



Metropolitan Archbishop of Izmir

Izmir, October 19, 2024

THE MESSAGE FOR MISSION SUNDAY

Every year on third Sunday of October Catholics all over the World are celebrating the Mission Sunday or “The day of the missions”. It is the Sunday, that unites us in prayer, solidarity, and support for the Church’s mission efforts.

This year’s theme, chosen by Pope Francis, is taken from the Gospel of Matthew: “Go and Invite Everyone to the Banquet,” (cf. Mt 22:9) expressing the inclusive and urgent call to bring God’s love to everyone, to announce the Kingdom of God to all humanity.

The whole Church has to accomplish her primary task, which is the preaching of the Gospel in today’s world and all of us are called to participate in this mission. The parable expresses the urgent call to go out and to invite everybody.

Why the gospel is good news? Because its deepest meaning is the announce expressed by the eyes witnesses of the death and resurrection of Christ. We proclaim his death, we announce his resurrection until he comes again. In the Gospel lies the entire mystery of our existence and deepest hope of our lives. The nucleus of our faith is the encounter with Christ, Risen Lord, who made us participate at the banquet of Kingdom through baptism. The foundation of mission is testimony of life, but the testimony comes from faithfulness and the faithfulness comes from the awareness of Christ’s excessive love for us all.

According to Pope Francis mission is *“a tireless going out to invite others to the Lord’s banquet.”* *“Mission, we see, is a tireless going out to all men and women, in order to invite them to encounter God and enter into communion with him. Tireless! God, great in love and rich in mercy, constantly sets out to encounter all men and women, and to call them to the happiness of his kingdom, even in the face of their indifference or refusal.”*

How should we participate at the mission of the Church? There are three ways: 1) By living an exemplary and transparent Christian life, 2) by prayer, and 3) by financial support of any missionary work of the Church.

World Mission Sunday challenges us to reflect on how we are living out our baptismal calling to witness to Christ in all situations and not to give up. It invites us to deepen our love of Christ, to welcome the power of the Holy Spirit afresh into our lives, and to be living examples – wherever we are and whoever we are – of the Father’s care for all of creation. Together, we are mission! The first and most powerful means of preaching Christ is by living a truly Christian life.



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Prayer is the second means of missionary work. Jesus said: “Without me you can do nothing” (Jn 15: 5). In the Gospel of Luke, we find the words of Jesus: “pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Lk 10: 2).

For its material existence, every Church needs support, especially young Churches of Africa and Asia, the poor Churches of Latin America and any generous work for the mission needs material support. On Missionary Sunday all collected offerings are gathered and sent to the Pontifical Mission Societies, to be distributed to the needy. According to our possibilities, we all are invited to give our part, to help the Church and all missionaries live and announce the Gospel.

Virgin Mary, having brought Jesus to Elizabeth and John the Baptist while He was still inside her was the first missionary. May she, who gave him birth to Jesus, for the salvation of humanity and faithfully remained with him under the cross, pray for us.

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