



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

October 15, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our Lord, before returning to the Father, announced the gift of the Holy Spirit and charged His followers with being His witnesses "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

We are familiar with this fundamental duty of all Catholics. Each year, we renew this baptismal call, especially during our Easter celebration. As the entire Church celebrates **World Mission Sunday on October 23**, we have a chance to fulfill this duty in a special way. Through prayer and sacrifice we are able to support those missionaries who bring the "Good News" of Jesus to faraway places. In doing so, we are renewing our own vocation as missionaries. The Church is, after all, *mission*.

Thankfully, there are many organizations – some Catholic – that extend the treasure and talent of Americans to those parts of the world where people are struggling to get enough to eat or send their children to school. However, the Church's missionary activity begins with the proclamation of faith: "Jesus is Lord!" He is our common hope – a hope that not only clothes and educates, but also saves. On World Mission Sunday, I invite you to "celebrate the hope that saves" through prayer and participation in the Eucharist, and by giving generously to the World Mission Sunday collection.

Your vital contribution to the Pontifical Mission Societies will support those 1,150 young mission dioceses and communities who await the "Good News" of Jesus as their saving hope. As we pray and respond here in the United States, we join with every parish and chapel around the world to renew ourselves and our Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley
Bishop of Grand Rapids

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For more about this important celebration of the universal Church, please visit the special World Mission Sunday website: www.IAmAMissionary.org