



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
Most Reverend John E. Keehner
DIOCESE OF SIOUX CITY
1821 Jackson Street
Sioux City, IA 51105

1 October 2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In 1926, the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith requested the establishment of a "day of prayer and propaganda for the missions." Pope Pius XI accepted this request, establishing World Mission Sunday to be celebrated on the penultimate (next to last) Sunday of October each year.

On 22 May 2025, in a special audience with national directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies, Pope Leo XIV spoke directly to the soul of our shared work: "The Pontifical Mission Societies are effectively the 'primary means' of awakening missionary responsibility among all the baptized and supporting ecclesial communities in areas where the Church is young."

In unity and communion with the entire Church, and with support of the 1,124 missionary territories around the world, the whole month of October is celebrated as Universal Mission Month as we are encouraged to focus on the universal dimension of our prayer and financial offerings for the missions.

We may recall that until 1908, the Church in the United States was mission territory and until then, we relied on help from other countries to build our churches and seminaries and to support our clergy and religious. Today many foreign missions rely on our generosity to sustain the Church, which is an instrument of God's love and mercy, His hope and peace. Last year, we collected \$44,427.00 for this collection.

The second collection on World Mission Sunday, October 18-19, supports the work of The Pontifical Mission Societies, the Pope's official means of assisting Catholic communities in the world's poorest and most remote regions. Our contributions provide essential resources for the Church's mission: the formation of seminarians

and religious sisters, ensuring that future priests and religious leaders are prepared to serve; the training of lay catechists, who bring the faith to communities that may not have regular access to a priest; education for children in Catholic schools, giving them not only knowledge but also a foundation of faith; medical care in Church-run hospitals and clinics, offering healing and hope where healthcare is scarce; and the construction and maintenance of churches and parish centers, creating sacred spaces where the faithful can gather, worship, and grow in their relationship with Jesus.

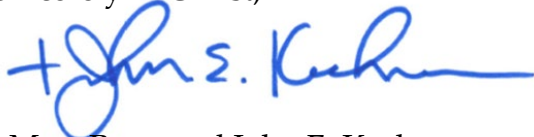
Your prayers and sacrifices today ensure that the light of Christ reaches the ends of the earth. The Church's mission is not the responsibility only of those who serve in distant lands; it belongs to all of us by baptism. Each time we support the missions, we affirm that we are one Church, one family in Christ, united in bringing hope and love to all people.

I encourage you to respond with a generous heart, knowing that 100% of your support makes a real difference in the lives of those who might otherwise never hear the Gospel.

May this World Mission Sunday deepen our commitment to the missionary dimension of our faith. Let us go forth as Missionaries of Hope, bringing God's love and mercy to all people.

Know how grateful I am for your generosity. I ask that you continue to pray for me and for all our priests, deacons, and consecrated religious who serve our Diocesan Church and for an increase in vocations. May the Holy Spirit be with you and enliven your heart!

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John E. Keehner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J".

+Most Reverend John E. Keehner
Bishop of Sioux City