

Papal missionary message

World Mission Sunday 2026: One in Christ, united in mission



Pope Leo XIV has chosen the theme for the 100th World Mission Sunday: One in Christ, united in mission.

"Following the Jubilee Year, I wish to encourage the whole Church to continue its missionary journey with joy and zeal in the Holy Spirit," the Holy Father said in his message for World Mission Sunday. "This requires hearts united in Christ, reconciled communities and, in everyone, a willingness to cooperate with generosity and trust."

The theme echoes Pope Leo's own papal motto: *In illo uno unum*, which means "In the One, we are one." In his message, the Holy Father reflects on how unity powers an evangelical mission of love.

"The more united we are in Christ, the better able we will be to carry out together the mission that he entrusts to us."

In his message, the Holy Father begins with a reflection on the importance of unity, saying "the mystery of union with Christ lies at the heart of mission." He goes on to speak of our life in union with Christ. He says that this union, which in turn unifies us with the whole communion of believers, is the "source of all missionary fruitfulness."

He warns us that our witness is undermined by polarization, conflict and lack of trust and says that to continue the missionary work Christ entrusted to his disciples we must have, "hearts that are reconciled and eager for communion."

"It is through the witness of a reconciled, fraternal and united community that the proclamation of the Gospel acquires its full communicative power."

The Holy Father goes on to explain that this Christian unity has a purpose – a mission. He points out that Jesus himself makes this clear in the Gospel of John when he says, "So that the world may believe that you have sent me" (Jn 17:21).

"No baptized person is exempt from or indifferent to mission," he says. "Everyone, each according to their own vocation and condition of life, participates in the great work that Christ has entrusted to his Church."

"If unity is the condition of mission, love is its essence."

Having reflected on the two aspects of his theme – union with Christ and the communion of believers and union in the mission – the Holy Father concludes his message with a reflection on the mission itself. "The Good News that we are sent to proclaim to the world is not an abstract ideal," he says, "it is the Gospel of God's faithful love, which became flesh in the face and life of Jesus Christ."

Pope Leo XIV specifically calls on each of us to contribute to the great mission of evangelization, which he calls a work of love. He reminds us that prayers and practical support, gifts no matter how small, become a "meaningful act of missionary communion."

The Holy Father concludes his message with a prayer:

Holy Father, make us one in Christ, rooted in his love that unites and renews. May all members of the Church be united in mission, docile to the Holy Spirit, courageous in bearing witness to the Gospel, proclaiming and daily embodying your faithful love for all creatures.

Bless all missionary men and women, support them in their efforts, and watch over them in hope!

Mary, Queen of Missions, accompany our work of evangelization in every corner of the earth: make us instruments of peace, and grant that the whole world may recognize in Christ the light that saves. Amen.

To read the full text of the Holy Father's message for World Mission Sunday, go to missionsocieties.ca