



**Missionary Servants of
the Poor**
Opus Christi Salvatoris Mundi

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Opus Christi Salvatoris Mundi.
Andahuaylillas (Cusco-Perú), 8 September 2021
Nativity Feast of the Virgin Mary

Dear friends,
LAUDETUR IESUS CHRISTUS (PRAISED BE JESUS CHRIST)

We have already closed the month of August without having given you any news yet.

July 16, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, was still an additional testing day. There was a fire on the mountain, just above the "City of Boys", in Andahuaylillas. A curious fact: whenever we have had a fire in previous years (... and we have had several very strong ones!), They have always been during Marian Feasts; ... Is there a meaning to this??? By the pure Grace of God, the wind changed direction, limiting the fire that was extinguished during the night. As in previous times, just as the start of the fire was inexplicable, there was always also "something" inexplicable or astonishing that has also stopped it "coincidentally" (... well, not "coincidentally", because chance is a reality that does not exist in the Christian dictionary!).

As I write this anecdote to you, I remember the words of Saint Teresa of Avila, co-patroness of our mission: "Nothing disturbs you, nothing frightens you, whoever has God lacks nothing." I would even dare to say that these words are like the common thread that we have always wanted to follow and more specifically since the beginning of the pandemic. By following the Lord with confidence and putting our hands in those of the Virgin Mary, for whatever happens, happens.

Like all of you, we are learning to live with this disease, living with it permanently, but not allowing it to interfere with our missionary activities.

Our schools continue to operate virtually (... and this is, for me, another continuous miracle, since many of the families do not have a telephone, let alone internet!). We are trying to adapt to the needs of our students (260 boys and 270 girls from the schools "Sts. Francisco and Jacinta Marto" and "St. María Goretti" respectively), by modifying and finding new educational strategies which are more appropriate to the living conditions of the students, the children and their parents. Many of them had to move out, and look for houses (I should say huts with corrugated roof) to rent at a less expensive price and more adapted to their economic income that continues to decrease or because where they lived did not have Internet signal or because since they did not have electricity in the place where they lived, so they could not simply recharge their phone. For example, a 9-year-old girl told us that to receive the signal, she leaves her house and climbs higher up the hill to capture the virtual lessons, in full sun and when it rained she would make a temporary little tent. We have endless examples of such extreme situations like this one.

Our Sisters from Cusco, at the "St. Teresa de Jesús" Home, while taking the necessary precautionary measures due to the pandemic, continue to receive children in critical situations. As some of you may already know, our Sisters take care of, among others, disabled children and children who have very complicated health issues. On December 15, 2020, they welcomed Lían Sebastián, one month old; On February 3, 2021, José Marcelo came at 28 days of life; then on June 16, Angélica Gabriela, 2 years old, who has a heart murmur; on June 21, they received Milagros, one month old; and July 14, David Gael, 2 years.

All these children were abandoned, but David Gael's story is different. He was refused entry in all institutions in Cusco, because he has microcephaly (in addition to malnutrition and a pressure ulcer on his back). His father "used" him to beg by selling sweets on the streets of Cusco and he also used to "rent" him to other people. One day, when he was being "rented", David Gael fell from a public bus and broke his foot. His father had to take him to the hospital where his foot was in a cast. But his father did not take proper care of him. The child cried a lot in pain, so the father drugged him to stop the crying. Finally, a woman who saw the child's condition, followed the man to his home and reported him to the authorities, and that's how David Gael arrived at our Home. Now, in less than a month, he has grown into a joyous and happy child.

Our MSP Sisters, despite the covid pandemic, continue to go on mission at Urubamba, Cusibamba and Punacancha and some of them had to be isolated because they had contracted the disease.

The 3 sisters who have lived in Ilo for more than a year now distribute one meal a day to more than 200 people. They do not buy anything because, providentially, it is the local people who provide them with what they need.

Our missionary couples also continue their magnificent work. In Cusco, in addition to the schools where they teach virtual classes, they take care of all the logistics of the MSPs. They are in charge of collecting the food that generous benefactors send us to redistribute it to the different centres, but more specifically, twice a month, to the many families in our schools. It is a laborious work that our couples do with enthusiasm.

Belonging to the Family Fraternity, we also have a married couple in Mexico and one in Lima, who have not stopped their pastoral activities either.

This year, the Fraternity of Families has seen their numbers grow: a young married couple (he is Mexican, she is Peruvian) joined us with their one-and-a-half-year-old son and a beautiful baby was born to them. Our dear

Hungarian couple was also blessed with one more son. Despite their parents having contracted covid, both babies were born super-healthy, thanks be to God. In other words, despite the covid attack, which devastated the entire Fraternity of missionary couples (it was a very difficult moment for everyone), the Lord continues to bless and protect them.

However the main mission of the Fraternity, "Holy Family of Nazareth" is to be a model of Catholic families, given to God and to the poorest through the Sacraments, Adoration, daily Holy Mass, daily prayers of the Holy Rosary and the fraternal life.

Likewise, the community of Priests and Brothers has had its share of difficulties and Graces. One of the Priests and one of the Brothers who accompanied him, on a mission in many remote villages in the high Andes, also returned with covid and had to be isolated (three other brothers who made up the group were "unharmmed").

At the same time, we had a great joy, this July 28, day of National Holidays in Peru, which this year also celebrates the Bicentennial of its Independence, and liturgically here, the Feast of Our Lady of Peace, to see two of our Brothers ordained deacons (Guido, from Cusco, and Deyvid, from Colombia) by our Pontifical Commissioner, Mons. Juan José Salaverry Villarreal, recently consecrated (last May) as auxiliary bishop of Lima.

Between many other Graces, several of our brothers who made their year of missionary experience, has discerned that God's will for them was to consecrate themselves to God in the MSP, so they have been sent to continue their studies (as part of their formation process) to Spain, at our "House of Formation" in Ajofrín.

We should also mention our small community of Contemplatives, which despite its small size, has an important prayerful strength, which continues its pastoral action by giving spiritual retreats for men who request it. They are our strength, support and protection.

Saint Joseph, in this year consecrated to him, is behaving with us like a true caring father, and for this he makes use of generous people who are sensitive to the suffering of his brothers. That is why we once again reiterate that it is your financial and material support that allows us to distribute food, clothing, medicine, etc. to more than 1500 people, if we only count the families belonging to our schools. To these 1500 people are added (which we cannot count) the convents, the nursing homes and everything that is distributed through the missions of our MSP Sisters. As we refuse to abandon all these little ones (not only children, but also all the materially and spiritually helpless) that the Holy Providence of God sends us permanently, we count on you to be able to continue our mission.

Know that you have the permanent spiritual support (through daily Holy Mass and Adoration, the daily prayer of our children and of ourselves) from all the members of this great family of Missionary Servants of the Poor to whom We consider you belong to already, through your valuable cooperation.

May the Virgin Mary and her husband Saint Joseph protect you from all evil.

I want to repeat to you the words of our dear Holy Father Saint John Paul II: "Do not be afraid", to which he added: "Open wide the doors to Christ!" ...A challenge. Let's all put it into practice! It's worth it!

On a personal note, I assure you of my poor prayers and send you all my love.

God bless you.



*P. Álvaro de María, msp
Vicario General de los MSP.*

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