



2025 OUR WORLD, FAMILY OF FAMILIES –

MARFAM THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

OCTOBER – FAMILIES ON MISSION



PEACE WITH CREATION SEASON OF CREATION 2025

SEASON OF CREATION -

1 SEPTEMBER TO 4 OCTOBER 2025.

THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY are available on www.marfam.org.za, facebook and X. Send request for email to info@marfam.org.za.
Abbreviations: Pope Francis: LS = Laudato Si. AL = Amoris Laetitia FT = Fratelli Tutti. MV= The Face of Mercy

OCTOBER. Family on Mission. Every family of any kind, human, plant or animal has a role to play to sustain our world, as a family of families. As the human family, we have the power to deliberately choose our sense of mission. During 2025 we accept our mission to journey as Pilgrims of Hope. We cannot afford selfish greed, or hurtful violence, but are called to adopt God's mission of love, love of creation, all its creatures and the poor. St Francis, the patron saint of ecology is our inspiration on our mission. **Pope Francis:** *The family is an agent of pastoral activity through the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, their witness, solidarity with the poor, openness to diversity of people, protection of creation, moral and material solidarity with other families and commitment to the common good.* AL 290 *Human beings too are creatures of this world, enjoying a right to life and happiness, and endowed with unique dignity. We cannot fail to consider the effects on people's lives of environmental deterioration, current models of development and a throwaway culture.* LS 43. **Jubilee.** *May the witness of believers be for our world a haven of authentic hope, a harbinger of new heavens and a new earth (cf. 2 Pet 3:13), where men and women will dwell in justice and harmony, in joyful expectation of the fulfilment of the Lord's promises.* SNC 24.

Setting the scene with the MARFAM DAILY THOUGHTS. Parishes, small communities and families are encouraged to promote the concept of FAMILIES ON MISSION and becoming missionary families. Recognising that all parishioners are connected with a family in some way, married couples, parents, children, grandparents, aunts and uncles and other relatives. THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY pick up this message from scripture readings and Pope Francis and Pope Leo..

PRAYER FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION

St Francis Canticle of the Creatures

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing,
To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no human is worthy to mention Your name.
Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor; and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night, and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.
Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed are those who endure in peace, for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.

POPE FRANCIS MESSAGE FOR MISSION MONTH 2025. World Mission Day in the Jubilee Year 2025 has the central message of hope and the motto: "Missionaries of Hope Among all Peoples". It reminds individual Christians and the entire Church, the community of the baptized, of our fundamental vocation to be, in the footsteps of Christ, messengers and builders of hope. I mention some relevant aspects of our Christian missionary identity, so that we can let ourselves be guided by the Spirit of God and burn with holy zeal for a new evangelizing season in the Church, which is sent to revive hope in a world over which dark shadows loom (cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 9-55).

1. *In the footsteps of Christ our hope.* From today until the end of time Christ is the fullness of salvation for all, and in a particular way for those whose only hope is God. In his earthly life, "he went about doing good and healing all" from evil and the Evil One (cf. Acts 10:38), restoring hope in God to the needy and the people. He experienced all our human frailties, save that of sin, even those critical moments that might lead to despair, as in the agony in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. Jesus commended everything to God the Father, obediently trusting in his saving plan for humanity, a plan of peace for a future full of hope (cf. Jer 29:11). He became the divine Missionary of hope, the supreme model of all those down the centuries who carry out their own God-given mission, even amid extreme trials.
2. *Christians, bearers and builders of hope among all peoples.* In following Christ the Lord, Christians are called to hand on the Good News by sharing the concrete life situations of those whom they meet, and thus to be bearers and builders of hope.
3. *Renewing the mission of hope.* Faced with the urgency of the mission of hope today, Christ's disciples are called first to discover how to become "artisans" of hope and restorers of an often distracted and unhappy humanity. From the paschal mysteries, made present in liturgical celebrations and in the sacraments, we constantly draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit in order to work with zeal, determination and patience in the vast field of global evangelization. "Christ, risen and glorified, is the wellspring of our hope, and he will not deprive us of the help we need to carry out the mission which he has entrusted to us" (*Evangeli*
Gaudium, 275
4. To conclude, evangelization is always a communitarian process, like Christian hope itself.

The SEASON OF CREATION continues until October 4.
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October 1. St Therese of Lisieux. Season of Creation. The families in the parish were invited to read her story. Therese grew up as a pampered girl and when she felt the calling to become a Carmelite her family didn't think she would be strong enough. She persisted and entered the convent at age 15. Ill-health did prevent her from going to a mission country which is what she wanted but she kept her love for the missions. She spent the last 9 years of her life aiming at perfection through what she called "the little way" and through prayer and meditation. Her little sacrifices of ordinary events in her daily life were seen as flowers and this simple spirituality earned her the title "the Little Flower." After hearing the story little Lizzy said, "I think I can be a missionary like St Therese too, doing all my chores as best I can." Pauline added, "Why don't we use the idea of a flower for each of the sacrifices we make too. Then we can take those flowers to someone who is sick, in the parish or community." Mom added, "her parents and all the family were really exceptional people. Her mom had 9 children, 4 died in infancy and the remaining 5 girls all joined Therese and became Carmelite nuns."

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Jesus said, "unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me. Mat 18:1-5. **Pope Francis:** St Therese invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. Our prayers also extend to the saints and blessed ones who made divine mercy their mission in life. MV24.

Eco-tip and prayer: Share how St Therese can be a model for each family member. **DAILY PRAYER.** God of love show us as families how to be channels of Your love for all Your creatures. Pour out Your Spirit upon us as we pray and work together to tend the garden and foster peace with creation.

October 2. Guardian angels. There is a very long tradition in the church of devotion to our guardian angels. In recent years this seems to have faded with a greater interest in angels in general. We often see pictures of cute cuddly little creatures with wings and sometimes angels are portrayed as avengers at the gates of heaven or hell. All angels are messengers from God, but our guardian angels bring the message of God's care and love to a specific person. This can be a real source of comfort to children especially. Families can use the prayer with the young and you might find that as the kids grow up they may still use the prayers they learned as children. *Prayer: Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.*

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Jesus said, “see that you do not despise these little ones; I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. Matt 18:10. **Pope Francis:** Each of us has a Guardian Angel, who acting on behalf of God, advises us and protects us from evil, if we only listen to him. 2015 message to families. Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others. LS 159 **Eco-tip and prayer:** Examine your prayer life as Eco-friendly families. How can it be enriched? Get MARFAM’S booklet *BECOMING ECO-FRIENDLY FAMILIES* to use for sharing and prayer.. **DAILY PRAYER.** God of love show us as families how to be channels of Your love for all Your creatures. Pour out Your Spirit upon us as we pray and work together to tend the garden and foster peace with creation.

October 3. FAMILIES WALK THE TALK. (From *BECOMING ECO-FRIENDLY FAMILIES*) To “walk the talk” means to actively live out what we believe, to “put your money where your mouth is”. If some of us are doing something we think is important, and also sitting together, sharing our thoughts and feelings, listening well and feeling understood we’re, “walking the talk.” That is the meaningful dialogue which is being promoted through the Church’s Synod process. Too often our talking is hardly a conversation, as we shout, mumble, whatsapp or text one another, talk at or past each other and hardly listen with more than half an ear. Meaningful communication is essential in building good relationships but also fixing any issues that are causing family conflict. Too often we choose to be “too busy” for one another, even as we go out to do good and help others. Why not fix family first! Walking the talk is also going beyond just talk, but taking action and standing up for what we believe, even lobbying for a cause as simple as “don’t drink and drive.” It is good for a family to act together when it comes to saving water, electricity and recycling at home, but adopting an external cause together can be particularly good. Example: Save the rhino, clean-up our town, protect unborn life.

A FAMILY TALK WALK is an activity for family members to take time together, ideally in nature or a pleasant setting, maybe with dog, pram or wheelchair for elderly, walking and talking as they go. No fixed distance, or time. Not a “Big Walk” fundraiser or exercise. A moment to bond that is good for family unity.

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Righteousness belongs to the Lord our God, but confusion of face as at this day, to us, to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and to our kings an dour princes and our priests and prophets and our fathers because we have sinned before the Lord and have disobeyed him and have not heeded the voice of the Lord. Baruch 1:15-21. **Pope Francis:** writing in preparation for the Synod on Synodality 2021-2024. Co-responsibility for the common mission calls families to cooperate in building the fabric of the Church. Let us give them space and a listening ear so that they can participate in the synodal journey, showing the family face of the Church. The family is the way of the Church. The Church is in fact a family among families FT276 The family is an agent of pastoral activity through its explicit proclamation of the Gospel and its legacy of varied forms of witness, solidarity with the poor, openness to a diversity of people, the protection of creation, moral and material solidarity with other families, including those most in need, commitment to the promotion of the common good and the transformation of unjust social structures beginning in the territory in which the family lives. AL 290. **Eco-tip.** Examine your prayer life as Eco-friendly families. Pray: Loving God, help us as families to grow in understanding of our responsibility for your creation, so that we may “walk the talk” more purposefully.

October 4. St Francis. End of Season of Creation. Michael shared with his fellow confirmation candidates. “Just like there are many Theresa’s there are also many Francises in parishes and families. Quite often children choose these as their confirmation patrons and to be their role models.” “How much do you know about St Francis, so that he can really be a model for you?” Tracy asked. Michael shared, “He lived 800 years ago. He was a playboy, came from a wealthy family but in a conversion experience Jesus appeared to him and said, ‘Go and rebuild my church.’ At first he thought he had to go and rebuild a broken down old building but what Jesus meant was to go and build up the people, including himself, to love Jesus, the poor and all of creation, animals and plants too. Although his later life was not easy as he suffered much from nearly going blind and the pain of the stigmata – the five wounds of Jesus on his body – he was filled with the joy of love.” Michael then added, “We, in our family, have discovered St Francis and try to follow his example. Our parents really are witnesses to us and in the world, as we say, “Our world is a Family of Families.”

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. For I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls Matt 11: 28-29. **Pope Francis:** to Youth at World Youth Day 2023 and often repeated, *The youth and elderly need one another. The elderly are their roots and wisdom and the youth the source of joy and hope. In calling to mind the figure of St Francis of Assisi, we come to realise that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to*

change. *LS 218. St Francis faithful to scripture invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness.* **Eco-tip and prayer:** Young people could do more to make St Francis a true model of an eco-family-friendly caring way of life. Begin together with a prayer and a special blessing of all animals, pets, domestic and wild? **Pray with St Francis Canticle of the Creatures or the Peace Prayer of St Francis.**

PRAYER FOR THE CLOSING OF THE SEASON OF CREATION AND ITS ONGOING MESSAGE

St Francis Canticle of the Creatures

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing,
To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no human is worthy to mention Your name.
Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor; and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night, and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.
Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed are those who endure in peace, for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.

October 5. 27th Sunday of Year C. Our Faith. Fr Peter held up the biggest sunflower he had been able to find. Pulling off the petals one by one he said, “instead of ‘she loves me, she loves me not,’ I’m saying ‘good news, bad news, good news, bad news.’” If I was talking about faith where should it end, good news, or bad news?” “Good news” most of the congregation said. “You are right of course. We have been conditioned to think of the gospel as Good News but if you read scripture carefully, and the prophets like Habakkuk, you would probably be able to identify quite well with his struggle in a society that seemed full of ‘outrage and violence.’ How different is that to today? Should we not also follow his advice?

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *‘Write the vision down, to be easily read. See how he tires, he whose soul is not at rights, but the upright man will live by his faithfulness.’ From Habakkuk 2:2-4.* Go and consider this question with your families. Is the gospel good or bad news for you today? Ask why and what could be done in your family? **Pope Francis:** *The word and the concept of ‘mercy’ seem to cause uneasiness in man who, thanks to the enormous development of science and technology has become the master of the earth and has subdued and dominated it. This dominion over the earth seems to have no room for mercy. This is why in the situation of the Church and the world today many individuals and groups guided by a lively sense of faith are turning almost spontaneously to the mercy of God.* **MV 11. JUBILEE:** *We are speaking of a judgement unlike any handed down by human, earthly tribunals; it should be understood as a rapport of truth with the God who is love and with oneself, within the unfathomable mystery of divine mercy. Sacred Scripture states: “You have taught your people that the righteous must be kind, and you have filled your children with good hope, because you give repentance for sins, so that... when we are judged, we may expect mercy” (Wis 12:19.22)* **SNC 22. . DAILY PRAYER.** God of love show us as families how to be channels of Your love for all Your creatures. Pour out Your Spirit upon us as we pray and work together to tend the garden and foster peace with creation.

October 6. After they had read the story of the Good Samaritan Dad asked how they could relate it to their own lives today. Dolly thought for a while and said, “You know some of those refugees Father was talking about fled for their lives with only their clothes on their backs. I think I can go through my cupboard and find some clothes to share with some of those children. Maybe we could go to St Therese parish with the St Vincent de Paul to visit.” Paul thought how some people may have been attacked and injured. “Who would have helped them and looked after them? That is what I want to do one day, but even now I think I should be more sensitive when people are hurt and injured.”

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell among robbers who stripped him and beat him and departed leaving him half dead. Read Luke 10:25-37. **Pope Francis:** the parable does not indulge in abstract moralising. It speaks to us of an essential and often forgotten aspect of our common humanity; we were created for a fulfilment that can only be found in love. We cannot be indifferent to suffering or allow anyone to go through life as an outcast. We should feel indignant and challenged to emerge from our comfortable isolation and be changed by our contact with human suffering. That is the meaning of dignity. FT 68. **JUBILEE.** May the Christian community always be prepared to defend the rights of those who are most vulnerable, opening wide its doors to welcome them, lest anyone ever be robbed of the hope of a better future. SNC 13. **ACTION AND PRAYER:** Act and pray for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 7. Our Lady of the Rosary. “Do those people selling rosaries on street corners really know what it is?” Ann asked her mom. “Maybe you’d be surprised. We don’t know where they came from? Do you know?” was mom’s reply. “Yes well.....” “Some families do pray the rosary at home, some in church and many pray as individuals. ‘The family that prays together stays together’ was the slogan of the Rosary campaign of the 1950s. We still need to pray and stay, but also to play together, don’t you think? The Rosary is not only a recitation of prayers but a reflection on events in the life of Jesus and Mary, dedicated to God and at Mary’s request offered for peace in the world. Why not teach that to those street sellers. We all need to work for peace.”

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Hail Mary, full of grace the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb. The most diverse messages and the most unpredictable experiences rapidly make their way into the lives of children and adolescents, and parents can become quite anxious about the dangers their children face. At times parents suffer acute disappointment at the failure of their children to resist the seductions of the drug culture, the lure of an unbridled hedonism, the temptation to violence, and the manifold expressions of meaninglessness and despair. To pray the Rosary for children, and even more, with children, training them from their earliest years to experience this daily “pause for prayer” with the family, is admittedly not the solution to every problem, but it is a spiritual aid which should not be underestimated. **John Paul II** ROSARIUM VIRGINIS MARIAE 2002 Her hymn of praise was dedicated to the mercy of God which extends from generation to generation. We too are included in those prophetic words. MV24. **Jubilee** the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City is preparing to celebrate, in 2031, the fifth centenary of Our Lady’s first apparition. Through Juan Diego, the Mother of God brought a revolutionary message of hope that she continues to bring to every pilgrim and all the faithful: “Am I not here, who am your Mother?” [20] That message continues to touch hearts in the many Marian shrines throughout the world, where countless pilgrims commend to the holy Mother of God their cares, their sorrows and their hopes. SNC 24. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 8. Mrs Paulson had been part of a group contributing to a soup kitchen for some time for people coming to their parish once a week. Sometimes their children helped out too. Prudence suggested, “Why don’t we go together to visit St Therese, our twin parish, to see how they are able to cater for the many people that come to them. Maybe we can learn and contribute something there as a family.” George commented, “I wonder if we did that the children there would believe that God was giving them their daily bread.”

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: “When you pray say, “Our Father, give us today our daily bread.” Luke 11:1-4. **Pope Francis.** The mercy of God is his loving concern for each one of us. He feels responsible. As the Father loves, so do his children. Just as he is merciful so we are called to be merciful to each other. MV9, . Someone in the past advanced, that, namely, the prayer of request is a weak form of faith, whereas the most genuine prayer is pure praise, that which seeks God without the weight of a request. No, this isn’t true. The prayer of request is genuine, is spontaneous, it’s an act of faith in God who is the Father, who is good, who is Almighty. It’s an act of faith within me, who am little, a sinner, needy. And, therefore, a prayer to ask for something is very noble. God is the Father who has immense compassion for us and wants His children to speak to Him without fear, directly, calling Him “Father,”: **JUBILEE** Let us listen once more to the words of the Apostle: “I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39). Saint Augustine observes: “Whatever our state of life, we cannot live without these three dispositions of the soul, namely, to believe, to hope and to love”. [1] SNC3, **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 9. The Rosen family had always made it a point to be self-sufficient and never ask for anything from anyone. Was it pride on their part? The Da Silva family also had a family tradition never to lend anything to others. “You

don't know when you're going to get it back, so it's better not to lend." That was their attitude. When the two families met at the new parish synodal dialogue group meeting it was interesting to hear them share their particular points of view.

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey and I have nothing to set before him." Luke 11:5-13.

Pope Francis: The temptation to focus exclusively on justice made us forget that this is only the first, albeit necessary and indispensable step. But the church needs to go beyond and strive for a higher and more important goal. MV10.

JUBILEE. Surely we need to "abound in hope" (cf. Rom 15:13), so that we may bear credible and attractive witness to the faith and love that dwell in our hearts; that our faith may be joyful and our charity enthusiastic; and that each of us may be able to offer a smile, a small gesture of friendship, a kind look, a ready ear, a good deed, in the knowledge that, in the Spirit of Jesus, these can become, for those who receive them, rich seeds of hope, SNC 18, **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 10. Casting out demons. Their RCIA catechist told the group, "There has been a lot of talk about false prophets, healing and casting out demons recently. How can we really know which "prophet" is genuinely on God's side or just out for himself?" She left them to debate and invited them too to take the issue home to their teenagers. "Remember, we must always be on guard against all forms of evil rebounding in our hearts & homes, if we just let things be it could become seven times as bad!"

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. He who is not with me is against me. Luke 11:15-26 **Pope Francis:** Deceit is in the mind of those who plan evil, but those who counsel peace have joy. War is frequently fuelled by a breakdown in relations, abuses of power, ambition and a tendency to see diversity as an obstacle. FT 256, The worship of the ancient golden calf (Ex 32:1-35) has returned in a new and ruthless guise in the idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose. EG 55. Violence in families breeds new forms of social aggression. AL 51. **JUBILEE.** Inclusive attention should also be given to all those in particularly difficult situations, who experience their own weaknesses and limitations, especially those affected by illnesses or disabilities that severely restrict their personal independence and freedom. Care given to them is a hymn to human dignity, a song of hope that calls for the choral participation of society as a whole. SNC 11. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 11. After a mini-mission some of the parishioners shared amongst themselves. "I have been fascinated how in African families goods and money are shared more readily than in white families. I don't know if my brother would pay my children's school fees." "But do we not also have to look beyond our own families? Should I offer to pay school fees for those refugee children or donate regularly to the orphan programme?" "Many of us give to charity in a general way but would it be good to make it more personal, like with our twin parish?"

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: A woman said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you." Jesus said, "blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" Luke 11:27-28. **Pope Francis:** Led by the Spirit the family circle is not only open to life by generating it within itself, but also by going forth and spreading life by caring for others and seeking their happiness. This openness finds particular expression in hospitality. The family lives its spirituality precisely by being at one and at the same time a domestic church and a vital cell for transforming the world. AL 324. **JUBILEE.** All of us, however, need to recover the joy of living, since men and women, created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:26), cannot rest content with getting along one day at a time, settling for the here and now and seeking fulfilment in material realities alone. This leads to a narrow individualism and the loss of hope; it gives rise to a sadness that lodges in the heart and brings forth fruits of discontent and intolerance. SNC 9. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 12. 28th Sunday of Year C. Thanksgiving. To highlight the point he wanted to make Fr Pius asked everyone to think about something they should be grateful for but had not said thank you for. The people sat quietly, some of them, even some children, looking a bit sheepish. "What do you suppose happened with the lepers that Jesus healed and that didn't come back to thank him? I'm sure he didn't "unheal" them. Gratitude is such a wonderful gift to give to others and yet we do neglect it quite often. Parents especially do so much for their children but at times it is also the other way round. Why not make that your special reflection today. Go and say thanks to each one for something, but do your best to be sincere, recognising that it is a special gift".

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: One of them when he saw he was healed turned back, praising God with a loud voice and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Luke 17:11-19. **Pope Francis:** Good habits need to be developed. A person may be sociable and open to others but if over a long period of time he has not been trained by his elders to say, "Please," "thank you" and "sorry" his good interior disposition will not easily come to the fore. AL266. **JUBILEE:** In the coming year, pilgrims of hope will surely travel the ancient and more modern routes in order to experience the Jubilee to the full. Journeying from one country to another, passing from one city to another in contemplating the beauty of creation and masterpieces of art, we learn to treasure the richness of different experiences and cultures, and are inspired to lift up that beauty, in prayer, to God, in thanksgiving for his wondrous works. SNC5 **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

13 October. After listening to Fr Pius's sermon on gratitude there was some honest sharing. "I don't think you children really appreciate what we do for you," Mom started. "I'm tired of being everyone's taxi." "No one ever thanks me for doing the dishes and feeding the dogs. It does take effort you know." After some time when everyone had their say Mom again asked how they felt, having had a chance to share. "Do you think we were wrong in not expressing our thanks? Can we change our ways and from now on do you think we could all try harder to say "thank you" to one another, and of course really mean it." "And what about saying thanks and showing appreciation to other people when they give us things or do things for us too?"

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: "This generation is an evil generation. The men of Nineveh will rise in judgement with this generation for they repented." From Luke 11:29-32 **Pope Francis.** The strengthening of the will and the repetition of specific actions are the building blocks of moral conduct; without the conscious, free and valued repetition of certain patterns of good behaviour moral education does not take place. AL 266. **JUBILEE:** Patience, one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, sustains our hope and strengthens it as a virtue and a way of life. May we learn to pray frequently for the grace of patience, which is both the daughter of hope and at the same time its firm foundation. This interplay of hope and patience makes us see clearly that the Christian life is a journey calling for moments of greater intensity to encourage and sustain hope as the constant companion that guides our steps towards the goal of our encounter with the Lord Jesus. SNC 4-5. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

14 October. Groups from the two twin parishes met from time to time for sharing and discussion. At such a time there was bound to be talk of corruption. "Corruption is a real cancer in our society today. We saw how it affected outcomes of the recent elections, both here and elsewhere, in Africa too." "But do you think that new brooms will sweep clean, or do they also have skeletons in their cupboards?" "However, should we ourselves not be conscious to do what is right, honourable and merciful too, rather than criticise others? At least some of them do care for the poor and underprivileged too." "With their ill-gotten gains!" "And how many of us would be prepared to go and visit those in prison?"

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Jesus accused the Pharisees for their hypocrisy. "You fool, did not he who made the outside not make the inside also? But give for alms those things which are within and behold everything is clean for you." Luke 11:37-4 **Pope Francis:** Corruption is a sinful hardening of the heart that replaces God with the illusion that money is a form of power. St Gregory the Great said that no one can think himself immune from this temptation. MV 19. **Jubilee.** During the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind. I think of prisoners who, deprived of their freedom, daily feel the harshness of detention and its restrictions, lack of affection and, in more than a few cases, lack of respect for their persons. I propose that in this Jubilee Year governments undertake initiatives aimed at restoring hope; forms of amnesty or pardon meant to help individuals regain confidence in themselves and in society; and programmes of reintegration in the community, including a concrete commitment to respect for law. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 15. Jesus' condemnation. There is a story about a farmer who wanted to give his farm animals a nice breakfast of bacon and eggs as a reward. The hen was quite happy to provide the eggs, but the poor pig sure wasn't. "You give from excess," he said, "I give from substance." Giving to God and the Church demands wisdom, balance and discernment. Wisdom is knowing what is what. Some modern-day churches that demand that their members tithe so as to be in God's good books may be manipulating people's commitment for their own benefit and show little care for the practical needs of their own flock.

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Woe to you, Pharisees, lawyers also. Luke 11:42-46 **Pope Francis:** The worship of the ancient golden calf (Ex 32:1-35) has returned in a new and ruthless guise in the idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose. EG 55 For new models of progress to arise there is a need to change models of global development. This will entail a responsible reflection on the meaning of the economy and its goals with an eye to correcting its malfunctions and misapplications. LS 194. **JUBILEE.** The need for peace challenges us all, and demands that concrete steps be taken. May diplomacy be tireless in its commitment to seek, with courage and creativity, every opportunity to undertake negotiations aimed at a lasting peace. SNC 8, **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 16. Prophets. Mission month reminds us that everyone is called to be a prophet, to speak the truth that comes from God and is written on their hearts. A Pharisee is someone who does not do the good they speak of. Sadly too, they can demand false religion from others they have power over. They kill the Spirit of God given to people Do our churches and pastors speak the truth or take the easier road that suits them or lets people off the hook. Do those in leadership lead by example?

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Do not expect people will like to hear the truth from you, when you speak it. We are all God's prophets: 2 Peter 2. People prefer false prophets. Luke 11:47-54: **Pope Francis:** Let us be spurred on by the signs of holiness that the Lord shows us through the humblest members of that people which "shares also in Christ's prophetic office, spreading abroad a living witness to him, especially by means of a life of faith and charity". GE8 Gaudete et Exultate. **JUBILEE.** In addition to finding hope in God's grace, we are also called to discover hope in the signs of the times that the Lord gives us. As the Second Vatican Council observed: "In every age, the Church has the responsibility of reading the signs of the times and interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. In this way, in language adapted to every generation, she can respond to people's persistent questions about the meaning of this present life and of the life to come, and how one is related to the other." SNC 7. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

17 October. Mr Thomas was a criminal lawyer with a reputation for integrity. One day he shared, "It is really difficult in a court case when one has to defend a person who you suspect is guilty. But he has the right of a defence. Sometimes I would rather be a prosecutor, or maybe the judge who has to do his or her best to get at the truth and then give a fair judgement, even a merciful one. Most of us want to cover up whatever we can, don't we? The Pharisees, scribes and lawyers of Jesus' day were not so different from our time do you agree?"

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Jesus began to speak, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known." Luke 12:1-7. **Pope Francis:** Justice is a fundamental concept for civil society which is meant to be governed by the rule of laws. Justice is also understood as that which is rightly due to each individual. A vision of justice as strict observance of the Law has not infrequently led to legalism by distorting the original meaning of justice and obscuring its profound value. MV 20 **JUBILEE:** It is urgent that responsible legislation on the part of states be accompanied by the firm support of communities of believers and the entire civil community in all its components. SNC9. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

18 October. Daswa – a man of courage. In 2015 here in South Africa our first martyr was recognised and beatified. Benedict Daswa was proud to be a Christian and speak up for Christian values in public. That resulted in his murder. Such courage will win us favour in God's sight. There is much persecution of Christians in the world today. Some people are afraid to speak up for him in public: they can be forgiven because the danger is great. At the same time people should recognize the Spirit of God active in the world slowly leading us closer to God and filling us with joy.

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: The Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. Luke 12: 8-12. **Pope Francis:** The gospel radiant with the glory of Christ's cross, constantly invites us to rejoice. Even amid persecution the disciples continued to be filled with joy. Why should we not also enter into this great stream of joy. EG 5. **JUBILEE:** The most convincing testimony to this hope is provided by the martyrs. Steadfast in their faith in the risen Christ, they renounced life itself here below, rather than betray their Lord. Martyrs, as confessors of the life that knows no end, are present and numerous in every age, and perhaps even more so in our own day. We need to treasure their testimony, in order to confirm our hope and allow it to bear good fruit. The martyrs, coming as they do from different Christian traditions, are also seeds of unity, expressions of the ecumenism of blood. I greatly hope that the Jubilee will also

include ecumenical celebrations as a way of highlighting the richness of the testimony of these martyrs. SNC 20. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

19 October. Sunday 29C Mission Sunday. Being a missionary himself Fr Pius spoke strongly about the importance of this day. "There are over 1000 mission dioceses around the world and they all have many mission parishes. Apart from that Pope Francis reminded us that we are all missionaries. We acknowledge that too through our October theme in this Jubilee year of Hope **Pope Francis' message for Mission Sunday 2025.** The motto: "**Missionaries of Hope Among all Peoples**".

"It reminds individual Christians and the entire Church, the community of the baptized, of our fundamental vocation to be, in the footsteps of Christ, messengers and builders of hope. I trust that it will be for everyone a time of grace with the faithful God who has given us new birth in the risen Christ "to a living hope" (cf. 1 Pet 1:3-4).

*Through his disciples, sent to all peoples and mystically accompanied by him, the Lord Jesus continues his ministry of hope for humanity. He still bends over all those who are poor, afflicted, despairing and oppressed, and pours "upon their wounds the balm of consolation and the wine of hope" Obedient to her Lord and Master, and in the same spirit of service, the Church, the community of Christ's missionary disciples, prolongs that mission, offering her life for all in the midst of the nations. While facing persecutions, tribulations and difficulties, as well as her own imperfections and failures due to the weakness of her members, the Church is constantly impelled by the love of Christ to persevere, in union with him, on her missionary journey and to hear, like him and with him, the plea of suffering humanity and, indeed, the groaning of every creature that awaits definitive redemption. This is the Church that the Lord always and for ever calls to follow in his footsteps: "not a static Church, but a missionary Church that walks with her Lord through the streets of the world" (Homily at the Concluding Mass of the Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, 27 October 2024). **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.*

20 October. "Just like in families, in our prayers don't we often want to tell God what to do. Like "Mom tell John to give my ball back." "Dad why don't you tell Minnie she has to share the TV. It's not all hers." "And what would happen in families if Dad or Mom said what Jesus did? There really is no easy answer."

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: "Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me." Jesus replied, "Take heed and beware of all covetousness for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." From Luke 12:13-21.

Pope Francis: Equal consideration needs to be given to the growing danger represented by an extreme individualism which weakens family bonds and ends up considering each member of the family as an isolated unit, leading to some cases to the idea that one's personality is shaped by his or her desires which are considered absolute. From AL 33.

JUBILEE. But what is happiness? What is the happiness that we await and desire? Not some fleeting pleasure, a momentary satisfaction that, once experienced, keeps us longing for more, in a desperate quest that leaves our hearts unsated and increasingly empty. We aspire to a happiness that is definitively found in the one thing that can bring us fulfilment, which is love. SNC 21. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

21 October. Servants have always been a topic for general discussion. "It seems that master-servant relationships have been an issue everywhere and always. However it does change as has happened in South African families in the last few generations as everyone can see. It was the norm for white families or other more affluent families to have one or even two domestic servants. Poorer families had to make do, with grandparents, aunts and older siblings playing a role in caring for younger children. Jesus spoke about good or lazy servants, but also good and hard masters, some of whom punished their servants or slaves and rewarded them if he was particularly pleased." "In today's world I think there is an interesting problem. Do servants still want to be servants or does everyone want to be a master, or his own boss? Is being a servant or domestic work looked down upon and not valued as still a good worthwhile occupation?"

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: Blessed are those servants whom the master finds ready when he comes. He will put on his apron and have them sit at table and he will come and serve them. Luke 12:35-38. **Pope Francis:** It is clear from the first pages of the Bible that work is an essential part of human dignity. In Gen 2:15 man is presented as a labourer who works the earth, harnesses the forces of nature and produces "the bread of anxious toil" (Ps 127:2) in addition to cultivating his own gifts and talents. AL 23. Men and women have the capacity to improve their lot, to further their moral growth and to develop their spiritual endowments. Work should be the setting for this rich personal growth with various aspects, creativity, planning for the future, developing our talents, living out our values, relating to

others, giving glory to God. LS 127 **JUBILEE.** We must not close our eyes to the dramatic situations that we now encounter all around us, not only in certain parts of the world. Each day we meet people who are poor or impoverished; they may even be our next-door neighbours. Often they are homeless or lack sufficient food for the day. They suffer from exclusion and indifference on the part of many. It is scandalous that in a world possessed of immense resources, destined largely to producing weapons, the poor continue to be “the majority of the planet’s population, billions of People SNC 15. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

22 October. Continuing the reflection and discussion on work across generations was also interesting. The younger people were horrified at the thought of ever beating a servant, never mind more or less severely. And yet until quite recently that was a common practice and a form of “slavery” still exists in some “patriarchal” relationships, although the circumstances may differ. Sometimes in the context of trafficking or the treatment of foreigners by locals or the authorities the reality can leave much to be desired. There are also occasions still today when workers, employees and employers are assaulted. What is the legitimate and correct punishment for a particular offence is the question?

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *The servant who knew his master’s will and did not act according to his will shall receive a severe beating. But he who did not know and did what deserved a beating shall receive a light beating. From Luke 12:39-48* **Pope Francis:** *That “public opinion is manifesting a growing opposition to the death penalty, even as a means of legitimate social defence,” he called a “sign of hope.” “Rendering justice “does not mean seeking punishment for its own sake, but ensuring that the basic purpose of all punishment is the rehabilitation of the offender. Fratelli Tutti 263. In a trial of two murderers St Augustine asked the judge not to take the life of the assassins but that by the measures provided by the law they be turned from their irrational fury to the calmness of men of sound mind and from their evil deeds to some useful employment.” FT 265. **JUBILEE.** We are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind. I think of prisoners who, deprived of their freedom, daily feel the harshness of detention and its restrictions, lack of affection and, in more than a few cases, lack of respect for their persons. I propose that in this Jubilee Year governments undertake initiatives aimed at restoring hope. SNC 10. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.*

23 October. Mercia was shocked when she read the gospel of the day where Jesus said he had come to cause division within families. “What could he have meant,” she asked the confirmation catechist. “It can be confusing,” was the answer, “but think in terms of differences in perception and context. Fire is a force, it does destroy but also burns away rubbish and was seen as the presence of God by the Jews and is also a source of energy. Truth too is an inner fire. Honesty, integrity and justice are essential forces for entry into the Kingdom.” “Jesus was really giving a wake-up call and a challenge to his disciples.”

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *I came to cast fire on the earth. I have not come to give peace on earth, but rather division. In one household they will be divided, father against son, mother daughter, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law. Luke 12:49-53. **Pope Francis:** Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth. The pace of consumptions, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet’s capacity. The effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now. We need to reflect on our accountability before those who will have to endure the dire consequences. LS 161. **Jubilee.** May the Christian community always be prepared to defend the rights of those who are most vulnerable, opening wide its doors to welcome them, lest anyone ever be robbed of the hope of a better future. May the Lord’s words in the great parable of the Last Judgement always find an echo in our hearts: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” for “just as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me” (Mt 25:35-40). SNC 13. **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.*

24 October. A group of economists had discussed the relationship between the environment and economics. Michael brought up the subject at home. “Do you think we focus enough at an ordinary every day level on global warming and environmental degradation? It seems to be only when water restrictions or drought or floods affect us personally that we take notice. We must remember that being merciful should also include the care of our world?”

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *You hypocrites you know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky but why do you not know how to interpret the present time. From Luke 12:54-59. Pope Benedict asked us to recognise that the*

natural environment has been gravely damaged by our irresponsible behaviour. The social environment has also suffered damage. Both are ultimately due to the same evil: the notion that there are no indisputable truths to guide our lives and hence human freedom is limitless. LS 6. JUBILEE: uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt. Often we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God's word helps us find reasons for that hope, taking it as our guide. Snc 1. Act and Pray for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

25 October. At a community gathering of the two parishes the subject of recent municipal elections came up. "How much of a 'give them another chance' mentality came into the outcome I wonder?" "At what stage does decisive action or the need for change really make people sit up and take notice?" "But even at home, don't we have the attitude of, 'it's always been done like that, even though there is pressure usually from younger ones to make changes?'" "I don't agree. We young people have many things we want to see changed. Like school rules about hair!!" **Reflect, share, act. Scripture:** *"Cut it down, why should it use up the ground." "Let it alone this year till I dig and put on manure. If it bears fruit next year, well and good. If not you can cut it down."* From Luke 13:1-9. **Pope FRANCIS:** *Anyone who makes a mistake must pay the price. However this is just the beginning of conversion, not its end, because one begins to feel the tenderness and mercy of God. MV 21, JUBILEE: . I encourage bishops to take advantage of their precious ministry, especially by sending them wherever hope is sorely tested: to prisons, hospitals, and places where people's dignity is violated, poverty abounds and social decay is prevalent. In this Jubilee Year, may no one be deprived of the opportunity to receive God's forgiveness and consolation SNC. 23 Act and Pray for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.*

26 October. 30th Sunday of Year C The Lord, the righteous judge. Fr Pius jokingly said, "Isn't it funny that in the 2nd reading Paul is kind of boasting about his own achievement in fighting the good fight, and then in the gospel Jesus criticizes the Pharisee who boasts about himself and commends the humble man who stood didn't dare raise his eyes to heaven. I'm sure all families have a problem with this, dealing with self-esteem but keeping a balance between acknowledging what is good and not bragging. In the first reading the wise man Sirach tells us that

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *"the Lord will not show partiality in the case of a poor man; and he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged. Sirach 35:12. Pope Francis:* All that should give you something to think about at home. *It is important for Christians to show their love by the way they treat family members less knowledgeable about the faith, weak or less sure in their convictions. At times the opposite occurs: the supposedly mature believers within the family become unbearably arrogant. AL 98. JUBILEE. Sacred Scripture states: "You have taught your people that the righteous must be kind, and you have filled your children with good hope, because you give repentance for sins, so that... when we are judged, we may expect mercy" (Wis 12:19.22). In the words of Benedict XVI: "At the moment of judgement we experience and we absorb the overwhelming power of his love over all the evil in the world and in ourselves. The pain of love becomes our salvation and our joy". [17] Act and Pray for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.*

27 October. The Sabbath. Be honest", the group leader said, "What does the Sabbath day mean to us nowadays?" "I sleep late." "I enjoy going to my sodality meeting." "I love the atmosphere in church even if it takes long." "I feel guilty if I don't go to Mass." "We still go to church together and then go out for breakfast afterwards. It is one of the joys of my week." "I have to work, no choice." "Is there really a choice about what we could do on Sundays? Do we talk about it as a family, or use it as a time to get away from one another?" Jesus' healing the woman on the Sabbath was much more than an act of kindness to an animal which was tied up, in pain, hungry, thirsty.

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *At that time Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity. Luke 13:10-17. Pope Francis:* The family's communal journey of prayer culminates by sharing together in the Eucharist, especially in the context of the Sunday rest. Jesus knocks on the door to share with the Eucharistic supper. Spouses can seal anew the paschal covenant which united them and reflects the covenant which God sealed with mankind on the cross. AL 318. **JUBILEE:** *. A spirit of welcome, which embraces everyone with respect for his or her dignity, should be accompanied by a sense of responsibility, lest anyone be denied the right to a dignified existence. SNC13. Act and Pray for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.*

28 October. Government and values. In today's society kings and kingdoms are largely out of fashion although some remain and are actively supported by their people. Kingship is hereditary and so can be a setting for national and/or family values to be planted or instilled and built upon. However there is also the possibility of abuse of power. When it comes to comparisons, as in the gospel, do forms of government other than democracy have an equally strong possibility of upholding positive values in such matters as the ownership and appropriation of land. That was the subject of a debate amongst three schools' matric classes. The outcome? Undecided. Kingdoms of man like the kingdom of God are a mystery.

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. The kingdom of God is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measure of meal. Luke 13:18-21.* **SACBC Statement on Land.** August 2018. *Based on Biblical teaching and developed by the Social Teaching of the Church we affirm that the land is meant for all the peoples of the earth and is held by us in sacred trust. There is no absolute ownership of land. Human beings are always at the centre of our social and economic life. We affirm the need for respect for human life and human dignity, a democracy at the service of the common good, transparent and incorruptible leadership, responsible dialogue, non-violence, respect for the Constitution, practical wisdom and rejection of populism.* **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 29. The Narrow Door. The matrics continued their discussion after the debate. "I don't think that Luke is very "merciful" in this gospel. If you don't buy into the values of this Kingdom of God, you're out in the cold." "Plus the only way in is through a narrow door. Is that because only a few would wish to enter or to make it difficult for people?" Their teacher shared an insight. "The small door into the church in Bethlehem's Manger Square is like that narrow door and I was told it was like that because the big main entrance was bricked up to prevent soldiers on horseback from riding in. Makes one think." Mr Bozzoli said, "Jesus taught that the wedding feast of Life or of the Kingdom, presided over by the Master of the House, is open to all peoples of all nations. We must seek diligently however to enter by the narrow door."

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *Strive to enter by the narrow door, for many I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Luke 13:22-30.* **Pope Francis:** *Whether believers or not we agree that the earth is essentially a shared inheritance, whose fruits are meant to benefit everyone. For believers this becomes a question of fidelity to the Creator, since God created the world for everyone. Every ecological approach needs to incorporate rights to the poor and the underprivileged. LS93, JUBILEE: May the Christian community always be prepared to defend the rights of those who are most vulnerable, opening wide its doors to welcome them, lest anyone ever be robbed of the hope of a better future. May the Lord's words in the great parable of the Last Judgement always find an echo in our hearts: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" SNC13.* **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 30. During the last days of Mission month and towards the close of the Jubilee year a special family mission was held in the diocese to thank them for their commitment and encourage them to follow in the way of the Christian churches of today that are striving for unity in the light of the 1700 anniversary of the Nicene creed. The Adams family agreed, "If only the Jewish people who were Jesus' people after all would see the light and strive for peace in the Holy Land between Jews and Palestinians. That will remain our constant prayer too. Surely Pope Francis in heaven continues to intercede for that."

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? **JUBILEE** By his perennial presence in the life of the pilgrim Church, the Holy Spirit illumines all believers with the light of hope. He keeps that light burning, like an ever-burning lamp, to sustain and invigorate our lives. Christian hope does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God's love: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or the sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:35.37-39). Here we see the reason why this hope perseveres in the midst of trials: founded on faith and nurtured by charity, it enables us to press forward in life. As Saint Augustine observes: "Whatever our state of life, we cannot live without these three dispositions of the soul, namely, to believe, to hope and to love". **[1] Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.

October 31. Mission month had always been a popular one in the Bertoni family, maybe because in Mom's time at boarding school there had been a big focus on that which she had continued throughout her life as a primary school teacher and parish catechist for more than 30 years. "I have lived through many papacies in my time and they all preached the same message. I hope that some of my missionary faith has rubbed off on the many children that have passed through my hands, my mind and my prayers for them"

Reflect, share, act. Scripture: *I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren. They are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs and of their race, according to the flesh is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen* Romans 9:1-3. **Pope Francis:** *The work of handing on the faith to children, facilitating its expression and growth, helps the whole family in its evangelising mission. It naturally begins to spread the faith to all around them, even outside the family circle. Children who grew up in missionary families often become missionaries themselves.* AL 289. **JUBILEE:** *Surely we need to "abound in hope" (cf. Rom 15:13), so that we may bear credible and attractive witness to the faith and love that dwell in our hearts; that our faith may be joyful and our charity enthusiastic; and that each of us may be able to offer a smile, a small gesture of friendship, a kind look, a ready ear, a good deed, in the knowledge that, in the Spirit of Jesus, these can become, for those who receive them, rich seeds of hope.* SNC 18 **Act and Pray** for the needs of families and our calling to become true missionary disciples.