



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN INTERNATIONAL

**One million children praying the Rosary – 2019
For peace and unity in the world**

Rome, 15. August, 2019

Solemnity of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary into Heaven

Dear Friends,

In order to inspire a new awareness for the theme of Mission in the world, Pope Francis has proclaimed an Extraordinary Month of Mission for this October. Launched under the theme "Baptised and Sent: the Church of Christ on mission in the world", the aim of the mission is to rekindle the zeal for mission through various pastoral and spiritual initiatives. The emphasis is particularly upon the personal missionary calling of every individual Christian.

In his message announcing the mission month, which has been called to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV's Apostolic Letter *Maximum illud*, Pope Francis wrote: "Today missionary activity still represents the greatest challenge for the Church and the missionary task must remain foremost... Throughout the world, let us be permanently in a state of mission... May the Extraordinary Missionary Month prove an intense and fruitful occasion of grace, and promote initiatives and above all prayer, the soul of all missionary activity."

In order to respond to the Pope's wish, we would also like to devote this year's worldwide prayer initiative, One million children praying the Rosary to the theme of mission and to pray, together with the children, especially for missionaries and for new missionary vocations. Saint Therese of Lisieux, the Patroness of the missions, wrote the following in her biography *The Story of a Soul*: "If the Church has a body, then it cannot fail to have the most necessary and most noble part of all, a heart. I understood that the Church has a heart that is burning with love. Love alone makes it possible for the members of the Mystical Body, the Church, to act. If love were extinguished, the apostles would no longer proclaim the Gospel and the martyrs would refuse to shed their blood. I understood that love includes all vocations... At the heart of the Church I will be love. And in this way I will be everything." This is likewise the profound intention





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of our worldwide initiative – to inflame the heart of the Church anew through the prayers of children and to fill it with a missionary love, so that the prayers of children may in a special way be the soul of the missionary renewal of the Church.

And so we are inviting you all – teachers, catechists, educators, parents and grandparents – to participate as in previous years in this great mission of prayer by the children and to pray the Rosary with the children under your care on 18 October 2019 at 9 a.m. (or at another time that is more suitable for you), in union with thousands of other groups of children all over the world. We would very much like this prayer initiative to become a “permanent mission”, as the Pope has asked of us, and to do so by forming ourselves together with the children into “living Rosary groups”. In practical terms this means ‘sharing out’ the 20 Mysteries of the Rosary each month among the children. Each child will be given the task of praying one single decade of the Rosary daily from a particular Mystery. As a help, you could give each child a little card with the selected Mystery on it. And so in this way the group as a whole will be praying the entire Rosary each day and contemplating the whole life of Jesus. At the end of the month the children will be given a new Mystery to pray, and in this way the prayer of the Rosary will become a living reality, with the power to change our lives, to sustain the mission of the Church and bring peace and unity to the world.

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