

Perspectives on Mission in today's world

Preparing for the Extraordinary Missionary Month 2019



Introduction

The Archdiocese is preparing for the Extraordinary Missionary Month declared by Pope Francis for October 2019. You and your parish communities are invited to participate. The Columban Missionaries, currently doing mission appeals across the Archdiocese, are witnesses to how the Church's understanding of mission around the world has changed over the last 100 years.

You are invited to explore five characteristics of mission. These characteristics have been learned by the Columbans from their experience of crossing boundaries for the sake of the Gospel and have been summarised from the paper 'Perspectives on Mission in today's world' by Fr Tom O'Reilly SSC, which was sent to you in preparation for this meeting. In the course of your reflection and discussion, you are encouraged to share examples and stories from your experience.

Characteristics of Mission

- **Mission of God – what is God's dream for the world?**

A communion of loving relationships. God reaches out to invite all people, and indeed all creation, to participate in the divine Communion of Love.

What are the 'loving relationships' in your parish community?

- **Purpose of Mission – promoting God's Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God is the activity of God in our world, the liberating and transforming power of God breaking into our world in the person and mission of Jesus. The Church is called to be a *missionary community* constantly reaching out beyond its borders in service of the Kingdom of God.

How is your parish community 'reaching out beyond its borders'?

- **Goal of Mission – Integral Salvation as a present reality**

Salvation involves *liberation* from anything that destroys, diminishes or threatens life today. It also involves a *transformation*, a restoration to a state of wholeness, so that we can live in true communion, in right relationship and harmony with God, with others, and with all creation.

What are the 'signs of the times' in the world today that destroy, diminish or threaten life?

How does your parish community participate in restoring the world to a 'state of wholeness'?

- **Way of Mission – Giving and Receiving**

Pope Francis reminds us that we must never cease sharing the joy and the gift of the Gospel with others. But that gift can never be imposed. *Listening and receiving* are absolutely essential in mission. God is already present and active in any given situation long before the missionary arrives.

What 'gifts' have you and your parish community received from your encounters with other people?

- **Call of Mission – Missionary Disciples**

Every member of the Church is called to play a part in the Church's mission. The missionary call is rooted in our common baptism. A well-integrated *inter-cultural parish community, open and welcoming to all*, can be a tremendous sign and instrument of the communion God desires.

How prepared are you and your parish community to be a 'sign and instrument of God's communion'?

What opportunities/forums are there for you and your parish community to discuss your 'missionary call'?