



newsletter 56

september 2009

“From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise...”

Psalm 8:2

The mother of Haider, one of the boys at Peniel Farm, is in prison. On a recent visit Nancy reports that “the day he visited her everyone was moved by the way he preached the gospel to her. He's only 7 but he has deep conviction.”

Children often surprise us by their clarity of thought and sense of purpose. There can be few of us who have not been taken aback by the directness of a child's question or observation. Their simplicity and honesty cuts across our adult sophistication and makes us stop and think. That so many children live in circumstances where this innocence is spoilt is indeed a dreadful thing. It is a privilege then to provide some with a good and positive childhood to counter these negative experiences and we are thankful that you share with us in this mission.

Born in Prison

Juan David who is 4 years old came to live at the farm in July. He was born in prison and lived there for 3 years. Thanks to some contacts with a couple of pastors it was possible to arrange for him to come to the farm. He is very happy and has won the hearts of all says Nancy.



Juan David “won the hearts of all”

Please pray for Juan David and Haider that they will flourish in their development with the help of IMC and that this will in time benefit their families.

Through a Child's Eyes

Children come to Peniel Farm for a number of reasons. It may be because of abuse or neglect, or from extreme poverty in the family but whatever the reason the connection to family is still very strong in a child's mind. The difficulties in the family are their normality. So





despite the improvement in their conditions at the farm separation from the family must be confusing for them. This was highlighted by a recent incident with Esteban.

Nancy reports, "In his innocence and need of love from his mother, he left the farm on July 20 at about 6 in the morning. Luis reported that he didn't know where he was at about 7 o'clock, and all began to look for him in the neighbourhood. It was necessary to inform the police and it was them who found him. A woman had met him on the main road into Bogotá, and brought him to the police station, where Luis picked him up at 9:30 in the morning. Esteban was without shoes, having walked all the way in his socks. The reason he gave was that he wanted to be with his mother, and without thought for the distance he left to look for her."

Thankfully this worrying situation was resolved very quickly and it gave cause for thought. Nancy goes on to say they have reviewed and changed some of the policies with the families. This means that families will be more responsible for their children, who will spend more time with them, so they can give them the love they need. Some of the children will return to their homes each weekend although for all that will not be possible.

Please pray for Esteban and all the children that the relationships in their families will be maintained and improved. Also pray that there may be families found for those children that have none.

Altamira

The influences and experiences of children before they come to the farm or Altamira ranch can have effects that emerge at a later stage in their development. These may be emotional, behavioural or psychological and sometimes spiritual if the child's parents had been involved in occult activity. The consequences can be disturbing not only for the child concerned but also the other children in the home. It places demands on the workers who have to deal with

the situations that arise and requires much wisdom.

One such situation arose at Altamira with one of the boys. This upset the other children who were frightened. Pastor Alfredo visited the children and spent time with the boy, praying with the authority of the word of God. This seemed to calm him. Further prayer was made for him and the children and staff at the ranch. Nancy reports that the boy's demeanour is much better.

Luisa, aged four, has recently come to the ranch to join her brother, Juan (7). Juan had been abandoned and now the same has happened to his little sister.



Luisa

Peer pressure is a powerful influence on children even on those with a secure and stable upbringing. It may be more likely that those with difficult pasts will succumb but it is saddening none the less. Jordy was given some drugs by children at his school and taking them affected him badly. His behaviour changed which affected his interactions in the home and the school expelled him. He had to be taken to hospital because he had lost control. As a result of this he was relocated to an addiction programme to help treat his



problems and it has been possible to enrol him in another school but with conditions.

The Altamira ranch really needs a dedicated couple who have maturity to work alongside Lucy who has been unwell recently.

On a more positive note we are thankful for Hernan from the church who has given a day a week to teach the children cooking.



Hernan's cookery class

Please pray for protection over the lives of all the children at Altamira. Pray especially for wisdom for the staff who minister to these children in their particular needs. Pray for stable and committed workers to come forward to help the work at Altamira.

Sponsorship News

Many of you who already sponsor a child will know that the information coming through to us from Colombia about the children can be sporadic and is not always as full as we would like. We appreciate that this can sometimes be disappointing where you are supporting and/or praying for a little one over the last year the Trustees have been working towards improving the flow of information from Colombia so that we can improve the quality of information we are then able to pass on to you, the children's sponsors.

More often than not those who are directly looking after the children in Colombia are very stretched and it can take time for enquiries on each child to be answered. We, and most importantly the children, appreciate all your

support, patience and the good faith that sponsors have shown over the years.

Our new aim is that every sponsor will receive an annual update on their child and, where possible, a new photo or photos. We hope that this will enable you to be in closer contact with your child's progress and to see the physical results of your support.

If you don't currently sponsor a child and feel that this is an area that you may be interested in, we always have a list of children waiting for sponsors. Some of the recent letters and Christmas greetings from the children were very humbling. The messages highlighted to us just how blessed and special the children feel to have a sponsor all of their own. IMC has just welcomed new five boys into the programme, all from high-risk situations.

Important Reminder

When making cheque payments for the work of IMC please make them payable to

Links International (IMC)

Cards, Gifts and Goods

Holidays just over and we're talking of Christmas but if we waited until the December newsletter it might be too late. Here are some ideas for cards, gifts and goods that benefit IMC.

Gospel Cards produce Christmas Cards and Calendars to a very high standard. The various calendars make excellent gifts, while the cards are perfect for sending to Christians and non-Christian family and friends.

20% of their Christmas card sales and 5% of their calendar sales are shared between 40 Christian missions including IMC.

For full details, please see their website:

GospelCardsEtc.com or you can ask for a catalogue: phone 01656 647551, or write to:

Gospel Cards, etc. PO Box 56,
Bridgend, CF31 1WG



Pictures from Scotland supporting Children in Colombia is a new range of ten high quality hand finished cards. They would make an attractive gift or be ideal to send to that special person on any occasion as they are blank inside for your personal message. All individually produced on the Isle of Skye and supplied in an attractive box with envelopes. At least 50% of the proceeds are donated to IMC.

They are available at plowprints.co.uk or for an order form write to:

Martin Plowman, 2B Glenbernisdale,
Skeabost Bridge, Isle of Skye, IV51 9NP.

EthicTrade have a wide range of quality goods available through the IMC online shop. You should find a flyer enclosed with this newsletter. You can find a link on the IMC home page inministrytochildren.org where you will also find links for the above card suppliers.

Re: Cycling

Cycling for IMC is not new, the idea just came round again.

Pablo (aka Paul Stockley), chair of the UK Trustees, completed a London to Paris ride with four friends, Perry, Chris, Sara and Zisu.

Pablo writes (with a few edits)...

Doing 65 miles on the first day in a temperature of 35°C was a challenge! We set off from Marble Arch around midday on account of a pre-ride stop at a bike shop. London's green route, the Wandle Trail, is appallingly signed, so after several missed turns we ended up relying on the compass. Having taken a couple of much needed breaks during the day (North Downs, Weald, South Downs, plenty of hills!) and after a seven mile detour around a closed road tunnel at Lewis, we eventually found our hostel at Afriston at 10 p.m.

After the second day's long ferry ride we hit Dieppe and finding the Avenue Verte was a welcome relief. It was clearly marked and easy to ride — no hills! The pace picked up on the open road and we enjoyed the French countryside. Their villages seem to have very grand churches but the cafe-tabacs and village

shops were found to be lacking in chilled drinks or ice-cream. This was a bit of a let down as was a puncture and a couple of minor mechanical problems, but overnight guest house stops offered fabulous accommodation, and a welcome shower and breakfast by way of compensation.

Negotiating Paris suburbs on the way in was not too traumatic, but we did make two errors which cost us some time. We took one boulevard on the advice of a helpful bystander and ended up in La Defense, a black hole for cyclists.

Finally we rode up to the Arc de Triomphe at about 5 p.m. on the Sunday. We had completed the 192.5 miles and even encountered a camel on the way!

A big thank you to the bike riders and their support team for raising over £1,000.

And Finally...

Just enough room to squeeze in, as always, thank you to all of you for your love, prayers and support that transforms children's lives so they too can join in joyful praise as we remember that "Jesus called the children to him and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these'." Luke 18:16.

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