

Mission Intention

February 2016 - 2017

Comfort for the Afflicted
That those who are afflicted, especially the poor, refugees and marginalized, may find welcome and comfort in our communities.

This month we are asked to consider the vulnerable in our world who suffer in their body, mind and spirit because of sickness, poverty, civil unrest, war and religious persecution.

Who is afflicted in our community and how can we reach out to them?

Country Focus: Germany



Germany is located in the heart of Western Europe and has played a central role in the rise and fall of Western civilization and the Church in Europe.

Until the 8th century, the lands of Germany were made up of regional tribes and warlords regularly fighting one another. Christianity arrived in the 8th century and became a force for unifying the many factions through one religion.

In 800 AD Charlemagne was crowned Emperor and led what came to be known as the Holy Roman Empire or Christendom. He unified the Roman Empire and the Catholic Church in Germany joining the Church and State together in a way never seen before for the next 800 years.

Martin Luther triggered the Protestant movement in the 16th century that led to separating Church and State. This movement sparked many conflicts between Catholics and Protestants. Remnants of these tensions continue to this day.

Germany was also at the center of conflict during World War I and World War II.

Today, it remains central to the life of Europe and strives to overcome the afflictions of its past through compassion and mercy. In particular, they are welcoming many refugees from Syria.

God's Word for Mission

Promoting Knowledge of Faith

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves" (Matthew 11:28-30).

"The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty" (St. Teresa of Calcutta).

A Saint for Mission: St. Boniface Education for Community Life



Winfred, St Boniface, was born about 675 AD in England and convinced his parents to let him attend a Benedictine monastery for schooling. Eventually he became a monk, a teacher and scholar. In 719, he was commissioned by Pope Gregory II, to be a missionary in Germany and was renamed "Boniface."

Boniface faced many struggles as he evangelized the Germanic peoples who were filled with many fears and taboos from their own religions. One famous story is told how Boniface chopped down a tree dedicated to Thor but was not harmed as he convinced people that God was with him in a powerful way.

Boniface ministered to the Germanic peoples by teaching, providing pastoral guidance, and building up the structures of the Church to support the faithful. Eventually, he was made a bishop and dedicated the remainder of his life to spreading the Christian faith in Germany and uniting the people. One day in 754, while waiting to confirm people entering the faith, his camp was attacked by bandits and Boniface was martyred along with his companions.

Boniface is known as the Apostle of Germany who brought unity and Christian civilization to this part of Europe. He is the patron saint of Germany and the patron saint of the World Youth Day movement in our day. His feast day is June 5.



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Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

Catholic Social Teaching



As we look around our country, we see a great diversity of people - some who are very wealthy and some who are very poor. Although most of us would not consider ourselves wealthy, compared to much of the people in our world we are very rich and very blessed.

To those who have been blessed with much - healthcare, education, homes, food and more - much is expected and we need to consider how we respond to the needs of the poor and vulnerable in our daily lives. The video link below depicts how a police officer in New York responded to a homeless man on the streets with an act of kindness.

Police Officer Larry DePrimo came across a homeless man in New York City who was being laughed at by others. The man had no shoes on a very, very cold night. Officer DePrimo wanted to help and went to a nearby shoe store. He said to the store salesperson, "I don't care what it costs, I want to buy a pair of boots that are warm and will last." After giving the man the new boots and socks, the officer also offered to buy him food.

The homeless man was very touched and grateful.

See the video on YouTube:
"NYPD officer gives boots to homeless man"

Daily Offering

Missionary Initiative

Dear God, I offer you all that I am this day. I offer to you all of my joys and sorrows; my work and my play. Help me to trust you more and more each day so that I may be the person you have called me to be. May I be an instrument of your comfort to those I meet who are afflicted this day. Amen.

Helping the Poor and Vulnerable

Moral Formation

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

1. Many Americans think about people living in Haiti or countries in Africa when "Option for the Poor" is mentioned. Why is this story an example that needs to be talked about?
2. When Officer DePrimo told the shoe salesperson that he did not care about the price of the boots, what does this say about his willingness to sacrifice for the good of another human?
3. Read Matthew 25:31-40. Who does the homeless man represent? What is the lesson here for all of us?
4. Are there ways that you can help those who have so little?



Petitions for Mission

Liturgical Education

- # Let us pray for comfort for the afflicted; especially the poor, refugees and the marginalized.
- # Let us pray that we will reach out in compassion to those who suffer in our community.
- # Let us pray that the people of Germany and Europe may rediscover their Christian identity.
- # Let us pray that all people have access to the necessities of food, water, shelter and work.
- # Let us pray that we may trust in the Lord at all times and seek his consolation when we find life a burden.



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