

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY 2020



Autumn 2020

Dear Friend,

On 16 January 1981, I was called to a rare meeting with the General Superior of the Mill Hill Missionaries to receive my first appointment to a missionary area. After six years of seminary training, which included one year of missionary experience in Nairobi, I believed with some degree of youthful innocence and arrogance, that I was ready 'to go out and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations'.

Generations of Mill Hill Missionaries had the same experience, though in former days the method of announcing appointments did not involve dialogue or explanation. At the appropriate time, those ready were gathered at the foot of the main staircase in St Joseph's College, Mill Hill. The General Superior would appear from on high with an alphabetical list of those to be appointed and then announced the name and their future missionary placement.

Though there was an atmosphere of joyful expectation, inevitably some were disappointed and others apprehensive about being sent to a place they had never heard of. Without exception everyone accepted his appointment without question. After all, for many years they had said to God, 'Here I am, send me!' Now their willingness had been answered.

By 1981 life had changed, and dialogue and consultation were the order of the day. I had expressed beforehand a desire to return to Kenya and I was granted my wish and sent to Kisumu.

My first few weeks in Kisumu were very challenging. The people were so kind and welcoming, so keen to understand and practice their faith, so naturally close to the mysteries of life that I often felt that they were the real missionaries. I was the disciple, still with much to learn.

Over the last 40 years of my life, I have learnt a vital lesson from this ancient tradition of 'sending out on mission'. None of us are fully prepared to be sent out to share the treasures of our faith, the Good News of new life in Jesus Christ. If we rely solely on our own resources, on our assumptions and our own personal vision, we are bound to fail.

Our celebration this World Mission Sunday is focused on our willingness to be sent, not our ability or readiness to be sent. 'Here I am, Lord, just as I am, a willing but unlikely candidate. I am in your hands. Send me!'

This is a golden opportunity for us all to support, with prayer and charity, those communities across the world who are as willing as we are to hear and respond to God's call.

In his message for World Mission Sunday 2020, the Pope says that we all have a mission and that mission is a free and conscious response to God's call to share his love with all humanity. Over the last few months, the fragility of life has been all too apparent, but we have also seen that when we stand together in solidarity with one another and share our resources, hope is renewed.

Please continue →

On 18 October – World Mission Sunday – we have an opportunity to consider God’s question: ‘Whom shall I send?’ and to think about how best we can respond and support all those who have responded with brave and generous hearts: ‘Here I am, send me!’ God continues to seek those whom he can send throughout the world to bear witness to his love.

I thank you for your support of World Mission Sunday in the past, and assure you that your generosity and prayers this World Mission Sunday mean that people like Sr Nilcélia (see *Mission Today* page 12) can keep serving and sharing God’s love.

She is just one example of many selfless missionaries who live and work amongst some of the most vulnerable communities in the world.

Missio empowers the Catholic Church globally, showing the love of Christ to everyone, especially to those in need. Your donations keep health clinics and schools open, train tomorrow’s generation of Priests and Sisters, and create a vibrant Catholic Church for the future.

We hope you find that the stories, updates and reflections in *Mission Today* inspire you to pray for, and take part in, the mission of Jesus to share God’s love with everyone. Your prayers and any gift you can share are crucial to the lives of countless people throughout the world. Thank you.

With my very best wishes,

Father Tony.

Fr Anthony Chantry
Missio National Director

My Mission Prayer

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Thank you!

Here I am, Lord,
send me

to share your love
with all people.

May I be empowered
and carried by you

to be courageous
and enthusiastic
in bearing faithful witness

to the merciful Father,
to the love of his Son,
Jesus Christ,

and to the divine life
in the Holy Spirit,
one God forever and ever.

Amen

