



Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office of the Cardinal
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

October 12, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Each of us, at Baptism, is given a special responsibility. We are called, by our Lord, to tell the world the “Good News” of His love and salvation. We are to be His Missionaries. Each year, on **World Mission Sunday**, all baptized Catholics gather for Mass—in small chapels, as well as in large cathedrals around the globe—to celebrate our Missionary vocation, and to offer prayers and sacrifices for the Missionary task.

World Mission Sunday, this year on October 19, takes on added significance as the Church here at home marks the passing of one hundred years since a papal decree removed the designation of “Mission territory” from the United States – 100 years of independence from the generosity of the Catholics of Europe through the *Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith*.

In fact, two-thirds of the very first collection of the *Propagation of the Faith* was sent to the Church here—to Kentucky and the vast diocese of Louisiana, which then extended from the Florida Keys to Canada. Philadelphia, from the beginning, was one of the first recipients of help from the *Propagation of the Faith*. Years of such assistance helped build schools and churches, provide for the education and work of Priests and Religious and support evangelization here at home. Concurrently, **World Mission Sunday, 2008** will also honor the many Missionaries from Europe who brought the Lord’s gift of faith and His message of hope to our people here.

As we remember our own Mission history this **World Mission Sunday**, we can offer our prayers and financial help for the young and growing churches of the Missions today. Your generosity through the *Propagation of the Faith* will reach those who await the “Good News” of Jesus, who long to experience His hope and love.

Please be as generous as your means will allow this **World Mission Sunday**. In accord with the message of our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI, let us join together in prayer, that our celebration will encourage all of us to rediscover the word of God in our lives and our urgent need to proclaim the Gospel.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ **Justin Card. Rigali**

Cardinal Justin Rigali
Archbishop of Philadelphia

(Please communicate the contents of this letter to your parishioners in the most appropriate manner on the

weekend of October 11 and 12; the collection is to be taken the following weekend of October 18 and 19. Collection remittal should be made payable to: ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA and sent to: *Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith*, 222 North 17 Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.)