

## World Mission Sunday 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“What do you want to be when you leave school?”

We sometimes ask that of children or young people. In a way, one of the things we are asking them is: “What will be your mission in life?”

God has given me something to do that no one else can do.

For Moses, in the first reading today, it was to keep his arms raised so that the Israelites would win the battle. For the poor widow in the Gospel it was to persist in seeking justice.

Every person has a purpose and for those who have been baptised it is to share in the mission of Jesus Christ to bring the presence of God and his love into our world. In his message for this World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis says that each one of us can declare, “I am Mission”. If I live this in my life then the plan of God for humanity can be accomplished. The Good News which we are being sent to bring is to make the world a place where there is faith and justice through which others will be able to see God and not just hear about him.

It is not only in the big decisions of our life that we live out our mission, but also in the small events, in the day to day challenges as well. That is what St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the patroness of the missions, taught us through her ‘Little Way’: to do the small things well for God. She never physically left the confines of her convent in France, but she travelled far and wide with her prayers for the whole Church, especially in those places where it was small and just beginning to take root. That sense of being connected with everyone in the Church was a fundamental part of her spirituality and her mission as a Carmelite. She still continues to live out that mission and fulfil her promise to spend her heaven doing good on earth. Since her death her relics have travelled to many countries throughout the world and recently here in Scotland we were privileged to have them come to each of our eight dioceses. Wherever her relics go they bring Catholics together and inspire us to renew our faith and commitment to God and helps the Church to be a sign of unity in a divided world.

In the Church we are all spiritually connected not just by bearing the name ‘Catholic’ but through our baptism, our sharing in the Eucharist, through our prayers for one another and through sharing our material resources. That love bears witness to Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer and is what makes the Church the Church.

On this Mission Sunday, Pope Francis asks us to pray for the Church everywhere, especially where it is being persecuted or is poor or is passing through trials. “Prayer” he says, “is the soul of mission”. He also asks us to give funds to the Pontifical Mission Societies to support our brothers and sisters.

This year, with what you will give today and through the donations you make using the Missio Box, you will be supporting parish communities in Botswana, India and Tanzania.

You will also be helping to feed and educate young people attending the Mulago School of the Deaf in Uganda, the Love of God School in Sierra Leone. Missio Scotland supports many projects which depend upon your generosity towards our brothers and sisters who are often in desperate need.

The Catholic men, women and children in Africa, Asia and South America would be grateful for whatever you can share. They too have the same mission which we have; to show the love of God to the people around them. By your prayers and donations they will experience more the reality of being part of the Church and will be able to share more fully in our common mission to be the Body of Christ bringing God's love to the world.

With thanks.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

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