

MISSION PARAGUAY 2010

Working through

Each year Mission Paraguay is a step of faith. Firstly, that sufficient funds are available to undertake the programme of work agreed with the Anglican Diocese in Paraguay and secondly, that people with the right gifts and skills are called to volunteer to assist with the projects for a three week period during July and August.

Once again, we have been blessed through much answered prayer. But with a gracious God, why should we be surprised? By early August almost £28,000 had been generously donated by supporters to carry out all the planned work and we had an ideal workforce of committed volunteers from churches across England and Northern Ireland. Many of us had visited Paraguay previously through Mission Paraguay and it was so encouraging to receive the wonderful welcome with plenty of South American hugs from those who we had met, worked, and worshipped with in the past. The building of relationships which transcend language and cultural differences is such an important element of a short term mission trip of this nature. Mission Paraguay is not just about the projects which we fund, it is also about strengthening our faith through the experience of living, working, worshipping and praying together on a daily basis.

The drought situation in the Chaco is becoming progressively more serious at certain times of the year. During August we funded another underground storage tank for the collection of rainwater during the rainy season. Owing to the presence of underground salty water, it is generally not possible to provide bore holes for a fresh water supply; however, in certain areas quantities of wholesome water are available at an accessible depth for wells. This year we were able to sink two wells which will now provide a constant supply of fresh water for families in the area.



Increasingly over recent years the emphasis of our work has moved to encouraging people to become more self sufficient. The sewing projects which began three years ago are continuing and this year, the volunteers working with resident missionaries, provided specialist instruction in more complicated sewing techniques for clothes and in bag making. Already some of the women are finding a market for their handcrafted shoulder bags.

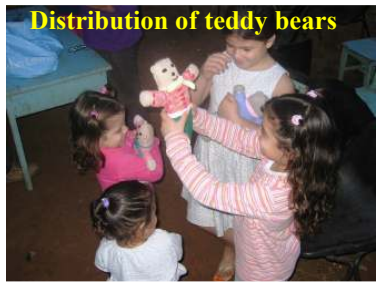
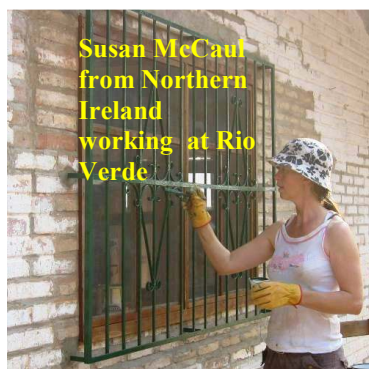
Last year a number of simple homes made of adobe bricks with sheet metal roofs and concrete floors were funded to replace overcrowded homes built of logs, plastic sheets and other discarded materials. Following some generous donations and specific fundraising by a youth group, we are able to provide more adobe homes this year. Work will continue during the forthcoming months. We anticipate that at least ten homes will be built using bricks manufactured in the local communities. Much of the labour is provided by the families themselves following initial training by a local Indian builder who has been working with us for a number of years. This is an exciting development as following our initial work we understand that another charitable organisation based in Paraguay is to provide funds for similar buildings in another village.



Over 450 pairs of spectacles sent from England and Ireland were distributed by a volunteer with ophthalmic knowledge and two further suitcases of glasses were provided for distribution in the Indian communities by Beryl Baker, the resident nurse in the Chaco.

Other work funded this year includes improvements to Diocesan buildings in Asunción and Concepción; the alteration of some existing buildings at Rio Verde in the Chaco to provide separate living accommodation for visiting missionaries particularly Ed and Marie Brice; the construction of a number of long drop toilets; the building of additional accommodation at Zeballos Cue for youth work; further improvements to the site at San Lorenzo where work began last year to provide good accommodation for work with children and outreach into the local community; the distribution of clothing, toys etc. sent from the England and Ireland; work with children and assisting with funding for Saturday feeding programmes for children in some of the poorer communities.

Distribution of teddy bears

A photograph showing several children, mostly girls, gathered around a table. They are holding and looking at teddy bears. The caption above the image reads "Distribution of teddy bears".

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported us in so many ways during 2010. The full Mission Paraguay 2010 Report will be available in January.

David Orritt, Coordinator