

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release.

World Mission Sunday: Save the date!

World Mission Sunday - the one day in the year when the entire global Church comes together in support of mission - will happen on 23 October 2022. Coordinated by Missio, the Pope's charity for world mission, World Mission Sunday is an opportunity to support every mission diocese and faith community which are in need of our help.

It is one of only three annual Papal collections, and has been especially chosen by the Holy Father to support the mission of the Church in the world via Missio. This special day is celebrated in every Catholic community in the world. It is a moment of grace to express solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are living in situations of poverty, violence and oppression.

The theme the Holy Father has chosen this year is: *'You shall be my witnesses (Acts 1:8)* In his message for World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis says:

'This is the heart of Jesus' teaching to the disciples regarding their mission in the world. The disciples are to be witnesses of Jesus, in every place and situation, thanks to the grace of the Holy Spirit that they will receive... In a similar way, every Christian is called to be a missionary and witness to Christ. The Church's only mission, as the community of Christ's disciples, is to bring the Gospel to the entire world by bearing witness to Christ.'

Our prayer, reflection and material help are a lifeline to missionaries in all continents who are striving to preach and live the Good News that God loves us.

World Mission Sunday is vital to the growth of the Church and the spread of the Gospel in predominately impoverished and remote areas overseas. Masses and collections will happen in every diocese across the world, and every single donation supports churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or poor.

One of the wonderful things about World Mission Sunday is that every parish around the world prays for and financially supports our global Church. For example, in 2021 the Church in Kenya gave just over £70,000 and the Church in Sri Lanka gave almost £25,000.

These funds build much-needed infrastructure, from chapels and schools to orphanages, clinics and dispensaries. Requested by the local community, support from Missio transforms lives and creates a hub from which the young Church can flourish and grow.

On World Mission Sunday itself, we will be honouring the brave and selfless women and men who are already making a huge difference in some of the world's most troubled areas. This year, our focus will be on Ethiopia and the work of Maria, a lay missionary from the Community of St Paul.

Maria works and lives with an Ethiopian community in Meki. This very large population is situated in a rural area, and the people of Meki survive by working the land and rearing cattle. Because of this, many women are forced to look

overseas for work. But this often leaves them in vulnerable situations where they suffer abuse and isolation away from home.

As Director of the Kidist Mariam Centre, Maria works to provide a safe, supportive, and educational environment for vulnerable women, so they no longer have to leave their families and communities to find work. Instead, Maria's amazing local team offer women various vocational training opportunities, including food preparation, hairdressing and tailoring. Maria shares:

'For me, every person in the Centre is unique... every person is full of joy, full of hopes. And my dream is to see all of them, not only the ones coming here, but even the ones they are inviting; every person coming to the Centre to feel happy and to feel they are doing their best'.

Missio: today, tomorrow, together

As the Pope's official charity for world mission, Missio enables Catholics in England and Wales to live out the call received at Baptism: to share in the Church's universal mission.

And in the lead-up to World Mission Sunday 2022 (WMS2022), Missio will be here to help individuals, schools, organisations, dioceses, parishes, communities, orders and congregations in England and Wales to get behind this worldwide Church initiative.

Missio invites everyone to get involved in WMS2022, joining our sisters and brothers around the world in faith and renewal. You can find out more about WMS22 on 23 October at missio.org.uk/wms

Notes to editors:

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Please get in touch with Michelle for more information and hi-res images.

- World Mission Sunday is coordinated by Missio, the Pope's official charity for world mission.
- The World Mission Sunday collection is one of just three personally requested by the Pope each year.
- World Mission Sunday takes place annually on the penultimate Sunday in October.
- Missio worldwide supports every mission diocese overseas (1,070) until they are self-sufficient.
- Missio ignites God's love by helping missionaries to work alongside communities globally that are poor or in need, regardless of their background or belief.

Sometimes this need might be very specific: a motorbike for a priest to celebrate Mass in remote villages; a simple community hall so people can gather together; vaccinations to protect vulnerable children. Whatever our missionaries need to help them share the joy of the Gospel, Missio strives to provide it.

We are proud to be the Pope's charity for world mission.

By supporting Missio, you play a valuable part in creating a vibrant Catholic Church for the future.

By volunteering, raising or donating funds, and by praying with children, grandchildren or students, YOU make our mission possible.

Together we are enriching **today's** global Catholic community.

Together we are training **tomorrow's** generation of priests and sisters.

Together we are giving hope to the world's poorest children.

Together we are Missio.

- Offerings from Catholics in England and Wales on World Mission Sunday are combined with donations to the Association for the Propagation of the Faith (APF) in all countries where the Church is present and distributed to 1,070 mission dioceses worldwide.
- In 2021, the World Mission Sunday collection in parishes across England and Wales raised £483,798 for Missio's work.