

# Annual Review 2025



# Prayer – Pope Francis

Teach us to discover  
the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe  
and contemplation,  
to recognise that we  
are profoundly united  
with every creature  
as we journey  
towards your  
infinite light.

We thank you for  
being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray  
in our struggle for justice,  
love and peace.

From *Laudato Si'*  
By Pope Francis



# Table of Contents

**2** Prayer - Pope Francis

---

**4** From the National Director

---

**5** The story behind the front cover image

---

**6** Organisational structure

---

**7** Mission Sunday Collection

---

**9** Growing and Building

**10** Training and Educating

---

**11** Children Helping Children

---

**12** Prayer and Mission

---

**14** Missio Ireland 2024 in numbers

---

**15** Where donations were sent recently



# From the National Director

Greetings from Missio Ireland. My sincere thanks for your continued support of Missio Ireland, which is greatly appreciated. Missio Ireland is the Irish branch of Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS). It is the Holy Father's official charity for the missions and the spread of the faith.

We welcome our new Pope Leo XIV and we thank God for the life and ministry of Pope Francis RIP. Pope Leo has strongly emphasised the Church's missionary nature and encouraged Catholics to participate in spreading the Gospel. He emphasises that the call to mission is not just for a select few, but for all baptised Christians. Thank you for your part in spreading the Gospel of Hope.

Like Pope Francis, Pope Leo has great feeling for the poor. He says: "The poor can be witnesses to a strong and steadfast hope, precisely because they embody hope in the midst of uncertainty, poverty, instability and marginalisation."



This brings to my mind one evening while on the missions. I was visiting a village called Belle Isle in Grenada. The people living there were among the poorest of the poor. It was just getting dark when I came to an old man, living in a one roomed shack, lit by a single candle. I could see that this man had very little food. He said to me: "Papa, God will provide for tomorrow". He was an extremely poor man, but a man brimming over with Hope in God.

Once again, I extend my sincere thanks to you, our benefactors and supporters. Pope Leo asks us to continue to be Missionaries of Hope.

*Fr. Michael Kelly*



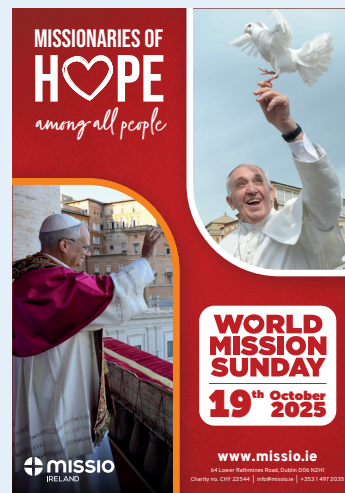
# The Story of the Image on the Front Cover

Pope Leo XIV was born Robert Francis Prevost on 14 September 1955, in Chicago to parents of French, Italian and Spanish descent. In 1977, the young Prevost entered the novitiate of the Order of Saint Augustine, Chicago. He was ordained a priest on 19 June 1982 and in 1985, he was sent to Peru for the first time, to an Augustinian mission in Chulucanas, Piura. He went on to hold a number of different roles in Trujillo, Peru over an eleven year period (1988-1999). He was elected Provincial Prior of the Augustinian Province in Chicago. Two and a half years later, he was elected Prior General, a role he held for two terms. In 2013, he returned to his Augustinian Province in Chicago, and held a number of roles until Pope Francis appointed him Apostolic Administrator of the Peruvian Diocese of Chiclayo. He was ordained a Bishop in 2014, and was appointed Bishop of Chiclayo in September 2015.

Pope Francis appointed him to a number of senior roles within the Church after that time, most notably, Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops in January 2023, a role which necessitated his move to Rome. He was also appointed President of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America at this time, and was promoted to the rank of Archbishop. Pope Francis created him Cardinal

in September 2023. As Head of the Dicastery for Bishops, he participated in a number of Pope Francis' final Apostolic Journeys.

The election of Pope Leo XIV has been celebrated across Latin America, where many hailed him as the second pontiff from the region, after his Argentinian predecessor, Francis. The news prompted particular elation in Peru, where he lived and worked for more than 20 years and was granted citizenship in 2015. Cardinal Prevost's choice to take the name Leo is an interesting one. Pope Leo I (known as Pope Leo, the Great) managed to stop Attila from invading Rome in 452, not with force, but with persuasion. Pope Leo XIII reformed the Church in a gentle way, opening a slow, but effective process. This is how Pope Leo XIV appears: calm and decisive at the same time, attentive to the reforms undertaken by Francis, especially to synodality and mission. He is the one Francis had chosen, transferring him from the edge of the world, to preside over the nominations of bishops, those he wanted with the same missionary style as the apostles.



# Organisational Structure



## STAFF

National Director **Fr Michael Kelly SPS**  
PA & Office Manager **Fiona Walsh**  
Finance Officer **Regina Daly**

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## DIOCESAN DIRECTORS

Achonry .....	Fr Peter Gallagher	Ferns .....	Fr Paddy Cushen
Ardagh & Clonmacnois .....	Fr P J Hughes	Galway .....	Fr Declan Lohan
Armagh .....	Mgr Colum Curry	Kerry .....	Fr Ger Godley
Cashel & Emlý .....	Fr Celsus Tierney	Kildare & Leighlin .....	Fr George Augustine
Clogher .....	Fr Brian Early	Killala .....	<i>Appointment pending</i>
Clonfert .....	Fr Declan Lohan	Killaloe .....	Fr John Molloy
Cloyne .....	Fr Mícheál Leader	Kilmore .....	Fr John McMahon
Cork & Ross .....	Fr Pat Fogarty	Limerick .....	Fr Derek Leonard
Derry .....	Fr Kevin Mulhern	Meath .....	Fr Tony Gavin
Down & Connor .....	<i>Appointment pending</i>	Ossory .....	Fr Seán O'Connor
Dromore .....	<i>Appointment pending</i>	Raphoe .....	Fr Damien Nejad
Dublin .....	Fr John Greene	Tuam .....	Fr Chris Brennan
Elphin .....	Mr Wando Araujo	Waterford & Lismore .....	Mr Robert Duggan

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly (Chair)	Sr Liz Murphy
Mr Niall Kennedy	Ms Shauna Rose Pickering
Fr John Greene	Fr Joe McGee
Mr Seamus McDonald	

On behalf of  
Missio Ireland,

# Thank You

for your support on Mission  
Sunday, The Mission  
Sunday Collection in 2024  
amounted to €1,423,453.

Thank you for your great  
generosity in difficult  
financial times.

*Go and Invite Everyone to  
the Banquet* was the theme  
for Mission Month 2024.



*Your support for missionaries and the communities they serve,  
through your prayers and generosity, is deeply appreciated.*

# Mission Sunday Collections

## Comparing 2023 and 2024

Diocese	2023	2024
Achonry	€22,714	€22,266
Ardagh & Clonmacnois	€38,470	€33,015
Armagh	€45,689	€133,348
Cashel & Emly	€43,390	€34,880
Clogher	€56,294	€61,809
Clonfert	€18,306	€18,225
Cloyne	€31,848	€43,524
Cork & Ross	€70,254	€70,504
Derry	€105,371	€107,148
Down & Connor	€102,081	€93,654
Dromore	€13,657	€9,629
Dublin	€221,280	€227,268
Elphin	€31,230	€34,786
Ferns	€30,830	€26,735

Diocese	2023	2024
Galway	€35 693	€13,500
Kerry	€45,065	€41,104
Kildare & Leighlin	€74,146	€55,515
Killala	€26,817	€30,000
Killaloe	€57,896	€41,490
Kilmore	€39,522	€36,123
Limerick	€39,218	€33,269
Meath	€84,464	€56,505
Ossory	€23,457	€29,222
Raphoe	€29,675	€15,059
Tuam	€100,000	€76,050
Waterford & Lismore	€50,129	€46,023
Individuals	€59,102	€32,803
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€1,496,607</b>	<b>€1,423,453</b>



# Growing and Building



Sadly, Sr Miriam Duggan passed on to her eternal reward on the 9th August 2025. She was a member of the religious congregation of Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa. Sr Miriam, a native of Co Limerick, graduated from University College Cork [UCC] with a degree in medicine. After graduation, she studied Obstetrics in the UK. Sr Miriam then moved to Uganda and was one of the first qualified obstetricians in the country. Responding to the HIV & AIDS pandemic, Sr Miriam supported the establishment of local clinics to care for patients with HIV & AIDS, as well as the rising number of AIDS orphans. She founded Youth Alive to support young people in making responsible choices and to provide support programmes to help prevent the spread of HIV & AIDS. The Youth Alive programme continues today and has been extended to 21 African countries.

In the late 1990s, Sr Miriam relocated to Kenya, where she continued to establish care and prevention programmes. One of the programmes that she set up (and still runs to this day) is the **Out of School Youth Project**, which reaches out to vulnerable and marginalised young people within some of the slum areas of Nairobi. The target group for the programme are young people who are idle in the community, school drop outs, those on drugs and those experiencing a feeling of hopelessness. The programme provides training in life skills and first aid, as well as vocational training, with the aim of finding employment. The **Out of School Youth Project** has helped reduce the risk of young people engaging in harmful activities, such as substance abuse, or criminal behaviour, by providing constructive alternatives. Feedback from families reported improved living standards, due to the increased income and positive behaviour of the young people involved in the programme.

Missionaries like Sr Miriam carry out their work in the service of others with quiet humility. Even in retirement, she continued to assist those who are the most marginalised in our world. Missio Ireland supported Sr Miriam's project and continues to support similar projects.

# Training and Educating

Pope Leo has expressed his joy in being able to pray together with all the People of God for vocations, especially to the priesthood and consecrated life. He said the Church has “great need for them” as do all of us who support them on their vocational journey so they can “find acceptance, listening and encouragement in their communities” and to be “credible models of generous dedication to God and to their brothers and sisters.”

Recalling Pope Francis’ message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations, he encouraged everyone to “welcome and accompany young people” while we ask God to help us all live “in service to one another ... capable of helping one another to walk in love and truth.”

Missio Ireland is part of a global network, the head office of which is the Pontifical Mission Societies, based in Rome. In 2024, the Pontifical Mission Societies in Rome were, with contributions



from individual countries, including Ireland, able to support the following:

**2710** projects in mission territories for the education and protection of children

**6310** novices in their formation courses

**74,080** minor and major seminarians

**751** new churches on 5 continents

Your part in this support is very much appreciated.

# Children Helping Children



**Fr Patrick Ryan is from Tipperary and has been a Mill Hill Missionary for over 50 years. He shares his ministry of educating the poor in Kenya.**

I first went to Africa in 1975. I wasn't quite sure what to expect. One thing I was not expecting was to find so many children. Children everywhere: at traffic lights washing the windscreens of cars; hawking bananas; taking care of younger children; washing clothes for a few pence; shop-lifting; getting into trouble. Children everywhere.

Everywhere, that is, except in school. These children would never be asked, as we were, "What did you learn today in school?" They would never be asked, "What would you like to be when you grow up?"

They were already grown up. They had passed from babyhood into adulthood, skipping any childhood. And in the world of adults the girls, particularly, were exposed to all sorts of dangers. These little girls had seen things, and done things, and had things done to them, that no adult woman should experience, let alone a little girl, or a teenage girl. I knew something had to be done.

It didn't take me long to find out what that something was. The children were not in school for one simple reason: they couldn't afford school fees. How to get then to school? Simple: pay their school fees. That became my life's ministry: enabling children to go to school. Of all the global have-nots, the African girl child is bottom of the heap. Discrimination against women begins when they are girls. There is a social preference for boys. From her childhood, a girl knows she will have less than her brothers. The boy child receives the lion's share of parental attention, food, health care, schooling.

Missio Ireland assists children's projects, to ensure a better future for those living in disadvantaged areas.

***Extract from article by Fr Patrick Ryan MHM***

# Prayer & Mission

Prayer is at the centre of our work. For many struggling communities overseas, and the missionaries working there, knowing that people in Ireland are praying for them, brings them hope.

The *Fides News Agency*, a service of the Pontifical Missionary Societies, in Rome, presents the stories of missionaries and pastoral workers who have been murdered around the world. The 2024 report highlights the tragic deaths of 13 Catholic missionaries, who dedicated their lives to serving vulnerable communities, often in regions fraught with violence, poverty, and social injustice. The term “missionary” includes all Catholics involved in pastoral work who were killed while living their faith. It also notes that the two most dangerous continents for missionary work are Africa and South America. Further information on these deaths is available in our Summer 2025 newsletter. Copies of this newsletter are available from the office. Please contact the Missio Ireland office on (01) 497 2035 or [info@missio.ie](mailto:info@missio.ie)



We have a supply of Rosary Beads and *Prayers & Reflections* booklets about the Rosary. If you would like a supply of either booklets or Rosary Beads, please contact the Missio Ireland office.

## Prayers & Reflections

*An Everyday Spiritual Companion*



 **missio**  
IRELAND

No. 49

## Prayers & Reflections

Each year in February, we publish our Prayers & Reflections booklet. The date coincides with the annual World Day of the Sick, which is celebrated on the 11<sup>th</sup> February, feast day of our Lady of Lourdes.

Prayers & Reflections encourages prayer and spiritual reflection, whilst also providing comfort to the sick and the housebound. These booklets are also used by priests, brothers, sisters and Eucharistic ministers in parish visitation of the sick and elderly. We also encourage users of the booklet to pray for missionaries.

This prayer booklet is distributed to individuals as well as to hospitals and nursing homes. If you would like to order a copy of our 49<sup>th</sup> *Prayers & Reflections* Booklet, please contact our office on (01) 497 2035 or [info@missio.ie](mailto:info@missio.ie) and we will be happy to send you a supply.



# Missio Ireland in Numbers - 2024



Over **€490,00** sent to support bishops, including retired bishops, in the running of their dioceses.

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Over **€250,000** sent to support catechists who assist priests at parish level.

.....



**25 buildings** renovated or built: churches, chapels, presbyteries, convents and parish offices.

.....



Over **€1.4 million** collected on Mission Sunday last year.

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**6 child related projects** assisted in Burkina Faso.



**24 seminaries** assisted in Nigeria, Tanzania, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

# Where donations were sent recently

**€1,165,843\*** was distributed recently to support missionaries and fund church projects abroad. The countries funded were located in Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania and Indonesia.



**€270,744** of the above figure was sent to support colleges in Rome that accommodate women religious and priests from mission countries for their ongoing formation. These will return to their home dioceses as resource personnel.

Young people shared hope and solidarity with the world's poorest children. **€33,610** was distributed recently to child related projects abroad. The projects assisted were located in Burkina Faso.

Through your generosity, the next generation of priests, sisters, brothers and lay catechists are supported in their formation. **€44,369\*** and **£250,000\*** were sent recently to the following countries: Nigeria, Tanzania, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

\* Two additional amounts of **£250,000** and **€500,000** were approved by the Board of Directors in 2025 to be distributed to support additional projects in 2025. These amounts will be shown in the 2025 audited accounts.



Mass stipends were sent to the following countries last year Bangladesh, Botswana, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, Gambon, Ghana, Grenada, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Myanmar (Burma), Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. €192,014 was distributed in Mass Stipends to these countries in 2024.

*Please continue to send Mass Stipends to Missio Ireland.*

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CRA no. 20205153

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**Pontifical Mission Societies**

