



Jess and Mark Simpson CMS mission partners **Brazil**

Jess and Mark Simpson are CMS mission partners working in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Mark is serving his curacy at the Anglican Cathedral, and Jess is working for Happy Child, a Brazilian NGO working with children at risk.

Link Letter No.4 March 2014

Dear praying friends,

Getting away

Last month we were able to have some holidays in the pre-Carnival lull of the Rio summer, so we fully embraced some of the countless beauties that Brazil boasts: Florianópolis, the Pantanal and Iguazu Falls.

We slept under our tent for over two weeks in scorching heat and clattering rain and relished being closer to the earth, going to sleep to the splash of the alligators snapping at their fish and awaking to – or rather being awoken by – the bellowing howler monkeys. “*A state in full development*”, the landscape in Mato Grosso do Sul is being re-shaped for soya and beef production, and we found ourselves asking “*who is the ‘development’ for?*”

We had the privilege of spending a couple of days with Claudio Oliver in Curitiba, who with a group of others has set up a pilot urban farm, complete with goats, chickens and lots of worms.



Iguazu Falls

We lavishly feasted on home-made feta cheese, English tea with fresh goat’s milk, 57 year-old sourdough bread loaves and warm embraces in open homes. They’ve faced tedious opposition from city authorities so changes are afoot.

Having since returned to Rio, danced through Carnival and witnessed

the colossal accumulation in rotting waste and resulting cockroaches due to the litter collectors strike, it's ironic that sanitation authorities are more keen to close down small but effective efforts that both reduce and use waste on site: the recycling of resources within Claudio's urban farm is astonishing.



Araras January getaway



Ipanema sunSet

Great travellers crossed our paths – like David who'd sailed from Cape Town to Rio; Jo who having finished her Maths PhD, cycled down from Canada to 1000km short of the southern-most point of Chile, got fed up with the rain and the high number of cyclists so changed track and got a flight to Brazil;

Evelien and Pierre who drove down from Montreal to Belize, where they sold their car and bussed it down to Brazil; Dom and Yuval, Israelis having completed their three-year military service, and Kathy and Dan, park rangers for the northern-most parks of Australia, who had been travelling around Latin America for the last 18 months...



One of our neighbours in the Pantanal!

Back to Rio...

We returned to Rio this weekend and landed amidst the whoosh of Carnival, a cross between maybe Glastonbury and multiple Notting Hill



A light shines in the darkness at an old slave cemetery in downtown Rio



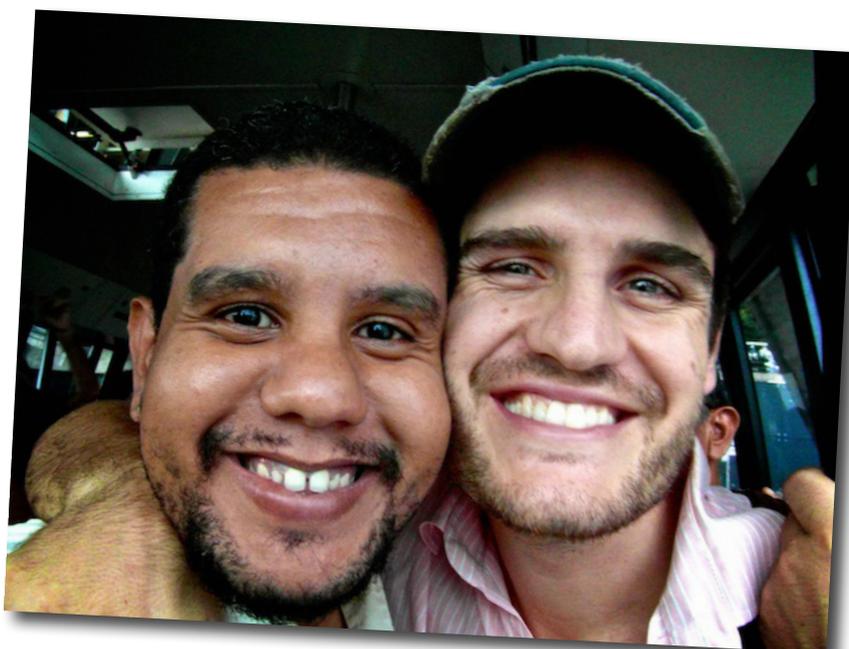
Is it ever possible to transition to 45 degrees?

Carnivals small and larger taking over the whole of London for five days. It really is something else. Extravagance... excess... euphoria... and pungent smells, passed-out bodies, permissiveness!

So the New Year has only really just begun, three months in. There's much to try to fit in before the World Cup in June: lots of Alpha courses and Word Made Flesh; we're also looking forward to a team from the UK visiting, some guerrilla gardening, the Street Child World Cup, and welcoming our first short-term volunteer.

January was, well, a sweaty month: we ran

a pilot Marriage Course at Christ Church and extended our visas. We also waved goodbye to our friend Rodrigo who has moved on from the City of God to run the ecological monastery of his old Franciscan order way out in the sticks of northern Minas Gerais, the neighbouring state. Some



Rodrigo



gifts stay in our hands for less time than others, hence attributing to him the voiceover for part of our video.

As we enter Lent, we're holding onto the Pope's words that it is a "turning point that can encourage in each one of us a change... to come out from tiring habits – not to get accustomed to violence, the homeless,

refugees searching for freedom and dignity" and more anon!

Photos, videos, Twitter...

- We're putting photos up on our Flickr - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/markandjesssimson>
- and the occasional video on our Vimeo - <http://vimeo.com/markandjesssimson/videos>
- Mark is reflecting via a Tumblr blog - <http://londontorio.tumblr.com>
- and a Twitter account - <https://twitter.com/mws27>

All the above are funneled through our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/markandjesssimson so if you like Facebook and you like our page, then you'll rarely be short of our news and views!

With love,

Jess and Mark

PS. Did you know that you can now receive link letters by email, sent as a pdf? If you would like to receive them this way and help CMS save money, please contact **the links team** at links@cms-uk.org

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Church Mission Society

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