

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

October 6, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we gather in communion this World Mission Sunday, October 18th & 19th, we celebrate a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility to proclaim the Gospel to all nations. It is a day when Catholics around the world unite in prayer and solidarity to support the missionary work of the Church. This year's theme, "Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples," is particularly moving because, even though it was chosen by Pope Francis, it reflects both the heart of our faith and the vision of our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV.

Pope Leo XIV, who spent most of his priestly ministry as a missionary in the remote regions of Peru, reminds us that The Pontifical Mission Societies are "the primary means for awakening missionary responsibility among all the baptized [and for] supporting ecclesial communities in areas where the Church is young." His personal witness deepens the meaning of this year's celebration, inviting us all to renew our commitment to the Church's mission in the world.

It is fitting, as we reflect on our role in supporting the missions, to remember that the Catholic Church in the United States was itself once a mission territory. Just over a century ago, the faith here was still taking root, supported by the generosity of Catholics from Europe and beyond, who provided financial assistance, sent priests and religious, and built the parishes and schools that formed the foundation of the Church in this country. Without that missionary support, many of the dioceses we know today would have struggled even more to grow. In those early years, American Catholics benefited from the same collection we are invited to support on World Mission Sunday, overseen by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

Now, it is our turn to extend that same generosity to others. We are called to support the missionaries, priests, religious sisters and brothers, and lay leaders who serve in the 1,124 mission territories where the Church is still young, vibrant, and often facing persecution or poverty. These areas, spanning Asia, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, and the Middle East, depend on our prayers and financial support to sustain and expand their efforts to share Christ and his saving words and work.

Our financial contributions provide essential resources for the Church's mission: the formation of seminarians and religious sisters, ensuring that future priests and religious leaders are prepared to serve; the training of lay catechists, who bring the faith to communities that may not have regular access to a priest; education for children in Catholic schools, giving them not only knowledge but also a foundation of faith; medical care in Church-run hospitals and clinics, offering healing and hope where healthcare is scarce; and the construction and maintenance of

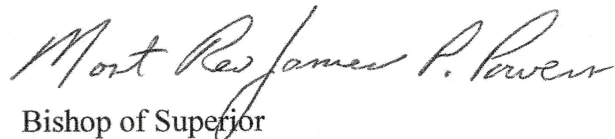
churches and parish centers, creating sacred spaces where the faithful can gather, worship, and grow in their relationship with Jesus.

Your prayers and sacrifices ensure that the light of Christ reaches the ends of the earth. The Church's mission is not the responsibility only of those who serve in distant lands; it belongs to all of us by baptism. Each time we support the missions, we affirm that we are one Church, one family in Christ, united in bringing hope and love to all people.

I encourage you to respond with a generous heart, knowing that your support makes a real difference in the lives of those who might otherwise never hear the Gospel.

May this World Mission Sunday deepen our commitment to the missionary dimension of our faith. Let us go forth as Missionaries of Hope, bringing God's love and mercy to all people.

In Hope, united in Christ's mission,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Most Rev. James P. Lawler". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Bishop of Superior