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**MISSION MESSAGE**

**June's Missionary Saints:  
Ordinary People,  
Extraordinary Witnesses**

By Shannon Kowalski  
Diocesan Director,  
Pontifical Missions Societies



As we settle into the rhythm of Ordinary Time and the early days of summer, the Church offers us quite a few stories of missionary saints who said “yes” to the call of Christ. June is rich with missionary witnesses: people who left home, faced opposition, and gave everything to share the Gospel.

Their lives might seem far removed from our own, but the truth is, their missionary spirit is meant for all of us. Baptized into Christ, we are all called to be missionaries — whether across the world or across the street. This June, consider getting to know these saints a little better — and let their bold witness inspire your own small missionary practice.

**Saint Boniface – June 5**

Saint Boniface, born in England in the late 7th century, is remembered as the “Apostle to the Germans.” A Benedictine monk known for his wisdom and leadership, he left behind the comforts of monastic life to bring the Gospel to the people of what is now Germany. He endured unfamiliar languages and rugged landscapes to preach the faith, renewing struggling Christian communities. He also boldly confronted pagan customs. One of the most well-known moments of his mission was when he cut down the sacred oak tree dedicated to the god Thor. This was a powerful act that revealed the emptiness of false idols and led many to embrace the Christian faith.

Boniface was eventually martyred, but his legacy lived on through the churches and monastic communities he built. His life reminds us that mission is often uncomfortable, but also deeply fruitful.

*Missionary practice idea:* Choose a country where the Church is still growing and struggling. Learn one or two facts about it and commit to praying for the people and missionaries there.

**Saint Barnabas – June 11**

Though not one of the original twelve apostles, Barnabas earned the name “apostle” through his evangelizing work. Born a Jew in Cyprus, he sold his land and gave everything to the Church, and later served as a crucial bridge between Jewish and Gentile Christians. He was one of the first to trust the sincerity of Paul’s conversion, even when others doubted. Paul and Barnabas embarked on the Church’s first great missionary journey from Antioch to Pisidia, Iconium, and other regions.

Barnabas’s name means “son of encouragement” — a beautiful reminder that sometimes the most missionary thing we can do is walk with someone, listen to their questions, and be a voice of hope.

*Missionary practice idea:* Encourage someone in their faith journey — send a note, text, or prayer to someone you know who might need support or reassurance.

**The Ugandan Martyrs – June 3**

In the late 1800s, Christianity began to take root in Uganda, thanks to the efforts of Catholic missionaries. Among the converts was Charles Lwanga, a young man working as a royal page in the court of King Mwanga II.

When the king began to persecute Christians and demand immoral behavior from his pages, Charles stood up in defense of purity and faith. Charles not only protected younger boys from abuse but also secretly baptized and catechized them. His faith, courage, and leadership inspired

*Continued on Page 35*

**Apostleship of Prayer**

Papal Intention for June 2025

*For the World to Grow in Compassion —*

Let us pray that each one of us might find consolation in a personal relationship with Jesus, and from his Heart, learn to have compassion on the world.



## Missionary Saints

*Continued from Page 34*

many others to stay strong in their faith. On June 3, 1886, Charles and 21 companions were martyred — burned alive, speared, or tortured for refusing to renounce Christ.

The Ugandan Martyrs were canonized by Pope St. Paul VI in 1964. Most of them were teenagers. Their example has left a lasting legacy of faith in Africa, where the Church continues to thrive and grow today.

*Missionary practice idea:* Share a saint's story or a scripture verse on your social media or in a conversation. Even a small act of evangelization can plant a seed!

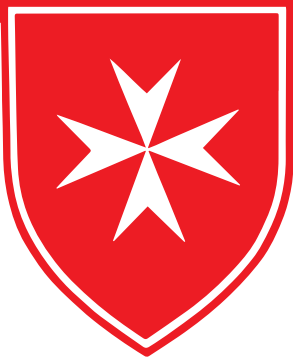
### *Saints John Fisher & Thomas More – June 22*

Missionary work doesn't always mean going far away. Sometimes, the Gospel calls us to stand firm right where we are. That's what happened with St. John Fisher, a bishop, and St. Thomas More, a lawyer and statesman. When King Henry VIII broke from the Catholic Church in the 16th century, both men refused to go along with it. Their fidelity cost them their lives, but their example still echoes today. These two saints remind us that missionary witness can happen in courtrooms, homes, classrooms, or anywhere truth, conscience, and Christ intersect.

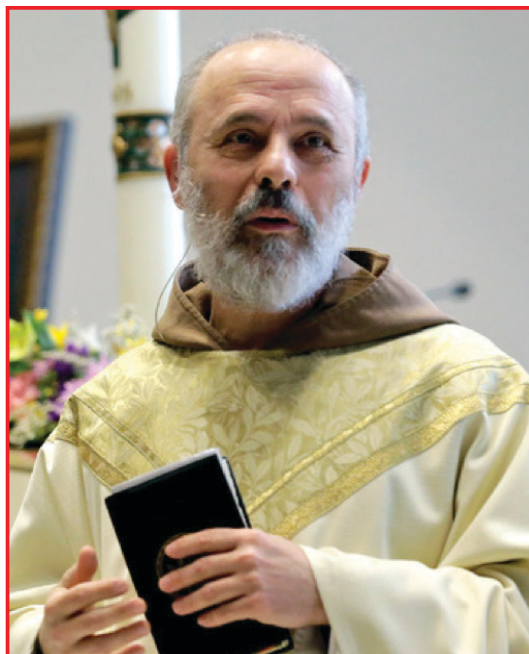
*Missionary practice idea:* Speak the truth in love, even if it's difficult. Whether defending the dignity of life, the poor, or your Catholic faith, don't be afraid to stand up with humility and hope.

These missionary saints of June weren't superheroes. They were ordinary people who trusted an extraordinary God. They made mistakes and had doubts. But they also had faith — and that faith became action, even when the cost was high.

The Gospel spreads through people like Boniface, Barnabas, Charles Lwanga, Thomas More, and John Fisher. It also spreads through people like you. Let this be the month where you say "yes," just as they did.



# THE ORDER OF MALTA SCRANTON CHAPTER PRESENTS



**FR. PIO MANDATO, FMHJ**  
MAIN CELEBRANT & HOMILIST

**MSGR. NEIL VAN LOON**  
MASS CONCELEBRANT &  
CHAPLAIN ORDER OF MALTA,  
SCRANTON CHAPTER

## AN AFTERNOON OF HEALING *with* **FR. PIO MANDATO, FMHJ**

Fr. Pio Mandato, FMHJ is a Franciscan priest living as a missionary hermit. He was born in Italy and along with his brother Vincenzo, received his first holy communion from Saint Pio before coming to the USA. He grew up in New Jersey and entered the Capuchin Franciscans at the age of 17, and was ordained in 1985. In 1998 he was accepted in the Diocese of Scranton, Pa., and now lives a life of solitude, prayer and intercession. He is also Chaplain to the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth and at times is engaged in the preaching apostolate.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2025**

**1:00 PM - CONFESSIONS**

**1:30 PM - ROSARY**

**2:00 PM - MASS & ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

*After the 2pm Mass, Father Pio will bring a relic of  
Saint Padre Pio and bless everyone individually.*

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