

WEEK 5

October 26th - November 1st



ASIA

St. Anthony Mary Claret:
Missionary of God's Word

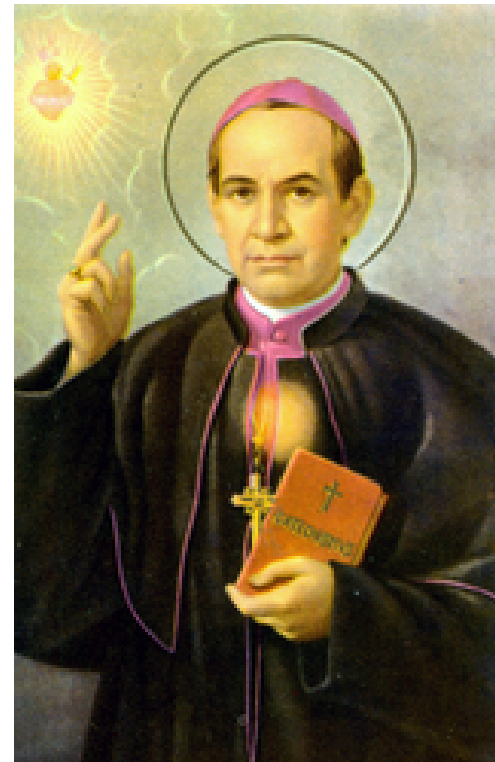
Feast Day: October 24

St. Anthony Mary Claret (1807–1870) was a Spanish priest who became a missionary, preacher, writer, and eventually the Archbishop of Cuba. St. Anthony Claret founded the Claretians in 1849 in Spain with the mission to evangelize wherever the Gospel was most needed, especially among the poor and forgotten. While he served mostly in Spain, the Canary Islands, and Cuba, he inspired a missionary movement that expanded across the globe — including Asia. While St. Anthony Mary Claret himself did not travel there during his lifetime, his missionary legacy has had a lasting and growing impact with Claretian presences in Asia, Philippines, China, Vietnam, Myanmar, Indonesia, Japan and East Timor.

In Asia, many children served by MCA also attend schools or receive aid from Claretian missions. Students here in the U.S. who support MCA may be directly helping children in Asia who are being taught, fed, and loved by Claretian missionaries today.

Mission Prayer Inspired by St. Anthony Mary Claret

Loving Jesus,
Thank You for the passion and energy of St.
Anthony Mary Claret.
Help us be like him — always ready to speak
Your truth and love others with joy.
May we remember children in mission places
who need our prayers and support.
Through the Missionary Childhood
Association, help us share Your Good News
with the world.
St. Anthony Claret, pray for us!
Amen.



Mission Inspiration

MARONITE DIOCESE OF BATROUN LEBANON



Father Rouphael Zgheib, the National Director of The Pontifical Mission Societies in Lebanon, shared with TPMS-US that as violence escalates between Israel and Lebanon, the country faces a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented scale.



The suffering of children, particularly in challenging, conflict torn regions like Lebanon, is a poignant reminder of the Church's mission to bring hope and love.

The Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) even amidst suffering, shares the profound opportunity to encounter Jesus with children around the world. The Maronite Diocese of Batroun particularly focuses on the joy of the Eucharist, and instruction for recipients of their first Holy Communion.

With the theme of "I come to you, because I love you" 6 parishes in this diocese are working together with families who have children preparing to receive the Eucharist.

Children in Lebanon are turning their suffering into joy and experiencing Jesus' love through a special book and catechism program. Their journey begins with an initial meeting during which the children are given a map with 13 stations, symbolizing the journey to be made with Jesus during the year.

As usual, for a trip, you need a bag and, therefore each child received a bag, containing a booklet of prayers that the child can consult at any time, either alone or with a member of their family.

In the bag there is also an empty bottle of water. In the course of the preparation, the child must fill it with drops of water as a reward for any effort, sacrifice, a good deed performed.

This may sound similar to the instruction or activities during a First Holy Communion retreat that would be help here in the US, but due to the economic crisis that the children have experienced and the fact that the country faces some serious and dangerous challenges, this book serves as sign of hope. It is a means to soothe the soul, to live with Jesus and prepare to receive Him in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, without pressure or added stress.



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Mission Inspiration

MARONITE DIOCESE OF BATROUN LEBANON



"I would like to thank the whole team who formed us to receive our First Communion. It was a great idea to meet new friends, from Jrane and neighbouring villages. I was so happy, every Saturday, to hear about Jesus through group games. This led me more and more to attend mass every Sunday. It was an exceptional year and one I will never forget."

**-Rayan Elias
8 years old**



Reflection and Activity:

"I come to you, because I love you"

Following the instruction of the parishes in the Maronite Diocese of Batroun, work in groups to create you're own lesson plan on the Eucharist. Work together with your classroom to combine into one large lesson plan to share with Mission countries who are just begining their religious instruction!



Pray and Sacrifice:

Lord, we ask you to accept our suffering as we offer it to you. Please turn our hardships into a deeper love for you and our Brothers and Sisters in the Missions who need our prayers the most.

**\$1 can help support parish
education programs in Lebanon**

**\$10 can help rebuild schools and
classrooms in countries affected
by war and conflict**

**\$25 buys school supplies and
other necessary items for
instruction, to support the
learning of children in the
Missions**



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