



newsletter 53

december 2008

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6 v 68.

Credit crunch, recession, inflation, climate chaos, it seems that whatever one reads in a newspaper or hears on a newscast engenders uncertainty. For some of us that may be true in our circumstances but by comparison our uncertainties are small compared to those of so many children in Colombia. Yet thanks to you some of these children are finding a certainty and a security in their future that they could never have anticipated or imagined.

Boys News

How time flies – Maicol and Neider graduate from secondary school this year. Maicol on November 29th and Neider on December 13th. Neider wants to go on to study “Systems” and Maicol is not sure what to do.

In December some of the boys from the farm are going back to their families as the degree of risk has diminished. Their families’ circumstances are improved and the boys’ ages mean that they will do well to be in their family. Some of them want to go home, including the two Javiers, Over and Gabriel. Although, as Nancy writes, “we are worried about Gabriel and Over, their situation is different, we want to work more in their lives because they need this, but their mother doesn’t want to leave them at the farm and so we have to send them home. They need a lot of prayer so they don’t follow a bad path. We trust in God’s protection and his control over their lives.”

Oliver has progressed and overcome much this year, he is reading and his behaviour has improved. His family is absent from his life and it would be good to find a family for him. Andrés Castro too has improved but his father continues to mistreat his younger brothers and sisters.

Please pray giving thanks for the success and achievements of Maicol and Neider and pray for their future. Pray for the boys going back to their families that they would be safe and for continued improvement in their family situations. Pray for a family for Oliver and also for protection for the brothers and sisters of Andrés. Pray too for wisdom and encouragement for all the staff working with these children.



Football at the Farm

Summer Team 2008

Back in September, five intrepid explorers – Terry and Yvonne, David, John and I (Sharon) – met up at Heathrow terminal 3 to travel to Bogotá, where we spent an inspiring and





challenging two weeks with the children and staff of IMC. To see the work and meet the people face to face is an incredible privilege which I thank God for – but it was also a lot of fun!

We arrived Saturday evening to a wonderful welcoming committee and spent the first couple of nights at the office base in the city, spending Sunday morning visiting the church, where we were all blessed by the opportunity to worship God and share fellowship and heart with our Colombian brothers and sisters.

Early Monday morning we travelled to Peniel Farm, just outside the town of El Rosal on the outskirts of Bogotá. We spent the week working on various projects, including digging a trench for a light cable, putting a corrugated iron roof on the new rabbit house, and painting various bedrooms, bathrooms and window frames. But the real privilege was to spend time with the boys – twelve aged 6 to 10 in the younger boys' house with houseparents Keli and Luis, and twelve in the teenagers' house with Gonzalo and Aminta. It was incredibly moving and rewarding to see how well the boys are doing at the farm, especially those who have not been there long such as the four Rocha brothers who arrived in January.



Home for Rabbits

On Friday we travelled to Fusa, a couple of hours outside of the capital, to spend a few days at Altamira – an old coffee ranch where Lucy runs a programme supported by IMC which is home to 10 girls and 17 boys aged from 7 to 17. Having painted the boys' house last year, the team faced the challenge of painting the girls' house this year – in just 2 short days! Again we felt it a privilege to serve

the programme in a practical way, but time with the children playing football, taking photos and chatting was very special and a lot of fun! A time of worship and thanksgiving late Sunday afternoon was followed by sad goodbyes to the wonderful children and equally wonderful staff.

Before leaving Fusa on Monday morning we stopped in the town to visit the feeding programme, run by Carlos. Over 80 children come for a lunchtime meal, Christian teaching, support with homework and social care input, as well as being sponsored to go to school. Many other children and young people are also sponsored in this way. I felt very humble seeing the way in which Carlos, and Sofia the cook, show God's love and grace in a practical way to a large number of children and their families.

After an evening's rest we returned to Peniel Farm on Tuesday to continue the practical jobs we had started previously.



Birthday celebrations!

We also shared a feria with the boys and staff – a celebration of recent birthdays, plus recognition of good or improved behaviour among the boys at the farm and at school.

It was sad saying goodbye to our new friends, both children and adults, when we left the farm for the last time. After spending the night back at the office we travelled about 4 hours out of Bogotá to Villa de Leyva, a colonial tourist town in the next province, for a couple of days of rest and relaxation before returning to the capital and then saying our final goodbyes to return home.

Seeing the love, dedication and hard work of Nancy and all the staff involved in IMC in



Colombia, whether office based staff or those based at the farm, Altamira or the feeding programme in Fusa, was humbling, and seeing young lives changed and families impacted by this practical outworking of God's love, was a privilege and a joy. I think we all returned feeling that this would not be our final time in Colombia!

Sharon Unwin

(Sharon was team leader this year)



The Team: Sharon David Yvonne Terry John

Please Pray giving thanks for all the Summer Team were able to achieve and the relationships made with the children and staff.

Pray that the visit was, and continues to be, a blessing to everyone both in Colombia and the team as they are now back home.

Prayer Pointers

In Nancy's October newsletter she highlighted a number of things to particularly pray about. So please pray for...

The situation in Colombia

"We pray and ask God for forgiveness for the situation of children in Colombia, each day we see more abuse against children and justice is not very effective. This week we read about something so sad and painful which made us cry and reflect more on this problem: a dad kidnapped and murdered his own child, aged 11 months. We pray for God's justice for little children such as this who suffer."



Home for a Family

A family

"Please pray for a Bogotá family with 5 children who come to the feeding programme, their wood and tin house is about to fall down, they live in very poor conditions, their mother has asked us for help to improve things and avoid a tragedy, she had sought help from many different organisations but hadn't received any. This woman has suffered a lot as her older children are involved in drugs. IMiC is supporting the children with their education and food as their situation is critical, please pray for them."

DVD Released

The premier launching of this wonderful film about the work of IMC took place in Petersfield on Friday 24th October 2008 at the United Reformed Church. Christine Bull who went to the event writes, "There were two simultaneous showings as there were so many of us wanting to see it. I went along with friends who already sponsor a child — I, on the other hand, have, up to now, only been on the edge of what this ministry has been achieving in Colombia.

"I highly commend this film to you — it has made a difference to me to see just one child rescued from a tragic life."

The film runs for 58 minutes and is the result of 17 hours of filming out in Colombia by Andrew Boyd, a Christian film maker (Crossfire Films) who lives in Petersfield.

The film centres on Ruben, John Alex and John Jairo, three of the first boys who came to live in



Altamira Ranch. They are now grown-up thriving young men, who have careers and a future. The film shows them visiting Altamira Ranch and reminiscing together about what it was like, and the hope and love that it gave them.”

The film also covers the other aspects of IMC's work and the plight of children in Colombia.

The quality of the production can be gauged by the fact that Andrew Boyd recently received a Silver Award from the Christian Broadcasting Council for this film.



Terry and Joan with Andrew and his award

Please Pray giving thanks for the work done by Andrew in producing the DVD and pray that it may be used effectively to raise awareness of the needs of children and the work of IMC.

Shopping Online

IMC has partnered with ethicTrade to provide a new and exciting online shop that will generate funds to support our work, as well as helping people in poverty transform their lives through trade.

The shop offers a wide selection of clothing, accessories, jewellery, kitchenware, toys and creative gift ideas. All the products are fairly traded and ethically produced and offer an exciting alternative to the High Street shop. Furthermore, **20%** of all sales will go directly to support IMC.

Contrary to popular belief, ethically traded goods need not be more expensive nor lower quality than those you buy from ordinary retail shops, plus you will be helping ensure that poor

communities across the globe get no less than what they deserve for their work.

You will find it at

<http://inministrytochildren.ethictrade.com/>

or if you go to the IMC website there is a link in the news section. By the time you read this there may well be a direct link button on the website, if not its coming soon.

...and Finally

Christmas is not far away and our thoughts turn to so many things that could distract us from the true meaning of the season. Our opening text reminds us that Jesus Christ is the answer to life's ultimate uncertainty.

There will be children in Colombia this Christmas rejoicing in this and thankful that on the other side of the world there were those who cared enough to make a difference to their lives.

Nancy wrote in a recent update email, **“Without you supporting the work we couldn't do what we do. United as sisters and brothers in Christ in one cause and one way, we will achieve the purposes of God for our country.”**

So on behalf of the children and all the workers in Colombia the UK Trustees thank you and wish you a blessed Christmas and a happy and hopeful New Year.

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