



newsletter 67

june 2012

“Therefore... stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.”

1 Corinthians 15:58

From Nancy

Dear friends, brothers and sisters,

Greetings!

I write this with much love and many thanks for walking alongside us over all these years and for being with us in the good times and the bad. For supporting us and teaching us to trust more in our God, for cheering us up and giving us hope, for being that light that does not go out. Thank you for your faithfulness and for the huge support that you've always given us.

What you have been sowing in Colombia is not in vain — its fruit is clearly reflected in many lives. With your donations, we've been able to improve the quality of life of many children, particularly as regards their nutrition, education, health and clothing. Some are living their dream of going to university. And it's not just with the material things that you've helped, but spiritually many lives have been changed too: they have been consoled and encouraged and they have come to believe in a Saviour, Jesus Christ. Today they recognise that, although they do not have material wealth, their lives have meaning because they have hope and eternal life — the greatest treasure.

For the team working here, each year is a great challenge because we face new struggles.

Every child brings their own family drama, as they come to us dismayed, full of resentment, rebellious and most of all deprived of love. And our biggest struggle is always with families over their lack of responsibility and commitment to their children.

Take Edward, for example. This is a child of eight years old and he arrived at Peniel Farm because he was orphaned. His mum worked as a prostitute and was murdered last year, leaving him and his 12-year-old sister. He had no other family who wanted to take responsibility for him. A family at church has the little girl and they brought Edward to us. He arrived here badly affected and very rebellious, and we're helping him work through his pain. It's not easy — but our Almighty God gives us the tools and fills us with His love because, without this, we couldn't do what we do.



By the gate to the farm

(...not Edward by the way!)





These last few years have been the most difficult that we've lived through, both as a ministry and in my own life personally. We've come up against many trials, spiritual and material ones, which have led to discouragement, sickness and frustration. I've had unjust threats and insults made against me to Social Services, damaging our good name, and all because we tried to help children in need. We've had financial problems which affected the ministry, forcing us to reduce the number of children we could help, and we almost had to shut down some programmes as we didn't have the means to continue them. Our income from donations fell, some donors stopped giving and the dollar continued to fall in value. Meanwhile, stress levels continued to rise. We didn't have the means to help more children in the community and it pained us to see how the enemy was gaining ground because we could see how delinquency was on the increase and children were dropping out of school, and there was violence and drug-taking among the young people.

But we thank God for all the problems that we have lived through because God showed us that what those young people were in need of was not just material things but theirs is much more a spiritual need. He reminded us of his word in Micah 6:8:

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

These words helped us to steer the ministry and taught us not to work in our own strength but to set our gaze on Him again, instead of looking at our circumstances. We just have to take His gospel out into all the world and seek first His righteousness and 'all these things will be added unto you', as it says in Matthew 6:33.

So, taking hold of His word and His promises, we formed Adventurers, a new programme for children in Fusa. Through it, they receive teaching in their free time about principles and values, and they learn about the word of God through play, art, sports, music and different

activities that keep them from bad company, drugs and social problems. The aim is that the children and young people will know Jesus Christ as their saviour and that their families will come along and get involved through them. We meet on Saturdays and they are very lively and each time more children come along as there is no age limit. And leaders are being trained from among the children themselves.

We are also developing an Eco-Tourism programme at Peniel Farm for children from schools, churches and from the community in general. The aim is to show them the good works of the Lord and let Him be known through them, but also to make children and adults aware of the problems some children face in society and of the need to care for our environment, God's creation. The aim is also to raise funds to support the ministry. We're organising ecological walks, and holding workshops focusing on the animals and other leisure activities.



Local School on an Eco-Tour

Our productive projects (such as our egg production) are being improved and we've managed to make Colombians more aware of the need to commit to looking after their children.

The "Return to Life" programme run by Lucy in Fusa was also affected by all the problems we faced. This meant that the focus of the programme changed from being a residential home to offering children care during the day. This has been a blessing because it has



allowed families to take greater responsibility for their own children and to be emotionally closer to them. Because we are working with families, we get them together with their children on Sundays as a church in the home itself. God provided Pastor Luis and his wife, Franci, for us, volunteers who come to Lucy's programme every Sunday and lead a service with these families, the workers and their friends. (They are also helping at Peniel Farm for three days a week.) The changes to Lucy's programme meant there was less financial pressure on us and it allowed us to start another project: a second-hand shop selling clothes and other items. God has blessed us because we have been able to open a second shop in Fusa this year, which is all helping to fund the work.



Children at Fusa

We are very grateful to our Almighty God and we give him all the glory and the honour. My health is better. We finished last year in a better place than we started it. And we began 2012 with fresh hopes and dreams. This is His work and everything that goes on is His will. Whether we face economic crises or all the other problems that can arise, we are always in God's hands. Change brings blessings — because He always keeps His promises.

Dear friends, thank you, thank you, for being such faithful brothers and sisters to us. Your prayers mean such a lot to us. On behalf of all the children and all the team here, we send you our thanks. God will reward you for this work you've started in Colombia. He chose you to bless this nation, even though you are so far away. And that's why this work goes on.

Terry and Joan and all the UK board, we thank you for your commitment, your support and your love.

You are in our hearts and you play a big part in my life. I love you all a great deal. From this cold Bogotá, I send you all a big hug, much love and many blessings.

Nancy Centeno

IMC Colombia.

Carlos Moreno

My name is Carlos Moreno, I'm 21 years old and I'm from Fusagasuga. At the moment, I live in a rather poor area, where there is violence every day. I got to know IMC Colombia in 1997, when I was about seven, through a friend. That's when IMC started to be involved with me more and to help me, not just giving me food, clothes and shoes, but also in my spiritual life, teaching me about God. I was with IMC for five years because there were problems at home. I live with my grandparents now but at the time there was something missing at home, there was violence in the family, and I went to live at Peniel Farm and I was there for a year, thanks to God. After, with the problems at home, things got better and IMC decided I could come home and even then it continued to support me.



Carlos and friends graduate high school

I finished my Baccalaureate in grade 11 and now I'm studying a maths degree at university and I'm due to graduate this year 2012 as a maths graduate. And IMC have helped me with



things like matriculation. And now, thanks to them and thanks to God, I've been able to study and be someone in life, like many other children whom they support.

Fund Raisers

In the last edition of the newsletter we asked for contributions about your fund raising efforts. Now we know that some are a little shy about publicising their efforts so it is good when folk tell us what other people are doing.

One person has been getting on with fund raising for a number of years. No one can remember quite how many years but in that time has raised over £3,000!

Sally Smith has been running a weekly stall at her church in Petersfield. Folk bring bric-a-brac and whatever they have finished with so others can buy for a small donation to IMC. Nothing is priced and people give whatever they feel is appropriate for the item.



It is an uncomplicated project but one that takes time and effort to set up the display and pack away the goods every week.

Sally says that as long as people use it she will keep doing it.

Well done Sally and a big Thank You for your faithful commitment over many years.

Prayer Points

Give thanks for, and pray for the continued success of the reorganisation of the existing programmes and the new projects that have been started because of the financial pressures in Colombia.

Pray for Nancy for her health and strength physically, for encouragement spiritually and for the wisdom and fortitude in the work she does.

Pray for all the staff and volunteers that work on the programmes at the farm, at the Fusa Dining Room and "Return to Life".

Pray for more contacts and support from churches in Colombia and give thanks for those already supporting.

Pray for Edward and his sister and the children like them that IMC helps that they overcome the difficulties already encountered and flourish with the love and care they are now receiving.

Give thanks for Carlos Moreno's progress and pray for his successful graduation and a good job to follow.

Pray for the trustees and boards in both Colombia and UK as they administer the resources entrusted to them.

Give thanks for each supporter who makes this work possible through their gifts, fund raising, prayers and love for the children.

And Finally...

Just the space to once more echo Nancy's words "Dear friends, thank you, thank you, for being such faithful brothers and sisters to us. Your prayers mean such a lot to us. On behalf of all the children and all the team here, we send you our thanks."

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