



Sunday Gospel Reflections for the Missionary Month of October 2025

Faith is like a seed (SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2025)

As we begin the Missionary Month of October, this Sunday we reflect about the faith we want to spread and make grow in our world.

“Increase our faith!” Through this request, the apostles acknowledge that they have some faith. They’re aware that faith isn’t something they can possess but rather a gift. And Jesus doesn’t deny it. He also understands their need for greater faith as it embodies a developing force in them. He compares it to a seed that is sown in a garden, that then grows and becomes a tall tree. As if on hold, a seed carries within itself everything that will later become a tall tree. But for this to happen, it has to be sown and taken care of. In its best conditions, a sown seed starts by growing (expansion) before germinating. The better it’s taken care of, the better the sprout will grow.

Just like with a seed sown in a garden, God sows faith within our soul, and everyone has the duty to take care of it so it can grow and develop. Like a seed yet to be sown, faith is already a formidable force, eventually capable of *uprooting a great tree and planting it in the sea*. Jesus believes that the apostles’ faith is smaller than any seed of faith that God can ever sow within the soul: “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed.” Yet, the mustard seed is “the smallest of all the seeds” (Mt 13: 32). Therefore, rather than asking to increase their faith, the apostles would be better off seeing if, instead of germinating, their faith’s seed hasn’t grown thinner, and thus, stopped germinating because of an obvious lack of care.

Jesus admits that his apostles have already taken a step forward in their caring of the seed of faith sown within them. But they still have much to do. They’re like that servant who just finished plowing or herding and who must, moreover, wear an apron, prepare dinner for his master and serve him. From Jesus their master, they have just received the formation of *disciples* by following him, listening to his word, sharing their lives with him and witnessing his actions. Now that they have become apostles, they are “sent out” to make disciples themselves, through their words and deeds, to bear fruit that will remain (cf. Jn 15:16). Thus, they celebrate Jesus, their master, and they serve God a good dinner. This is what mission is all about! Indeed, “By this is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit and become my disciples” (Jn 15:8).

To grow and germinate, the faith that is sown in us needs to listen to the Word, to regularly take part in confession, to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, in Eucharistic Communion and a life of prayer and charity. At this level already, faith can “*uproot a great tree and plant it in the sea*,” in other words, it can undo bad habits that are deeply rooted in us and our family members and immerse us in the immense sea of God’s grace. Faith that germinates grows and develops through fidelity to the Holy Spirit and the Teachings received. It becomes strong through a courageous battle against heresy and by standing firm in the face of persecution (2nd reading). Faith bears fruit and proves its maturity through openness to the *ad gentes* mission, *a mission of hope among all peoples*, as expressed by Pope Francis. The *bearer of hope* immerses himself in the community in which he’s sent out. It’s there where he offers all of himself and all that he has; where he lets himself be touched and moved by everything that touches the community, and be shaped by everything that will have shaped her. Then, he motivates and supports the community’s human and Christian emergence: he becomes a *builder of hope*. (cf. Pope Francis’ Message for World Mission Day 2025, № 2).

From the foregoing, it is clear that by experiencing and bearing witness of one's faith at home, then taking it elsewhere, it is how one takes care of it, and, therefore, makes it grow. However, no one may boast. God is the Master of every situation (first reading). He gives us the ability and duty of contributing to the salvation of our humanity because he wants us to be proud of Him and ourselves. For without Him, we can do nothing. For without Him, we cannot be good partners in his mission. Have a good Missionary Month with Him!

Go show yourselves to the priests! (SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2025)

This second Sunday of Mission Month invites us to reflect upon mission's healing and liberating dimension. When there wasn't a known cure for leprosy, lepers were isolated to avoid infecting others. For the People of Israel, leprosy was not only a disease, but also a curse, a consequence of sin. And in the Bible, it alludes to sin that ends a person's relationship with God, his brothers and sisters, and Creation. Leprosy that appears, as the one that heals, requires the intervention of a priest. After a thorough examination, he will declare if a person suffers from leprosy and thus is impure or if she was purified and thus pure (cf. Lv 13). After this, he proceeds to the rites of purification, social and spiritual reintegration (cf. Lv 14). When Jesus sends back the ten lepers to the priests, he grants them their role: *"Go show yourselves to the priests!"*

God, who healed Naaman's leprosy and the ten lepers, continues to heal every physical and spiritual disease. However, physical healing is not an end in itself. It's oriented towards spiritual healing. And this is what Jesus aims for when he teaches or heals; not because physical health isn't necessary, but because we cannot be saved through it only. However, we are saved through spiritual healing, even if we become physically disabled.

"Go show yourselves to the priests!" Jesus' words to the ten lepers remind us of the words that the prophet Elisha said to Naam the Syrian: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan." They announce the words that the Church addresses to the faithful: *"Go confess yourselves to the priest!"* Bathing in the Jordan prefigures the *"one baptism"* for the forgiveness of sins, which is renewed and revived through confession, which is like a *"second baptism."* It's neither water nor the priest who takes away sins, but rather God through them. They remain important, even indispensable, in normal conditions. The water of baptism is a message from God: *"I wash away all your sins, keep yourself free from them!"* And it's the same message given by the priest who grants God's forgiveness: *"I forgive you all your sins. Go in peace!"*

Healing requires trust and obedience to the word of God's servant. It inspires confession of faith and thanksgiving to God. It requires bearing witness to all.

Naam headed towards the prophet Elisha with trust, and he obediently washed himself in the Jordan seven times. When he noticed that he was healed after bathing in the Jordan, *he returned with his whole retinue to the man of God* and said, *"Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel."* Then, he offered him a gift; he already bears witness of his faith. He will continue to do so by offering sacrifices to the God of Israel.

The ten lepers headed towards Jesus with trust, and they obediently go and show themselves to the priests. When one of them noticed that he was healed, he "returned." On his way back, he bears witness *"by glorifying God in a loud voice"*; he fell at Jesus' feet and thanked him. Then, Jesus lifts him. However, the leper was a foreigner, an idolatrous who was unaware of the Jewish tradition.

We confess our sins with trust in the Church and obedience to Christ, who institutes forgiveness and his minister. And this is the path traced by Jesus to welcome forgiveness. After receiving and accepting the priest's advice, we confess our faith to God through the act of contrition. After the

absolution of our sins, we express our gratitude to God. Then, we go back home giving thanks to God. Upon our baptism, we become witnesses of the Gospel. Furthermore, we become witnesses of mercy through confession. We are sent to proclaim the benefits of baptism to the unbaptized and the benefits of the “*second baptism*” to the baptized. At the same time, we contribute to the Church’s mission, which Pope Francis reminded us, which is to say, “*To revive hope in a world over which dark shadows loom*” (Pope Francis’ message for World Mission Day 2025, № 1). During this Mission Month, let us experience mercy and let us bear witness of its liberating benefits in our lives.

Pray always without becoming weary!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2025 (World Mission Day 2025)

During Mission Month and specially today, on World Mission Day, we pray for the Church and the baptized who are sent out. We reach out to God through prayer. It’s a sign of friendship with Him. It reminds us of the frequent dialogue and communication we have with our best friend, and the joy, peace, pride, enthusiasm, honesty, attention and respect that characterize it. Thus, we understand that we pray not only because we need something but because we are driven by something: love. Requesting is one element of prayer among many others. We don’t stop praying because our answers don’t come fast enough or don’t come at all. We soon realize that when we don’t get an answer, contact with God becomes more intense as we enquire about the progress of our request: *Pray always without becoming weary!*

In everyday life, we experience how some requests are delayed or are never answered to, although they’re addressed to competent people, according to required conditions and instructions. A person might be ill-intentioned and mishandle a file or not handle it at all, although he or she is competent. This is what the widow in the Gospel must face. The judge doesn’t want to handle her case. And, if he eventually renders her justice, it would only be in order for him to have peace and not for the widow’s peace.

So, when a request is delayed, although it is addressed to a competent and well-intentioned person, it is maybe because there are some difficulties or that the processing of the files requires more time. The same happens when we address our prayers to God, and our answer is delayed. God is competent and well intentioned when we present our request according to the desired conditions and requirements. All we have to do is wait for an answer, which can only be good, even if it might be different from what we expect.

Meanwhile, it is wise to continue any contact with the persons, especially if we want to find out the file’s progress, knowing that there can be issues either upon its arrival or return. When we are aware of this, we know which actions to take in order to stop the impasse. This is the case of Israel and Moses. God heard their plea, freed them from slavery and promised them a land. While heading to that land, the Amalek attacked them. Joshua and his soldiers fought them. Along with Aaron and Hur, Moses stood at the top of the hill, holding God’s staff. When he raised his hand, Israel would prevail, and when he rested his hand, Amalek would prevail. Then, Aaron and Hur supported his hands until sunset, and Joshua prevailed.

Just like Israel, we are a Church who walks towards eternal life with God, and on our way there, the enemy tries to block us. We must identify him and unmask him so that we do not confuse him with mankind, who, when he offends us, is merely taken hostage. Our battle, just like our Mission, must hold together action and prayer. By using our physical strength and ability to act, we remember and profess before God that we get that from Him. We bow before God’s choices; we don’t reject those who weaken, but we support them in their efforts.

God is our best friend, he is competent and well intentioned, and always answers our prayers at his time. If his answer is delayed, it's either because the enemy interfered or we're not ready yet. Prayer remains important for releasing a situation or being available. This wisdom runs through the sacred texts, but seems unknown, and Jesus questions himself: "But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" He calls us to mission, since "faith comes from what is heard" (Rm 10:17). This is the advice given by Paul to Timothy and to us: to remain faithful to the Gospel we've received and to constantly proclaim it in order to teach it. Furthermore, "the missionary activity of handing down and shaping a mature faith in Christ is paradigmatic for all the Church's activities," points out Pope Francis (Message for World Mission Day 2025, №3). On this World Mission Day, let us support the Universal Church's missionary action through our prayers and donations.

He went home justified (SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2025)

We learn from Sirach the Wise that God hears the prayers of the poor, like the orphan, the widow and the oppressed. Regarding this ordinary poor, he also adds, "He who serves God with a full heart," and it's because we know that we are spiritually poor that we put ourselves at the service of God. We all possess that poverty. And whoever acknowledges it, whether they're physically, financially, socially rich or poor, God hears them.

Praying is above all to acknowledge our precarity before the greatness of God and to agree with the feelings he has for our neighbours, as it is convenient for his servants. This is what Jesus teaches through the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector's prayer. Both agree with the common opinion that the Pharisee conforms to God's Law, unlike the tax collector. While he was praying, he acknowledged before God that he's a sinner, and he doesn't say anything against the Pharisee, whom he admires. On the other hand, the Pharisee stands before God as his equal. He brags about his merits and despises the tax collector. What he says is probably true. But he doesn't know that perfection has never been achieved, that *whoever says he has no sin is a liar* (cf. 1 Jn 1:10), and it is convenient to *consider others as more important than ourselves* (cf. Ph 2, 3).

We pray well with our heart, our body and our words. Indeed, it is the disposition of the heart and not the rites that please the Lord. But for someone who, through his body, expresses what his heart is feeling when he has a relationship with God, he knows how to find an appropriate explanatory word to accompany it, and in that case, rites can dispose of the heart well.

The Pharisee's standing position is a good posture, that of a normal human being, in good health, strong and serene. But the words that accompany him sing their wonders, as if he only stands up by his efforts. They only allude to God when it comes to making him responsible for the gaps between people: "*O God, I thank you that I'm not like the rest of humanity.*" And it is curious to see that today, a similar prayer is gaining ground in some Christian circles: "*I thank you, Lord: while others are dead, I'm still alive; while others are sick, I'm in good health; while others are poor, I'm rich...*" We cannot give thanks to God while comparing our situation with the comfort or discomfort of others. Our well-being is not a reason to have pride, but rather to show compassion and take responsibility for those who suffer. In this regard, the Pope teaches that Christians continue Christ's mission and are called "to hear the plea of suffering humanity and, indeed, the groaning of every creature that awaits definitive redemption" (Pope Francis' Message for World Mission Day 2025, № 1). He insists on the *missionary synodality of the Church, and the service rendered by the Pontifical Mission Societies in promoting the missionary responsibility of the baptized and supporting new Particular Churches* (Pope Francis' Message for World Mission Day 2025, № 3).

The tax collector assumes three bodily attitudes with a single word. He stands off at a distance and doesn't even raise his eyes to heaven but beats his breast and prays: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." God dwells in the Temple, especially in the Sanctuary. The more we get closer to the Sanctuary, the more we get closer to the sanctity of God. However, sin and sanctity do not coexist: either the glory of God moves or the sinner gives in. By standing at a distance and begging, the tax collector acknowledges that he's a sinner before a holy, impressive and merciful God. The dwelling place of God is also heaven. *Like the eyes of servants in the hands of their masters* (Ps 123: 2), like the eyes of a child towards his parents, we look up to the one from whom help comes from, as long as we are still on good terms with him. Otherwise, we don't dare and we implore for clemency. The dwelling place of God is also the heart, within the chest (Ps 55:5). By beating his chest, the tax collector regretfully acknowledges the evil that lies within him because he drove God away from his dwelling place, which is the heart.

Having sincerely presented his poverty of God, the tax collector goes home justified. He was fed with what he hungered for and given what he thirsted for. For God has filled the hungry with good things, and he has sent away the rich empty, and whoever is filled with God, has everything, like Paul, who keeps hope and peace during trials. Have a good remaining Mission Month and let us continue, throughout the following days, to keep in our prayers the cry of humanity and support our Missionary Church of hope among all peoples.

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His Sunday reflections are available throughout the year on his Facebook page.

Here is an extract from his book, *The Whispers of God*, published by *Croix de Salut*: "God no longer speaks in an earthquake, hurricane or fire. He speaks in a whisper that is heard silently. Anyone who wants to listen to him and meditates silently." *The Whispers of God* (A-B) is a collection of Sunday meditations that covers part of liturgical year A and another part of liturgical year B. They apply to biblical texts from the years 2023; 2026; 2029; 2032 and 2035.