



newsletter 54

march 2009

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

After receiving the final printed copy of the last newsletter it was clear something had gone wrong. The appearance was not the same as the one that left my computer. There seemed to have been a problem with the software as it passed through other computers on its way to be printed. We apologise that the appearance was not up to scratch.

Thinking of this bit of trouble brought the above words that Jesus addressed to his disciples to mind and I thought of the children in Colombia. When it comes to trouble they experience it, I just have minor irritations.

From Nancy

News from Colombia had been a little sparse until the beginning of March when we received Nancy's newsletter.

In her opening remarks she tells us why. "Please forgive the delay in sending news; we had a testing time at the end of last year and the beginning of this one." She goes on to say, "but as God's word says in Romans 5 we should glory in testing because it produces patience and trials hope which can't be extinguished because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. These promises have helped me to stay strong

and trust God because without Him, and your prayers and great support, it wouldn't be possible to carry out this work which God has called us to. Therefore we are thankful to our Heavenly Father and also to all of you, for your faithfulness in spite of the problems."

At The Farm

We mentioned last time that Maicol and Neider were due to graduate from school in December with Neider graduating with honours. Other children have received good school reports too including Arley, Esteban and Kevin. Not only have they done well at school but also in their personal development being more at peace and happier. Pre-schoolers Marlon and Kevin received their certificates and are now ready for the big step into primary school.



Kevin and Marlon





Several boys left Peniel Farm in December, including Javier (Aa), Javier (An) and twins Gabriel and Over. The latest news about the two Javiers has been very positive, they are settled and continuing with their studies and Javier (Aa) continues to attend church every Sunday with his brother Carlos. However there has been no news at all regarding the twins despite several attempts to contact their family.

Five new boys have come to the Farm Fabian, Alex, Anderson, William and Esteban. All have settled remarkably well into life on the farm and much more quickly than expected. There are now 25 boys at the farm.

Nancy is encouraging the older children to become involved in helping to disciple the younger ones and to start to give something back to the work from which they are benefiting. Neider is a real role model in this, demonstrating a servant heart and willingness, working through the week at Peniel Farm and going to college on Saturdays to study.

Please pray for the wellbeing of all the boys who have left the farm and for protection over them. Give thanks for the successes of the children in their schooling and the changes in their lives. Pray for the new boys as they start a new life at the farm.

In Fusa

The Mayor in Fusa has approved an IMC project to increase the work at the Feeding Programme. This will mean an additional 20 children from displaced families can come every day and have a good meal, receive support with schoolwork and spiritual input and care. This brings the number of children coming every day to 100. It is planned to utilise the second floor of the building to enable children to stay for longer rather than returning to empty homes where the parents are out all day.

Nancy says, "We thank God for Juad David, a boy who has grown a lot spiritually and socially and is a support to Carlos (who runs the Feeding Programme in Fusa) helping with bible teaching, helping the other children with their

homework and with all the activities. The boys call him 'Little Pastor' because of how he talks about God. There are four other adolescent boys at the Feeding Programme who are training to become assistant leaders helping serve the other boys, and we would love them to be involved in seeing the vision of IMC grow."

Pray for these children who want to help and serve their fellows and for Carlos as he leads them. Give thanks for the opportunity to expand the work and for the support of the mayor.

At Altamira

A new boy Felipe (Sonia's little brother) has come to Altamira Ranch. As yet we do not have much background information but as with the new boys at Peniel Farm he has a sad history too.

Unfortunately a number of the workers have left including the cook and new workers are desperately needed. A new couple, Jimmy and Viviana, have recently arrived but they are lacking in experience.

The vehicle at Altamira is no longer working and a replacement is needed to transport the children.



Visit to Altamira

The Director of Action International visited Altamira and he was moved, reports Nancy. He wants to help us so that we don't have to leave the ranch, although he says the decision is not just his. You will recall that IMiC has been given use of Altamira for a period of 5 years rent free.



Apparently there are some who would like IMC to leave so they can sell the ranch.

Please pray for all the situations above, for Felipe, for new workers and a new vehicle and the security of IMiC's use of Altamira.

Community Centre

Nancy and the team are pushing forward with plans to develop a Community Centre in Bosa, a very poor area of Bogota. The aim is to provide services to the community from a local centre drawing in support from local churches, the municipality and businesses. It will be similar to the feeding programme in Fusa providing nutrition, assistance with education and health care and support for parents. Progress is slow at the moment but the team are attempting to develop links with the local mayor's department to secure support for the project.



Singing at Bosa

Various events have already been held in Bosa and in January a "feria" was a great success. The boys from the farm sang for the children of Bosa and gave out lots of presents and supplies to the families.

Please pray for doors to open and a positive reception from local authorities to the plans of IMC in this neighbourhood. Give thanks for the events that have already taken place in this neighbourhood.

AGM and Visas

The annual general meeting of IMC-UK is being held on Saturday 25 April at St Albans Primary School, Beauchamp Road, East Molesey, KT8 0PA. As always it will be more than a business meeting with opportunity to hear more about the work and time to give thanks to God.

This year's guests are Nancy and Carlos provided all the necessary administration has been finalised. It hasn't been easy sorting out the travel arrangements and there have been difficulties with the British Embassy in Bogota with visas. It seems that this is more difficult than it has been in the past.

Please pray that the arrangements for Nancy and Carlos will be sorted out soon and their visit to UK will be both blessed and productive.

Concerted Effort

Joan Thraves tell us of some students from Southdowns College Havant, who turned a cold winter's night in January into a warm, relaxed evening.

Twenty music students led by a confident Lauren Merriman, treated a filled Methodist church to a musical delight. The evening was relaxed and full of musical talent, both vocal and instrumental, a mixture of classical and modern pieces. Admission was free but a retiring collection of over £700 showed the audience appreciation of the talented and gifted students.



Southdown students take a bow

Thank you all for giving up your time to help raise funds for the children supported by IMC. Special thanks to Lauren for her inspiration and



organisation, her abilities as compere were obvious during the evening.

Anyone out there like to try something similar? Let us know.

Feeling the Pinch

You may recall from last year that Paul Stockley chairman of IMC-UK reminded us that we have faced tough challenges in funding. He reports that by God's grace we have been able to send the full amount each month to Colombia. However due to falling exchange rates against the peso, the money we send does not stretch as far as it used to. To maintain the level of support we need to increase our regular income.

Could you use the DVD documentary to tell neighbours, friends and colleagues about the work of IMC? Is there some way you could encourage others to get involved in fund-raising, in giving or in sponsorship? If you need promotional brochures to pass on to those who show a keen desire to respond contact the office and we will send you what you need.

Nancy and her team are using the DVD (Spanish edition) and doing all they can to encourage local churches and businesses to invest their time, energy and resources. Unlike here in Europe, Colombia does not have a culture of charitable giving, so it is not easy. But praise God for those who have caught the vision and are providing for the needs of the children and their communities.

Please pray that as people hear about the work of IMC they will respond to the need to support the children and projects.

Reminder

A brief reminder for sponsors who wish to send letters or cards (no parcels please) to children in Colombia. The postal address is Apartado Aereo 077099, Bogota, Colombia.

For birthday gifts, please send cheques to the usual address payable to "**Links International (IMC)**" with a covering note and the name of

the child on the back. The staff in Colombia will ensure your child gets the gift.

In fact all cheques for the work of IMC should be made payable to "Links International (IMC)". We are still receiving some differently made out, which causes some administrative problems.

And Finally

The text that starts the newsletter is sometimes chosen before the latest information comes in and when the news arrives it is so often appropriate. This is one of those times.

It is evident that things in Colombia have been tough recently and difficulties are arising all the time. Here in the UK we are constantly being told by government and the media that we are in a crisis. For many of us it may not really affect us much, but for some it may be very real. However we are fortunate that here there are many benefits and systems to help us out. In Colombia these things are not available and it is a privilege to be able to help out and humbling to read in Nancy's newsletter;

"I thank God for the great support we receive from you, for your love and care, and pray that God would multiply His blessings to you. We send greetings to everyone with much love. Don't forget in these times of crisis the promises of our Eternal Father in his word. Psalms 24 v 1 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.'"

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