

Dear Daddy, Mammy and all at home,

It is about time I wrote. I had sent you a letter by Elizabeth and Amy O'Brien and I hope you got it alright. There I mentioned that our community wanted me to go to Jamaica to see about the possibility of starting a community there. I had thought to do it later in the year after going back to Europe for a while but as Jesús Ramón the brother with me had problems with his Visa we decided it was best to go to Jamaica now. We will spend a few months here so that when we finish here in December or maybe November, I will probably go home then for a while - a month or two over Christmas. I thought it better to do that than to go back earlier - anyway things got a bit complicated.

We arrived here in Jamaica about 2 weeks ago and spent a while in a country church with an Irish priest some 62 years of age. The place needed a lot of work around so I spent the time doing that work. We fixed some leaking shutters, painted the Church doors, made a cupboard for the house-keeper, helped him tidy up the place. Then we met the bishop here, a man called Samuel Carter and he was very happy to see us. He said he would be interested in us working in the capital city of Kingston - it is about half the size of Dublin and people are very poor there. There is a church with the priest away at the moment so that we were asked to help there until the priest comes back which will be in October. It will give us time to get to know the situation. The weather here is beautiful and the sea is really very nice. People speak English but a kind of pidgin type of English. It takes a bit of time to get used to it and to understand what they are saying.

We didn't get any fresh news about the missing priests in Argentina but at least the few months I was in Washington has meant that their cases have become very well known and we are confident that they will be some news shortly. In a way I was glad to leave the US. It is a very superficial kind of country and people are very materialistic. It is not the same as the image given in the Television series but it is not very different either. It is amazing the amount of Spanish that is now been spoken in the States particularly in New York. People are speaking Spanish all the time as they come from Spanish speaking countries such as Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. I will give you our telephone number here in Kingston it is Kingston 923 9072. Any urgent message Kathleen can ring. How are all the lads keeping? I see that they had a very successful year again rowing. How did Denis get on in his new boat? I suppose he is getting used to it by now. I saw that Castle Lyons creamery helped him to go to some regatta. It was very good of them although I suppose they look for some form of promotion. How did he do in that race? We were all very delighted with the new pope. No one expected him to be elected so quickly. They must have already come to agreement among themselves, the cardinals. He seems to be a very friendly man and accessible. Although I saw they gave the Argentine president a bit of a crust -ing of things when he went to Rome for the new Pope. The situation there seems to be continuing the same as ever with very little if any improvement. Here we don't get so much news but even in the States they give very little news about Argentina even during the world Cup. The food here is very good - there are a lot of fruits and vegetables - particularly tropical ones. How is Ned getting on with his house. I must write to Mary Noonan and her new husband - I see they was a really big do then. I imagine they are back now from wherever they went to.

The people here are very religious and have great respect for priests and pastors. The majority are protestant as it was a former English Colony and about 12 % of the population are Catholic. They are not very many native priests and a lot come from the States to work here and some come from India. It is a very nice parish where we are. The people sing a lot in the Mass on Sundays and take a very active interest in things. Between the 2 masses on Sundays over 300 people would come so it is very big numbers. I think one of the reasons why they take such a keen interest is that they be competing with all the other churches - Baptist, Pentecostal, etc. The most of the people are of African or Asian origin and they are very few white people around. People are very friendly but they say they are a lot of assaults in some parts of the City so it is not good to be out too late at night.

Well I'll write again soon. The address to which you can write is on the back of this letter. I hope Mammy is keeping well and that the harvest will be going well.

All the best to everyone at home and to all the relatives and neighbours --- God Bless your fond son *Patrick*

To open cut here

Sender's name and address:

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JAMAICA,

WEST INDIES

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AIR LETTER
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Mr. William Rice,

Curraghmore,

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