



A Newsletter from the Missions Office/Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States  
Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Ohio

## *U.S. Mission Territories face unique challenges*

*To monthly mission donors:  
“Thank you for your support!”*

On behalf of His Excellency Frederick F. Campbell, the Bishop of Columbus, and Father Andrew Small, OMI, the National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States, I would like to thank you for your prayers, sacrifices and financial support for the missions.

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Among the collection envelopes that you have received from your parish is one marked “*Catholic Home Missions.*” Home Missions are Catholic dioceses in the United States and its territories that cannot continue to exist on their own. They need help from established churches elsewhere. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has designated one collection a year to help these dioceses. In the Diocese of Columbus this collection will be taken on the weekend of **June 2 and 3, 2018**. Please be generous!

The USCCB’s Catholic Home Missions collection helps to fund 84 dioceses and eparchies in the United States, which represents roughly 44 percent of all U.S. dioceses.

According to a Religious Congregation study, there are more than two million residents living in counties without a single Catholic Church; 183 U.S.

counties have no Catholic parish; 927 counties have only one parish, and 171 of them have fewer than 50 individual members.

In the 1930’s, Father William Howard Bishop, the founder of the Glenmary Home Missionaries, recognized the large number of areas in the U.S. where the needs of Catholics were not met. At that time, there were 1,000 U.S. counties that did not have any resident priest. He called these counties, “*No priest land USA.*”

These mission areas face unique challenges. The pastor of the Holy Redeemer Parish in La Pine, Oregon, spends more time at the wheel of his car than at the altar of his church. In addition to Church of the Holy Redeemer, he also serves three other mission parishes spread across a 10,000 square mile region in the Diocese of Baker, Oregon.

On Sunday mornings the pastor first heads to Holy Trinity Church in Sunriver for the 8:00 a.m. Mass, then returns to the Holy Redeemer Church for Mass at 10:00 a.m. Next are Masses at two other mission churches – Our Lady of the Snows in Gilchrist at 12:30 p.m. and Holy Family in Christmas Valley at 3:00 p.m. On Sundays the pastor logs 500 miles round trip!

This type of arrangement is common in the mission areas of the U.S. and is replicated all

across the Northwest and in the Southwest, where there are great distances and where parishes don’t have their own resident pastor.

A mission diocese is often characterized by small Catholic populations, large geographic areas, lack of clergy and Catholic institutions, high poverty rates, and limited financial resources. These factors can make it difficult to provide access to Mass, the sacraments, and basic church ministries.

The smallest Catholic populations tend to exist in rural areas of the South, in Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia and the Carolinas. Tennessee has the smallest percentage of Catholics of any state with only 3.5 percent of the population identifying as Catholic. Many people in Tennessee have never seen or met a Catholic priest.

Catholic parishes are also few and far between in Western states that cover large geographic areas. Though 11 percent of Wyoming’s residents are Catholics, the state has only 70 parishes on its 100,000 square mile area. Utah, which is home to more than 270,000 Catholics, has just 63 parishes.

On behalf of missionaries and the people they serve, I would like to thank you in advance for your generosity when the collection is taken.

## ***From Bishop Campbell on Catholic Home Missions***

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has designated one collection each year to help the mission dioceses in the United States. These dioceses are commonly known as "Mission Land USA". In the Diocese of Columbus the collection will be taken on the weekend of June 2 and 3.

These dioceses cannot exist without the help of Catholics elsewhere. The funds gathered through this collection help support and expand the Catholic presence in these areas. Helping the needs of the mission dioceses across the country unites all of us as a Catholic family.

Contrary to what many people think, the missions are not only in Africa, Asia, India, and Latin America. The missions are also in the vast wilderness of Alaska, in the Deep South, in the Rocky Mountain States, in the Appalachian regions, in the Southwest, in Puerto Rico, in the Virgin Islands and in the distant Pacific Islands like the American Samoa and the Marshalls.

I invite you to respond generously to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal. May the Lord bless us in our efforts to help expand and strengthen the presence of the Church at home.

## ***The Diocese of Columbus welcomes missionaries from around the world***

Every year, from April to September, representatives from mission organizations and foreign dioceses visit the parishes in the Diocese of Columbus to participate in a program called Mission Cooperative Plan (MCP),

which is the Bishop's mandatory program administered by the diocesan Missions Office.

MCP gives parishioners the opportunity to hear stories about the Church's work to spread the Gospel even to the ends of the earth, as mandated by our Lord, Jesus Christ. It also, gives mission organizations and foreign dioceses to ask parishioners for financial help to support their evangelization programs and projects.

On behalf of Bishop Campbell and our visiting missionaries, I would like to thank you in advance, for the hospitality, charity and generosity that you will afford to our missionary guests.

Every now and then, we receive complains from pastors and parishioners about visiting missionaries that are not fluent in the English language; that they have a heavy accent and can be difficult to understand. We request mission organizations and foreign dioceses to send appeal speakers who are fluent in English. Unfortunately, their standards and our standards are not always congruent.

If it happens that the speaker we send to your parish does not meet our standards, let us receive him as an act of penance, knowing that God will be pleased with our charity; that ultimately in heaven there will be no language barriers; that listening to one sermon a year in broken English could shorten our purgatory time. Also, I fully understand the struggle of foreign speakers to communicate, because I, too, speak broken English, as it is my second language.

## ***A Joke a priest can tell... LOL!***

A man dies and is met by Peter at the pearly gates.

Peter says, "You need 100 points to make it into Heaven. Tell me all of the good things you've done and I'll give you a certain number of points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 100 points, you get in."

"Okay," the man says, "I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart."

"That's wonderful," says Peter, "that's worth three points!"

"Three points?" the man exclaims. "Well, I attended church all of my life and supported its ministry with my tithes and service."

"Terrific!" says Peter, "that's certainly worth a point."

"One point? Okay, well I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for the homeless."

"Fantastic, that's good for two more points," Peter says.

"TWO POINTS!" the man cries.

"At this rate, the only way I'll get into Heaven is by the Grace of God!"

Peter exclaims, "Come on in!"

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