



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

October 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On October 22, as we observe World Mission Sunday, we stand in solidarity with the Missions of the Church in this annual worldwide Eucharistic celebration.

Pope Francis chose “Hearts on fire, feet on the move” as this year’s theme. The Holy Father invites us to kindle the fire of Christ's love in our hearts and to actively share this warmth with the world around us. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we go forth and bring the Good News to all corners of the world.

Founded by French laywoman Blessed Pauline Jaricot in 1822, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith is an essential source of aid for the Church's missionary work. In the United States, we benefited from these donations: up until 1908, we received close to 7 million dollars, the equivalent of over 250 million today. The dioceses in our country considered mission territories have continued to receive subsidies. Fairbanks, Alaska, was the last of those dioceses and received its final subsidy payment this year!

The World Mission Sunday collection assists the Holy Father meet his Petrine obligation to build up the Church in over 1,100 dioceses and territories that are too young and/or too poor to sustain themselves. Offerings support the formation of seminarians and religious men and women, assist in the construction of schools and orphanages, and enables missionaries to build churches in remote and resource-limited areas, and to meet essential works to proclaim the Gospel and celebrate the Sacraments.

Embodying this year’s theme, I urge you to keep your hearts aflame and your feet moving this World Mission Sunday. Your prayers are invaluable, and your financial support provides life-giving aid to our brothers and sisters in the world’s most vulnerable communities.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids