

Missionary intentions of the Holy Father For 2011

JANUARY: We pray for unity among Christians

That Christians may attain full unity, witnessing to all the universal fatherhood of God

FEBRUARY: We pray for those suffering from disease

That Christian communities may witness to the presence of Christ in serving those who suffer from disease in those mission territories where the fight against disease is most urgent.

MARCH : We pray for those persecuted because of the Gospel

That the Holy Spirit may give light and strength to those in many regions of the world who are persecuted and discriminated against because of the Gospel.

APRIL : We pray for those who do not yet know Christ

That by proclamation of the Gospel and the witness of their lives, missionaries may bring Christ to those who do not yet know him.

MAY : We pray for the Church in China

That the Lord may help the Church in China persevere in fidelity to the Gospel and grow in unity.

JUNE : We pray for missionary vocations

That the Holy Spirit may bring forth from our communities many missionaries who are ready to be fully consecrated to spreading the Kingdom of God.

JULY: We pray for women in mission territories

That religious women in mission territories may be witnesses of the joy of the Gospel and living signs of the love of Christ.

AUGUST: We pray for Western Christians

That Western Christians may be open to the action of the Holy Spirit and rediscover the freshness and enthusiasm of their faith.

SEPTEMBER: We pray for Asia's Christian communities

That the Christian communities of Asia may proclaim the Gospel with fervor, witnessing to its beauty with the joy of faith.

OCTOBER: We pray for World Mission Day

That the celebration of World Mission Day may foster in the People of God a passion for evangelization with the willingness to support the missions with prayer and economic aid for the poorest Churches.

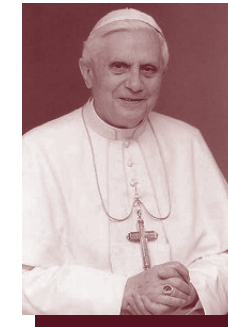
NOVEMBER : We pray for justice and reconciliation in Africa

That the African continent may find strength in Christ to pursue justice and reconciliation as set forth by the second Synod of African Bishops.

DECEMBER : We pray for children and young

That children and young people may be messengers of the Gospel and that they may be respected and preserved from all violence and exploitation.

Message of the Holy Father for World Mission Sunday October 24th 2010



Building Ecclesial Communion is the Key to the Mission

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
The month of October, with the celebration of World Mission Sunday, offers diocesan and parish communities, Institutes of Consecrated Life, Ecclesial Movements, and the entire People of God, an occasion for renewing their commitment to proclaim the Gospel and give pastoral activity a greater missionary character.

This annual event invites us to live out the liturgical, catechetical, charitable, and cultural means by which Jesus Christ calls us to the table of His Word and the Eucharist, to delight in the gift of His Presence, to form us in His school, and to live united to Him, Our Master and Lord, with ever greater awareness. He Himself tells us: "He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him" (Jn 14:21). It is only from this encounter with the Love of God that transforms our existence, that we can live in communion with Him and among ourselves and offer our brethren a credible testimony, giving reason for our hope (cf. 1 Pet 3:15). A mature faith, capable of entrusting itself completely to God in a filial manner, nourished by prayer, meditation on the Word of God, and study of the truths of the faith, is the condition necessary for promoting a new humanism, founded on Jesus' Gospel.

Also, in October, many countries resume their various church activities following the summer vacations. The Church invites us to learn from Mary, through the recitation of the Holy Rosary, how to contemplate the Father's loving plan for all men and to love them as He does. Is this not, as well, the meaning of the mission?

I grant you all, my blessings.

From the Vatican, February 6th, 2010

Benedict XVI

◆ We wish to see Jesus

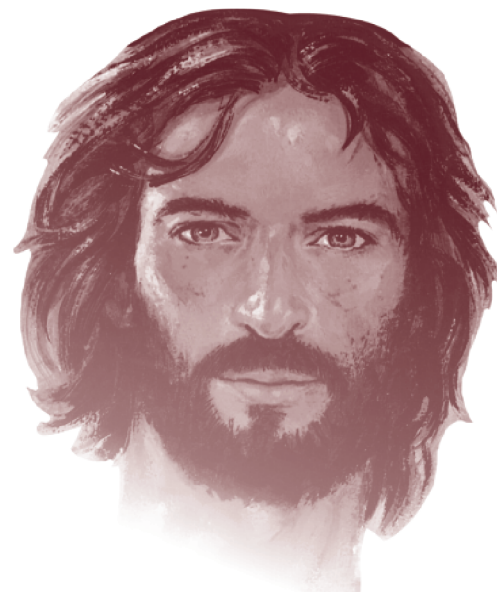
The Father, in fact, calls us to be beloved sons in His Son, the Beloved, and to see ourselves as brothers in Him, the Gift of Salvation for a humanity that is divided by discord and sin and Revealer of the true face of that God who "so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).

"We wish to see Jesus" (Jn 12:21) is the request made to the Apostle Philip in the Gospel of John by some Greeks, who have come to Jerusalem for the Passover pilgrimage. This resounds in our hearts as well in this month of October, which reminds us that the commitment and task of proclaiming the Gospel belongs to the entire Church, "missionary by her very nature" (Ad Gentes, 2), and calls us to become advocates of a newness of life, formed by authentic relationships, in communities founded on the Gospel. In a multi-ethnic society that experiences increasing forms of solitude and alarming indifference, Christians should learn to offer signs of hope and become universal brothers, cultivating the great ideals that transform history and, without false illusions or unnecessary fears, work to make the planet a home for all peoples.

◆ To make the Redeemer's Face shine

Like the Greek pilgrims of 2,000 years ago, so too the men of our time, perhaps at times unconsciously, ask believers to not only "speak" of Jesus but to "make Jesus visible," to make the Redeemer's Face shine in every corner of the earth before the generations of the new millennium and especially before the youth of every continent, who are privileged recipients and subjects in the proclamation of the Gospel. They should perceive that Christians bear Christ's word because He is the Truth, because they have found in Him the meaning, the truth about their life.

These considerations regard the missionary mandate that all the baptized and the entire Church have received, but that cannot be fulfilled in a credible manner without a profound personal, communal, and pastoral conversion. In fact, the awareness of the call to announce the Gospel not only inspires every individual believer, but all the diocesan and parochial communities, to an integral renewal and to an ever greater openness to missionary cooperation among the Churches, to promote the proclamation of the Gospel in the heart of every person, every people, culture, race, nationality, in every place. This awareness is heightened through the work of the Fidei Donum priests, consecrated men and women, catechists, and lay missionaries, in a constant effort to promote ecclesial communion, so that the phenomenon of "interculturalism" may be incorporated into a framework of unity in which the Gospel is leaven of liberty and progress, a source of fraternity, humility, and peace (cfr. Ad Gentes, 8). The Church, in fact, "is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race" (Lumen Gentium, 1).



◆ God is love

Ecclesial communion is brought about through the encounter with the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who through the Church's preaching reaches out to all men and establishes them in communion with Himself and therefore, with the Father and the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Jn. 1:3). Christ establishes the new relationship between God and man. "He Himself revealed to us that 'God is love' (1 John 4:8) and at the same time taught us that the new command of love was the basic law of human perfection and hence of the world's transformation. To those, therefore, who believe in divine love, He gives assurance that the way of love lies open to men and that the effort to establish a universal brotherhood is not a hopeless one" (Gaudium et Spes, 38).

The Church becomes "communion" starting from the Eucharist in which Christ, present in the bread and wine, with His sacrifice of love establishes the Church as His Body, uniting us to the one Triune God and among each other (cf. 1 Cor 10:16). In the Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, I wrote: "The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him" (no. 84). The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: "an authentically eucharistic Church is a missionary Church" (ibid.), capable of proclaiming with conviction: "what we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; for our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:3).1.



◆ Proclaiming the Gospel

Dear brothers and sisters, in this World Mission Sunday in which the eye of the heart widens its perspective to look upon the vastness of the mission, may we all see ourselves as active participants in the Church's task of proclaiming the Gospel. Missionary zeal has always been the mark of vitality among our Churches (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, 2) and their cooperation is a unique testimony of unity, fraternity, and solidarity that makes them credible heralds of Saving Love!

Therefore, I renew my invitation to prayer and, in spite of the economic difficulties, to fraternal, concrete aid in support of the younger Churches. Such signs of love and solidarity, whose distribution is overseen in the valuable service of the Pontifical Mission Societies, to whom I express my gratitude, will go towards the support of priests, seminarians, and catechists in the most far off missionary lands and will become a source of encouragement for the young ecclesial communities.

In concluding this annual message for World Mission Sunday, I wish to express my affectionate acknowledgement of all missionaries, who offer their testimony to the Kingdom of God in the most far off and difficult places, often at the cost of their own lives. It is to them, who are at the forefront in announcing the Gospel, that every believer lends his friendship, closeness, and support. May God, who "loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7), fill them with spiritual fervor and profound joy.

Like Mary's "yes," every generous response of the ecclesial community to the divine call to fraternal charity will inspire new apostolic and ecclesial maternity (cf. Gal 4:4,19:26), that in awe before the mystery of God who is Love, who "in the fullness of time... sent His Son, born of a woman" (Gal 4:4), gives new apostles confidence and audacity. This response will make all the faithful capable of "rejoicing in hope" (Rom 12:12) in the fulfillment of the plan of God, who desires "that the whole human race might form one people of God and be built up into one temple of the Holy Spirit" (Ad Gentes, 7).

From the Vatican, February 6th 2010

Benedict XVI

