



## **POPE FRANCIS STRESSES MISSIONARY MANDATE OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

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### **VATICAN CITY -**

The Holy Father Pope Francis has described young people as the hope of the missionary apostolate of the Church and therefore stressed the need for them to be more involved in the missionary responsibility of the Church. The Holy Father's contention in this perspective was contained in his message for the celebration of the 2017 World mission Sunday, held by the universal Church recently.

The Pope's message titled: *Mission at the heart of the Christian faith* also reiterated the important role of the Pontifical Mission Societies noting that they are "a precious means of awakening in every Christian community a desire to reach beyond its own confines and security in order to proclaim the Gospel to all."

Noting how the societies have helped to nurture the spirituality and continually raise the missionary awareness and enthusiasm of the faithful, the Pope declared: "World Mission Day, promoted by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, is a good opportunity for enabling the missionary heart of Christian communities to join in prayer, testimony of life and communion of goods, in responding to the vast and pressing needs of evangelization."

On the need for greater responsibility for young people in the missionary apostolate of the Church Pope Francis stressed: “Young people are the hope of mission. The person of Jesus Christ and the Good news he proclaimed continue to attract many young people. They seek ways to themselves with courage and enthusiasm at the service of humanity.”

The Holy Father continued: “there are many young people who offer their solidarity in the face of the evils of the world and engage in various forms of militancy and volunteering ..... How beautiful it is to see that young people are ‘street preachers,’ joyfully bringing Jesus to every street, every town square and every corner of the earth! (ibid 106)” He added: “the next Ordinary General assembly of the Synod of Bishops, to be held in 2018 on the theme: Young people, the Faith and Vocational Discernment, represents a providential opportunity to involve young people in the shared missionary responsibility that needs their rich imagination and creativity.”

Speaking on the essential need of the positive impact of the Gospel on the world: the Pope declared: “The world vitally needs the Gospel of Jesus. Through the Church, Christ continues his mission as the Good Samaritan, caring the bleeding wounds of humanity, and as Good Shepherd, constantly seeking out those who wander along winding paths that lead nowhere. Thank God, many significant experiences continue to testify to the transformative power of the Gospel.”

The Holy Father’s address which reemphasized the missionary nature of the Church also spoke extensively on: mission and the transformative power of the Gospel of Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life; mission and *kairos* of Christ and mission inspires a spirituality of constant exodus, pilgrimage

and exile.