

Resisting Corruption  
 That those who have material, political or spiritual power may resist any lure of corruption.

*This month we pray for our civil and religious leaders that they will be faithful servants and not give in to the temptations of power, popularity or possessions.*



**Country Focus: Eritrea**

Eritrea is located on the east coast of the Horn of Africa along the Red Sea. It shares a border with Sudan to the north and Ethiopia and Djibouti to the south. It's location has made it an important port for sea travel and trade.

Christianity in Eritrea can trace it's beginning to 4th century traders from Syria and Egypt who traveled along the Red Sea. Eventually, Islam made its way into Eritrea.

Over the centuries, it was colonized by various empires and was part of Ethiopia until it gained independence in 1993. Since then, it has struggled to achieve internal unity.

Today, Eritrea faces many challenges. It continues to be in conflict with neighboring countries and internally faces various power struggles among the many leaders. This keeps the country from making progress. Also, religion is sometimes used as a political tool to sway and divide people, causing conflict and disunity.



**Promoting Knowledge of Faith**

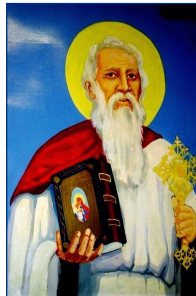
**God's Word for Mission**

*"How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God" (Lk. 18:24).*

*"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:25-28).*

**Education for Community Life**

**A Saint for Mission: St. Frumentius**



Frumentius was born in the city of Tyre, Lebanon, in the fourth century and was raised as a Christian. While still a boy, he and his brother travelled with their uncle to Abyssinia (Ethiopia and Eritrea), but became shipwrecked in East Africa while voyaging on the Red Sea. They were enslaved to serve the king's court in Axum, Abyssinia. When the king died, the two brothers remained a part of the queen's court and served as a tutor to the king's son. The queen permitted them to introduce Christianity to the country, as well as encouraging trade between Abyssinia and the West.

Frumentius travelled to Alexandria, Egypt to meet with St. Athanasius and convinced him to send missionaries to evangelize the Abyssinian Kingdom. Athanasius agreed and made Frumentius Bishop of Abyssinia. When he returned, he spent his life evangelizing by living the Gospel and bringing new members into the Church. There are also stories of miracles of healing performed by Frumentius. Eventually, the king of Axum and many of his subjects were baptized. The people began to call him "Abuna" which means "father". Despite attempts to urge the king of Axum to remove Frumentius, he remained and served the people until he died in 383 AD. He is considered the Patron Saint of the Aksumite Empire: Eritrea and parts of Ethiopia. His feast day is October 27th.

## Option for the Poor and Vulnerable



Streets of Eritrea

<http://totalitarianimages.blogspot.com>  
*El Companero*

The Catholic Church teaches that it is important to make the needs and welfare of the poor and vulnerable a priority. This is especially important in the world today as the separation between the wealthy and poor seems to be widening.

In many countries, teens and children who are most vulnerable are subject to forced labor, the slave trade, or being driven to serve in the military against their will. Because of these evil conditions, many try to flee their countries in the hope of finding a better life someplace else. The lucky ones survive and find a country where they are safe and can begin a new life free from fear and intimidation.

Filimon Mengs is a teenager who fled Eritrea because he was forced to serve, possibly indefinitely, in the military. He arrived in Rome as a migrant after a difficult, dangerous journey and is one of the fortunate ones finding shelter and food with other refugees.

Because Eritrea is very poor, people have few choices and are compelled to do many things that defy their human rights. Many find little choice but to flee becoming refugees in other countries, like Filimon in Rome.

By leaving his country, Filimon also left his family knowing that he may never see them again. It is Filimon's faith in God that keeps him going and gives him hope for a brighter future.

## Filimon as a refugee in Rome



Watch the video about Filimon's story: Teenage Refugee Fled Eritrea for New Life in Europe

1. Name some of the risks that go with the decision to flee one's country when you are a teenager like Filimon?
2. Why do you think the Italian police are ignoring the shelter where Filimon and other refugees are living?
3. How can extreme poverty lead to unjust conditions for people in countries like Eritrea?
4. Can you think of other examples in the world, or even our country, where children and teens are in vulnerable situations because of poverty?

## Mission Petitions

- ✚ Let us pray that those who have material, political and spiritual power may resist any temptation for corruption.
- ✚ Let us pray that our civil and religious leaders may serve the common good of their people.
- ✚ Let us pray that the people of Eritrea may find lasting peace and flourish in our time.
- ✚ Let us pray that we may follow Jesus's example of service in our daily life as we share our gifts to serve the poor and vulnerable in our world.

Dear Lord,  
You sent your son, Jesus, to show us your way of love and service. May we love one another as he has loved us. We offer you our gifts this day and pray that you will make us an instrument of your peace. We make this prayer in Jesus name,  
Amen