

Mission Intention

September

2017 - 2018

Education for
Community Life

Country Focus: U.S.A.

Missionary Spirit in Parishes

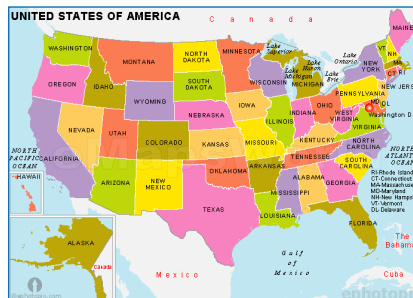
That our parish communities, animated by a missionary spirit, may be places where faith is communicated and charity is seen.

The history of the Catholic Church in the United States is a missionary history. Beginning in the 1600's, the Catholic faith was spread by the work of missionaries. The mission spirit inspired their efforts to respond to immigrants in need of shelter, education and healthcare. Catholic missions witnessed to faith by promoting the rights of workers, the dignity of all people and the upholding of human rights.

The missionary spirit that shaped the American church became concrete in the forming of local dioceses and parishes. Each local parish in the diocese

is called to be a visible sign and witness of Christ's mission in their part of the world.

Today, we are living in a new missionary age where parishes must renew their missionary spirit to be evangelizing communities and missionary disciples. Each parish member is given the same Spirit to witness to Christ.



A Saint for Mission: St Frances Cabrini



Frances Cabrini was born in 1850 near Milan, Italy and was the youngest of thirteen children. She grew up enthralled by the stories of missionaries and decided to join a religious order. Because of poor health, she was turned away from the order of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart. However, in 1880, she was able to found her own order called the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She thought the sisters would go to China, but Pope Leo XIII told her to go "not to the East, but to the West," to New York.

Mother Cabrini came to the USA with seven sisters. Soon, they got to work living out their faith among the immigrant people of New York City. She organized catechism and education classes for Italian immigrants. This education effort eventually expanded all over the world. She opened hospitals and orphanages as well. In all, she established 67 Catholic institutions until her death in 1917.

In 1946, she was the first American citizen to be canonized a saint and patron to immigrants.

Her sisters continue to serve missions in 15 countries around the world.

Her feast day is November 13th.

Promoting Knowledge
of Faith

God's Word for Mission

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

*"Throughout the world, let us be permanently in a state of mission...a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with him"
(Pope Francis, The Joy of the Gospel, 2013).*

Solidarity



Joy Helping Others

The Catholic Church teaches that solidarity means respect for all and that all deserve “fundamental rights flowing from the dignity intrinsic of the person” (Catechism 1944). We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. We are all dependent upon one another as we all share the same needs and desires: the common good. However, there are great divisions currently in our country and communities that block these rights: between political parties, bias towards people of different religious and racial backgrounds and wide differences in economic status - between wealthy and poor. Only we, as individuals, parishes

and communities can protect these rights for others. As John Paul II stated in *Sollicitudo rei Socialis*, “Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people... On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good... of all and of each individual.” This is a demonstration of solidarity through loving one’s brothers and sisters.

This video tells of how one individual’s acts of kindness changed the lives of many - including himself:

[Happiness is Helping Others](#)

Happiness is Helping Others: Practicing Solidarity

What are your reactions to the man and the actions of solidarity he performs for others?
Answer questions below.

1. What are some of the ideal examples in the video that demonstrate solidarity and acts of love of neighbor? Be specific.
2. What society divisions did this individual overcome to act in kindness?
3. Can you name times when others in the video did not agree with his actions?
4. What do you think motivated him to continue to show love and solidarity, even when others did not support him?
5. What evidence was there in the video that the man happily sacrificed for others?
6. What actions of solidarity and compassion can you, as an individual, show in your own communities?



Mission Petitions

- ✚ Let us pray that our parishes will live the missionary spirit and be places where faith is communicated and charity is seen.
- ✚ Let us pray that each of us live out our faith by what we say and what we do.
- ✚ Let us pray for our brothers and sisters who live on the margins of our society...the poor, the sick, the prisoners and the lonely.
- ✚ Let us pray that we may share our gifts, given by the Holy Spirit, with others and love our neighbors as Christ loves us.

Loving God, I offer you the joys and sorrows and the ups and downs of this day. Send your Holy Spirit upon me and give me the strength I need to live your call in my life. Help my parish and school to be places where our faith is lived and charity is practiced. Bless this new year of learning and growing into the people you created us to be. We ask this in Jesus’ name.
Amen.