



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

October 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

World Mission Sunday – the annual, worldwide Eucharistic celebration for the Missions of the Church will be on **October 24** this year. This important day in the life of the Church universal fortifies our understanding of our shared call to mission, bestowed upon us at Baptism.

Pope Francis' message for World Mission Sunday reflects on the theme: **"We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard"** (Acts 4:20). The Holy Father shares his zeal, reminding us that, "as Christians, we cannot keep the Lord to ourselves," as we "recall with gratitude all those men and women who by their testimony of life help us to renew our baptismal commitment to be generous and joyful apostles of the Gospel." He invites us to speak of our faith!

World Mission Sunday provides us with that very opportunity. We can speak about our faith and respond to our missionary call – *through prayer, participation in the Eucharist, and giving generously* to the collection for the **Society for the Propagation of the Faith** on that special day. Your gifts support and sustain priests, religious and lay pastoral leaders in more than 1,100 mission dioceses in Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands, and parts of Latin America and Europe as they proclaim the Gospel, build the Church, serve the poor and speak of our shared faith in all corners of the world.

"The global pandemic has brought to the fore and amplified the pain, the solitude, the poverty, and the injustices experienced by so many people," reminds Pope Francis. This year, as the world recovers from the loss and the challenges that resulted, let us respond with reciprocal generosity to the fullest extent that we are able.

If you were unable to support missionaries last year due to difficulties arising from the pandemic and assembly, I urge you to double your generosity for those most in need. As we rebuild our lives, help us to also reach out in solidarity and support for the Mission Church, and the work and witness of missionaries in the Pope's missions.

In this spirit, I offer my sincere personal gratitude for your kind missionary heart, reaching out in love throughout Mission Month.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids