



THY KINGDOM COME (Mt. 6:10)
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PASTORAL LETTER

MISSION SUNDAY

Dear Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and the Faithful,

Thy Kingdom Come!
Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Once again mission Sunday is around the corner. This year it falls on 19 October 2025. May I share some reflections on Mission Sunday to fortify our missionary commitment. The great command of Jesus to the disciples is the foundation stone of Christ's mission in the world. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:19-20).

The origin of mission Sunday can be traced back to the early 20th century. The idea of a universal mission awareness day was first proposed by Pope Pius XI in 1926, during a period when the Church was increasingly focusing on global outreach. The Holy Father's encyclical, *Rerum Ecclesiae*, urged for a collective effort in supporting the Church's missions. This initiative culminated in the establishment of Mission Sunday in 1926, aiming to create a specific day each year to encourage prayer, reflection and financial support for missionary work.

World Mission Day established by Pope Pius XI in 1926 aims to foster a sense of global solidarity in Church's mission to evangelize. It is a day dedicated to create awareness, prayers and financial support for missionary work. The observance undercovers

the need for Catholics worldwide to embrace their role in the Church's mission supporting the efforts to spread the Gospel and serve those in need.

World Mission Day assumes a unique significance in the Indian context as we reflect the diversity of religions and cultural traditions. The multifaceted spiritual landscape presents both challenges and opportunities for missionary work. The primary goal of missionary work is proclamation of Good News - "the kingdom of God is at hand repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mk. 1:15). By signs and wonders it shall be confirmed (Cf. Acts 2:43, 5:12). Thus the disciples witnessed their Christ's representative mission by their love and service. By your love everyone shall know that you are my disciples (Jn. 13:35). Somehow in our context today our mission is misinterpreted as works oriented only for baptism. Though we do not exclude baptism, we do not exclusively mean baptism either. It is the work of the Holy Spirit and with the full consent of the person concerned. To evoke faith in a person there should be internal disposition. Indeed Holy Mother Church categorically denounces forced baptism and wooing anyone through material benefits. However the invitation to the divine banquet (Mt. 22:1-14) becomes poignant as the Church seeks to engage with, and serve vast and varied populations.

The World Mission Day reminds every baptized person his/her mission to evangelize by word and deed. Strengthening local mission in education, healthcare and social justice make a tangible impact even today. Fostering global solidarity by our support in cash and kind reinforces the idea that the mission of the Church is universal. World Mission Day inspire the youth empowering them to take an active role in spreading the Gospel and serving their communities. Praying for missionaries provide strength and guidance for all those who are in the forefront of the missions. We shall do our customary practices of prayers, acts of charity, helping the sick and elderly, mission Sunday auction etc. with more earnestness and enthusiasm. World Mission Day offers a profound opportunity for reflection and action, particularly in the diverse and dynamic context of India. With good wishes and prayers,



Yours devotedly in Christ

† Ephrem Nariculam
Bishop, Diocese of Chanda

NB: Please explain the content of this pastoral letter to the people on Mission Sunday 19th October 2025.