



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

July
2026

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"Just a Little Patience..."

Dear Friends,

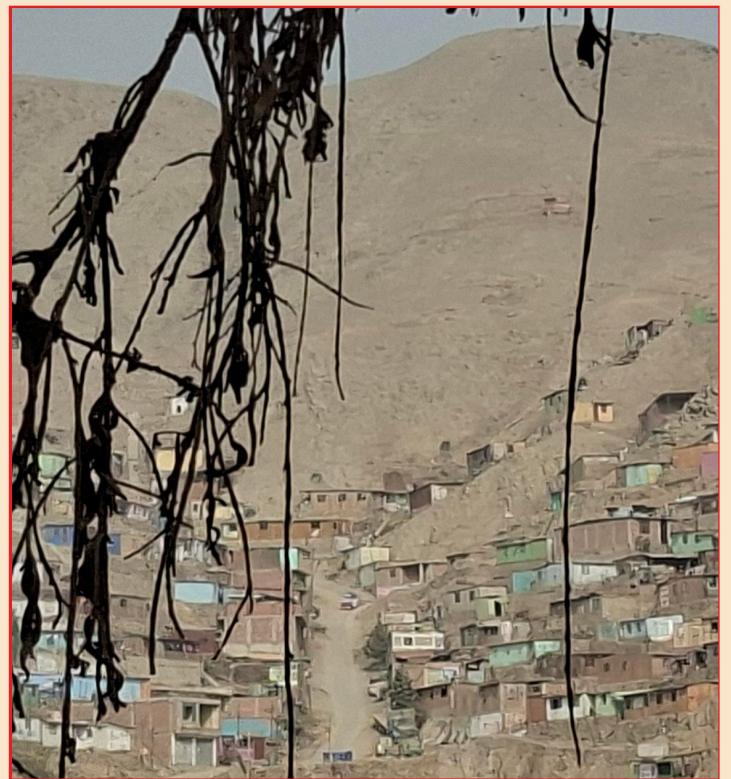
"Think of the Lord's patience as your opportunity to be saved" (2 Peter 3:15)

I was just coming back to the parish in the car from a visit and wondering what I might write for the newsletter when a classic Guns N' Roses song came into my head. One of my all-time favourite songs is "Sweet Child O' Mine" with its amazing guitar riff and striking vocals from Axl Rose.



However, the song that came to mind was "Patience", which goes back to 1988. I remember buying the single and playing it over and over. It's really a love song, but it has the classic line, "All we need is just a little patience". Patience has been a recurring theme for me over the past few months as I have taken up my mission appointment as Parish Priest of the parish of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Carabayllo. 'Tranquilo, Padre'. 'Con paciencia'. Those are words I hear often. 'Take it easy Father', 'One step at a time'. 'Easy does it!' I'm learning to be patient. Things don't necessarily happen at the same pace, or with the same urgency here as they do back home in England. "Think of the Lord's patience as your opportunity to be saved". Take this time as a period of growth! I have been in Peru now for ten

months. I'm still a newbie. I've been fortunate to have experienced something of our different parishes. I also spent six weeks in Cochabamba, Bolivia on a one-to-one language course and stayed with a great host family. I've had the opportunity to visit Arequipa, Cusco, and some of the classic tourist destinations and have gotten a good flavour of the country and the people. Now it's about facing into reality as Parish Priest of this community here in Carabayllo. But, patience is the name of the game. The parish is almost two hours away from the centre house in Barranco. It's in the north-east of Lima and, whilst the main church and house are in an urban area, you only have to get in the car and in two minutes you are in the countryside. It's an urban/rural mix. As well as the main church, there are four other chapels that the parish serves. One is up in the 'cerros' or hills that dominate the landscape for miles as you drive from the centre of Lima. This is Santísima Cruz in Lomas. Others are in urbanizations within the countryside. These are Santa Rosa de Lima in Río Seco and La Virgen de Aránzazu in Chocas. A further chapel (Santa Rosa) is hidden away in a small farming village called Puquio.





We also have another place where there is a monthly Mass in a little square in Punchauca. The latter draws the largest gathering by far. I think there is a real need to build a chapel there and we're looking into it – patience!! Please pray for this. I actually came to this parish for a 2-week visit last October and Fr. Michael, who was in charge at the time, gave me a tour of the parish. Therefore, I had a sense of what I was coming into. Being here now on a permanent basis and being in charge changes the experience. There are some great things going on with "Catechesis Familiar" in the parish. There are some really committed parishioners, both young, old and somewhere in between. I think there is a need to start looking outward a bit more and seeing how we can become more engaged with the community. We are involved with schools and I do get asked to celebrate Masses occasionally. We are also looking at how we can build on these relationships too. There's certainly plenty to keep us busy, but always *'poco a poco'*. Attendance at the chapels we serve is generally quite low. This is no reflection on anyone. It's the reality, I believe, of semi-urban and countryside chapels. I think if we had a second priest here we could make more of a difference. However, in spite of the low attendances, in Río Seco there is a separate First Holy Communion programme. Also, in Chocas, there are young people being prepared for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. In Puquio, whilst there is rarely participation at the Mass of any of the local community, we do have a good relationship with the school immediately opposite. Each week about thirty children join us for Mass on a Thursday morning and afterwards, with the help of a couple of parishioners, we have just started preparing twelve children for First Holy Communion. This is a new venture. Also, as alluded to above, we have around sixty who come to an open-air Mass in Punchauca each month. Perhaps this is where patience comes in: taking the long view. Sometimes it's good to step back and try to



view things from above and get a bit of a vision of what is happening and what the potential really is. Speaking of patience, what really strikes me about the Peruvians I have met is that they are a very patient people They're great people actually. They are very loving, very welcoming and VERY accepting of a gringo who isn't too patient with himself and wants everything now! Maybe I'm wrong, but could it be that their patience is born out of

long-suffering? After all the root of the word comes from the word 'to suffer'. To be patient is to be able to endure suffering without breaking. In a land of long journeys, poverty and injustice, perhaps patience is something that simply becomes ingrained. The Lord is patient with us. He gives us plenty of time to keep choosing him. Those words from St Peter are to be cherished and deeply pondered, along with the line, "With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like a day" (2 Peter 3:8).



Well, it is time to sign off. I've just had a message to say that Jesús is about to arrive. No, it's not the Second Coming (although we need to be ready!) It's our local printer dropping off some materials! Thank you for your prayerful support of The Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle and for your financial contributions too. Be assured of our prayers for you! **--Fr. Matt Anscombe**

With Every Good Wish in Christ,

Rev. David Costello, Director



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