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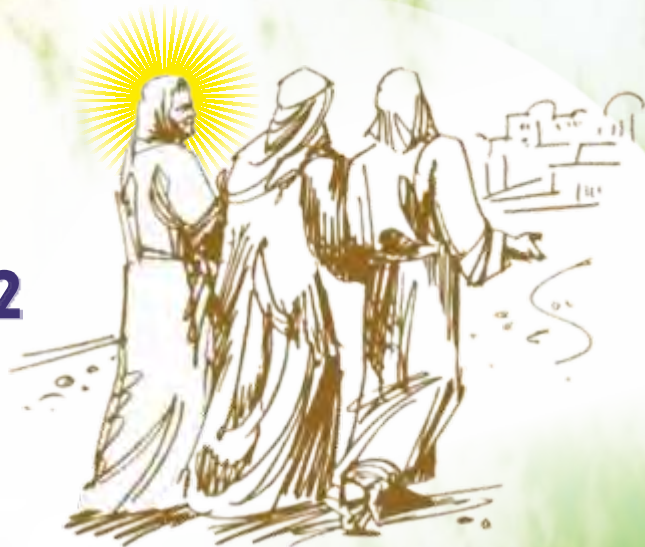
September - October 2023

# PROCLAIM

A magazine for Missionary Animation



**WORLD  
MISSION  
SUNDAY  
2023 OCT. 22**



*Hearts on Fire,  
Feet on the Move*

*cf. Luke 24:13-35*



## PRAYER FOR MISSION

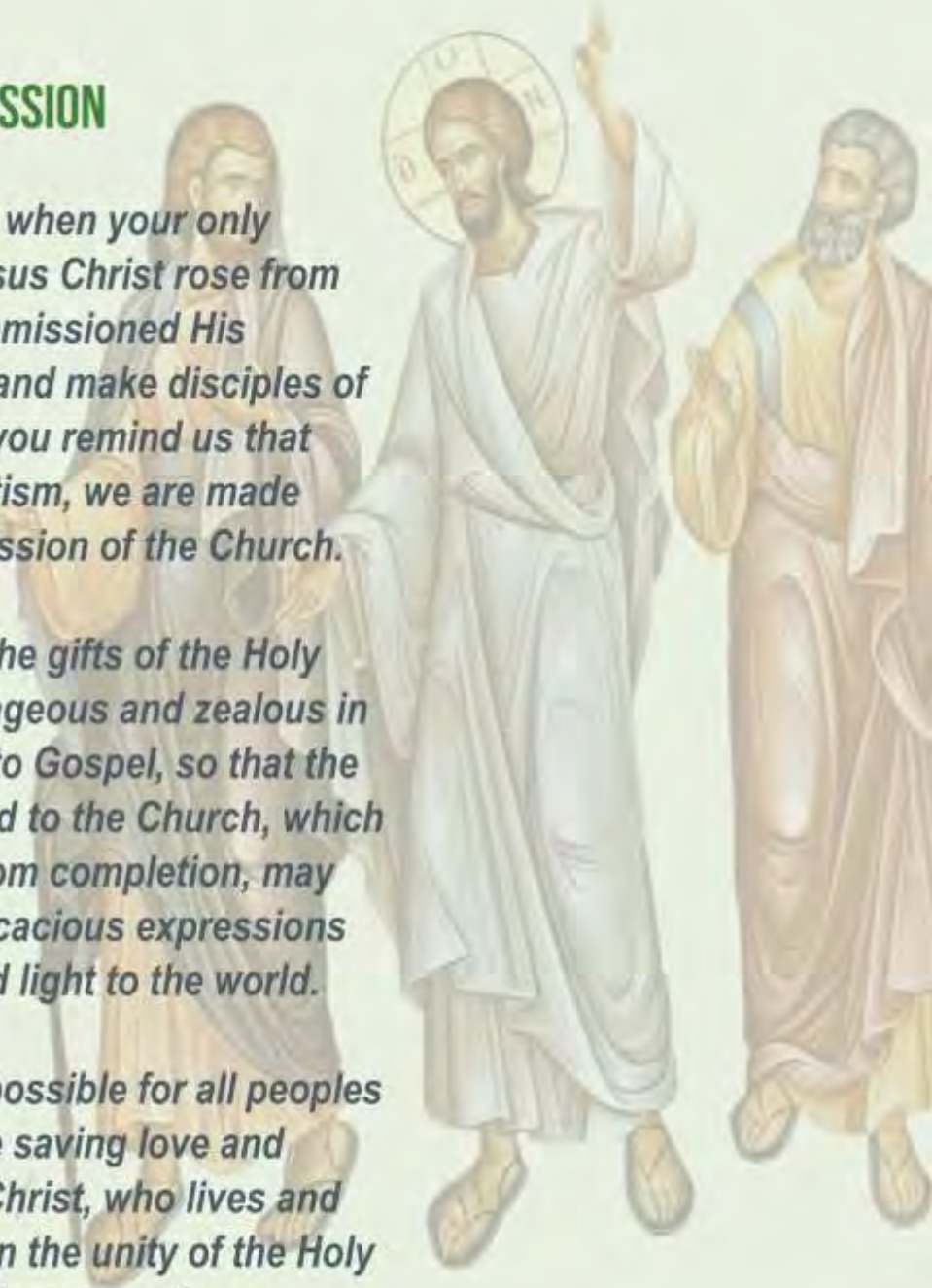
*Heavenly Father, when your only begotten Son Jesus Christ rose from the dead, he commissioned His followers to “go and make disciples of all nations” and you remind us that through our Baptism, we are made sharers in the mission of the Church.*

*Empower us by the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be courageous and zealous in bearing witness to Gospel, so that the mission entrusted to the Church, which is still very far from completion, may find new and efficacious expressions that bring life and light to the world.*

*Help us make it possible for all peoples to experience the saving love and mercy of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.  
Amen.*

Happy **Mission** Day

Your Goodness Spreads



# PROCLAIM

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### Saint Faustina Kowalska

1905–1938

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

### Let us set out once more

In his message for World Mission Day 2023, Pope Francis invites us to reflect on the importance of mission, drawing lessons from the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

The two disciples are filled with sadness and despair after the death of Jesus. They move away from the place of the Master, Jerusalem. But the Risen Lord does not want them to leave Jerusalem so dejected and hopeless. He takes the initiative to encounter them. He wants them to know that he is there for them even when they find it hard to overcome failures and challenges. He explains to them the Scriptures, and their hearts are “set on fire.”



Having experienced the Risen Lord, the disciples are transformed completely. Their despair turns into hope, their sadness is changed into joy and their sense of abandonment is filled with the accompaniment of the Lord. Now their feet are “set in motion.” They do not want to go to their hometown; they return to Jerusalem. They could have stayed in Emmaus happily knowing that the Lord is not dead and their hope is not dead. But taking the decision to return to the other disciples who do not know the truth is the missionary zeal that we see in the disciples. This is mission.

Hence for a missionary's feet to be set in motion, his/her hearts should be set on fire first. Without experiencing the Risen Lord, one can never become a true missionary. True discipleship requires resistance to complacency. While it is necessary that one remains in the same place and shares the rich experience of the Risen Lord, it also becomes mandatory to go to the place of hopelessness, to the people of hopelessness, to the people who do not know that the Lord is Risen and proclaim this Good News, to them as the two disciples did.

Mission is not easy. It can be challenging to share our faith with others, especially in a world that is increasingly becoming secular on the one hand, and fundamentalistic on the other. A missionary will always face problems, will find resistance, but that should not worry us or stop us. Pope Francis says that “The Risen Lord remains close to his missionary disciples and walks beside them, particularly when they feel disoriented, discouraged, fearful of the mystery of iniquity that surrounds them and seeks to overwhelm them.”

We celebrate World Mission Sunday on 22 October 2023. This annual celebration reminds us once again that the missionary work is not something that is reserved for a few select individuals. It is the vocation of all Christians. There are many practical ways that we can live out our missionary vocation. We ought to pray for those who are far from Christ. We should support missionary work through our talents, energy, skills and participation in the activities of the Church. Our financial assistance and offering play a very important role in the life and ministry of the young and new churches in the world. The most important of all is to be kind and compassionate, to be the hope to those people around us, so that they may see the love of Christ in us.

As the Holy Father says: “Let us set out once more, illumined by our encounter with the risen Lord and prompted by his Spirit. Let us set out again with burning hearts, with our eyes open and our feet in motion. Let us set out to make other hearts burn with the word of God, to open the eyes of others to Jesus in the Eucharist, and to invite everyone to walk together on the path of peace and salvation that God, in Christ, has bestowed upon all humanity.”

**Fr Dr Ambrose Pitchaimuthu**  
**National Director (PMO-India)**



# Hearts on fire, feet on the move

## Pope Francis' message for Word Mission Sunday 2023

Dear brothers and sisters!

For this year's World Mission Sunday, I have chosen a theme inspired by the story of the disciples on the way to Emmaus, in the Gospel of Luke (cf. 24:13-35): “Hearts on fire, feet on the move”. Those two disciples were confused and dismayed, but their encounter with Christ in the word and in the breaking of the bread sparked in them the enthusiastic desire to set out again towards Jerusalem and proclaim that the Lord had truly risen. In the Gospel account, we perceive this change in the disciples through a few revealing images: *their hearts burned within them* as they heard the Scriptures explained by Jesus, their eyes were opened as they recognized him and, ultimately, *their feet set out* on the way. By meditating on these three images, which reflect the journey of all missionary disciples, we can renew our zeal for evangelization in today's world.

***1. Our hearts burned within us “when he explained the Scriptures to us”. In missionary activity, the word of God illumines and transforms hearts.***

On the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus, the hearts of the two disciples were downcast, as shown by their dejected faces, because of the death

of Jesus, in whom they had believed (cf. v. 17). Faced with the failure of the crucified Master, their hopes that he was the Messiah collapsed (cf. v. 21).

Then, “as they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and walked with



them” (v. 15). As when he first called the disciples, so now, amid their bewilderment, the Lord takes the initiative; he approaches them and walks alongside them. So too, in his great mercy, he never tires of being with us, despite all our failings, doubts, weaknesses, and the dismay and pessimism that make us become “foolish and slow of heart” (v. 25), men and women of little faith.

Today, as then, the Risen Lord remains close to his missionary disciples and walks beside them, particularly when they feel disoriented, discouraged, fearful of the mystery of iniquity that surrounds them and seeks to overwhelm them. So, “let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of hope!” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 86). The Lord is greater than all our problems, above all if we encounter them in our mission of proclaiming the Gospel to the world. For in the end, this mission is his and we are nothing more than his humble co-workers, “useless servants” (cf. *Lk* 17:10).

I desire to express my closeness in Christ to all the men and women missionaries in the world, especially to those enduring any kind of hardship. Dear friends, the Risen Lord is always with you.



World Mission Sunday 2023  
October 22nd

Were not our hearts burning within us?  
Luke 24:13-35



					
2023	38,40	8,750	12,000	644,000	258,540
Costs	For people	For people	For people	For people	For people

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BE THE SPARK THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES. GIVE NOW.



He sees your generosity and the sacrifices you are making for the mission of evangelization in distant lands. Not every day of our lives is serene and unclouded, but let us never forget the words of the Lord Jesus to his friends before his Passion: “In the world you will have tribulations, but be courageous: I have conquered the world!” (Jn 16:33).

After listening to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, the risen Jesus, “beginning with Moses and all the prophets, explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Lk 24:27). The hearts of the disciples thrilled, as they later confided to each other: “Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?” (v. 32). Jesus is himself the living Word, who alone can make our hearts burn within us, as he enlightens and transforms them.

In this way, we can better understand Saint Jerome's dictum that “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ” (Commentary on Isaiah, Prologue). “Without the Lord to introduce us, it is impossible to understand sacred Scripture in depth; yet the opposite is equally true: without sacred Scripture, the events of Jesus' mission and

of his Church in the world remain indecipherable” (*Aperuit Illis*, 1). It follows that knowledge of Scripture is important for the Christian life, and even more so for the preaching of Christ and his Gospel. Otherwise, what are you passing on to others if not your own ideas and projects? A cold heart can never make other hearts burn!



So let us always be willing to let ourselves be accompanied by the Risen Lord as he explains to us the meaning of the Scriptures. May he make our hearts burn within us; may he enlighten and transform us, so that we

can proclaim his mystery of salvation to the world with the power and wisdom that come from his Spirit.

***2. Our eyes were “opened and recognized him” in the breaking of the bread. Jesus in the Eucharist is the source and summit of the mission.***

The fact that their hearts burned for the word of God prompted the disciples of Emmaus to ask the mysterious Wayfarer to stay with them as evening drew near. When they gathered around the table, their eyes were opened and they recognized him when he broke the bread. The decisive element that opened the eyes of the disciples was the sequence of actions performed by Jesus: he took

the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them. Those were the usual gestures of the head of a Jewish household, but, performed by Jesus Christ with the grace of the Holy Spirit, they renewed for his two table companions the sign of the multiplication of the loaves and above all that of the Eucharist, the sacrament of the sacrifice of the cross. Yet at the very moment when they recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread, “he vanished from their sight” (Lk 24:31). Here we can recognize an essential reality of our faith: Christ, who breaks the bread, now becomes the bread broken, shared with the disciples and consumed by



them. He is seen no longer, for now he has entered the hearts of the disciples, to make them burn all the more, and this prompts them to set out immediately to share with everyone their unique experience of meeting the Risen Lord. The risen



Christ, then, is both the one who breaks the bread and, at the same time, the bread itself, broken for us. It follows that every missionary disciple is called to become, like Jesus and in him, through the working of the Holy Spirit,

one who breaks the bread and one who is broken bread for the world.

Here it should be remembered that breaking our material bread with the hungry in the name of Christ is already a work of Christian mission. How much more so is the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, which is Christ himself, a work of mission *par excellence*, since the Eucharist is the source and summit of the life and mission of the Church.

As Pope Benedict XVI pointed out: “We cannot keep to ourselves the love we celebrate in the Sacrament [of the Eucharist]. By its very nature, it asks to be communicated to everyone. What the world needs is the love of God, to encounter Christ and believe in him. For this reason the Eucharist is not only the source and summit of the life of the Church; it is also the source and summit of her mission: ‘An authentically Eucharistic Church is a missionary Church’” (*Sacramentum Caritatis*, 84).

In order to bear fruit we must remain united to Jesus (cf. *Jn* 15:4-9). This union is achieved through daily prayer, particularly

in Eucharistic adoration, as we remain in silence in the presence of the Lord, who remains with us in the Blessed Sacrament. By lovingly cultivating this communion with Christ, the missionary disciple can become a mystic in action. May our hearts always yearn for the company of Jesus, echoing the ardent plea of the two disciples of Emmaus, especially in the evening hours: “Stay with us, Lord!” (cf. *Lk* 24:29).

**3. *Our feet set out on the way, with the joy of telling others about the Risen Christ. The eternal youth of a Church that is always going forth.***

After their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus “in the breaking of the bread”, the disciples “set out without delay and returned to Jerusalem” (cf. *Lk* 24:33). This setting out in haste, to share with others the joy of meeting the Lord, demonstrates that “the joy of the Gospel fills the heart and the whole life of those who meet Jesus. Those who allow themselves to be saved by him are freed from sin, from sadness, from inner emptiness, from isolation. With Jesus Christ, joy is always born and reborn” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 1). One cannot truly encounter the risen Jesus without being set on fire with enthusiasm to tell everyone

about him. Therefore, the primary and principal resource of the mission are those persons who have come to know the risen Christ in the Scriptures and in the Eucharist, who carry his fire in their heart and his light in their gaze. They can bear witness to the life that never dies, even in the most difficult of situations and in the darkest of moments.

The image of “feet setting out” reminds us once more of the perennial validity of the *missio ad gentes*, the mission entrusted to the Church by the risen Lord to evangelize all individuals and peoples, even to the ends of the





earth. Today more than ever, our human family, wounded by so many situations of injustice, so many divisions and wars, is in need of the Good News of peace and salvation in Christ. I take this opportunity to reiterate that “everyone has the right to receive the Gospel. Christians have the duty to announce it without excluding anyone, not as one who imposes a new obligation, but as one who



shares a joy, signals a beautiful horizon, offers a desirable banquet” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 14). Missionary conversion remains the principal goal that we must set for ourselves as individuals and as a community, because “missionary outreach is *paradigmatic for all the Church's activity*” (ibid., 15).

As the Apostle Paul confirms, the love of Christ captivates and impels us (cf. *2 Cor* 5:14). This love is two-fold: the love of Christ for us, which calls forth, inspires and arouses our love for him. A love that makes the Church, in constantly setting out anew, ever young. For all her members are entrusted with the mission of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, in the conviction that “he died for all, so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised again” (v. 15). All of us can contribute to this missionary movement: with our prayers and activities, with material offerings and the offering of our sufferings, and with our personal witness. *The Pontifical Mission Societies* are the privileged

means of fostering this missionary cooperation on both the spiritual and material levels. For this reason, the collection taken on World Mission Sunday is devoted to the *Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith*.

The urgency of the Church's missionary activity naturally calls for an ever closer missionary cooperation on the part of all her members and at every level. This is an essential goal of the synodal journey that the Church has undertaken, guided by the key words: *communion, participation, mission*. This journey is certainly not a turning of the Church in upon herself; nor is it a referendum about what we ought to believe and practice, nor a matter of human preferences. Rather, it is a process of setting out on the way and, like the disciples of Emmaus, listening to the risen Lord. For he always comes among us to explain the meaning of the Scriptures and to break bread for us, so that we can, by the power of the Holy Spirit, carry out his mission in the world.

Just as the two disciples of Emmaus told the others what had taken place along the way (cf. *Lk* 24:35), so too our proclamation will be a joyful telling of Christ the Lord, his life, his passion, his death and resurrection, and the wonders that his love has accomplished in our lives.

So let us set out once more, illumined by our encounter with the risen Lord and prompted by his Spirit. Let us set out again with burning hearts, with our eyes open and our feet in motion. Let us set out to make other hearts burn with the word of God, to open the eyes of others to Jesus in the Eucharist, and to invite everyone to walk together on the path of peace and salvation that God, in Christ, has bestowed upon all humanity.

Our Lady of the Way, Mother of Christ's missionary disciples and Queen of Missions, pray for us!

*Rome, Saint John Lateran, 6 January 2023, Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord.*

FRANCIS ♦

## MISSION SUNDAY

# Call to witness God's love and mercy

By Fr Merline Ambrose

### 1 Introduction

Mission Sunday. A reminder that we live out our baptismal call of mission to witness God's love and mercy. This day is set aside in the Catholic

women, not merely clerics and lay religious, are the mission agents. We are here to proclaim Jesus every minute of our life and witness his values and teachings, no matter what we do.

### 2 Mission *Ad intra* through the *Tria munera*

The code of Canon Law is essentially the expression of the general mission of the Church, which is the salvation of all souls. Synodality means that we accompany each other on the journey entrusted with the mission. It identifies our Christian “life” (*modus essendi*) and “mission” (*modus agendi*). Because synodality describes our way of being, it also explains our way of acting – since action follows being (*agere sequitur esse*). It highlights that we are a living people, co-responsible in the common mission of evangelisation, which continues the life-giving mission of Jesus, each with our unique gifts and vocations (*Lumen gentium*, 33; can. 208). The missionary agenda orients and directs communion, protecting the Church from being self-referential. Every Christian, by virtue of Baptism, is a disciple-missionary (*Praedicate evangelium*, n. 8). It means that the priest may carry out the offices of teaching, sanctifying, and governing (*tria munera*) with the assistance of lay members of Christ's faithful.

Church to publicly renew its missionary commitment. This day was instituted in 1926 by Pope Pius XI. This day further gives a clarion call to have our hearts on fire and feet on the move. As we read in St John Paul II's encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* no. 2, the mission revitalizes our faith and strengthens it. The synod which is to be held in Rome in October, the month of the mission, has an added special significance this year.

The Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis *Evangelii gaudium* “On the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world” in 2013, which is considered to be the charter of Pope Francis's pontificate, beautifully enumerates that life is the mission and every man and woman is a mission; that is the reason for our life on this earth. To be attracted and to be sent are two movements that our hearts feel as interior forces of love. “I am a mission on this Earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world” (*Evangelii gaudium*, 273). It makes clear that all baptized persons, both men and



## 2.1 *Munus sanctificandi* (Sanctifying Office)

While can. 781 states that missionary activity is the fundamental duty of the people of God (AG



35), can. 216 indicates their right to share the Church's mission. In the sanctifying function of the Church, lay faithful serve as ministers of lector, acolyte, cantor or commentator (can. 230), as ministers of baptism (cann. 230 §3, 861 §2), distributors of the Holy Communion even as Viaticum (can. 230 §3, 910, 911), as officiants at the marriage (can. 1112 §1), as those preparing others for the reception of the sacraments, especially of initiation (cann. 867 §1, 851 – baptism; 890 – confirmation; 914 - Eucharist), as presiders over the liturgical prayer (can. 1248), exposing and reposing the Most Blessed Sacrament (can. 943). Commenting on these ministries exercised on a supply basis, we notice that many of the functions assigned to the laity in the Code are envisaged where clerics are not available. Could we have expected a progressive stand on the issue of non-ordained ministers and ministries?

## 2.2 *Munus docendi* (Teaching Office)

Can. 747 §1 beautifully sums up the obligation and inherent right of the Church to participate in the teaching function. In the teaching function of the Church, the laity can offer their

opinions on ecclesial issues to pastors and other members of the Christian faithful (can. 212 §3). Can. 759 states that lay members of Christ's faithful can cooperate with bishops and priests in the exercise of the ministry of the Word, impart Christian doctrine as catechists to adults, youth and children (cann. 774, 776), teach the sacred sciences (can. 229 §3), exercise the ministry of the Word (cann. 230 §3; 766), share in the teaching function through social communication (cann. 822 §3; 823, 1; 830 §1), preach the word of God (cann. 762-772), render missionary activity (cann. 781-792) and catholic education (cann. 226, 793-799). Catechist as enumerated in Pope Francis' Motu proprio *Antiquum ministerium* (10 May 2021) revives the ancient ministry and calls for the greater involvement of the laity in this stable manner for the proclamation of the Gospel.

## 2.3 *Munus gubernandi* (Governing Office)

In the governing function, a layperson can be the moderator of an association of Christian faithful (can. 317 §3), perform service through the public association of the faithful (can. 301), represent the Apostolic See as a delegate or



observer at international councils and conferences (can. 363 §2), they can be appointed as censors according to their competence in consultative bodies, such as particular councils (can. 443 §4), the diocesan synod (can. 463 §1, 5°), the diocesan finance council (can. 492 §1), the diocesan pastoral council (can. 512 §1), the parish finance council (can. 537), the parish pastoral council (can. 536



§1). They can be appointed as chancellor and vice-chancellor (can. 482 §1), (It is noteworthy that twenty-five per cent of diocesan chancellors in the United States are women), a notary (can. 482 §3), financial officer or procurator of the diocese (can. 494 §1), judge in the diocesan tribunal (can. 1421 §2), an assessor or adviser (can. 1424), an auditor (can. 1428 §2), a defender of the bond and promotor of justice (can. 1435), an advocate and curator (can. 1483), and experts (can. 1574).

### 3 Mission *Ad extra*

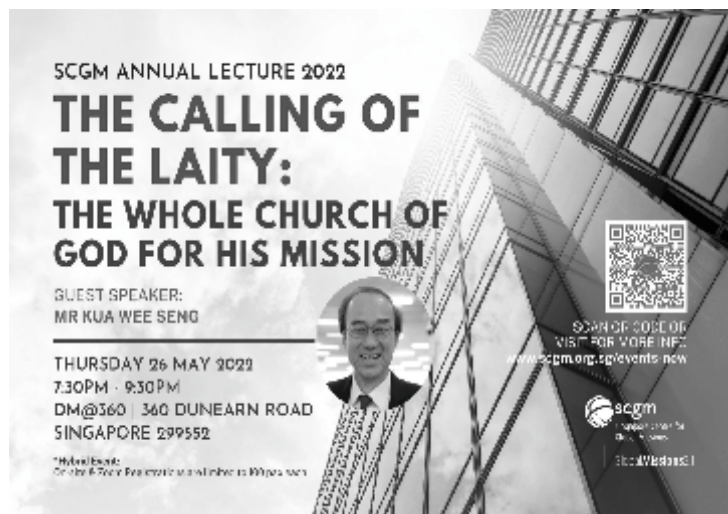
The missionary law in the Code is envisioned by cann. 781-792 (cann. 584-594 of CCEO 1990). This is the sum total of canonical norms by which the missionary activity is organized and promoted. These canons are the juridical formulations of the decree *Ad gentes*. Can. 781 says it is a fundamental duty of the people of God to play their part in the missionary activity because the Church is missionary by its nature (*AG 2; EN 22; Mk 16:15*). In the fast-changing world, the mission must be identified and addressed in every particular context

solicitude for missionary activity by fostering and sustaining missionary activity carried out by Christ's faithful. Can. 784 states that missionaries, sent by the competent ecclesiastical authority, need not be only secular clergy or members of institutes of consecrated life or society of apostolic life but also lay members of Christ's faithful. Can. 786 states that the specific purpose of missionary activity is evangelization and the planting of the Churches (*plantatio ecclesiae*) among those people and groups where she has not yet taken root (AG 6). Can. 787 prescribes that all the Christ's faithful by their words and life are to establish a dialogue with those who do not know Christ. Can. 792 indicates the need of welcoming and embracing the immigrants and others who come for health reasons, the refugees, fleeing from persecution of one kind or another.

### 4 Conclusion

The entire Church is called to missions. Each faithful member shares in the mission of Christ through their baptism. It is the call of all people to be priests, prophets, and kings. It is in the love of God and the love of neighbour that we share the priesthood and the call to holiness. It is important to note that within this general baptismal call, there are different roles and specific ways of expressing it, such as the ordained ministry, the laity, and the religious communities. There is no one way that is considered better or more holy than the other. In its own way, each part of the Church participates in the mission. In their everyday family and professional lives, lay people are shown to have their own vocations. In this way, lay members of

the Church are reassigned their rightful place among the People of God. Several provisions of the Code of Canon Law provide opportunities for lay faithful to participate in the life of the church, and the Church must make these avenues available to lay people in order to increase their active participation in the life of the Church. ♦



# The Church is missionary by her nature

## Catechesis by Pope John Paul II on the Church

1. Heir to and continuation of the apostles who were sent to witness to Christ and to preach the Gospel "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8), the Church possesses the note of "catholicity" from which her "missionary" nature derives. This second characteristic, part of her mystery, comes "from on high." The Second Vatican Council notes this in the decree *Ad Gentes* (AG), according to which, "The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father" (AG 2). It is a mystery established by the divine trinitarian plan which is fulfilled in the Church and made manifest as permanently her own, since the day of Pentecost.

2. Being essentially missionary does not mean merely that the Church has a universal mission to all humanity. It means that in her constitutive reality, in her soul, and thus it could be said in her very "psychology," she possesses a dynamism that concretely unfolds in preaching the Gospel, in spreading the faith and in calling to conversion. All this is proclaimed "to the very ends of the earth." This interior drive, intimately linked to her mission, comes from the Holy Spirit and is

therefore part of her mystery. The dynamism that comes from it is thus expressed as a distinctive characteristic of the whole Church. This is shown in a concrete and effective way especially in those who, starting with the apostles, go to regions far from their land for the sake of the Gospel. Even if all are not called personally to go to mission lands, each one in the Church and with the Church has the task of spreading the light of the Gospel, according to the saving mission passed on by the Redeemer to the ecclesial community. Indeed, all are called to cooperate in this mission.



3. We must insist on deepening the trinitarian origin of this missionary dynamism, to which the decree *Ad Gentes* refers (cf. nn. 2, 3, 5). This dynamism flows from the "fountain-like love," that is, from the "love of God the Father," from "his great and merciful kindness." He is the God who creates us and "gratuitously calls us to share in his life and in his glory." He "pours out his divine goodness" in order to be "all in all" (1 Cor 15:28). It is from his infinite generosity destined for every creature that the Church's missionary movement stems as the Holy Spirit's gift, a movement committed to spreading the message of salvation in the world.

4. The dynamism of divine life was first communicated in the Incarnation of the eternal Son of God, sent by the Father to bring mankind revelation and salvation. The coming into the world of the Word made flesh (cf. Jn 1:14) can be considered a "type" or "archetype"--as the Fathers would say--of the Church's missionary drive. Going beyond the frontiers of ancient Israel, it extends the kingdom of heaven to all humanity. This drive is carried out in particular by the "leap"



of missionaries, who, like the apostles, leave their native countries to proclaim the divine message to "all nations" (Mt 28:18).

The first missionary, the only begotten Son sent on earth by the Father to redeem the world, sends the apostles out to continue his mission (cf. Jn 20:21). The missionary typology of the "Word made flesh" also includes the self-emptying of the one who exists in the form of God and who assumed the form of a servant, becoming like men (cf. Phil 2:6-7). The Pauline concept of "kenosis" allows us to see in the Incarnation the first example of the self-emptying of those who accept Christ's mandate and leave everything to bring the Good News "to the very ends of the earth."

5. In affirming the transcendent origin of the missionary dynamism of his Incarnation, Jesus also reveals in it his purpose, which consists in opening to all the way back to God. Jesus marked this path out first. He declared: "I came from the Father and have come into the world. Now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father" (Jn 16:28). He explained that the aim of this "going" was to prepare a place "in his Father's house" for the disciples, to whom he said: "I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be" (Jn 14:3). Jesus' return to the Father was carried out through a sacrifice in which he showed his love for men "to the end" (Jn 13:1).

He wants men to participate in his ascent to the Father. To bring about this participation, he sends his apostles, and together with them, the whole Church, which extends his preaching and activities in all places and in all ages.

6. We have emphasized the fact that Christ's missionary activity culminated in the offering of his sacrifice. According to the Father's plan, Jesus spent only a short period of his earthly life preaching, which was limited to the "lost sheep of



the house of Israel" (Mt 15:24). At the start, he also limited the ministry of the Twelve to this (cf. Mt 10:6). However, with the sacrifice of the cross he totally fulfilled the missionary purpose of his coming on earth: the salvation not only of the people of Israel or the Samaritans, but also the "Greeks" (cf. Jn 12:20-24), indeed, all humanity (Jn 12:32).

This fact sheds light on the Church's missionary activity, which must be marked by a sacrificial note foretold by Jesus: "No disciple is above his teacher, no slave above his master" (Mt 10:24). "You will be hated by all because of my name" (Mt 10:22).

We must follow the divine Master on the way of the cross. This is the way of the Church and the way of missionaries, as the Council recalls: "The Church, prompted by the Holy Spirit, must walk in the same path on which Christ walked: a path of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice to the death, from which death he came forth a victor by his resurrection" (AG 5).

7. On this way of the Church and her missionaries, Christ is not only the initiator and the perfect example. He is also the one who supplies the necessary energy to proceed, communicating the Holy Spirit to his Church in every age. As we read again in the Council, to achieve universal salvation, "Christ sent from the Father his Holy Spirit, who was to carry on inwardly his saving





# What is World Mission Sunday?

## Share Your Faith – Give Life

World Mission Sunday falls on the penultimate Sunday in October. It is the one Sunday in the year when the Mass is celebrated exclusively for missionary activity.



entirety, to support churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or poor.

## Pray with the Global Church

World Mission Sunday is our chance to show love and solidarity to our brothers and sisters overseas who share our faith. In offering our prayers, we join with missionaries everywhere in communion and compassion to support them in

In 2023, World Mission Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, 22 October. Donations are collected at these worldwide Masses and they go, in their

spreading the Good News, and by giving a donation we respond to Christ's call to feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

## Why WMS is so important to us

Missio is responsible for coordinating World Mission Sunday and provides new, young or poor dioceses with the essential support they need on their journey to becoming self-sufficient.

We work through local bishops, churches and missionary congregations to ensure that resources are distributed equitably and justly – on the basis of need. The money goes directly from England and Wales to the bishops in the mission territories – local Church directly helping local Church!



This World Mission Sunday, help us ignite God's love around the world.

**Source: [mission.org.uk](http://mission.org.uk) ♦**

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*Continued from Page 11: The Church is missionary by her nature*



the Holy Spirit kindled at Pentecost. He continuously nourishes it in hearts, as the Love of the Father and the Son-- ignis, caritas --which imparts to the Church the fire of eternal Charity.

Pentecost was not only a moment of intense emotion. It was the start of a dynamism of supernatural origin which developed throughout the Church's history (cf. RM 24). As on the day of Pentecost, so in our times the Holy Spirit continues

work and prompt the Church to spread out" (AG 4). Let us return once again to the trinitarian source of the Church's missionary dynamism, which

inwardly to inspire missionary enthusiasm and to give hierarchical and charismatic gifts (cf. 1 Cor 12:4ff.), which make the Church "one in communion and in ministering" (AG 4; cf. LG 4). This intimate unity of Jesus' disciples is expressed in "fraternal communion," in being "of one heart and mind" (RM 26).

8. The Holy Spirit illumines and inflames the whole person with divine love, working effectively in minds and hearts. He intervenes deeply in the Church's missionary activity, which he himself at times "visibly anticipates...just as he unceasingly accompanies and directs it in different ways" (AG 4). Thus the Church, moved "by the grace and love of the Holy Spirit," fulfills her mission, opening up for all men "a firm and free road to full participation in the mystery of Christ" (AG 5)."

**Source: <http://totus2us.com/teaching> ♦**

# Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay

## Pope Francis' message for World Day of Migrants & Refugees 2023

Dear brothers and sisters!

The migratory flows of our times are the expression of a complex and varied phenomenon that, to be properly understood, requires a careful



analysis of every aspect of its different stages, from departure to arrival, including the possibility of return. As a contribution to this effort, I have chosen to devote the Message for the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees to the freedom that should always mark the decision to leave one's native land.

“Free to leave, free to stay” was the title of an initiative of solidarity promoted several years ago by the Italian Episcopal Conference as a concrete response to the challenges posed by contemporary migration movements. From attentive listening to the Particular Churches, I have come to see that ensuring that that freedom is a widely shared pastoral concern.

“An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him'” (Mt 2:13). The flight of the Holy Family into Egypt was not the result of a free decision, nor were many of the migrations that marked the history of the people of Israel. The decision to migrate should always be free, yet in many cases, even in our day, it is not.

Conflicts, natural disasters, or more simply the impossibility of living a dignified and prosperous life in one's native land is forcing millions of persons to leave. Already in 2003, Saint John Paul II stated that “as regards migrants and refugees, building conditions of peace means in practice being seriously committed to safeguarding first of all the right not to emigrate, that is, the right to live in peace and dignity in one's own country” (*Message for the 90th World Day of Migrants and Refugees*, 3).

“They took their livestock and the goods that they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and they came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him” (Gen 46:6). A grave famine forced Jacob and his entire family to seek refuge in Egypt, where his son Joseph ensured their survival. Persecutions, wars, atmospheric phenomena and dire poverty are among the most visible causes of forced migrations today. Migrants flee because of poverty, fear or desperation. Eliminating these causes and thus putting an end to forced migration calls for shared commitment on the part of all, in accordance with the responsibilities of each. This commitment begins with asking what we can do, but also what we need to stop doing. We need to make every effort to halt the arms race, economic colonialism, the plundering of other people's resources and the devastation of our common home.

“All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need” (Acts 2:44-45). The ideal of the first Christian community seems so distant from today's reality! To make migration a choice that is truly free, efforts must be made to ensure to everyone an equal share in the common good, respect for his or her



fundamental rights, and access to an integral human development. Only in this way will we be able to offer to each person the possibility of a dignified and fulfilling life, whether individually or within families. Clearly, the principal responsibility falls to the countries of origin and their leaders, who are called to practice a good politics – one that is transparent, honest, farsighted and at the service of all, especially those most vulnerable. At the same time, they must be empowered to do this, without finding themselves robbed of their natural and human resources and without outside interference aimed at serving the interests of a few. Where circumstances make possible a decision either to migrate or to stay, there is a need to ensure that the decision be well informed and carefully considered, in order to avoid great numbers of men, women and children falling victim to perilous illusions or unscrupulous traffickers.

“In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property” (Lev 25:13). For the people of Israel, the celebration of the jubilee year represented an act of collective justice: “everyone was allowed to return to their original situation, with the cancellation of all debts, restoration of the land, and an opportunity once more to enjoy the freedom proper to the members of the People of God” (Catechesis, 10 February 2016). As we approach the Holy Year of 2025, we do well to remember this aspect of the jubilee celebrations. Joint efforts are needed by individual countries and the international community to ensure that all enjoy the right not to be forced to emigrate, in other words, the chance to live in peace and with dignity in one's own country. This right has yet to be codified, but it is one of fundamental importance, and its protection must be seen as a shared responsibility on the part of all States with respect to a common good that transcends national borders. Indeed, since the world's resources are not unlimited, the development of the economically

poorer countries depends on the capacity for sharing that we can manage to generate among all countries. Until this right is guaranteed – and here we are speaking of a long process – many people will still have to emigrate in order to seek a better life.

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked



and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25:35-36). These words are a constant admonition to see in the migrant not simply a brother or sister in difficulty, but Christ himself, who knocks at our door. Consequently, even as we work to ensure that in every case migration is the fruit of a free decision, we are called to show maximum respect for the dignity of each migrant; this entails accompanying and managing waves of migration as best we can, constructing bridges and not walls, expanding channels for a safe and regular migration. In whatever place we decide to build our future, in the country of our birth or elsewhere,

the important thing is that there always be a community ready to welcome, protect, promote and integrate everyone, without distinctions and without excluding anyone.



The synodal path that we have undertaken as a Church leads us to see in those who are most vulnerable – among whom are many migrants and refugees – special companions on our way, to be loved and cared for as brothers and sisters. Only by walking together will we be able to go far and reach the common goal of our journey.

*Rome, Saint John Lateran, 11 May 2023*

FRANCIS ♦



# Pope welcomes young people to WYD

Pope Francis leads the welcoming ceremony of the 37th World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal, asking for advice and prayers for their families, countries, and local Churches.



The welcoming ceremony continued with the procession of flags from all the countries represented at World Youth Day, accompanied by an original song, “Um Dia de Sol” (“A Sunny Day”), composed by Héber Marques especially for the occasion. The song highlights the desire to celebrate faith in Jesus.

## Called by name

and reminds young people from across the globe that God calls each of us by name because He loves every person.

A vibrant spectacle of colour and sound greeted Pope Francis and hundreds of thousands of pilgrims at the Welcoming Ceremony for World Youth Day 2023.

The festive character was intended as a celebration of the faith and a demonstration of the unity and diversity of a Church that combines tradition and modernity, and featured a cast of some 50 young people from 21 different countries, as well as the WYD choir and orchestra, and numerous other musicians showcasing the Portuguese culture.

A notable addition to this year's opening ceremony was the choreographic performance of the lyrics of the music in Portuguese sign language, promoting the participation of those with difficulties hearing.

## Letters from young people

Following the arrival of Pope Francis, a group of young people read selections from letters produced by the cast, representing the thousands of letters the Pope receives each day. The letters highlighted the questions and concerns of youth from around the world, with many

The highlight of the Welcome Ceremony was a Liturgy of the Word, focusing on St Luke's account of Jesus' sending forth the seventy-two disciples.

In his reflection on the Gospel reading, Pope Francis warmly welcomed the young people taking part in World Youth Day, reminding them that God has called them by name precisely because He loves each one of them. “At this World Youth Day,” the Pope said, “let us help one another to recognize this fundamental reality: May these days be vibrant echoes of God's call of love.”

## A community of the called

Christ's Church, the Pope continued, is “the community of the called,” not a community of the best people; rather, we are all sinners, all called “as we are, with our problems and limitations.” We are, he said, “a community of brothers and sisters of



Jesus, sons and daughters of the same Father. I want to be very clear with you.”

Pope Francis insisted, “There is room for everyone in the Church,” adding that Jesus expressed this clearly in the Gospels in parables where all are called: “the young and old, the healthy and the sick, the righteous and sinners: everyone, everyone, everyone, everyone!” And he invited the crowd to repeat after him, “Everyone, everyone, everyone!”

### **God loves us**

Insisting again and again that God loves them, the Pope told young people to never grow tired of coming to God with questions. “Asking questions is good,” he said, “it is often better than giving answers, because those who ask questions remain restless, and restlessness is the best remedy” for a routineness that can “anaesthetize the soul.”

Pope Francis invited young men and women to reflect on how “beautiful” it is that God loves us. “God loves us as we are,” he repeated, “not as we would like to be or as society would like us to be.” Instead, we are called and loved as we are with our defects and limitations, but also “with our desire to move forward in life.”

“This is what I wanted to tell you,” he said, in conclusion: “Don't be afraid, have courage, go



forward knowing that we are loved...” And he called on the young people to repeat with him: “God loves us.”

### **'There's a Rush in the Air'**

The Pope's address was followed by a Litany invoking the patrons of World Youth Day, including Pope St John Paul II, St John Bosco, Bd Pier Giorgio Frassati, and Bd Carlos Acutis, as well as Portuguese saints and blessed, such as St Anthony, Bd Joan of Portugal, and Bd Maria Clara of the Child Jesus.

The liturgical ceremony concluded with the recitation of the Our Father and the Pope's final blessing.

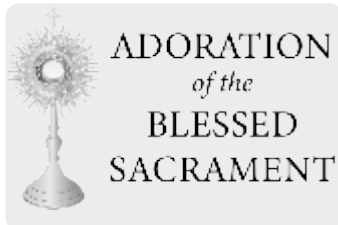
For the finale, the performers offered a choreographed presentation of an anagram inspired by the Gospel reading and addressed to all those present: “Go... I am sending you... the Kingdom of God has come near to you.”



As the Holy Father left the stage at the conclusion of the opening ceremony, Lisbon's Edward VII Park resounded with the strains of this year's World Youth Day anthem, “Há Pressa no Ar” – “There's a Rush in the Air.” ♦



# Pope stresses need for Eucharistic Adoration



From Lisbon, Portugal, Pope Francis on Wednesday, August 2nd, reflected on the urgency of taking up again “the prayer of adoration” before the tabernacle to recover “the taste and passion for evangelization” in a message addressed to bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated women religious, and seminarians.

“I would like to ask a question here, but each one should answer it interiorly. How do I pray? Like a parrot — blah blah blah blah blah? Or taking a nap in front of the tabernacle because I don't know how to talk to the Lord? I pray? How do I pray? Only in adoration, only before the Lord can the taste and passion for evangelization be recovered,” the pontiff said during his Aug. 2 homily for vespers at the Jerónimos Monastery.

After noting that “to trust every day in the Lord and in his word, words are not enough” but



rather “a lot of prayer is needed,” he pointed out to the approximately 1,100 attendees that the Church has abandoned prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

“Curiously, the prayer of adoration — we have lost it. We have lost it, and everyone — priests, bishops, consecrated men and women, laypeople — have to recover it. It's to be in silence, before the Lord,” Francis urged.

In this context, the pope invited his listeners to follow the example of St. Teresa of Calcutta, who, despite being “involved in so many things in life, never gave up adoration even at times when her faith wavered and she wondered if it was all true or not.”



“So, in prayer the temptation to carry out a pastoral ministry of nostalgia and complaining is overcome,” he added.

To further exemplify the need to redirect our gaze to eucharistic adoration, the pontiff recalled the anecdote of a nun who “complained about everything” in her convent.

“In a convent there was a nun who, I don't know what her name was, but they changed her name and called her 'Sister Lamentela' [the whiner]. How many times do we transform our inabilities, our disappointment, into 'lamentela' [being whiners]? And leaving behind these 'lamentelas,' one gets the strength to sail out to sea, without ideologies, without worldliness. The spiritual worldliness that gets into us and which engenders clericalism not only in priests; clericalized laymen are worse than priests,” he explained.



**Source: catholicnewsagency.com Aug 2, 2023 ♦**



## A King feels like a child. And how do we?

### A close reading of Psalm 131

By Fr Dr Yesu Karunanidhi\*

“1 O Lord, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvellous for me.2 But I



have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.3 O Israel, hope in the Lord

from this time forth and forevermore.” (Psalm 131)

The Hebrew Bible speaks of David in connection with a child on two occasions. First, when David bore a son through adultery with Bathsheba (cf. 2 Sam 11:27). The Lord afflicts the child that Uriah's wife bore to David. It is cruel that the Lord, instead of punishing the adults who were involved in the act of adultery, afflicts the child. The child dies despite David's efforts to save him through fasting and prayer. Second, David uses the metaphor of 'a weaned child' (cf. Ps 131:3) to express his inner disposition when he was beset with difficulties and conflicts. This present article does a close reading of Psalm 131, and points that we adults need to feel like children when thunders and storms engulf us.

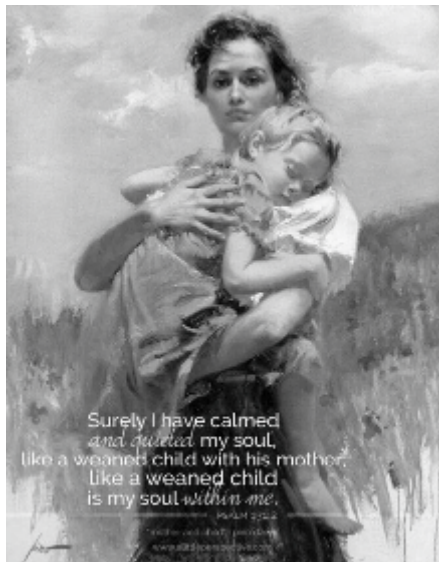
#### Background to the Psalm

Psalm 131 is one of the Songs of Ascents, the hymns that the pilgrims would sing as they climb the Mount Zion for various feasts. Commentators suggest two possible occasions

for the composition of Psalm 131: The first occasion may have been when Saul hunted David, and David was repeatedly accused of aspiration for the throne of Israel. The second may have been in response to his wife, Michal, when she accused him of being vulgar and undignified after he danced in the procession of bringing the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem (cf. 2 Sam 6:16-23). There are four psalms (cf. 122, 124, 131, 133) of David in the Psalms of Ascent, and this is the third of four. David is a good example of someone who learned the truths of this psalm well. When David was hunted by Saul, he refused to take matters into his own hands, but trusted God to make him king when the time was right. David is a wonderful example of someone who learned the twin truths of humility and contentment.

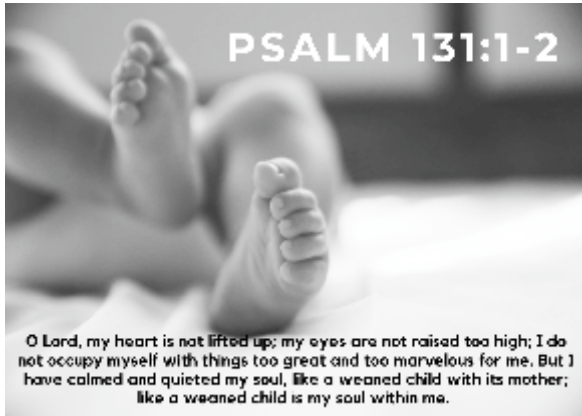
#### Its Meaning

Psalm 131 has three verses in Hebrew. The Psalm begins with calling the Lord and ends with calling the people of Israel. It begins as a declaration of David before God about himself but



ends as an exhortation to the people of Israel, inviting them to trust in the Lord. At the centre of the declaration and the exhortation is an affirmation that David, the King of the United Israel, feels like a weaned child.

v. 1: 'practice humility.' Some people say that when we say, 'we are humble,' we make an indirect statement about our pride. This may be possible when we make this declaration before human persons. A proud person usually says that he is



the humblest of all. But, in Ps 131, David declares his humility not in front of human persons but in front of God. 'Humility' comes from the Latin word 'humus' meaning 'mud' or 'earth', the prime substance with which we were made according to the Second Creation Narrative in the Bible (cf. Gen 2). A humble person lets go of his / her labels and identifies himself / herself with the mud that is underneath him / her. David, standing (or kneeling) in front of God, peels of label after label, that he identified himself with, and becomes bare, left with core substance. David declares that his heart is not lifted up. The same word 'lifted up' is used in 1 Sam 10:23, where it refers to Saul who stood taller than everyone else in the crowd. And there is no pride in his eyes. He does not look down upon others. He is not occupied with too great and too marvellous things.

v. 2: 'learn contentment.' David says, 'I have calmed or stilled my soul, like a weaned child with its mother.' Weaning is a difficult process both for mother and child. Weaning is the time of separation, pain, and alienation. In the womb the child feels that it is a body-part of the mother. When the child is born and the umbilical cord is cut, it feels there is a separation. But, soon it gets close to the mother by sucking her breasts.

Weaning is the critical moment for the child, because from now on the child will learn to be independent. If the weaning is done early the child feels restless, and if the weaning is done later the child feels over-dependent. Between restlessness and over-dependence, in fact, lies contentment. Contentment is learnt through different stages. David feels that his heart has quietened.

v. 3: 'live in hope.' David concludes with an exhortation to his own people, calling them to hope in the Lord. Hope is an act of waiting for the fruition of a promise. Hope keeps our hearts alive. A hope-filled heart is contented with everything.

### Do we feel like a child today?

The image of the child that is portrayed here is a child which is independent, calm, and docile. Wordsworth says, 'a child is the father of man.' The unknown weaned child figuratively portrayed in Ps 131 invites us to imitate him / her.

Samuel Cox, a commentator, has a wonderful summary of this psalm. He writes: "We do too commonly busy ourselves with things too great and wonderful for us. And hence it is that we are so restless and perturbed. There is no peace but in the humility which leans on God, which trusts in Him, which confesses weakness and ignorance and guilt; which is not ashamed to say, 'I do not know', 'I cannot tell'; which rejoices not in the faults and defects of others, but in whatever is true in them and good and kind. Only as we



recover the spirit of a little child, of a weaned child, and rest in simple lowly faith in God shall we enter into the peace which surpasses all understanding" (cf. <https://www.rayfowler.org/sermons/psalms-of-ascent/psalm-131-humbled-and-content/> accessed on 20 Aug 2023).

\* **The writer is Executive Secretary, CCBI Commission for Bible, yesu@live.in ♦**

## SAINT OF THE MONTH - I

# St Nicholas of Tolentino

1245 - 1310

Feast Day - September 10

Nicholas Gurutti was born in 1245 in Sant'Angelo, Pontano, Macerata, Italy. His family was rather poor. He was named Nicholas after the name of St Nicholas of Myra, at whose shrine his parents prayed to have a child. He joined the Augustinian Order while a young man about the age of 18, after hearing the inspired preaching of Reginaldo da Monterubbiano, Prior (local superior) of the Augustinian monastery in Sant'Angelo.

Seven years later, he was ordained a priest. He gained a reputation as a preacher and a confessor. In 1274, he was sent to Tolentino, near his birthplace. The town suffered from civil strife between the Guelphs, who supported the pope, and Ghibellines, who supported the Holy Roman Emperor, in their struggle for control of Italy. Nicholas was primarily a pastor to his flock. He ministered to the poor and the criminal. He is said to have cured the sick with bread over which he had prayed to Mary, the mother of God. He gained a reputation as a wonder-worker.

As a priest and religious, he was full of charity towards his brother Augustinians as well as towards the people to whom he ministered. He visited the sick and cared for the needy. He was a noted preacher of the Gospel. He gave special attention to those who had fallen away from the Church. People considered him a miracle worker.

He often fasted and performed other works of penance. He spent long hours in prayer.

The story is told that, one day, having fasted for a long time, Nicholas was physically weak. While at prayer, Jesus told him to eat some bread marked with a cross and soaked in water in order to regain his strength. Thus arose the Augustinian custom of blessing and distributing Saint Nicholas Bread in his memory.



Another story relates that Nicholas, while asleep in bed, heard the voice of a deceased friar he had known. This friar told Nicholas that he was in Purgatory, and urged him to celebrate the Eucharist for him and other souls there, so that they would be set free by the power of Christ. Nicholas did so for seven days. The friar again spoke to Nicholas, thanking him and assuring him that a large

number of souls were now with God. Because of this Nicholas was proclaimed patron of the souls in Purgatory.

One year before departing for eternity, he saw, in a dream, a star of extraordinary brilliance rise in the sky of Saint'Angelo, his birthplace, and move toward Tolentino, coming to rest over the altar of the oratory where he celebrated daily Mass and said his prayers. Intrigued, Fr Nicholas consulted a brother of good reputation and learning about the significance of the occurrence, and received this reply: "Father, this star is undoubtedly a sign of your sanctity, and I am sure that it will finish its course where your body shall be buried." The Saint protested this interpretation,



## SAINT OF THE MONTH - II

### St Hedwig

1174 - 1243

Feast Day : October 16

Hedwig was one of eight children born to Berthold IV, Count of Andechs and Duke of Croatia and Dalmatia, and Agnes, daughter of the Count of Rotlechts. Of her four brothers, two became Bishops. St Hedwig was a strong mother and wife, and is honoured for the faith that she brought to her husband and the people that they governed. She was born in Bavaria in 1174, and was aunt to St Elizabeth of Hungary. As a girl, she was placed in a monastery for her education, and when she was 12, she was given to marriage to a duke named Henry. Together, they had seven children.

Henry I was an energetic prince, who greatly extended the boundaries of his duchy, established his authority on a firm basis, and rendered important services to civilization in the realm. For this purpose he encouraged to the utmost the spread of the more highly developed civilization existing in the German territories adjoining his to the west, so that Silesia became German in language and customs.

Hedwig now took a prominent part in the beneficent administration of her husband. Her prudence, fortitude, and piety won for her great influence in the government of the land. When her husband succeeded his father, and gained the governance of his region, Hedwig encouraged him to establish a monastery of Cistercian nuns. Together, they founded more monasteries, which helped develop the faith among their people, and

also preserved and enhanced their culture. Both Henry and Hedwig founded hospitals, which they took personal interest in. In particular she gave her support to new monastic foundations and assisted

those already in existence. It was chiefly through the monasteries that German civilization was spread in Silesia. Henry and Hedwig endowed munificently the Cistercian Monastery of Leubus, the Premonstratensian monastery of St Vincent, and the foundation of the Canons of St Augustine at Breslau. They built many monasteries and hospitals.

As their children matured, they gave the couple much trouble. Several bickered bitterly over land rights, even battling one another. Hedwig tried to intervene, but eventually resigned herself and moved to one of the monasteries she had founded.

There, she spent her time in the prayer and manual labour of the community, and was known for her austerities that helped her sharpen her will. For example, she would often travel to nearby villages for Mass without wearing shoes, in any kind of weather.

Even when she was alive, Hedwig was given the gift of miracles, and she healed a nun who was blind by making the sign of the cross upon her. Several other miraculous cures are attributed to her. Hedwig expressed this conviction to Gertrude, the youngest of her seven children. Her life as a wife and mother had been filled with many



sorrows. The duchess, who had stood by her husband and assisted him in his duty of governing, had witnessed the death of three sons and two of her three daughters. She bore her pain with composure, a result not only of the attitudes of her time and culture, but of her strong Christian faith. She found comfort in the daily life of faith and prayer.

Duke Henry II fell at Wahlstatt (1241) in a battle against the Tatars. After her husband's death, Hedwig took the grey habit of the Cistercians, but was not received into the order as a religious, that she might retain the right to spend her revenues in charities. She chose the Cistercian monastery of Trebnitz, which Hedwig herself had founded in 1202.

The duchess practised severe mortification, endured all trials with the greatest resignation, with self-denying charity cared for the sick and supported the poor; in her interior life of prayer, she gave herself up to meditation on supernatural

things. Her piety and gentleness won for her even during life the reputation of a saint. When she died, on 15 October 1243, no one had any doubts: it was the death of a saint. She was interred



attached to the monastery, and was canonized by Clement IV, 1267, and on 25 August of the same year her remains were raised to the honours of the altar. Her feast is celebrated 16 October; she is honoured as the patroness of Silesia.

**Source:** [www.catholic.org](http://www.catholic.org);  
[www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org); [www.faith.nd.edu](http://www.faith.nd.edu);  
[www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com) ♦

### *Continued from Page 20: St Nicholas of Tolentino*

but the facts prove how true it was: until his death, a luminous star accompanied him in plain sight of all.

In addition, during his last six months of earthly life, “the Angels descended every night to his cell to regale him with their melodies and to give him a foretaste of eternal glory.”

Feeling that the moment of his departure was approaching, Nicholas received Viaticum and Extreme Unction with deep fervour and then gave himself over to lofty contemplation. On the day of his death, he embraced the relic of the Holy Cross and surrendered his innocent soul to God as he said: “*In manus tuas, Domine, comendo spiritum meum*



– Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit” (Lk 23:46). It was September 10, around the year 1310.

Fulfilling the forecast of the star, at the tomb where the body of St Nicholas of Tolentino lies, grace opens souls to Christ through his intercession, to this day, operating conversions and miracles with its heavenly light.

Canonized in 1446 by Pope Eugene IV, Nicholas is the first Augustinian friar to be canonized after the Grand Union of the Order of St Augustine in 1256. His relics were rediscovered in 1926 and they are preserved at the Shrine of Saint Nicholas in the city of Tolentino.

**Source:** [www.midwestaugustinians.org](http://www.midwestaugustinians.org);  
[www.catholicmagazine.news](http://www.catholicmagazine.news) ♦

# The old fisherman

Our house was across the street from the entrance of a famous hospital in the city. We lived downstairs and rented the upstairs rooms to



outpatients at the clinic. As I was fixing supper one summer evening, there was a knock at the door. I opened it to see a truly awful-looking man.

"He's hardly taller than my eight-year-old," I thought as I stared at the stooped, shrivelled body. But the appalling thing was his face—lopsided from swelling, red and raw. Yet his voice was pleasant as he said, "Good evening. I've come to see if you have a room for just one night. I came for treatment from the eastern shore this morning, and there's no bus 'till the morning."

He told me he'd been hunting for a room since noon, but he had no success as no one seemed to have a room. "I guess it's my face. I know it looks terrible, but my doctor says with a few more treatments...."

For a moment, I hesitated, but his following words convinced me: "I could sleep in this rocking chair on the porch. My bus leaves early in the morning." So I told him we would find him a bed but to rest on the porch.

I went inside and finished getting supper. When we were ready, I asked the old man if he would join us. "No, thank you. I have plenty." And he held up a brown paper bag. When I had finished the dishes, I went out on the porch to talk with him for a few minutes.

It didn't take long to see that this older man had a big heart crowded into that tiny body. He told me he fished for a living to support his daughter, her five children, and her



husband, who was hopelessly crippled from a back injury.

He didn't tell it by way of complaint; in fact, every other sentence was prefaced with thanks to God for a blessing. He was grateful that no pain accompanied his disease, which was a form of skin cancer. He thanked God for giving him the strength to keep going.

At bedtime, we put a camp cot in the children's room for him. When I got up in the morning, the bed linens were neatly folded, and the little man was out on the porch. He refused breakfast, but just before he left for his bus, haltingly, as if asking a great favor, he said, "Could I please come back and stay the next time I have a treatment? I won't put you out a bit. I can sleep fine in a chair."

He paused a moment and then added, "Your children made me feel at home. Grownups are bothered by my face, but children don't seem to mind." I told him he was welcome to come again.



On his next trip, he arrived a little after seven in the morning. He brought a big fish and a quart of the largest oysters I had ever seen as a gift. He said he had shucked them that morning before he left so that they'd be nice and fresh. I knew his bus left at 4:00 a.m., and I wondered what time he had to get up to do this for us.

In the years he came to stay overnight with us, there was never a time that he did not bring us fish or oysters or vegetables from his garden. Other times we received packages in the mail,



always by special delivery; fish and oysters packed in a box of fresh young spinach or kale, every leaf carefully washed.

Knowing that he must walk three miles to mail these and knowing how little money he had made the gifts more precious. When I received these little remembrances, I often thought of a comment our next-door neighbour made after he left that first morning. "Did you keep that awful-looking man last night? I turned him away! You can lose



roomers by putting up such people!"

Maybe we did lose roomers once or twice. But oh! If only they could have known him, perhaps their illnesses would have been easier to bear. I know our family will always be grateful to have known him; from him, we learned to accept the bad without complaint and the good with

gratitude.

-Author Unknown

**Source:** <https://alltimeshortstories.com/the-old-fisherman-inspirational-story/> ♦

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## Thank you, Readers

Word of appreciation from a reader

Dear Father Ambrose Pitchaimuthu,

I have been receiving PROCLAIM and appreciate the simplicity and reality of the magazine. In particular I would like to thank you for the July - August issue, with the article *Girl who directed army commander*. A simple girl is made the protagonist of the episode because she made known the workings of God in her homeland Samaria. I will share the story with Sisters/ Teachers engaged in the education and formation of our Catholic girls. God bless your work for the missions. I am still in Vadodara and will soon be moving to Gandhinagar. Do pray for me.

Fraternally yours.

Reverend Stanislaus Fernandes, SJ  
Archbishop Emeritus: Gandhinagar

**Note:** We request our readers to share with us their opinion about the contents of *Proclaim*. --- Editor

### Holy Father's Prayer Intentions

#### September 2023: For people living on the margins

We pray for those persons living on the margins of society, in inhumane life conditions; may they not be overlooked by institutions and never considered of lesser importance.

#### October 2023: For the Synod

We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

# World *Mission* Day

Sunday, 22 October 2023

## ***How do we celebrate Mission Sunday?***

- Pray for those who are far from Christ  
... and for those who go to bring them back to Christ.
- Support missionary work through your talents, energy, skills and participation in the activities of the Church.
- Assist financially. Offer Generously.
- Be kind and compassionate, to be the hope to those people around us, so that they may see the love of Christ in us.

***... the missionary work is not something  
that is reserved for a few select individuals.  
It is the vocation of all Christians ...***

**Rev. Dr. Ambrose Pitchaimuthu**  
National Director, Pontifical Mission Organizations



***Let us be illumined by the  
Word of God.***



***Let us recognise Jesus in  
the Eucharist.***



***Let our feet set on the way in  
missionary outreach with joy.***

