reconciliation, justice and peace.”

Many living in over 1,111 mission territories worldwide will only encounter Christ through the work of missionaries. These men and women tirelessly proclaim the Gospel, baptize new believers, celebrate the Eucharist, and care for their flocks, in all circumstances. While many of us cannot travel to the ends of the earth to share the Gospel, we can foster a missionary spirit and offer generously our prayers and support. As Pope Francis states: “Let us not close our hearts within our own particular concerns, but let us open them to all of humanity.”

Please prayerfully consider making a generous sacrificial offering on October 23rd for World Mission Sunday. These offerings, made through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, enable missionaries to show God’s great mercy in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Pacific Islands, and all the ends of the earth.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson
Archbishop of St. Louis