

29TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

100th World Mission Sunday: “Mission of evangelization a Work of Love!”

Readings: 1st: Is 45:1. 4-6; Ps:95; 2nd: I Thes 1, 1-5; Gos: Mt 22:15-21

Today, the twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we celebrate the 100th World Mission Day. For this reason, the mission “*ad gentes*” continues to be the most urgent. All the members of the Church are called to participate in this mission. Today is a privileged moment to engage in prayer and concrete gestures of solidarity to support God’s mission.

It is a celebration of grace because the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, offers wisdom and strength to those who are obedient to his actions. It is a celebration of joy because Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, who was sent to evangelize the world, supports and accompanies our missionary efforts.

In today’s second reading, Paul and his companions prayed for the church of Thessalonica. They preached the good news there but knew only God could sustain their work. So, they knew the importance of prayer in the mission. Therefore, we must continue to pray for missionaries as the Holy Father reminds us today.

We are called to play the same significant role played by St. Theresa of the Child Jesus. She never went on any foreign mission. Nevertheless, she was fervent in her prayers for the success of missionaries. Today, she is the patron saint of missionaries. Paul realized the importance of prayers for the success of his mission, so he pleaded: “Pray also for me, that I may be bold in speaking about the gospel as I should” (Eph 6, 19-20).

In today’s gospel, the Pharisees sought a way to discredit Christ’s message. This gospel reminds us of a fundamental reality that every missionary faces. As much as we preach the good news, detractors and difficulties abound. Hence, the Pharisees in today’s gospel represent the different obstacles a missionary must encounter in his work.

They come in different shapes and forms. They come like tests, various temptations, doubts, persecutions, threats to life, calumny, and alienation or loneliness, even amid

people. Therefore, for a missionary to overcome all these and be successful in today's world, He or she "must be as wise as a serpent and as gentle as a dove (Mt 10, 16). He or she must be a person of prayer and strong faith.

Any attack against missionaries is an attack against the good news or the gospel. When missionaries suffer, the good news suffers too. However, God, the owner of the mission is always in control and the good news always wins the battle. So, today the church offers us an opportunity to participate in this battle. We will win it with faith, prayer and solidarity with each other.

The joy of being a missionary does not come from what one receives. Instead, it comes from how many lives one touches and how much joy one can bring to others. It also comes from how much love one can communicate and give to others through the gospel.

Finally, in his message on this centennial Mission Sunday, *"One in Christ, United in Mission"*, Pope Leo XVI exhorts and extends a special invitation to all of us on this special moment in the history of Christ's mission: *"Let us all commit to contributing to the great mission of evangelization — which is always a work of love."* This is a call that all lovers of Christ's mission must heed.

Peace be with you all!

Maranatha!

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Watch on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H88jnoBbPmY>

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