



Diocese of Austin

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Office of the Bishop

September 22, 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

October is Respect Life and World Missions Month. During these next several weeks, we have an opportunity to engage in acts of generosity, which are a tremendous blessing to the Body of Christ. This is a distinctive time of the year when the church promotes the dignity of all human life, from conception to natural death, as well as cultivates awareness and support for the 1,150 mission territories of the Catholic Church.

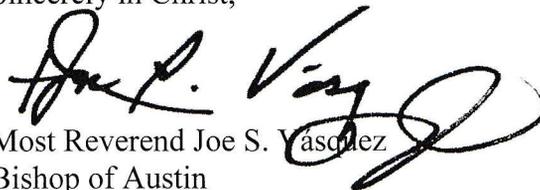
The Respect Life Program begins the weekend of September 29-30. This year's theme, "Every Life Cherished, Chosen, Sent," is a call to missionary discipleship. As Our Lady of Guadalupe said to St. Juan Diego, "You who are my messenger, in you I place my absolute trust." Like this saint, let us embrace our daily mission to help others encounter God's transforming, life-giving love.

On World Mission Sunday, October 21, Catholics are invited to pray and sacrifice for the whole world, not just one particular mission. As followers of Christ, we are called to support the missionary works of the Universal Church. On this day, the Propagation of the Faith collection will be taken. Funds collected provide much needed support to mission churches that spread the Gospel and provide a spiritual home for the poorest and most vulnerable of humanity. The missionary work of the Catholic Church relies on this annual collection to continue evangelizing and serving the poorest and most disadvantaged in numerous remote areas of the world.

In his message for World Mission Day 2015, Pope Francis wrote, "In Jesus' command to 'go forth' we see the scenarios and ever-present new challenges of the Church's evangelizing mission." With the increasingly devastating attacks on human life in our world today through abortion, euthanasia, slavery, sex-trafficking, and terrorism, our Holy Father reminds us that "Mission is a passion for Jesus and at the same time a passion for his people." I invite you to be generous in supporting this collection. It is our love for Jesus and humanity authenticated through our prayers and actions that we can continue to build heaven on earth.

May God bless you and your loved ones.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Joe S. Vasquez
Bishop of Austin

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