

Today the Church celebrates World Mission Sunday, and there are envelopes at the entrance of the building for this, should you want to make a donation to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

It was only 100 years ago that the United States was still considered by the Holy See as "Mission Territory." And this year's World Mission Sunday Appeal points us to a new mission area, that being Mongolia.

Mongolia is the largest land-locked country in the world, and is also the most sparsely populated country in the world. To the north and west, there are high mountains; and to the south is the Gobi Desert. Roughly 1/3rd of the population - about 1 million people, are nomads. It is about 1/6th the size of the size of the United States, but has about 1/100th the population.

From 1924 until 1989, Mongolia was a satellite of the Soviet Union.

During that time, it was used as a military buffer by the USSR, and was a cold and lonely outpost of that now defunct empire.

Only 22 years ago, Mongolia became an independent constitutional republic, yet it still suffers from 65 years of oppression and exploitation.

At that time, three missionary priests arrived to establish the first Catholic Church in Mongolia - one priest for every million people in the country.

Right now, there are about 850 Catholics in the country, with 20 priests, and 45 nuns. There are six parishes, roughly 300 miles apart.

In today's Gospel, the Pharisees and the Herodians try to trip Jesus up with a trick question. If Jesus sides with paying taxes the Romans - then He's part of the establishment. If He says not to pay, then He's an enemy of the state, and could be punished for inciting insurrection.

Jesus answers them with a question ... inquiring: "*Whose image is this and whose inscription?*"

The impression on the coin was of course the conquering emperor and the inscription spoke of the glory of the Roman Empire.

In places like Mongolia, the impression of 65 years of Communist rule have left 3 million people lost and without Faith. In our own country, increasingly the impression left by generations of Catholics and Christians are fading as things move more and more to a secular worldview.

If we are to remain more than an historically Christian nation, it is up to us to continue not only give “*to Caesar what belongs to Caesar*”, but we have to give “*to God what belongs to God.*”

Our Catholic Faith requires more than sitting around for 45 minutes on the weekend. It is up to us to learn our Faith, and to live and promote our Faith beyond these walls.

Saint Paul exhorts the Thessalonians, and us as well, to “[*endure*] in hope” so that our “*word of faith*” may be a “*labor of love.*” The Prophet Isaiah reminds us that God has chosen us and called us by name. We need to respond to that call with our own choice to live for God in Jesus Christ.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us re-commit ourselves to live out the Baptismal graces of Faith, Hope, and Love. May the graces of this Eucharist today impress upon us the image of God and of His Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us live out our Faith in thought, word, and deed ... as those who have been both called ... but also sent ... to live the Gospel and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in our lives.