



newsletter 52

september 2008

It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth.

3 John 1 v 3

These words of the Apostle John convey the joy he has on receiving news of his close friend Gaius.

Preparing newsletters brings a feeling of excitement and anticipation as the news from Colombia arrives.

Keeping you informed is important because you are part of the work of IMC and much valued.

Days of Prayer

June 7th and 8th were days of prayer for children at risk and at Peniel farm and Fusa meetings were held with the children and some of their families.

Nancy Centeno (Colombian Director) reports: The stories that we hear and the cruel reality of what we see today of childhood on a worldwide level is what moves us to continue working for these little ones that are suffering. Each day the statistics of abuse and vulnerability of the rights of children are increasing. In Colombia there are children obliged to be in the militias, due to poverty many children cannot study, some are involved in common delinquency, many are affected by sexual exploitation... cases of sex abuse increase, [as do] physical abuse, abductions, children obliged to work, displaced persons, [and] increases in drug use. These problems have caused a lot of damage in society, children are being used to traffic drugs, and to commit all types of crimes, because

minors cannot go to prison, although the law is changing.



Maicol and Alejandro — lives being changed

Nancy goes on to say “we have a great challenge to continue proclaiming the gospel, we need strength and greater support in prayer, so that this situation changes...we should not just do it on these days.”

Please pray continually for a transformation in Colombia, for people to seek God and desire righteousness.

Peniel Farm

A number of birthdays were celebrated in June: Javier Arteaga, Javier Albarracin, Willian, Sebastian, Emilio, Kevin, and Arley who were thankful for gifts from their sponsors.

Camilo Castro won a scholarship in a football academy for being the best player in his school.

During the holidays the children who were able spent time with their families which for some





can be very difficult. They are now all safely back at the farm but Over and Gabriel were upset by meeting with their uncle, a drug user, and admitted having taken marijuana. This is an indication of the pressures these children grow up with but it is also encouraging that the influence of their time at the farm means that they are able to see the right from wrong, be upset by it and trust their carers enough to be prepared to talk about it.

An opportunity to help build better families was at the Family Day when a number of mothers visited their sons. Games were played to get them involved and be shown how to better interact with their children.



Family Day fun

There have been some difficulties with dogs coming onto the farm and killing the rabbits and sheep. A neighbour's cow managed to get in and eat the growing vegetables and recently 30 chickens died from some kind of genetic disorder. Despite this Nancy says, "we are upset but in all this we are happy because God is our strength." They have started to replant with fresh hope.

Ana Rebeca who worked in the kitchen has had to give up the job for health reasons.

Youth With A Mission (YWAM) asked if two of their mission students could spend time at the farm to gain experience and learn about the work. Tara from Canada and Megan from New Zealand have been a great help, Yanira and Lucas came with them too. (Yanira and David

were house-parents at the farm before going to work with YWAM, Lucas is their son.)

Please pray for the children and their families for better relationships. Give thanks and pray for the staff and volunteers who work at the farm. Pray for protection for everyone including the animals.

Altamira Ranch

At the Family Day at Altamira the boys and girls organised theatrical sketches and shared the Gospel. It was very sad for some of the children whose parents cannot be relied on to come to these days because they so much wanted to show their talents to their families.

The grandmother of Leidy and Jordi is very ill with cancer and the children are very upset. It was she who brought them up while their mother remained a drug addict.

Please pray for all the children at Altamira that their families will take more interest in them, also especially remember Leidy and Jordi at this time.

Fusa Feeding Programme

Recently two children, John and Felipe, who come to the programme have been maltreated by their families and it was necessary to report these incidents to the authorities.

Also two recent arrivals from a family in a critical situation have malnutrition problems and need particular care and attention.

Such is the demand for places on the feeding programme changes have had to be made to better cater for those in most need.

Children over 14 years are being replaced by children under 10 as these older children have improved situations both physically and spiritually. A new project is being developed to encourage the older ones to become involved in the Sunday school and in helping the younger children.

Please Pray that the changes in the feeding programme will be successful and for Carlos as he manages it. Also pray particularly for John and Felipe and the new arrivals in the programme.



Summer Camp

The summer camp was held at Chinauta near Fusa during June. Budget restraints meant that only 122 children could be catered for helped by 30 adults. Alfredo (Chair of the Colombian Board) led the teaching on the theme of God working in the heart of each child to minister with his power, to heal wounds and to forgive.

It was a blessed time and six of the children wanted to be baptised as well as Antonio and Tatiana who are the workers at Altamira.



On the journey home the bus from Peniel farm broke down and it was very late back and everyone was very tired but they arrived safely. Nancy reports that they were very conscious of God's protection throughout the camp.

Please pray that the camp will encourage the children and give them hope for lives that can be transformed.

Summer Team 2008

It seems summer is later this year as the team will probably be in Colombia as you read this. They went out on the 6th September and return on 23rd. This years team is lead by IMC trustee Sharon Unwin and comprises Terry and Yvonne Mann from Salisbury, John Irving from Petersfield, and David Comley from Alton.



John, Terry and David, Yvonne and Sharon

Sharon writes, "The itinerary is fairly fluid, but will involve a few days at each farm, doing

repairs and maintenance and possibly some painting and decorating, as well as visits to the feeding programme and the new work in Bosa, a very poor area of Bogota where IMC with Alfredo's church are looking to develop a programme similar to the one in Fusa.

"The team spent a half-day together in July to discuss and prepare for the trip, and — most importantly — to pray together.

"Please pray for us while we are in Colombia — that our heavenly Father would use us to be a blessing to children and workers alike; pray for opportunities to share God's love and grace with those we meet: pray too for protection as Colombia is a dangerous country."

View from the Chair

Cautious optimism: After the long decline in our income over the year to March, it looks like we are now turning the corner again, with a few more donations coming in. More importantly we are gaining some new regular donors. While we always welcome one off gifts to boost our funds, having a regular income stream enables us to plan ahead much more effectively. We still have a way to go to reach our target of doubling our regular income, but we are moving in the right direction!

Praise God for gracious provision, especially in the recent months where finances have been extremely tight. Pray that the rising trend will continue, and encourage friends and colleagues to get involved!

And oops! (...to err is human). Our recent redesign has been a resounding success. However, when we chose a new website name we failed to check the UK register of charities, and we overlooked that another charity uses the name. We have decided to resolve this immediately to avoid any future conflict.

Our new website is still up and running, but we have changed the default address with immediate effect to: inministrytochildren.org and the contact email is now info@inministrytochildren.org (Note: if you do forget and use the formerly published addresses, you will still get through.) Apologies for any confusion caused.



For those waiting patiently, some two years of solid work by Andrew Boyd has now come to fruition. As I write this I have in hand a proof copy of the high quality documentary, and all who have seen it agree that it is superb. It will go to production this week, and if you have pre-ordered, it should arrive on your doorstep hot on the heels of this newsletter!

Enjoy it, share it with friends, and spread the word of God's incredible work transforming lives in Colombia!

Paul Stockley (Chair)

Fruto del Espiritu

Healthy drinks, not harmful drugs! This is the message of Fruto del Espiritu, an ethical company importing Colombian fruit. Endorsed by the Colombian Ambassador to the UK, this company is encouraging young people to set up small businesses within their own schools selling exotic fruit juices, frappés and smoothies. At the same time the young people learn how the healthy lifestyle choice for fruit rather than cocaine actually has a positive impact for the Colombian farmers and their families. At the same time, out of their profits, they can sponsor a child in the nutrition programme in Fusa. Some 20 or schools are already onboard.



Youth Bartenders

If you are a young person wanting to run your own business (and get training as an expert barista! — how cool is that?), then get in touch with Rutie Stranack at info@fruto.co.uk .

To learn more checkout
www.cordonverde.com

And Finally...

An advert and a reminder before a final thought.

The advert is for Gospel Cards because although Christmas is still far away, an advert in December's newsletter may be too late for you to order your cards. IMC receives a portion of the profits from these cards when you order them and name In Ministry to Children on the form. You can look up and order on their website too at www.gospelcardsetc.com

The reminder is for when making out cheques to support IMC these should be made payable to "Links International (IMC)" as Links are now handling the accounts on our behalf. Thank you.

A final thought while thinking of the hundreds of you reading the newsletters, the words of Jesus to Thomas, the one who doubted, came to mind. "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Most of us have never met any of the children or workers in Colombia yet we all care about them, support them, pray for them and want to know how they are getting on.

I wonder is there a parallel here? I wonder would Jesus say "blessed are you who have not met them, yet have compassion?"

I believe he would. May God bless you all.

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