



News and Prayer Requests from Beryl Baker in Paraguay

8 December 2008



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Dear Praying Friends,

Asuncion, from where I'm writing, is twinkling with fairy lights and always gives one the feeling that the real meaning of Christmas is still at the centre of most people's celebrations as life-size manger scenes dominate shop displays and office forecourts. The coming of the baby Jesus everyone knows about, his second coming as King and Judge is something else! John the Baptist's cry to the people of his day to repent of sin and truly believe and follow God is meant for us too and the cleansing refining fire of the Holy Spirit will make an impact on this sad, sinful world if only individuals like you and me let Him have his way in our daily lives.

This morning at St Andrew's we said an official farewell to the Metcalfe family who are returning to live in the UK. They are an example of just what God can do if people are willing to step out in faith and obey the leading of the Holy Spirit. They came as schoolteachers with no children. They leave ten years later, still schoolteachers but with three adorable adopted Paraguayan children, a formed foster home which has been a Christian halfway house for children waiting for all the legal papers to be sorted out before they go on to their permanent families. They headed up the pastoral team at St. Andrew's and the church, Sunday school and Alpha Group have been blessed by their service and many new believers are now walking with Jesus. Please pray for them back in the U.K. and Pastor Agustín's wife as she takes on the administration of the La Esperanza children's home.

I've had to say goodbye to many animal friends this year and Bella and her sister Kitch died last month. Jagua'i also passed away in Asuncion and is buried at the animal cemetery at Luque.

The Chaco is beautifully green and I praise the Lord for the frequent showers of rain that have brought life and hope to everyone and everything again.

Liberato Cabañas, the principal health promoter at Sombrero Piri, is in the Villa Hayes hospital after undergoing surgery for his prostate. He has been in town for nearly two months and it's been quite a battle to get him on the 'operating list'. Norma Alvarez has been doing most of his work and I have been in Sombrero Piri more frequently. The other Sombrero Piri Health Promoter Maria Teresa Ayala has started to train as an auxiliary nurse in Asuncion and so will be away from her home for three months. Please pray for her that she will be strong to resist any advances from men with impure intentions and in general be protected from sin, the world and the devil. Indian women away from their communities are very vulnerable.

The T.B. work continues to increase but everyone is making an all-out effort to eliminate this scourge from the Indian colonies. The Health Promoters are the key people to ensure that patients take their medicines and complete their six-month treatment. Please pray for Eva Chamorro and Gladys Gonzalez, Paraguayan nurses who head up the T.B. work at the Ministry of Health. They are very open to hearing about Jesus and have a good relationship with Tim Curtis, Caroline Gilmour-White and myself.



South American Mission Society

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I'm grateful to the British Fire Brigade for all the medical equipment they fit into their containers for me, which in turn is channelled to the most needy people and hospitals. Colin Cunliffe's untiring efforts along with Ian Hainsworth and his colleagues from Scotland are so much appreciated and I praise the Lord for all they do, not just for me but for all the training and practical backup they give to the volunteer fire brigade here and all over the world.

Communication remains a problem as land mail is being delayed en route for months and the computer and the internet server have again been uncooperative. So please forgive me for long silences.

I thank you all for your prayers and financial backup as without you I can't continue to do anything worthwhile here. Please pray for Julie and her husband John who have faithfully sent my prayer letter to so many people for such a long time. John is not well at present. May the Lord give us all wisdom and strength as none of us are getting any younger.

A visit from Bea McGowan, albeit a brief one, was very much appreciated. Please pray for her back in England after several months serving the Lord as a volunteer health worker in Peru.

Christmas approaches rapidly and I hope you all have a very happy and peaceful time celebrating Jesus' birth and experiencing His blessing in a special way on the 25th and throughout the coming year.

lots of love and prayers,
Beryl.

Letter sent out by Julie Fagan

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