



the Easter Vigil Mass! For me, accompanying the people in the journey through it all - making music, laughing, sharing reflections, praying, pushing wheelchairs, making friends - was a Paschal experience. Like climbing the stairs on the hills, it changed us a bit and made us closer to each other.

As it was time to part ways, we were glad to have shared the journey together. I think we all found water in the desert.

Sincere thanks to Jerome for sharing his experience with us. As I was the founding Pastor at El Resucitado it is always a great joy for me to be updated on the progress going on there.



Fr. Loreto leading the Palm Sunday procession in Las Americas.

With Every Good Wish in Christ,

Rev. David Costello
Director



Please pray for our Friends and Alumni of the Society who have died since April 1, 2019:

Rev. Joseph Cunningham - Archdiocese of Liverpool, Served in Ecuador from 1972-1980

Rev. Edmond F. Adams - Diocese of Sioux City, IA, Served in South America from 1963-1972

Mrs. Kay McAvoy - Many of you may have met Kay over the years. She was the Chairperson of our Annual Fundraising Banquet in Boston. She was a devoted friend to many, and indeed a wonderful friend of the St. James Society. We owe her a huge debt of gratitude for her many years of volunteer service with us. May she rest in peace.

For the purpose of wills, bequests, and living trusts, our official name is:
The Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle, Inc.

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

WATER IN THE DESERT

Dear Friends,

Jerome Kiley is a lay missionary and friend of the St. James Society. Many of you will be familiar with Jerome's mission in Ecuador called 'Barriers to Bridges'. Each year Jerome spends six months or so in South America. Recently he spent two months with us in Lima, Peru, ministering at El Resucitado parish. Jerome shares with us a little of his experience while in Lima:

I spent Lent and Holy Week in the parish of El Resucitado in Peru, with Frs. Loreto Jaque and Francis Kwofie. The parish is a collection of 13 communities located on the edges of the capital city of Lima, in an area that is virtually a desert. Having undergone extraordinary growth since the Society arrived in 2006, it's still a mix of material poverty and bustling human community that benefits much from Christ's presence providing - and being - spiritual water in the desert.

While the valleys in the region are centers of community life, the surrounding hills are less accessible and still largely populated by those with lesser means. There, smaller homes of thin wood or cardboard are primarily accessed by dirt pathways or long, steep stairways, whose gateways at the pueblo level are proudly named and adorned. The first times I started to climb these stairs and pathways - in the safest way



Fr. Loreto Jaque, Fr. Francis Kwofie and Jerome Kiley snap a selfie at El Resucitado parish.

that I could manage - I began to encounter and help out strangers carrying up their groceries. Along the way, we would talk, and afterwards part ways glad we shared the journey together. On my way back down, there'd be another person on their way up, and I'd do it all over again! Apart from the good exercise, the stairs became a great way for me to encoun-



I spent time getting to know the food kitchen, which is communally sustained and provides nutritious primary meals to about 100 children each weekday. In getting to know the children with the assistance of Fr. Loreto, we were able to begin to open up a space of creative play and activities before and after meals. It started small with showing some videos to a few children and mothers, but slowly expanded to include arts & crafts, musical instruments, sports, and games - and most of the children. For me, eating with and socializing and playing with the kids was a chance to come to know them and the families better, and for everyone it was an opportunity for growing the sense of community. The community and Fr. Loreto are planning on continuing the activity, and I'm very grateful to have had such an opportunity to be in the lives of the people.



Some of the stairways leading to homes in the hills.

ter people and accompany them in their lives, to become closer to them by living in a way what Paul wrote to the Galatians, "Carry one another's burdens."

As many people in the parish have their roots in a mass migration from the mountains during the 80's to 00's, they face challenges of both poverty and displacement. So, the parish has grown a variety of social services out of the sacramental life to engage these challenges along with the people: from therapeutic group activities and dental care, to skill training, to a food kitchen for children.



Jerome (top) and Fr. Loreto (bottom) with children doing arts and crafts at the soup kitchen.



Fr. Loreto speaking to the children at the soup kitchen before their meal.

The parish community where the Society priests stay, Monterrey, has a small but busy pueblo center, with a school, chapel, and soccer court surrounded by homes and apartments and local storefronts. A faith-based children's group had been initiated in the parish to welcome children who frequently are out in the pueblo but may not have much home support. Having had experience in Ecuador with children's ministry, I was glad to support the parish ministers guiding this group, sharing my own ideas and resources I had accumulated - and as always learning new things myself! Listening to and accompanying children in their world is a fun, priceless experience that grows trust. It enables children to follow adults more freely, and adults to grow in vulnerability. Every time I'd see the kids in passing in the street, they'd ask about the next meeting - they couldn't wait! I'm hopeful that the group will continue to be a source of love and growth in their lives.

In the parish, Fr. Loreto regularly leads various valuable groups and workshops dedicated to therapeutic spiritual healing, and for Lent he added in a series of evening reflections on reconciliation with sacramental confession. After reflecting on my own experiences so far, I offered a two-part workshop called Water in the Desert about finding more hidden surprise gifts in our own lives and in the four Gospels, through reflection and meditation. It was an opportunity for the people to discover more about me and me about them, while entering together into something of my own spirituality related to desert life. I think we all came away with surprise gifts!

Early on, I was also introduced by Fr. Loreto to Holy Mary's Home, a housing facility for people with disabilities.

Founded and run by a large, international faith-based group of people with disabilities, the Home provides a temporary place to stay for group members from the mountains while they are receiving medical attention in the city of Lima. Stays can be from a month to a few years, so the community in the Home is often in flux. The surrounding parish community includes the Home residents in their services and activities, and I was able to make some visits to present myself and begin to get to know the residents. Having family members myself with disabilities, and having experience in ministry with people with disabilities, I felt at home.

The parish's Holy Week began with early Mass on Palm Sunday in a community called Las Americas. This community doesn't have a chapel, so we processed with palms around the public park where Mass is held weekly. Walking with folks old and young, and with the early sun spreading attention over the older valley community and its overflow into the hills, the procession was a testimony to the role of faith in the people's remarkable flourishing growth in the middle of a desert.



Jerome with residents of Holy Mary's House.

I spent Holy Week through Easter accompanying the people from Holy Mary's Home and my local community of Monterrey. The time flew quickly! Each community had its own Mass of the Last Supper, and then on Good Friday, it's own Way of the Cross, followed by a procession on foot to a local school, where the whole parish came together for the Adoration of the Cross. The following night, each community also processed to the school again for