

Greetings and thank you for participating in the Extraordinary Missionary Month!

In light of the centenary (on November 30, 2019) of the Apostolic Letter, Maximum Illud, with which Pope Benedict XV wished to give new impetus to the missionary call to proclaim the Gospel, Pope Francis has called for the whole Church to observe an Extraordinary Missionary Month in October 2019, which is World Mission Month.

The Missionary Childhood Association, one of the four Pontifical Mission Societies, has prepared lessons for the Extraordinary Missionary Month – for grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 – which relate to the four dimensions of the Extraordinary Missionary Month as indicated by Pope Francis (see “About the Extraordinary Missionary Month”).

This Leader’s Guide includes these sections:

- *About the Extraordinary Missionary Month (pages 1-3)*
- *About the Synod for the Amazon (pages 3-4)*
- *Maximum Illud (page 5)*
- *Laudato si’ (pages 6-7)*
- *About the Lessons (pages 7-9)*

Additional information and resources may be found on a special Resources Page for the Extraordinary Missionary Month at [this link](#).

❖ **About the Extraordinary Missionary Month**

PROMPTED BY AN ANNIVERSARY

November 30, 2019, will mark that centenary of the promulgation of the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, with which Pope Benedict XV wished to give new impetus to the missionary call to proclaim the Gospel. On the occasion of this important anniversary, Pope Francis has called for the whole Church to observe an Extraordinary Missionary Month in October 2019, which is World Mission Month. Wrote Pope Francis in his Letter for the centenary of the promulgation of the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* on the activity of missionaries in the world, 22.10.2017:

“The Apostolic Letter Maximum Illud called for transcending national boundaries and bearing witness, with prophetic spirit and evangelical boldness, to God’s saving will through the Church’s universal mission. May the approaching centenary of that Letter serve as an incentive...(to) be open to the joyful newness of the Gospel. In these, our troubled times, rent by the tragedies of

war and menaced by the baneful tendency to accentuate differences and to incite conflict, may the Good News that in Jesus forgiveness triumphs over sin, life defeats death and love conquers fear, be proclaimed to the world with renewed fervor, and instill trust and hope in everyone.”

CONNECTED TO A SYNOD

During the Extraordinary Missionary Month, a Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region will also take place. Pope Francis, speaking to the National Directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies (June 2018) explained the connection between the two events:

“As you know, in October 2019, the Extraordinary Missionary Month, we will celebrate the Synod for the Amazon. In response to the concerns expressed by many of the faithful, laity and pastors alike, I wished to convoke this meeting in order to pray and reflect on the challenges faced in the evangelization of these South American lands that are home to important particular Churches. I hope that the conjuncture of these two events may help us fix our gaze on Jesus Christ while addressing problems and issues, resources and needs; may it also help us renew our commitment of service to the Gospel for the salvation of the men and women living in those lands. We pray that the Synod for the Amazon can help provide a more evangelical approach to missionary work in this area of the world that is so troubled, so unjustly exploited and so much in need of the salvation of Jesus Christ.”

THEME

The theme for the Extraordinary Missionary Month is: “Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World.” Awakening awareness of the *missio ad gentes*, and reinvigorating the sense of responsibility for proclaiming the Gospel with new enthusiasm, are themes that combine the pastoral concern of Pope Benedict XV in his Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, published 100 years ago, with the missionary vitality expressed by Pope Francis in his recent Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*: “Missionary action is the paradigm of every work of the Church.” (EG 15)

LOGO

The logo of the Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019 is a missionary cross where the primary colors refer to the five continents. The Cross is the instrument and direct sign of communion between God and man for the universality of our mission, and through its vibrant colors, a sign of victory and resurrection. The world is transparent because the action of evangelization has no barriers or boundaries, it is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Christian charity and



the world transfigured in the Spirit overcome distances and open the horizon of our minds and hearts. The words **Baptized and Sent** next to the image indicate the two characteristics of every Christian: baptism and proclamation.

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WAYS TO PREPARE AND CELEBRATE

Pope Francis has indicated four dimensions, or ways to prepare for and live out the Extraordinary Missionary Month of October 2019. These four dimensions are:

1. a *personal encounter* with Jesus Christ alive in His Church: Eucharist, Word of God, personal and communal prayer,
2. the *witness* of the Saints, the Missionary Martyrs, and the Confessors of the Faith, who are unique expressions of the Churches throughout the world,
3. biblical, catechetical, spiritual, and theological *formation* regarding the *missio ad gentes*,
4. *missionary charity* as a material support for the immense work of evangelization, especially the *missio ad gentes* and Christian formation in Churches that are most in need.

❖ **About the Synod for the Amazon:
Amazonia: New Pathways for the Church and for an Integral Ecology
The Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region**

“In October 2019, the Extraordinary Missionary Month, we will celebrate the Synod for the Amazon. In response to the concerns expressed by many of the faithful, laity and pastors alike, I wished to convoke this meeting in order to pray and reflect on the challenges faced in the evangelization of these South American lands that are home to important particular Churches. I hope that the conjuncture of these two events may help us fix our gaze on Jesus Christ while addressing problems and issues, resources and needs; may it also help us renew our commitment of service to the Gospel for the salvation of the men and women living in those lands. We pray that the Synod for the Amazon can help provide a more evangelical approach to missionary work in this area of the world that is so troubled, so unjustly exploited and so much in need of the salvation of Jesus Christ.” ~ Pope Francis

The Special Assembly will be held from Sunday, October 6, to Sunday, October 27, 2019 in Rome. Building on recent Church documents such as *Laudato si'* and the *Aparecida* Document, the Assembly will address the urgent teaching that our common home belongs to everyone, and the consequences of its exploitation affect all the peoples of the world, but certain peoples and regions feel those consequences more dramatically.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT AMAZONIA TO PREPARE FOR THE SPECIAL ASSEMBLY

- The Amazonia Region spreads across Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela, Suriname, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Guyana and French Guiana. The area has more than a third of the world's forests and has been described as the "Lungs of our Planet" because it recycles carbon dioxide into oxygen for the entire earth. Moreover, Amazonia hosts 30 to 50% of the world's biodiversity of flora and fauna, and 20% of fresh water for our planet.
- Expanding and unchecked economic interests are threatening this richness and our shared survival. Such interests have led to deforestation, as well as the contamination of rivers and lakes due to the use of agro-toxins, oil spills, legal and illegal mining, and byproducts from pharmaceutical production. Human trafficking, especially in women and children, in the area has also increased along with these businesses destroying our common home.
- The region has 34 million inhabitants. Over 3 million are indigenous, representing about 390 different peoples and nationalities. Included in these figures are between 110 and 130 different Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation or "free peoples." All live in a vital relationship with the vegetation and the waters of the rivers. They have never been as threatened as they are now.
- The Assembly acknowledges the Church's presence in the Amazon has its roots in the colonial occupation of the area by Spain and Portugal. This period gave rise to attitudes that negatively affected treatment of indigenous cultures, and in some ways continues to affect the territory and its inhabitants in the form of neocolonialism carried out under the guise of development.
- The Assembly also recognizes that some in industrialized countries may find it difficult to understand the ways of native peoples and, at times, do not respect their differences. The Church, however, recognizes that their worldviews and wisdom have much to teach us.
- The Synod will seek to listen to the voices of those living in the Amazon region and identify new paths of evangelization and advocacy, especially for indigenous people who are often forgotten and denied a peaceful future because of the current crises faces the Amazon rain forest.

Read the [full Preparatory document for the Synod](#).

❖ ***Maximum Illud*, On the Propagation of the Faith Throughout the World
Apostolic Letter of Pope Benedict XV, November 30, 1919**

SUMMARY

The global and tragic conflict of World War I between the world's most powerful countries – each with Christian heritage and influence – represented a step backward for the world and for mission. Pope Benedict XV asserted an alternative approach to mission in the world, so that it would be cleansed of any colonial desires and avoid the nationalistic and expansionistic aims that had proved so disastrous. In so doing, he recalled the great Apostles of the Gospel to remind Catholics that the goal of mission is a spiritual one. It is not interested in power, resources, or achievement. It is to be carried out in a selfless way.

Maximum Illud speaks directly to bishops and superiors to communicate the necessity of proper preparation for engaging foreign cultures – including learning foreign languages – and the need to educate and form local clergy. The letter also suggests, however, that mission activity is not only for missionaries who travel to foreign lands. All Catholics are invited (and obligated) to participate in various forms.

Maximum Illud CALLS FOR...

- Overcoming the tendency to emphasize differences and to provoke conflict.
- Transcending national boundaries with prophetic spirit.
- Resisting the temptation of self-referential ecclesial introversion, cultural pessimism and nostalgia for a golden era of the past.
- Instilling the trust and hope that love defeats fear and death.
- Mission leaders to commit themselves to creating new missionary efforts and methods, and training more skilled pastoral missionaries.
- Missionaries to aspire to live with humility and a great trust in God to facilitate the many new tasks that do appear during mission and ministry.
- All Catholics to commit themselves in available ways to support mission in the world. Above all, we are to pray for our brothers and sisters around the world.
- A truly universal perspective of mission *Ad Gentes* geared towards developing local churches and local leadership beyond the boundaries of Europe.

[Full text of *Maximum Illud*](#)

❖ ***Laudato si'*, On Care for Our Common Home**
Encyclical of Pope Francis, May 24, 2015

SUMMARY

The opening words of the canticle of St. Francis: “Praise be to you, my Lord” give *Laudato si'* its title. The words remind the reader that to live in relationship with God is to live a life of praise to God and what God has given – including our common home. With this theological grounding, Pope Francis makes an urgent appeal: Our common home, and our mother earth, is crying out because of the harm we are inflicting upon her.

The document asks all Catholics and all people of goodwill to discover that unseen bonds link all of Creation and together form a universal family. We are not above it. We are creatures also. And in God’s created order everything is connected. Rooted in Scripture and tradition, Pope Francis reflects on the human roots of the ecological crisis we are facing today. The encyclical notes the amazing technological growth humans have experienced has not been guided by responsibility, values and conscience. We have not used our power well.

As opposed to a culture of waste, Pope Francis proposes an integral ecology based on the relational nature of the world discovered in science – and based on the relational reality and God our tradition teaches, and that we put our faith in. The heart of the documents develops this comprehensive and integrated vision for the world, and applies its principles to our global environmental and moral crises.

***Laudato si'* TEACHES...**

- That the urgent ecological conversation can be grounded in Scripture and in tradition.
- A “throwaway culture” consumes, exploits, and discards our natural resources – and human life.
- Everything is connected – including how we spend our money, how we spend our daily life, the design of our societies, the way we think about our bodies, and how we treat the rest of creation.
- When we see life that way, we see every act of consuming as a moral act that involves gifts of creation and impacts the dignity of other members of the human family (workers and global poor).
- Action reflecting this awareness of an integral ecology will create “culture of care.”
- Concern for the environment should no longer be seen as an “optional” aspect of Christian life but rather an integral and urgent part of Church teaching.
- Consensus among scientists gives us real view into the unsustainable state of our world.

- Scientific research regarding the environment and climate change should be praised and used.
- The poor are disproportionately affected by climate change.
- The condition of sin perpetuates indifference and selfishness at the root of this crisis and its denial.
- To avoid distractions that deny the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, and engage in dialogue concerning solutions.
- We should be asking ourselves: What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us?

[Full text of *Laudato si'*](#)

❖ **About the Lessons**



For All Grades

The Missionary Childhood Association is sponsoring a **MISSION SONG CONTEST** based on the theme for the Extraordinary Missionary Month, “Baptized and Sent: Sharing the Good News and Caring for God’s Creation.” Deadline for submissions is September 23; winners announced and celebrated during the Extraordinary Missionary Month (October 2019). More information may be found on this website: www.propfaith.net/songcontest.

For Grades K-2

For the section “*Missionary Help: Joy Ornament*,” the **World Mission Rosary** will fit well in two areas: (1) selecting a color for the mission country (O in JOY), and (2) introducing prayer to the financial solidarity with the Missions.

In February of 1951, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith from 1950 to 1966), in a radio address (*The Catholic Hour*), inaugurated a World Mission Rosary. Each decade of the World Mission Rosary calls to mind an area where the Church continues her evangelizing mission: GREEN for the forests and grasslands of AFRICA; BLUE for the ocean



surrounding the PACIFIC ISLANDS; WHITE symbolizing EUROPE, the seat of the Holy Father, shepherd of the world; RED calling to mind the fire of faith that brought missionaries to the AMERICAS, and YELLOW, the morning of the East, for ASIA. When you had finished the World Mission Rosary, Archbishop Sheen said in that radio address, you would have “embraced the world in prayer.”



For more information, including mission-themed mysteries of the Rosary:

[World Missionary Rosary, English](#)

[World Mission Rosary, Spanish](#)

For Grades 3-5

For the section “*Missionary Witness: Saint Teresa of Calcutta*,” a quiz will help (1) reinforce details about the life of this missionary saint, and (2) supporting reading comprehension instruction, so integral in these grades. That quiz is found at the end of this guide.



For Grades 6-8

For the section “*Missionary Witness: Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN*,” there is a Prayer Reflection that includes more words from Sister Dorothy and an opportunity for internal reflection and discussion with young people on what this missionary witness calls each of us to do, every day. This reflection also features a reading and reflection from *Laudato si’*.

[Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN Prayer Reflection, English](#)
[Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN Prayer Reflection, Spanish](#)

A Word About Sister Dorothy and the Extraordinary Missionary Month: Pope Francis, in designating October 2019 as an Extraordinary Missionary Month, has asked each country to highlight a great missionary who shared their life for the love of the Gospel. In the United States, we have chosen Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN, who was martyred in Brazil in 2005 because of her defense of Indigenous people and the Environment. More information on Sister Dorothy may be found in these Extraordinary Missionary Month resources:

[Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN Biography, English](#)
[Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN Biography, Spanish](#)
[Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN Key Facts, English](#)
[Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN Key Facts, Spanish](#)



Baptized
and sent

Missionary Witness: Saint Teresa of Calcutta

- 1) In what city was Mother Teresa born?
a. Athens b. Calcutta c. Skopje d. Rome e. New York
- 2) Mother Teresa was a part of what major religious group?
a. Islam b. Catholicism c. Hinduism d. Confucianism e. None
- 3) What was Mother Teresa's birth name?
a. Teresa b. Catherine c. Mary d. Agnes e. Hannah
- 4) Mother Teresa became a missionary in what country?
a. Greece b. Italy c. Macedonia d. Turkey e. India
- 5) What group did Mother Teresa form in 1950 to help the poor and needy?
a. Loretto Abby b. Missionaries of Charity c. Red Cross
d. Salvation Army e. United Way
- 6) True or False: Mother Teresa went right to India as a missionary, and didn't have to learn anything before she got there.
TRUE FALSE
- 7) What job did Mother Teresa have when she first went to India?
a. Teacher b. Doctor c. Cook d. Seamstress e. Minister
- 8) Who did Mother Teresa want to help with her charity?
a. The homeless b. The crippled c. The blind d. persons with leprosy
e. all of the above
- 9) How many members does the Missionaries of Charity have today?
a. 13 b. 100 c. 300 d. 1,000 e. more than 4,000
- 10) What did Mother Teresa ask to do instead of having an honor banquet when she won the Nobel Peace Prize?
 - a. She asked for a new car instead.
 - b. She asked that the money for the banquet be used to build her mother a house.
 - c. She asked that the money for the banquet be given to the poor of India
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above



Testigo misionero: Santa Teresa de Calcuta

- 1) ¿En qué ciudad nació la Madre Teresa?
a. Atenas b. Calcuta c. Skopje d. Roma e. Nueva York
- 2) ¿Madre Teresa era parte de qué grupo religioso principal?
a. Islam b. Catolicismo c. Hinduismo d. Confucionismo e. Ninguno
- 3) ¿Cuál era el nombre de nacimiento de la Madre Teresa?
a. Teresa b. Catherine c. María d. Inés e. Hannah
- 4) ¿Madre Teresa se convirtió en misionera en qué país?
a. Grecia b. Italia c. Macedonia d. Turquía e. India
- 5) ¿Qué grupo formó la Madre Teresa en 1950 para ayudar a los pobres y necesitados?
a. Abadía de Loretto b. Misioneros de la caridad
c. Cruz Roja d. Ejército de Salvación e. La Vía Unida
- 6) Verdadero o Falso: La Madre Teresa fue directamente a la India como misionera y no tuvo que aprender nada antes de llegar allí.
VERDADERO FALSO
- 7) ¿Qué trabajo tenía la Madre Teresa cuando fue por primera vez a la India?
a. Maestra b. Doctora c. Cocinera d. Costurera e. Clérigo
- 8) ¿A quién quería ayudar la Madre Teresa con su caridad?
a. los vagabundos b. el lisiado c. el ciego d. personas con lepra
e. todo lo anterior
- 9) ¿Cuántos miembros tienen hoy las Misioneras de la Caridad?
a. 13 b. 100 c. 300 d. 1,000 e. más de 4,000
- 10) ¿Qué pidió hacer la Madre Teresa en lugar de tener un banquete de honor cuando ganó el Premio Nobel de la Paz?
 - a. Ella pidió un auto nuevo.
 - b. Ella pidió que el dinero para el banquete se usara para construir una casa para su madre.
 - c. Ella pidió que el dinero para el banquete se entregue a los pobres de India
 - d. Todo lo anterior
 - e. Ninguna de las anteriores

