



# FRIENDS

The Missionary Society of St. James  
the Apostle

September 2024



## "An Elegant Beauty"...

*Dear Friends,*

*In this issue we hear from Fr. Melchor Andaya, who is working in the parish of El Resucitado, in the Diocese of Chosica, in Lima, Peru:*

To witness the Church in mission, is to view yet another beautiful aspect of the Church. At my parish of El Resucitado, Peru I recently had a conversation with a community coordinator before Mass. She asked me how I became a priest and inquired about the process of my seminary formation. I shared some stories about seminary activities, particularly in the Philippines, right up to my current role as a diocesan priest on mission. I realized that I was simply talking about a kind of ecclesiology where, as one Church, we can help one another, rendering years of service for the mission. The community coordinator's reply was, "Our Church is so beautiful!" Indeed, the beauty of the Catholic Church is her prompting to each member to be a missionary.

*Diocesan priests serving the poorest of the poor in Latin*

**W**hy is missionary endeavor beautiful? The missionary endeavor magnifies God's Glory. God's glory is found especially in times and places where life seems to be inconvenient and difficult. By being present in the ordinary day-to-day living of people's lives, we can share the Word of God, and accompany them on their ups and downs. Mission is God's way, through His Church, of demonstrating that divine action can penetrate all situations. In the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, during the funeral of an Italian priest, Don Luigi Giussani (1922-2005), His Holiness stated that Msgr. Don Luigi completed his earthly life in "*an elegant beauty*". Yes, a person can be materially poor but not miserable. The example of Fr. Don Luigi's life and work is truly missionary. Giussani insisted that a faith not grounded in everyday experiences cannot defend itself.<sup>1</sup> Sharing and giving are possible among brethren even if resources are scarce. The community can be uplifted, despite poverty. Accepting others as our brethren speaks of the beauty of mission where all are accepted. God purifies what beauty is; God perfects what we need to see as beautiful in its truest sense. Here, where I am working, mission helps me see the radiating beauty of one's experience of God and share that experience with people without seeking one's own glory. Mission makes the Church on earth very real and God offers us the most beautiful outcome of mission work, increased holiness. From God's glory, the Church in mission also reflects the beauty of creation.

**I**n the parish of El Resucitado, we provide the elderly with creative activities on a weekly basis, in addition to providing a *Comedor* for daily hot meals. At our weekly senior group, a man named Carlos, in his advanced age, can still be creative, knitting his own scarf to keep warm during winters in Lima. A widow named Mely shares her culinary skills at the Comedor (where free meals are prepared and provided). Creativity, service and presence are ways to cooperate in creation. Additionally, the friendship that is being nurtured among those involved, mirrors the beauty of creation. Many of the faithful will ask for blessings. A cheerful man approached me recently after a weekday Mass, holding a bond paper with a prayer on it. The prayer consisted of petitions asking for a blessing for his moto-taxi. I was moved by the genuine beauty of his preparation for the blessing of his moto-taxi, his means of daily work as a taxi driver, adorned with a bouquet of flowers.

**E**ach time we celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism, when we become sons and daughters of God, we see the Church's beauty. Parents bring their children to the Church for Baptism, and it is with great hope that those who receive this gift may also be given the gift of holiness as they live out the Catholic faith. Hearing the words of Jesus in the sacrament, "*baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*" (Mt 28,19) is the present fulfillment of that mandate of Jesus who



*Blessing of the moto-taxi*

<sup>1</sup> <https://faithpatterns.com/2014/07/31/the-priest-who-smiled-the-legacy-of-don-luigi-giussani/>





obeys the father with the power of the Holy Spirit. At Baptisms I like to make friends with the family and take photos with the parents and godparents, hoping they will always recall the creative power of the gift of baptism to their children, each time they see the photograph. Our hope is that they do believe their family life may be beautiful as active members of the Church.

We missionary priests regularly exchange stories, about common experiences that highlight the creativity of the undecorated beauty of the ministry of evangelization. We are amazed by the genuine trust of people who do not submit to defeatism. I believe that the beauty of faith in mission is so rich that it manifests itself and the

strength of the Church in real day-to-day situations. The people continue to teach the missionaries how to learn from the real-life struggles, helping us not to be discouraged by any apparent unfruitfulness. How many times have I received consoling words from people in an unexpected moment; in moments, when I honestly needed them the most. Now, the beauty of the Church is experienced by us, by the missionary diocesan priests. Missionary work is the action of God in us. Missionary endeavor is to marvel at God's



*Catechist Group*




beauty and to continue to remind others of God's law on love. Even our Tabernacles in the chapels (constructed by the Society of St. James) are all inscribed with a Spanish word, "Amense" (Love one another). This commandment of Jesus makes the community beautiful. Moreover, happiness that stems from being loved brings healing. One of my favorite parish activities is the weekly preparation of the catechists, who then give input to the parents of the youth who will be confirmed. My simple role is to share my insights on a given Gospel passage. Each Wednesday, I can see the growth among the catechists, manifested in their group discussions. They share their concerns with the parents, and they reflect on how to be more effective in catechesis, considering how their apostolate affects their own personal life. To some extent, they become instruments of healing to every family they meet. Indeed, as the mission continues, it promotes and expands the healing ministry of the Church and incarnates the beauty of our merciful God. In general, sincerity and compassion in every community are growing. As a result, the parents are introduced to a level of ecclesial community and the Church is growing closer to these families. Every time the faithful wholeheartedly fulfill their apostolate to their brothers and sisters, the power of goodness moves against the stagnant effect of poverty, depression, discrimination and injustice. The mission has

something to offer in healing wounds brought by divisions among people; it sheds light into hearts clouded by strife and wars. This healing effect of mission is founded on the service of the Gospel and service for God's people. As wounds were inflicted by human selfishness, so mission work brings selfless service to the wounded and the neglected. Beauty and mission are evident in the Church, seen in those youth, who at



their young age, are willing to cooperate in evangelization. Weekly gatherings of the youth occur in all chapels of this parish. The youth patiently instruct the younger ones, preparing the children to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Truly, how beautiful it is to witness the youth who prepare their brethren to receive Jesus in the most beautiful Eucharistic way. The sacraments and various other occasions are a reason to celebrate and Peruvians like celebrations very much! They enjoy gatherings and dinners and music and, more profoundly, they also celebrate after they open up about their problems with a priest or after the Sacrament of Penance. In closing, I recall the final culminating phrase from the language school in Cochabamba, Bolivia – “being a missionary has a vocation to *gastar la vida*” (to spend one’s life for others). By being true to Jesus’ parable of salt and light (Mt: 5,13-16) salt will add flavor and taste while the light will make visible the beauty of a place or person, shedding light to others, so they can be seen by all. This is the beauty of the Church in mission, like the salt of the earth and light of the world. ~Fr. Melchor Andaya

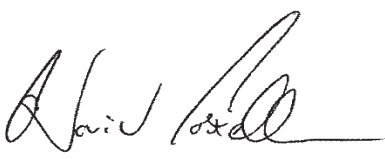


*You are heartily invited to the*  
**St. James Society Golf Tournament**  
 being held at the  
 Windham Country Club - Windham, NH

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Wednesday - October 9, 2024  
 10:15 AM Shotgun Start  
 Call Blessed Trinity Parish @ 978-320-4220 for details  
 Hosted By: Rev. Peter Quinn

*With Every Good Wish in Christ,*



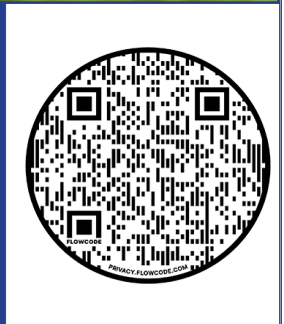
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