



# FRIENDS

THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ST JAMES THE APOSTLE

December 2023



**“To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”**

**St. John Henry Newman**

*Dear Friends,*

*Fr Michael Sharkey, who recently celebrated his 40th anniversary of the priesthood, writes to us with updates from Peru:*

Undoubtedly, this was a very busy year for the parish of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe and the four small chapels attached to us here in Carabayllo, Lima. In July this year, I celebrated my 40th Anniversary of the Priesthood. Who would have thought for one minute that I would be celebrating this in Peru! The occasion was made even more special by the presence of my archbishop Most Rev. William Nolan, Archbishop of Glasgow, who visited Peru for the event.

*Diocesan priests serving the poorest of the poor in Latin America since 1958.*



**M**asses of thanksgiving were celebrated for my 40th anniversary in Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Saint Rose of Lima in Rio Seco and the Holy Cross in Lomas with the Archbishop giving individual blessings to all my parishioners. Needless to say, traditional Peruvian food and entertainment followed the masses. As always, these occasions are opportunities to bring the parish communities together in love, faith and support of each other.

The World Youth Day in Lisbon,

Portugal took place in August this year.

With funding from the Missionary

Society of St. James the Apostle, we were

able to send five young people from

the parish on this “once in a lifetime

pilgrimage” These young people had never

stepped foot outside of Peru. Therefore,

this opportunity to travel to Portugal was

beyond all of their dreams! Milagros, one

of the young people from the parish who

visited Portugal commented: “It is with

*immense joy and gratitude that I inform*

*you of what the World Youth Day in Lisbon*

*meant to me. This trip for me was very*

*significant from the perspective of seeing*

*many places with a religious value, like*

*Toledo, Avila, Santiago de Compostela in Spain and*

*Fatima and Lisbon in Portugal. The sanctuary of*

*Fatima was one of my favorite places, for its history*

*and architecture, as well its religious significance.*

*The pilgrimage made me see that God can unite*

*many people from all over the world. We were very*

*privileged to see Pope Francis in Lisbon. His words*

*reached out to us, with the message that we must*

*have hope for the future as there can be so many*

*dark moments in this life and that we need to love*

*like Christ. His second piece of advice was to listen*

*carefully to others and to never be afraid of fighting*

*for justice and peace. As an eighteen-year-old, it*

*was very special to have had the opportunity to*

*travel to another country and to help other young*

*people come closer to God. However, this would*

*not have been possible without the support of the St.*

*James Society and Fr. Michael. From the depths of*

*my heart, I thank you for giving me the opportunity*

*to live this experience”.*







*The youth from the parish, on their travels*



Another memorable day took place here in the parish, on Sunday, the 13th of August, with the farewell Mass of Fr. Denis Parry, who celebrated 26 years of ministry with the St. James Society. Thirteen of those twenty-six years were spent in Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Father Denis, as the founding pastor, was responsible for the construction of this beautiful church, which was reported on in a previous Friends newsletter. (February, 2022).

Since Fr. Denis' departure, it has been my privilege to continue the good work which he began. It is a huge privilege to lead our parishioners in prayer, the celebration of the Mass and the Sacraments. I always marvel at the generosity of the parishioners and their willingness to lead the catechesis program for our young people. Their dedication and commitment each week, promoting the faith of our young people and their families, is most impressive and most important. I am very humbled and grateful for what they have achieved in our faith communities. The fruits of their work were clearly seen in the parish of Rio Seco in October, when

we welcomed fifteen of our young people into the Family of God through the sacrament of Baptism. These same young people will also receive their First Holy Communion this month, in December. December is a particularly busy month with all that will be going on in the parish. Starting on Friday, December 1st, we will begin a twelve day celebration, in honor of the parish's seventeenth Anniversary. We have much to celebrate:

fifty First Holy Communions, fifty Confirmations, and the feast of the Immaculate Conception The celebrations will conclude with the very special feast of our patron, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, on December 12. Along with all of the parishioners, I look forward to this time of special grace. As I reflect on my relatively short time (thirty months) on the missions in Peru, I cannot help but think how very different this experience has been, compared to my twenty-nine years as a chaplain in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines! However, I can honestly say, I have found this new ministry in Peru to be equally rewarding. In truth, it is an honor and a blessing to serve the Family of God here in Lima. I am reminded of the words of St. John Henry Newman: *“To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often!”* This has been a significant and positive change in ministry for me - one that I am enjoying greatly. I would like to thank all our readers and benefactors for your support of the priests serving on mission today. Your kindness, prayers and generosity are very much appreciated.

~ Fr. Michael Sharkey



### *In This Holy Season*

*Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.*

*Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wise men. Help us to rise bigger than we are. Amen.*

- Author Unknown

*With Every Good Wish in Christ,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Costello".

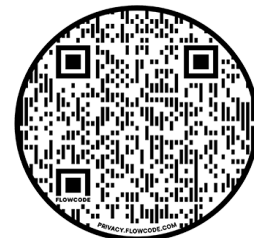
*Rev. David Costello, Director*



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