

Doesn't this last command of Jesus sound impossible? "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." If you tell this to eleven guys on a hill in Galilee, how could you think they would actually do it? It's like asking kids to clean their room – just an impossible command.

At the end of Matthew's gospel, the risen Jesus speaks his final majestic words. He has received all power in heaven and on earth. He commands the evangelization of all nations. He wants everyone to learn all that he has commanded, and he promises to remain all days. All power, all nations, all commandments, all days: at the end of the gospel Jesus announces his supreme authority.

The disciples give two reactions. They worship him and they doubt. Matthew doesn't say what they doubt, but you can make a good guess. They doubt still that Jesus is Lord. They doubt that they can carry on after Jesus leaves. They are not ready to change from disciples to leaders. But they did, and the gospel did spread to all nations, and Christ has remained with the church all days even as he promised.

Every parish shares its mission with the universal church. Each year a missionary visits to tell us about the church somewhere else in the world. We collect funds during the year to benefit the needy of other countries. This year our stewardship council is helping us twin with Mary of Fatima Parish in Marambo, Tanzania.

Ninety percent of the people of Tanzania are subsistence farmers. They don't know if one year's harvest will last till next year. They farm by hand because tractors cost too much. The per capita income in Tanzania ranges from \$35 to 50 per year. They have no running water. They walk some distance to get water and boil it before drinking it. AIDS has reached epidemic proportions.

Mary of Fatima parish has 3000 Catholics spread throughout 8 outstations. They meet in small Christian communities to pray and discuss the challenges of life. They reach out to inactive Catholics, and they strongly promote praying the rosary as a family. Sr. Rita Tofflemire, originally from

Cameron, lives in Tanzania and is helping us set up this relationship. It is one way that our parish will try to fulfill Jesus' command to bring the gospel to the world.

Whenever we baptize someone we use the words of today's gospel. Those words still imply the same message: If you are baptized, you bring the gospel to all nations. It's part of your job, like cleaning your room. Whenever we doubt, we have this assurance that Jesus is with us always to the end of the age.