



**The Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle**  
*Diocesan priests serving the poorest of the poor since 1958.*

**March**  
**2026**

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***"Celebrate the Present with Enthusiasm..."***

***Dear Friends,***

Each year in January the members and alumni of the St James Society, along with visiting bishops and friends, host a three-day conference in Barranco, Lima. Breaking with the usual tradition of inviting an expert to give a talk on a specialized subject, it was decided, this year, to have an in-house experience. Two former members of the St. James Society, Fr. Chris McCoy and Fr. Pat Cleary along with Bishop Pedro Bustamante from Peru addressed the conference. They took as their starting point some famous words of Pope John Paul II from 2001 when he urged missionaries to "Put out into the deep" and while they do so they should '...Remember the past with gratitude, to celebrate

*the present with enthusiasm and to look to the future with confidence.* On the first day of the conference Fr. Chris and Fr. Pat explored the idea of our *'astounding point of origin'*; of our being made in the image and likeness of God. On day two, Bishop Pedro expressed his appreciation of the work of the Society over many years and outlined the many challenges facing the church in Peru today. This was explored further in a round table discussion by a group of the priests working on the ground in Peru currently. Fr. Chris, on day three, took up the theme of looking to the future with confidence and with hope. He suggested that we are living at the dawn of a new digital age. Outlining the rapid process of urbanization in Peru, along with the challenge that so many young people are engaged in the new on-line world, our missionary activity will take new forms. He suggested that community, connection and celebration are the constituent elements of our pastoral mission. These three elements lie at the heart of our vocation as missionaries preaching the gospel. They are the eternal verities in the Christian story. Whatever new means we use to share faith in the digital, urban world, we return to the challenge of belonging together as community, forging new connections between people and lifting the human spirit in celebration. During Fr. Pat Cleary's talk, he raised the question of shame and how to avoid "shaming or allowing others to shame us" in unhealthy ways. Drawing from John Bradshaw's book, Healing the Shame that binds You, he explained the nature of shame and how healthy shame (Something Pope Francis urged us to pray for) is an important part of being human. Fr. Pat added the insights of Carl Jung regarding the many facets of our personality and the importance of integrating them. Jung said that the most terrifying thing we could do is discover who we truly are. Fr. Pat added that Jesus heals us by taking us by the hand and walks with us into the cellar where all the "shameful" stuff lurks; His light helps us to accept ourselves as we are. Additionally, Fr. Pat also spoke about Professor Brian Cox's insight - that our galaxy, the Milky Way, (one of a hundred billion in the observable cosmos) is so vast that it would take 100,000 years for a beam of light to travel from one side to the other. About 100,000 galaxies are all moving in harmony to what physicists call "the great attractor". God is the Omega and the Alpha and attracts us from the future.

Fr. Pat reminded the alumni and current members how we are familiar with the word, 'Mission' in the church: as the Father sent the Son, the Son sent the apostles, and we too were sent as missionaries with the Missionary Society of St James the Apostle. He was grateful, that, this year, we were blessed to welcome two Missionary priests, Frs. Aaron Bamba and Matt Anscombe, into the Society of St. James who are being *sent* on mission in Peru.



*Fr. Chris McCoy with Bishop Pedro*



*Alumni priests: Fr. Joe, Fr. John, Fr. Ray, & Fr. John together with current member, Fr. Aaron.*



*Mission Cross Recipients, Fr. Aaron and Fr. Matt, with Superior General, Fr. David.*



Fr. Melchor in the Diocese of Huanuco



Archbishop Henning, Fr. Simon, Fr. David



Archbishop Henning at the orphanage



The Bishops of Brooklyn, NY and Limerick, Ireland on a visit to Fr. Nilton's parish on the East side of Lima.



Fr. Nilton in front of one of his chapels

Joining the current members and alumni for the AGM week, was Archbishop Henning of Boston, on his first trip to Peru in his capacity as President of the St. James Missionary Society. The Society was celebrating its 68th anniversary. The Archbishop participated in the conference and also had the opportunity to visit parishes in poor urban settings around the capital city of Lima. Fr. David Costello, the Superior General of the Society, expressed his gratitude for this visit, acknowledging the busy schedule of a Church leader charged with caring for the spiritual needs of thousands of people in Massachusetts. Archbishop Henning commended Bishop Pedro Bustamante López of the Diocese of Huánuco for his pastoral leadership and sensitivity to the needs of his people in the Andean highlands of the diocese of Huánuco, where a new St. James mission has just begun. In an interview with *The Pilot*, the Archbishop commented, *"It's true mission territory, it takes a lot of resiliency and stamina from the priests to be able to do all of the travel among these very, many different communities...these missionaries have been really skilled at going in and building almost from nothing"*. Archbishop Henning visited two of the St. James Society's three parishes in Lima, during his visit. One is located in Villa El Salvador, on Lima's south side, which Fr. Simon is responsible for; it includes a church and two chapels. There are very few police in the area, requiring security guards to patrol the church on a near-constant basis. There is also an orphanage in Villa El Salvador, operated by an order of Italian sisters, which Archbishop Henning visited. The orphanage cares for children under age three, and had seventeen babies present when the archbishop visited. Most of the babies were abandoned and had no one else to care for them. Many of the babies will be adopted but, for those who aren't, they go to another orphanage in the countryside, when they turn three.. The *Pilot* reported that the Archbishop said, *"The children that I met, they're very young, but they seem to me happy, relaxed, open, unafraid, which tells me they are receiving really true love and care...So that was very moving to see. And I certainly*

*am grateful to the sisters for really that gift of their lives for the sake of these children that literally have no one else."*

The parish of El Resucitado, in the Diocese of Chosica, east of Lima is another one that Archbishop Henning visited. It's a community of 100,000+ people living on the side of a mountain. This area is home to fifteen communities, all overseen by Fr. Nilton.

This parish celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation for 152 parishioners, the Sunday after the AGM. There were several bishops presiding along with Bishop Izaguirre of Chosica: Bishop Leahy of Limerick, Ireland, Bishop Brennan of Brooklyn, NY and Bishop Hennessey of Boston,

While in Peru, Archbishop Henning took the opportunity to thank the personnel, supporting staff and priests for their conscientious contribution to the mission, an evangelizing project which began in 1958. At that time, just over a dozen priests from various English speaking countries, all incardinated into the Archdiocese of Boston, landed at the port of Callao outside Lima, and set themselves to accompany communities looking to develop their faith amid the difficulties of poor housing, a lack of electricity and basic needs such as running water and sewerage. While circumstances have evolved over the decades, the mission is still strong and very relevant.

The AGM week's activities closed with a joyful celebration of Mass and dinner as the Archbishop blessed all who collaborate in a ministry which continues to bring the hope of the gospel to areas of social deprivation in urban and outlying districts of Peru. Archbishop Henning also presented Bishop Bustamante with the Cardinal Cushing Medal, which is the highest honor the St. James Society can bestow on someone. Thank you, our generous benefactors, who support and pray for The Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle.

*~~With special thanks to Fr. Robert O'Grady (The Boston Pilot); Fr. Simon Cadwallader, Fr. Chris McCoy and Fr. Pat Cleary (St. James Society) for their contributions to this article.~~*



*Bishop Leahy, Bishop Izaguirre, Bishop Brennan, Bishop Hennessey. Confirmation Mass, below.*



*With Every Good Wish in Christ,*

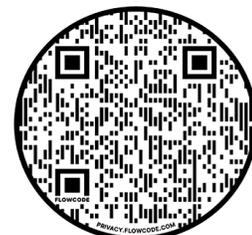
*Rev. David Costello, Director*



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