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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today we are reminded in two ways to be persistent missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. In his message for World Mission Sunday, the Holy Father encourages us, "As Christians, we cannot keep the Lord to ourselves: the Church's evangelizing mission finds outward fulfillment in the transformation of our world and in the care of creation." At the same time, with the opening of the Synodal Process around the world, Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on a theme that is decisive for its life and mission: "It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium" (Address for the ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops, 17 October 2015).

We celebrate World Mission Sunday with the Universal Church on October 24, offering prayer and reflection on our mission to proclaim the gospel to all the nations. The collection taken this day supports over 1,000 mission dioceses through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. These local churches are the poorest in the world and yet they joyfully share the Lord and provide hope amidst struggles in Africa, Asia and remote areas of Latin America and the Pacific Islands. The collection also provides for mission dioceses in the Middle East, Northeast Africa, India and Eastern Europe through the Catholic Near East Welfare Association.

Also, during this time, The Church of God is convoked in Synod. Today, the Archdiocese of Chicago is celebrating the opening of the process for the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, in October 2023. The theme of this synod is "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission" and so is intimately tied to our celebration of World Mission.

This global pandemic has highlighted the peripheries of our world and the importance of widening our circles to reach out to neighbors both nearby and far away. Let this celebration of World Mission Sunday and the opening of the Synodal Process be an opportunity for pause and prayerful solidarity with our sisters and brothers in faith around the world. May we give thanks for their witness and recommit ourselves to our own call to be missionary disciples. With every wish, I remain.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago