

REFLECT—YOUR BAPTISMAL CALL TO BE MISSIONARY

THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPEL FOR WORLD MISSION SUNDAY, 2018

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Reading 1: Isaiah 53: v10-11 • Reading 2: Hebrews 4:14-16 •
Gospel: Mark 10: 35-45

We are baptized for Mission. Every Sunday, when we hear the word of God and receive the Body and Blood of the Lord, our baptism belonging to Christ and his Church is renewed. And so, our Missionary vocation that comes to us with Baptism is renewed. On World Mission Sunday, the focus on our baptismal missionary



vocation receives greater emphasis from the Church. We listen to the biblical texts for this Sunday in Ordinary Time with the ears of faith to inspire our Missionary efforts and those of the whole Church.

The great Prophet Isaiah reminds us again that the Lord desires the people he has made his own to be faithful to him. The Lord alone crushes the sin of those who

separate themselves from him. Like the Prophet we are missioned to go into the midst of our brothers and sisters to announce the desire of the Lord for fidelity from his people. At times our announcement takes the shape of the sacrifices and prayers that we make on behalf of ourselves and one another for our complete return to the Lord—much like the Prophet. The Psalmist reminds us that the mercy of the Lord is with us in our Missionary task as we place our trust in him.

The Missionary *par excellence* is Jesus Christ, our great high priest. The Letter to the Hebrews recalls for us how Jesus has gone before us as the Savior and Redeemer of all and gives us the timely help we need to share in his redeeming and saving work. When we unite ourselves to the action of his cross, bringing all people and all things to the Father through him, we are holding fast to the confession of our faith and also making it known. Let us not fail to approach the throne of grace, the eternal cross of Christ in glory, as the beginning and end of our baptismal missionary work.

Jesus highlights and honors our baptismal vocation in the Gospel dialogue with James and John. They wanted the privilege of sitting on his right and left in glory which was not his to give. But what he could give to them and gives to all of us is to drink of the cup of his suffering, to be one with him in the baptism of his cross. This we have all received in a most generous way in the Sacrament of Baptism and anew in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. These gifts of the Lord anchor us in our baptism for mission as we become over and over again servants of all for their ransom in Christ for salvation.

Prepared by the Office for Divine Worship—Archdiocese of Philadelphia

World MISSION SUNDAY, 2018

MORE INSPIRATION

Learn more about the **Extraordinary Missionary Month** to be celebrated in October, 2019 to talk about this upcoming **EXTRAORDINARY YEAR** in Philadelphia:

November 30, 2019 will celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the promulgation of the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, with which Pope Benedict XV sought to give new impetus to the Missionary task of proclaiming the Gospel. The Pope recognized the need for a more evangelical approach to Missionary work in the world, so that it would be purified of any colonial overtones and kept far away from the nationalistic and expansionistic aims that had proved so disastrous. Benedict XV thus laid special emphasis on the *missio ad gentes*, employing the concepts and language of the time, in an effort to revive a sense of duty towards the Missions.

That duty is a response to Jesus' perennial command to "go into the whole world and

proclaim the Gospel to every creature." Mk 16:15

Obeying this mandate of the Lord is not an option for the

Church: in the words of the Second Vatican Council, it is her "*essential task*," for the Church is "*Missionary by nature*."



With this, Pope Francis declared a month, as, "today Missionary activity still represents the *greatest challenge* for the Church" and "the Missionary task must remain foremost."

Help the **Pontifical Mission Societies** help the developing Churches in 1.111 Dioceses worldwide.