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"I remember celebrating World Mission Sunday as a boy": Pope Leo XIV's centenary message for World Mission Sunday

Pope Leo XIV has released a personal video message for the centenary of World Mission Sunday, recalling how the annual celebration helped shape his missionary vocation. In his message, the Holy Father calls on Catholics to support the Church's mission through prayer and practical help. Celebrated on 18 October this year, World Mission Sunday will mark 100 years since its establishment by Pope Pius XI in 1926.

World Mission Sunday holds a special place in his life, having helped shape his missionary journey.

"I remember celebrating World Mission Sunday when I was a boy in the United States," he says. The prayers offered each year, he reflects, "mysteriously helped prepare my heart to hear Jesus' call and to follow Him as an Augustinian missionary."

He adds that the prayers and contributions of the faithful *"sustained and encouraged my missionary ministry in Peru."*

"So I express my heartfelt gratitude to all who have supported the missions through World Mission Sunday over the years," Pope Leo says.

Reflecting on this year's theme, *'One in Christ, united in mission'*, the Holy Father says that through Baptism all the faithful become one Body in Christ. Jesus, he says, calls them to work as one family to bring everyone into a communion of faith.

He then renews the appeal from his Message for World Mission Sunday:

"Let us all commit to contributing to the great mission of evangelisation — which is always a work of love — according to our own vocation and the gifts we have received. Your prayers and practical support, particularly on World Mission Sunday, will be a great help in bringing the Gospel of God's love to everyone, especially the poorest and those most in need."

In Australia, the World Mission Sunday appeal is led by Catholic Mission, the Australian arm of the Pontifical Mission Societies. Gifts made in parishes and online support the Church's work in Australia and around the world, wherever the need is greatest.

To watch Pope Leo XIV's video message and learn how to support the Church's mission this World Mission Sunday, visit catholicmission.org.au/worldmissionmonth.

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For further information:

Astrid Delayre
Senior Communications Officer

Tel: 0458 489 877

Email:
media@catholicmission.org.au

Website:
catholicmission.org.au

About Catholic Mission

Catholic Mission is the Australian agency of the Pontifical Mission Societies – the Catholic Church’s global organisation dedicated to continuing Jesus Christ’s mission in the world: that all may have life to the full. Catholic Mission contributes funding and project support to critical church-run initiatives in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South America. These include spiritual formation, pastoral care, education, health, sanitation, and agricultural programs. Here in Australia, we form people to go out and be missionary in their professional and personal lives; to pray, advocate and act for those on the margins. Catholic Mission has offices in 27 Australian dioceses.