

HOSPITALLER MISSION WEEK 15-21 October 2018

THEME OF WORLD MISSION SUNDAY:

Together with young people, let us bring the Gospel to all



INSTITUTIONAL THEME:

HOSPITALITY dissolves borders



Dear Co-workers, Volunteers, Sisters and Brothers:

Every year, on Pentecost Sunday, the Pope sends us his message for the WDP ¹.

In his message, he reminds us of some of the fundamentals which underpin the mission, and summarises his most important insights regarding the theme for the Day (some of which have already been developed in greater detail in other, more official, texts published previously, such as encyclicals or exhortations). He provides a short account dealing with one particular aspect or issue, and an idea appropriate to the current year regarding some particular matter on which the Pope is particularly focused. In this year's case, it is the Synod, which will convene in Rome in October this year, and which the Pope tells is "*offers us an opportunity to understand more fully, in the light of faith, what the Lord Jesus wants to say to you young people, and, through you, to all Christian communities*".

His message for the 2018 WDP addresses all the features of the mission, which are clearly set out in the title of this message, and which we can make our own by converting them into an appeal to our institutions, to experience and enable others to experience the enthusiasm of our vocation and commitment to the most disadvantaged, for **HOSPITALITY dissolves borders**.

This year, you will forgive us for offering you a less well-developed guide than usual, because we have just completed the General Chapter of the Congregation and we are now approaching the General Chapter of the Order, and find it difficult to draft and translate all the materials as we had done in previous years, and we are therefore asking you to complete them yourselves, or to use any previous years' documents which can help you.

It will also give us the opportunity to ask some of our young people, Brothers, Sisters, Volunteers, Co-workers... to suggest prayers of supplication or thanksgiving for this Week, or even to perform some significant gesture. Would you kindly let us know afterwards how you have lived the Day this year.

We also wish to announce that Pope Francis has proclaimed **the month of October 2019 as an Extraordinary Missionary Month** throughout the Church, under the theme: ***Baptised and Sent: the Church of Christ on a Mission for the World***. He has announced this well in advance so that everyone can make special preparations for it.

I send my best wishes to you all, united in prayer and by the challenge to feel anointed by the Spirit in HOSPITALITY and sent by Jesus to proclaim His Kingdom, practising it throughout the world, breaking down barriers, and dissolving borders and distances, as our Founders Saint John of God and St Benedict Menni.

¹ MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS FRANCIS FOR WORLD MISSION DAY 2018. From the Vatican, 20 May 2018, Solemnity of Pentecost.

Introduction:

“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, especially when we are young, feel as interior forces of love; they hold out promise for our future and they give direction to our lives. More than anyone else, young people feel the power of life breaking in upon us and attracting us. To live out joyfully our responsibility for the world is a great challenge. I am well aware of lights and shadows of youth; when I think back to my youth and my family, I remember the strength of my hope for a better future. The fact that we are not in this world by our own choice makes us sense that there is an initiative that precedes us and makes us exist. Each one of us is called to reflect on this fact: “I am a mission on this Earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world” (Evangelii Gaudium, 273).”

Introduction:

“The Church, by proclaiming what she freely received (cf. Mt 10:8; Acts 3:6), can share with you young people the way and truth which give meaning to our life on this earth. Jesus Christ, who died and rose for us, appeals to our freedom and challenges us to seek, discover and proclaim this message of truth and fulfilment. Dear young people, do not be afraid of Christ and his Church! For there we find the treasure that fills life with joy. I can tell you this from my own experience: thanks to faith, I found the sure foundation of my dreams and the strength to realize them. I have seen great suffering and poverty mar the faces of so many of our brothers and sisters. And yet, for those who stand by Jesus, evil is an incentive to ever greater love. Many men and women, and many young people, have generously sacrificed themselves, even at times to martyrdom, out of love for the Gospel and service to their brothers and sisters. From the cross of Jesus we learn the divine logic of self-sacrifice (cf. 1 Cor 1:17-25) as a proclamation of the Gospel for the life of the world (cf. Jn 3:16). To be set afire by the love of Christ is to be consumed by that fire, to grow in understanding by its light and to be warmed by its love (cf. 2 Cor 5:14). At the school of the saints, who open us to the vast horizons of God, I invite you never to stop wondering: “What would Christ do if he were in my place?”

Introduction:

“You too, young friends, by your baptism have become living members of the Church; together we have received the mission to bring the Gospel to everyone. You are at the threshold of life. To grow in the grace of the faith bestowed on us by the Church’s sacraments plunges us into that great stream of witnesses who, generation after generation, enable the wisdom and experience of older persons to become testimony and encouragement for those looking to the future. And the freshness and enthusiasm of the young makes them a source of support and hope for those nearing the end of their journey. In this blend of different stages in life, the mission of the Church bridges the generations; our faith in God and our love of neighbor are a source of profound unity..”

Thursday 18

Transmitting the faith

Introduction:

“This transmission of the faith, the heart of the Church’s mission, comes about by the infectiousness of love, where joy and enthusiasm become the expression of a newfound meaning and fulfilment in life. The spread of the faith “by attraction” calls for hearts that are open and expanded by love. It is not possible to place limits on love, for love is strong as death (cf. Song 8:6). And that expansion generates encounter, witness, proclamation; it generates sharing in charity with all those far from the faith, indifferent to it and perhaps even hostile and opposed to it. Human, cultural and religious settings still foreign to the Gospel of Jesus and to the sacramental presence of the Church represent the extreme peripheries, the “ends of the earth”, to which, ever since the first Easter, Jesus’ missionary disciples have been sent, with the certainty that their Lord is always with them (cf. Mt 28:20; Acts 1:8). This is what we call the *missio ad gentes*. The most desolate periphery of all is where mankind, in need of Christ, remains indifferent to the faith or shows hatred for the fullness of life in God. All material and spiritual poverty, every form of discrimination against our brothers and sisters, is always a consequence of the rejection of God and his love.”

Friday 19

To the ends of the earth

Introduction:

“The ends of the earth, dear young people, nowadays are quite relative and always easily “navigable”. The digital world – the social networks that are so pervasive and readily available – dissolves borders, eliminates distances and reduces differences. Everything appears within reach, so close and immediate. And yet lacking the sincere gift of our lives, we could well have countless contacts but never share in a true communion of life. To share in the mission to the ends of the earth demands the gift of oneself in the vocation that God, who has placed us on this earth, chooses to give us (cf. Lk 9:23-25). I dare say that, for a young man or woman who wants to follow Christ, what is most essential is to seek, to discover and to persevere in his or her vocation.”

Saturday 20

Bearing witness to love: volunteer

Introduction:

“I am grateful to all those ecclesial groups that make it possible for you to have a personal encounter with Christ living in his Church: parishes, associations, movements, religious communities, and the varied expressions of missionary service. How many young people find in missionary volunteer work a way of serving the “least” of our brothers and sisters (cf. Mt 25:40), promoting human dignity and witnessing to the joy of love and of being Christians! These ecclesial experiences educate and train young people not only for professional success, but also for developing and fostering their God-given gifts in order better to serve others. These praiseworthy forms of temporary missionary service are a fruitful beginning and, through vocational discernment, they can help you to decide to make a complete gift of yourselves as missionaries.”

Introduction:

“The Pontifical Mission Societies were born of young hearts as a means of supporting the preaching of the Gospel to every nation and thus contributing to the human and cultural growth of all those who thirst for knowledge of the truth. The prayers and the material aid generously given and distributed through the Pontifical Mission Societies enable the Holy See to ensure that those who are helped in their personal needs can in turn bear witness to the Gospel in the circumstances of their daily lives. No one is so poor as to be unable to give what they have, but first and foremost what they are. Let me repeat the words of encouragement that I addressed to the young people of Chile: “Never think that you have nothing to offer, or that nobody needs you. Many people need you. Think about it! Each of you, think in your heart: many people need me” (Meeting with Young People, Maipu Shrine, 17 January 2018).”



CONCLUDING PRAYER:

God of love,
show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
to be and to practise Hospitality
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.

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