



## Message of his Holiness Pope Francis for World Mission Day 2020

Here am I, send me (Is 6:8)

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters,  
In this year marked by the suffering and challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the missionary journey of the whole Church continues in light of the words found in the account of the calling of the prophet Isaiah: *"Here am I, send me"* (6:8).

This is the ever-new response to the Lord's question: *"Whom shall I send?"* This invitation from God's merciful heart challenges both the Church and humanity as a whole in the current world crisis.

*"Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other."*

The mission, the *'Church on the move'*, is not a programme, an enterprise to be carried out by sheer force of will. It is Christ who makes the Church go out of herself. In the mission of evangelization, you move because the Holy Spirit pushes you, and carries you.

God always loves us first and with this love comes to us and calls us. Our personal vocation comes from the fact that we are sons and daughters of God in the Church, his family, brothers and sisters in that love that Jesus has shown us.

All, however, have a human dignity founded on the divine invitation to be children of God and to become, in the sacrament of Baptism and in the freedom of faith, what they have always been in the heart of God.

Understanding what God is saying to us at this time of pandemic also represents a challenge for the Church's mission. Illness, suffering, fear and isolation challenge us.

The poverty of those who die alone, the abandoned, those who have lost their jobs and income, the homeless and those who lack food challenge us.

Being forced to observe social distancing and to stay at home invites us to rediscover that we need social relationships as well as our communal relationship with God.

Far from increasing mistrust and indifference, this situation should make us even more attentive to our way of relating to others. And prayer, in which God touches and moves our hearts, should make us ever more open to the need of our brothers and sisters for dignity and freedom, as well as our responsibility to care for all creation.

The celebration of *World Mission Day* is also an occasion for reaffirming how prayer, reflection and the material help of your offerings are so many opportunities to participate actively in the mission of Jesus in his Church.

May the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of Evangelization and Comforter of the Afflicted, missionary disciple of her Son Jesus, continue to intercede for us and sustain us.

Franciscus

Vatican, vatican.va, May 31, 2020

