

# Mission Intention

## December 2016 - 2017

*The Peoples of Europe*  
*That the peoples of Europe may rediscover the beauty, goodness and truth of the gospel which gives joy and hope to life.*

Let us pray for our brothers and sisters where the Christian Church has existed for nearly 2,000 years, but today struggles to find its relevance in today's world. We hope that they may be renewed by the core message of joy and hope found in the Gospel of Christ.

### Country Focus: Slovenia



Slovenia is located in south central Europe and can trace its history back several thousand years. Slovenia refers to the Slavic peoples who settled in this area after the fall of the Roman Empire. Christianity played an important role in the development of this nation at this time.

For the next 1000 years, the people of Slovenia lived under various regimes up until the end of World War I when they joined with Serbians and Croats to form Yugoslavia. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Slovenia achieved independence and by 1992 entered the European Union. Today, Slovenia is a thriving country with various industries and popular tourist destinations known for its natural beauty.

Slovenia has remained mostly Catholic for centuries, but today is experiencing a decline in practice among Catholics. There is a waning fervor among Catholics for the teachings of the Church. As the Church and state begin to be separated from each other and religious freedom is promoted, concerns surfaced about the Church's role in influencing society. It remains to be seen how the Church will share space with other religious and secular movements in Slovenia.

### God's Word for Mission

*Promoting Knowledge of Faith*

*"What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our own eyes, what we looked upon and touched with our hands concerns the Word of life - for the life was made visible; we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was made visible to us - what we have seen and heard we now proclaim to you...God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:1-3; 5).*

### A Saint for Mission: St. Modestus of Slovenia

*Education for Community Life*



St. Modestus was born in Ireland in the year 720 AD. He eventually became a monk and was called to be a missionary to the Slavic people living in the alpine region on the borders of present-day Austria and Slovenia. At about 755 AD, Modestus was sent with four other priests and a deacon to bring the Gospel

to the people. He built three churches in the region of Carantania which became the cultural and political center of the region throughout its history.

Modestus became a bishop and spent the rest of his life serving and encouraging the Slavic people and growing the Church. He was bishop during a time of great challenge from invading armies. One of the individuals he baptized was a man named Domitian, a Carinthian prince. Domitian eventually led the people and aided in the Christian conversion of many.

St. Modestus died after a lifetime of inviting many people to follow the Gospel. He died in 763 AD and is known as the "Apostle of Carantania."

The feast day for St. Modestus is December 5th.

## Common Good and Flourishing

### *Catholic Social Teaching*



Each of us is called by God to work for the common good of everyone. Pope John XXIII defined the common good as “the sum total of social conditions which allow people...to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.” This allows individuals to flourish, to reach their potential spiritually and materially. One way to actively help others to flourish is to reach out to those around us who are hurting and suffering hardships and offer opportunities for grow.

Alex, a six year-old boy from New York, saw a picture of a boy, Omran Daqneesh, in Syria who was injured in a bombing raid on his city. Omran was riding in an ambulance and was bruised and battered; he was in shock.

Alex was moved to write a letter to President Obama and asked him to find this boy and bring him to Alex’s house where he and his sister would share their toys with him and introduce him to their friends at school. Alex wanted to “give him a family.” President Obama even talked about Alex in a major speech at a Leaders Summit.

Watch the story on YouTube:  
“We will Give Him a Family.”

## Daily Offering

### *Missionary Initiative*

Dear God, I offer you all that I am and all that I will do this day. Thank you for the gift of my life and my family. Thank you for the gifts of my family, the opportunity to learn and the many talents you have place in me. Help me to live the life you have called me to and give me the opportunity to serve you by sharing my gifts with others. Amen.

## Helping Others Flourish

### *Moral Formation*

After watching the video, think about the questions below and discuss.

1. How have Alex’s actions reflected the Catholic Social Principle of the Common Good and the individual’s right to grow and flourish?
2. In addition to inviting Omran to our country, what specific actions does Alex offer and what sacrifices is he willing to make?
3. Why do you suppose the President chose to read Alex’s letter to the Leaders Summit?
4. Can you think of a time when Jesus and His family were forced to leave their home and became refugees? How do you think they were treated by others at the time?



## Petitions for Mission

### *Liturgical Education*

- ✚ Let us pray that the people of Europe may rediscover the joy and hope of the gospel for their lives.
- ✚ Let us pray that we will be ready to give witness to the gospel in our life to those we meet.
- ✚ Let us pray that we can contribute to the common good of our local community and global family, especially those that suffer hardships.
- ✚ Let us pray that we will create room in our hearts for Jesus to come and live with us this Advent season.
- ✚ Let us pray for all those who still long to know the good news of Jesus that God’s word may reach their ears and their heart.



**CENTER for MISSION**

*Society for the Propagation of the Faith / St. Paul and Minneapolis*