



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

October 2018

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Church's Eucharistic celebration for the Missions is on October 21, 2018. In Pope Francis' message for this year's celebration he explains that "life is a mission." "Each one of us is called to reflect on this fact: 'I am a mission on this Earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world' (*Evangelii Gaudium* 273)," he writes. Focusing on young people, he notes: "In speaking to you, I also address all Christians who live out in the Church the adventure of their life as children of God."

I invite all of us in the diocese to see World Mission Sunday as a special moment to live out the mission we share as God's children, the mission to bring the Gospel to the whole world. I encourage you to be a "voice for mission" through your prayers and through the help that you are able to give in support of the priests, religious and lay pastoral leaders who work tirelessly, day in and day out, proclaiming the Gospel, building the Church, and serving the poor in more than 1,100 mission dioceses in Asia and Africa, the Pacific Islands, and parts of Latin America and Europe.

The prayers and material aid generously given to the collection for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith on World Mission Sunday, the Pope explains, continue to support the "preaching of the Gospel to every nation," thus "contributing to the human and cultural growth of all those who thirst for knowledge of the truth."

"Mission revitalizes faith," Pope Francis reminds us, quoting Saint Pope John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* (#2). May your commitment to the Lord's continuing mission renew your faith and be a blessing in your life. And may you know of my personal gratitude for your generous response on this unique day for the entire Church, and throughout the year, as you are able.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *David J. Walkowiak*

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids