

MISSION MESSAGE

From the Telethon to the Collection Basket: A Lifetime of Giving

By Shannon Ruiz
Diocesan Director,
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Do you remember the Jerry Lewis MDA Labor Day Telethon? More importantly, do you remember the first time you made a charitable donation? I do.

I vividly remember sitting on the floor in my living room, watching Jerry Lewis and the various stories of people living with Muscular Dystrophy tug at my seven-year-old heartstrings. I had no money of my own, so I begged my mom to donate for me.

I was so proud to see my name scroll across the bottom of the television screen. I was too young to understand what Muscular Dystrophy was, but I knew I wanted to help.

For several years after that, I received a personal solicitation in the mail. That was a big deal to a kid who rarely ever got mail, and it made me feel like I was making a difference in people's lives. I'm grateful my mom humored my request because, by giving me that opportunity, she helped plant the seeds of philanthropy in my life.

The Labor Day tradition of the MDA telethon ended in 2015, but many important causes still need our support today. I invite you to consider the difference you can

make in the world by supporting World Mission Sunday 2026 on Sunday, October 18, 2026.

There will be no telethons or celebrity-backed campaigns to support World Mission Sunday, but every parish in our diocese will hold a second collection. We will also celebrate our missionary faith with a Pontifical Mass celebrated by Bishop Bambera at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton at 12:15 p.m.

Funds collected through World Mission Sunday are distributed by the Pontifical Mission Societies to support missionary priests, religious sisters and brothers, and lay catechists serving in mission dioceses worldwide. Some funds help missionary dioceses run and survive, while the rest build churches, seminaries, convents, and pastoral centers.

World Mission Sunday is the Church's annual invitation to remember that our faith does not end at our parish doors, but that it extends to every corner of the globe where the Gospel is still being carried into communities in need.

As Catholics, we are baptized into a missionary Church, called

PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES IN THE UNITED STATES

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
Missionary Childhood Association
The Society of St. Peter the Apostle
Missionary Union of Priests and Religious

www.onefamilyinmission.org

by Christ to care for our brothers and sisters near and far.

Just as a childhood donation once planted a seed of generosity in my own life, your gift this October 18 may be the very seed that grows into someone else's lifeline of hope, faith, and human dignity.



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Apostleship of Prayer

Pope's Intention for October 2026

For Mental Health Ministry —

Let us pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.