

## Pastor's Column

Supporting the Work of the Missions

“Go out to all the world and proclaim the Good News.” (*Mk 16:15*). These last words of Jesus on earth (before he ascended into heaven) are a clarion call to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth. The Catholic Church takes that call seriously. It is the reason the Church exists.

The Church evangelizes the gospel through corporal and spiritual works of mercy. We feed, clothe and shelter people and provide for their economic needs (corporal works of mercy). We instruct people in the faith through teaching, preaching and building churches and schools where the faith is taught (spiritual works of mercy).

One of the greatest Catholic outreaches for spreading the gospel is the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Once a year, every Catholic Church hosts a missionary priest who speaks at all the weekend masses and describes the needs of the local church where he lives – the material needs of the people and the spiritual needs of the people in terms of churches, schools, catechists and supplies. We call this a Mission Appeal.

This year's Mission Appeal at St. Francis will take place this weekend, July 7-8. Father Andrzej Szorc, CSsR, a Redemptorist priest from Poland, will make the appeal at our parish.

Many years before I entered seminary, I heard a mission appeal by a priest from India. He spoke about the great need for funds in his diocese to build a seminary to train men for priesthood. I was moved by his talk not only to give to the collection but to become an ongoing benefactor for the work of priestly formation in his diocese. (I had no thought at the time of entering seminary myself).

Through the years, the diocese in India has sent me photos of the seminary they built, letters from seminarians, and pictures of newly ordained priests. Being a part of this effort has been a blessed experience.

Please welcome Fr. Szorc as he visits this weekend. Prayerfully consider his appeal and please be generous in your response. Envelopes for the Mission Collection are in your mailed packets and in the pews. Lastly, please pray for the work of spreading the gospel so more and more people can experience the life-saving message of Jesus Christ.

God bless,  
Fr. Joe