



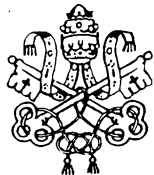
Scotland's donations were distributed to support the missionary work of three dioceses in Nigeria (Jalingo, Kano & Lokoja) and four dioceses in South Africa (Tzaneen, Umtata, Umzimkulu, & Witbank). It is worth highlighting that because people used the donation envelopes last year, it allowed MISSIO to increase its Gift Aid claim by nearly £10,000. When using the envelope provided, please complete the Gift Aid Declaration, if you are eligible to do so. This increases your donation at no extra cost to you.

Pope Benedict says that Mission Day is not an isolated moment but a precious occasion for pausing to reflect on whether and how we respond to the missionary vocation, an essential response for the life of the Church. So I invite you to be generous today to support mission overseas and to respond to the call to be missionary here and now. As we do so, we join with every Catholic diocese, rich or poor, throughout the world in contributing to this global solidarity fund to the 1,069 mission dioceses who depend on our support.

This particular Mission Sunday also has special significance as today another missionary saint is declared. Blessed Guido Maria Conforti, Bishop of Parma, founder of the Xaverian Missionary Family and first president of the Pontifical Missionary Union, will be canonised in Rome today by Pope Benedict XVI. Our prayers and support for the global mission of the Church will be joined with those of the pilgrims present in St Peter's Basilica, including a group from Scotland.

May World Mission Day renew your commitment to proclaim the good news in your everyday life wherever you are.

Rev Tom Welsh sx
National Director for the Propagation of the Faith



Mission Sunday Letter

To be read at all Masses

23rd October 2011

MISSIO Scotland,
Pontifical Mission Societies
St. Andrew's, 4 Laird Street, Coatbridge, ML5 3LJ
Reg. Charity No. SCO 14858

World Mission Day – 23rd October 2011

Letter from MISSIO Scotland National Director

Theme: Go Proclaim the Good News

Today is World Mission Sunday.

I wonder what picture the word mission brings to mind? Maybe of someone we know who has chosen to be a missionary going to a faraway place. And what about you? Do you see yourself as a missionary?

In 2003, Stefano was a 16-year-old student in the seminary in Gulu, northern Uganda, when he was abducted, along with 40 other students, by rebels who wanted to turn them into soldiers in the Lord's Resistance Army. The rebels wanted to teach the boys to kill. For two months he saw some of his friends beaten and kicked to death or slaughtered with machetes when they dropped from exhaustion. Most of those taken were eventually killed and 12 are still missing. Stefano escaped in the confusion when the rebels were attacked by government soldiers. Today, despite all he suffered, Stefano has returned to his studies and become a priest.

Like Fr Stefano, you and I can 'live in Christ Jesus', when we trust in God, open ourselves to the call of the Spirit, offer ourselves in the service of our brothers and sisters in need, announce the God of love and hope, and denounce unjust situations that dehumanize and kill others, preventing us from living in peace and justice.

As we celebrate World Mission Day, Pope Benedict reminds us that the Gospel is a gift entrusted to all the baptised, not just some. A gift to be shared with all people. Good news to be passed on to others. His prayer is that World Mission Day will reawaken in each person the joy and desire to go out to meet humanity taking Christ to all.

Today's readings show us that proclaiming the good news is not about power and privilege but leading others to love God and love one's neighbour through our witness. Just as the reading from the book of Exodus reminds us of our responsibility to care for the most vulnerable in our human family, so also today's Gospel affirms that love of God and of our neighbour is central and essential to the practice of our faith.

The second collection today is for the Association for the Propagation of the Faith (APF), one of the four pontifical associations under the banner of MISSIO. MISSIO is the Church's official support organisation for overseas mission, raising awareness and funds for missionary and pastoral work worldwide. APF provides solidarity funds to assist young dioceses in poorer countries to proclaim the good news. In past years, my predecessor as National Director was able to convey in a more personal manner his direct experience of visiting some of the dioceses supported by your generosity. Having only recently been appointed by the Bishops of Scotland, I have not yet had that opportunity but have already received a letter from Fr Bernard Makadani Zulu, National Director of Missio-Zambia, who wrote,

"I express my appreciation and deep sense of gratitude for all you have been and done for us. Many people are showered with God's blessings through you. I continually experience the spirit of profound missionary communion. I thank all the benefactors through you, who give us their generous support for our ministry because we are all acutely aware of the many families and homes that face serious economic difficulties and yet, they continue to support our priestly ministry in such an effective way."

Last year in 2010, Catholic parishes in Scotland donated £368,028 to the APF, part of a total of £502,433 when the Missionary Children contributions and St Peter the Apostle Fund for seminarians are included. This represents an increase of 8% over the previous year and such generosity is doubly appreciated during this period of economic difficulty.