

May, 2018

Impact

Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.

WHAT IS YOUR MISSION?

We do not always think about it, but each of us has a mission, a purpose for our life, a call which only we can fulfill. The word "mission" might throw us off – some of us have spent hours at work or our parish working on a "mission statement." Sometimes, that work bears much fruit, as people have a clearer sense of the purpose of the organization. Sometimes, however, the process of writing a mission statement seems an exercise in futility. A lot of work goes into developing it, but that doesn't mean it actually directs action or progress. The same might be said for our personal mission as a follower of Jesus. We might occasionally think about what we are called to be or to do, only to return to our regular routine.

YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN

Jesus said, "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain." (JN 15:9-17)

Being chosen by Christ and called to live as a disciple is not a pie-in-the-sky endeavor. We are chosen to share God's love in the way that only each of us can. Imagine the difference it would make in our lives if we thought about this each day. What would happen if we looked at our family with the love of God? We might be more understanding, forgiving, and ready to spend time with them. What about at work? We might pray for that co-worker who gets on our last nerve, or reach out in care when he or she is frustrated rather than losing our patience. Maybe a friend has a hard time understanding why we go to Mass, and instead of dodging the question, we take the time to explain the way faith impacts our life.

This is our mission: to bear the fruit of God's love so that others may know the good news of Christ through us. In a new pastoral letter to the Church, released last month, Pope Francis invites us to think about this deeply: "May you come to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to

speak to the world by your life. Let yourself be transformed. Let yourself be renewed by the Spirit, so that this can happen, lest you fail in your precious mission. The Lord will bring it to fulfillment despite your mistakes and missteps, provided that you do not abandon the path of love but remain ever open to his supernatural grace, which purifies and enlightens." (GE, 24)

GO!

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

At the end of Mass, we are told to go – to live what we have just celebrated – the living presence of Christ with us and within us. We are called to be missionaries – most of us are not called to do so in some far away place, but in the very place in which we live. Our mission field begins when we exit the doors of church.

"Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."

(MK16:15)

YOU ARE
ENTERING
THE MISSION FIELD

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We live in mission through the Holy Spirit

Have you ever felt it just isn't possible to live as a disciple in today's world?

There is no doubt, living faith in our daily lives is not always easy. Not only is the world increasingly ambivalent about, sometimes overtly hostile to, faith, it is challenging to consciously live as a follower of Jesus. Doing so requires us to

be intentional about our attitudes, decisions, and actions, every day, in every situation.

We are sometimes uncertain whether we are ready to take our relationship with Christ seriously.

It isn't that life is always hard, although we all have difficult periods in our lives. It is simply that living as a Christian raises

expectations about the way we should live.

Sometimes it feels as though we're hitting a wall, and are tempted to take the easy way out.

Friends may want us to do things that feel counter to the Christian way of life. We may face ethical dilemmas at work. We may fight selfish and self-centered tendencies when demands are placed on our time. We may be afraid to truly live as a person of faith, for fear of rejection or ridicule.

After Jesus' crucifixion, the disciples were filled with fear.

They likely felt they had hit a wall. They remained together, waiting as Jesus had told them, uncertain of what was to come.

On the day of Pentecost, they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Empowered with the strength and courage of the Spirit of

God, they they boldly shared the good news of Jesus' resurrection and they never looked back.

Like the disciples, we, too, have a mission. And like them, the Holy Spirit is with us.

In his new pastoral exhortation on the call to holiness in today's world, Pope Francis challenges us to live our mission with purpose through the power of the Holy Spirit: "You too need to see the entirety of your life as a mission. Try to do so by listening to God in prayer and recognizing the signs that he gives you. Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make, so as to discern its place in the mission you have received. Allow the Spirit to forge in you the personal mystery that can reflect Jesus Christ in today's world." (GE, 23).



Impact this month

Commit yourself to live as a follower of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pray this prayer to the Holy Spirit each day this month. Lift your heart and mind to God, and be especially mindful of the ways in which you need the power of the Spirit at this time.

Holy Spirit, fire of love, open my heart and mind to your wisdom.

Come, Holy Spirit!

Guide me as I walk the way of discipleship; enliven me in your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit!

Give me courage to serve boldly and with compassion.

Come, Holy Spirit!

Strengthen my faith as I grow more deeply in relationship with Christ and with others.

Come, Holy Spirit!

You are God, with the Father and the Son, now and forever.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

