



newsletter 58

march 2010

"Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops."

James 5: 17,18

Letter from Nancy

From the outset of the work in Colombia prayer has been an important part of the ministry. In January the trustees had a day of prayer for the work of IMC and the newsletters from Nancy Centeno (the Colombian director) always have requests for prayer.

Here is the latest newsletter from Nancy. It looks back over last year as well as at things that are happening now. The translation of the letter is given in full and whenever the word pray appears take the opportunity to add your prayers for these things too.

"Hello dear friends. sisters and brothers,

Happy New Year, may it be blessed and may our all powerful God keep you well especially in good health. Thank you for your prayers and support, as always we begin the year with many expectations and challenges, trusting in the Lord of this work who can do everything.

We thank God for last year, it was a time of much testing for the ministry especially finance, it was hard to fulfil all our obligations but God is faithful and never abandons us. He enabled us to fulfil our responsibilities and achieve the results we hoped for.

Centre for Integral Formation: Fusa

At the feeding programme, five young people from backgrounds of extreme poverty and family problems, graduated from sixth form. We thank God that despite these problems they have completed their schooling and some, including Tania Romero, who graduated with honours as the best student in the school. We are very proud to see their enthusiasm as they begin new challenges.

We were also very proud to see Sonia (the cook) successfully complete her schooling in spite of her problems, and Carlos (who runs the programme) completed his degree. We thank God for his great work in Colombia.



Feeding Programme at Fusa

Every day we help children come out of poverty and avoid dying of starvation. Over the years the programme has seen more than 400 children being fed and sponsored to go to school as it is our policy that all children who come to us for food should be going to school.





In December we celebrated Christmas and gave presents to the children at the feeding programme, Peniel Farm and Altamira, and we held a market for families during the holidays.

Pray for a new project at the feeding programme, we are in discussions with the local authorities to move the feeding programme to the community hall which has more room and could cope with more children, and where we can have a reference library and computer room and internet for local children and young people. Pray for new workers for this project.

Pray for Carlos and Pastor Alvaro and the church in Fusa, for the work of evangelisation with local families.

Pray for resources to develop these new projects.

Altamira Ranch

We thank God for his faithfulness and protection for the staff team and children alike.

Please pray for a new couple and more workers for the children at Altamira as the previous couple are leaving and William Martinez is planning to leave at short notice — it is a difficult situation.

Pray for a vehicle for Altamira and stability in the contract we have with Action International. The current contract ends this year and we still have not reached an agreement for the future.

Peniel Farm

We thank God for his blessing, that the children are all well, studying and growing spiritually, and for ongoing projects — the rabbits are breeding and we have a new calf, the chickens are laying well and are healthy, and the goats are also breeding.

Please pray for rain, we've had a long dry summer and we have no grass for the animals.

Pray for the Guzman family, Yolanda and her three children, during the holidays they did a great job looking after the farm but they have financial problems, she plans to replace Esperanza in the kitchen and is a lovely Christian. Her son Leonardo is hardworking

and helped out a lot caring for the animals, but he had an accident in December so please pray for his health.

Pray for the new children who have just arrived at Peniel Farm and Altamira that they adapt to their new home and especially for the spiritual growth and for their families.



New boys: Sebastian, Alexander and Duvan

(Pictures borrowed from the Bye's newsletter)

Pray for a new couple to replace Luis and Kely who are leaving in June.

Pray for the children of Bosa as we've not been able to get this project started as we had planned.

Pray for Egson who seems to be depressed, it is related to the problems with his family and their abandonment of him. He has received medical treatment.

Pray for finances for IMC for new projects which we could begin, that God gives us wisdom, strength and that every day we would bring him glory in all we do.

Please pray for the Board in Colombia, as we make some important decisions especially regarding the current financial situation.

We are very grateful for all your prayers and faithfulness to the work, for your support, for your encouragement and grateful to God who sustains us.

With love and blessings,

Nancy Centeno

IMC Colombia



Byelines from Bogotá

The Byes, Grant and Kathleen, from USA who have been working with IMC Colombia for a number of years send out their newsletter "Byelines" to the folks in USA who support them. Fortunately we get a copy too so we have some extra news from a different angle to share.

Grant has been a great blessing with his input to the development and maintenance of the farm. Recently he's been working on the tank that maintains pressure in the site water system. It had been leaking and losing pressure and this could have led to the water pump being damaged. To quote from their newsletter "By God's grace, expressed through the generosity and love of one of our supporters in the US, we were able to purchase a new fibreglass composite pressure tank (built in the US) that has a larger capacity and won't ever rust. Praise God, what a blessing it has been! The pressure in the water system is now more consistent, enabling the on-demand water heaters to work properly when people are taking showers. Grant hasn't had to drain, disassemble, or recharge the tank once since it was installed in October, whereas he did so perhaps five times during August and September."

Over the Christmas break, Grant, his son Keegan and William Gomez from the farm, who stayed with the Byes over the holiday, refurbished one of the Peniel fridges. This involved stripping the paint, repainting and replacing the seals. William having gained the skills during the project prepared and painted some steel shelving in the workshop.

Grant also has quite a range of workshop activities planned for the boys during the year, including rebuilding a donated dresser, painting another refrigerator, building another bicycle rack, making graceful birds from PVC pipe to sell, and making wooden cars. These projects will be in addition to the basic skills lessons that Grant provides for the boys.



William working on the fridge

(Picture from the Bye's newsletter)

Minibus Fundraising Project

In recent discussions with Nancy it has become clear that there is a pressing need to obtain some transport for the children. Getting them to and from school each day and to church is quite difficult. Some of the children have special needs and have to go to different schools in different parts of Bogotá. This creates real problems for Nancy and the other staff.

A large enough minibus to be useful would cost between £8,500 and £9,000 and is not something that can be paid for from the money we receive for the children's everyday needs such as food, clothing, and medical supplies.

For this reason we are starting a special fundraising effort over the next few months for a minibus to assist in the everyday running of Peniel Farm, Altamira and the Feeding Programme. This will make the lives of both the children and the staff a lot easier.

We know from past experience that many of you have done some amazing things to raise support for the children or for particular needs so if you are looking for a new project to use as a focus this could be it.

Terry Thraves is planning a 100 mile walk and Chris Fry has a triathlon coming up soon. Let us know what you have planned!



Administrative Matters

Administration for an organisation is a bit like how our digestive system is for us. We don't notice it until it's not working properly.

There was some disruption last year when a fire in the building IMC shares caused some difficulties. Fortunately nothing in the IMC office was destroyed but it did make it unusable. A new office has been found. The new address **62 Station Road, Petersfield, GU32 3ES** also appears at the bottom of the newsletters. The phone number stays the same as before.

While on the subject of administration, a reminder that all cheques to IMC should be made out to "**Links International (IMC)**". Otherwise it causes a little indigestion in the system!

Also gifts for special projects such as the minibus should be indicated on the reverse of cheques or with accompanying letters.

On the Agenda

The IMC UK annual general meeting is coming up on 24th April, and this year it is going to be at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Four Marks near Alton in Hampshire. This year we are aiming for something a little different. It will be in a more relaxed Café Colombia style instead of formal rows. In addition to the necessary business there will be presentations about aspects of the work. If you can be there it will be a pleasure to meet you and share about the ministry.

View from the Chair

Another year has flown by, and yet by God's grace we are just about keeping up with the pace of things in Colombia!

As we look to the year ahead, once again we are never quite sure what is in store. We hope to make an opportunity for some UK trustees to visit projects on location, and talk face to face with Colombian board members and staff. While we do all we can from a distance to encourage and support the key people in our

Colombian sister charity, it is always so much easier to get insight into the daily challenges when seeing first hand the pressures of their work.

Plus, of course, there are always successes to celebrate! Every time I have visited there have always been birthdays and graduations, fun activities and parties. You can't be with these children for long without much laughter and joy!

So as you read this newsletter, please join with us in prayer for the children and their families, the director and her staff, and the members of the Colombian board. Ask God that as communities are transformed there would be an abundance of happy moments and good things to appreciate. And that in the rough times as well as the smooth, God's grace would be experienced in the life of each worker and child.

And we're also thankful to you, for being part of this work. Every blessing.

Paul Stockley (Chair)

And Finally...

Looking back to the verses we started with and the request from Nancy in her letter to pray for rain, amongst other things, we are reminded that Elijah was human just like us. Not only that, but the prayers of folk just like us can make a difference and produce fruit in the lives of children in Colombia.

Thank you for your continuing love, support and prayers.

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