

WORLD MISSION DAY 2021 MESSAGE

The month of October is always considered as “mission month,” highlighted with the celebration of World Mission Day. The month-long period designated for mission promotion and animation is a wonderful opportunity for us to renew and deepen our commitment to give witness to our Christian faith. For, after all, faith is something that we cannot keep to ourselves but is to be proclaimed and shared with others.

The theme for this year’s World Mission Day celebration is: *“We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard.”* It is taken from Acts 4:20 in which the unschooled and ordinary men, Peter and John, eloquently and bravely spoke about the risen Jesus before the Sanhedrin. They were able to speak with eloquence and conviction because of their personal experience with Jesus. They were living witnesses of what Jesus had said and done.

This year’s World Mission Day theme is a good point for reflection as we also celebrate the 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines. This milestone in the history of our Christian faith reminds us also of our encounter with the Lord Jesus in the many and different ways that He has revealed himself to us for the past 500 years. We have been blessed with His divine presence as we encountered Him in faith in the different facets and aspects of our lives.

We can therefore say that we are also following the same path with Jesus’ disciples when we acknowledge that we are “gifted to give.” We are gifted to give what we have heard and seen about Jesus. As such, like Peter and John, we are also challenged to be bold to proclaim what we have experienced about the Lord Jesus. As Pope Francis reminds us: “Once we experience the power of God’s love, and recognize his fatherly presence in our personal and community life, we cannot help but proclaim and share *what we have seen and heard.*”

During this Jubilee Year of our Christian Faith may we witness more people who will be moved and inspired to proclaim and share what *they have seen and heard* about Jesus our Lord with others!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Socrates C. Mesiona". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning and a horizontal line at the end.

+ **Socrates C. Mesiona, MSP, DD**

Apostolic Vicar of Puerto Princesa

Chairman, Episcopal Commission on Mission – CBCP