



friends

a publication of *The Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle*

September, 2014

AGREE WITH THOSE WHO URGE YOU ON

Dear friends,

Each year the St. James Society looks forward with joy to welcoming new members, and occasionally we experience some sadness when a current member reaches the end of his five year commitment with the Society. Over the past five years you will be familiar with reading much about Fr. John Molloy and his work at El Bautismo de Jesús (The Baptism of Jesus) in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Fr. John arrived in Lima, Peru, back in August 2009 to begin language study. The next five years flew by and it is now time for Fr. John to return to his native Diocese of Killaloe, Ireland. I have asked Fr. John to reflect a little on his time with us in the St. James Society, and so he shares his thoughts and reflections:

"The great Missionary, Saint Columbanus (543-630AD) wrote: 'agree with those who urge you on.' I was 'urged on' in Ecuador working with the Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle. Arriving in a new continent, learning a new language, adapting to a new culture and tradition and coping with a very different climate all had their challenges. Living and ministering in Monte Sinai, Guayaquil, and continuing to establish our new parish called

El Bautismo de Jesús was a very fulfilling and rewarding experience. Working together and relying on voluntary support in this poor parish has taught me that collaboration with and working among people is the only model of ministry that really works in building up a vibrant Christian community. I have learned that Mission/Evangelization is putting faith into action; in a very real sense it is about putting meaning into the words we preach.



Fr. John served in the parish of El Bautismo de Jesús, Mt. Sinai, Guayaquil.



Students hard at work in the new computer lab.

My introduction to *Catechesis Familiar*, a family based catechesis program which encourages parents to take the lead role in handing on the faith to their children, was an especially moving experience. Each week it was a very rich blessing for me to witness young people filled with enthusiasm and joy as they shared their faith with each other, teaching each other about God, Church, and Social Action. What a wonderful grace it has been for me to be part of all of this. Another memorable experience is working with missionary sisters from Colombia and the Archdiocese of Guayaquil, in building a new Catholic primary school in the parish. I never learned so much about bags of cement, wages, scaffolding, etc. And looking back now I can laugh at myself when I see how many times my blood pressure rose when confronted with bad work, slow work or even at times..... no work!!

Gandhi urges us: 'Be the change you want to see in the world.' I believe we members of the St. James Society have



Serious about studies! Fr. John reviews a catechism book.

a mission to do... we are just passing through and want to make a difference... but when the time is up it's time to move on. Just as our founder Cardinal Cushing said in the beginning 'Get in, Get on, and Get out!!' My memory of visiting people in their bamboo homes on stilts was a very humbling experience for me. The welcome and hospitality is also something I will never forget. Dignity is probably the word that sums it up for me. The home may only have a small garden plant growing outside, struggling to survive in the dust, a duck or a chicken running around the house, but that home had laughter, with little material wealth and care in abundance.



Fr. John with a volunteer from Ireland.

To serve God's poor with our home visits, financial help, food and water, to tend to the sick and those mentally and physically challenged in their homes, to call on those abandoned by family and friends and those living alone, to tend callers at the door and to be as patient as possible, even when at times patience was a much sought after virtue. To visit the sick in hospital and those in prison, to administer the sacraments, often baptisms in their dozens, to celebrate joyful liturgies and just BE present in the rainy season and dry season, in and out of season – God what a privilege!

I thank God with all my heart for my time spent on Mission with the St. James Society in Ecuador. My priesthood has been enriched by the experience. Trying to make sense of the poverty of people's lives in South America and attempting to link it to the faith we profess is a constant challenge. So many times I found myself asking in prayer: Why such suffering? It is precisely in the midst of such suffering that I learned to trust in God because the



A reason to smile: Sr. Lucely, Fr. John, Sr. Maryluz, Sr. Mayra, Gerard and Margaret Molloy, and parish coordinator Silvia and her son, stand outside the completed 18 classrooms.

poor taught me that our God is a God of the poor, a God who is right there with them in the middle of their suffering. God was in Monte Sinai long before I arrived and will continue to be there in a very real way. To see hope arise and people's lives improving, albeit at a very slow pace, makes me realize more and more that any good we can do to 'urge others on' along the way is very noble and Christian.



Parish volunteers in Mt. Sinai build a home for a poor family.

I want to thank especially my sending Diocese of Kilaloe, Bishops Willie and Kieran, also the financial generosity and prayerful support of my former parish in Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland. Sincere thanks too to all the committees, benefactors and organizations in many different places who extended a helping hand along the way. Without your support the parish of El Bautismo de Jesús could never have developed. Another great memory for me will be of all those volunteer groups and individuals

who made the long journey to Ecuador and made a huge difference to the life of our new parish. Mission is always about cooperation between so many different people, all united in the one cause.

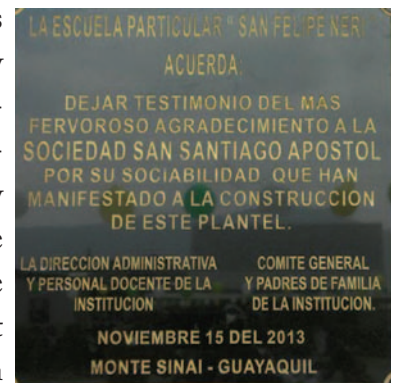
And so my time with the St. James Society has come to an end. On August 11th I will begin walking the 'Camino', that very special pilgrimage from St. Jean Pied de Port in France to Santiago de Compostella in Spain. It's only 480 miles!! I will undertake this pilgrimage in thanksgiving for all that has happened in my life through others while on mission with the St. James Society. Please God, when I reach Compostella and enter the great Cathedral of St. James, I will be able to say, 'you urged me on'...Thank you!!



Out and about - making a quick stop to check the mail.

I owe much gratitude to my good friend Fr. David Costello who urged me to go on Mission in the first place, and to all in the Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle, especially my loyal neighbors Frs. Tom Oates and PJ Hughes. Keep up the good work!!

They say, 'the journey is the reward.' My short few years on Mission in Guayaquil and its people will always be in my heart. Now I am being 'urged on' once again as I prepare to take on my new assignment as Parish Priest/Pastor in Toomevara, Co. Tipperary, Ireland. Pray for me, as I will for you. Gracias!!"



St. Philip Neri Catholic school acknowledges the Society of St. James for its generosity in helping to build the new parish school.



The youth and music group meets faithfully every week.



Fr. John teaches the students a prayer.

Many thanks to you Fr. John, for your priestly example and humble witness among us, especially your dedication to God's poor. We wish you every blessing as you prepare to minister to God's people in the parish of Toomevara. I'm sure the experience gained during your years on mission will greatly enhance your ability to minister effectively back home in Ireland. Sincere thanks as always to all of you, our kind benefactors and friends, who continue to make it possible for our priests to work on your behalf in the Lord's vineyard. Please continue to pray that the Lord of the Harvest will send more laborers to the St. James Society so that we may continue to tend His harvest in Ecuador and Peru.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. David Costello
Director



Please Save The Date!

The Cardinal Cushing Award Celebration

- Sunday, November 2nd
- Boston College High School, 150 Morrissey Blvd., Boston
- Tickets: \$125*
- Honoring:
 - Rev. Joseph Gaudet - Society alumnus and Boston Priest*
 - Donna Hackley, D.M.D - Pediatric Dentist*
 - The Honorable Martin J. Walsh - Mayor of Boston*
- Donations and reservations may be made online at: www.socstjames.com/awards2014.html

*This year's event features a new reception style format and is not a sit down dinner with assigned seating.

Golf Tournament

- Wednesday, October 8, 2014. 12:15 pm shotgun start.
- Windham Country Club, Windham, New Hampshire
- For more information, please contact Fr. Peter Quinn at 978-692-6353