

Diocese of Northern Argentina Prayer Bulletin, mid-July 2008

Pray for the new pastor of the congregation in *Barrio Obrero*, one of the Wichi neighbourhoods of Ingeniero Juárez. May the **Rev Matías Astorga** be guided by God's Spirit in his pastoral duties and display the love of Christ in abundance.

The Young People of the *criollo* church in Ingeniero Juarez are organizing a **winter camp** from July 14-19th. The theme is 'Called to be Different' and the coordinating team expects around 70 participants, some from as far away as Salta and Tucumán. The organizers need your prayers: Eli de Corbalán, Rev Juan Maldonado, René Pereira, Rolando Salazar and Rev Narciso Sánchez.

Archbishop Greg Venables invites you to join him in thankfulness for the outcome of the **Global Anglican Futures Conference (GAFCON)** held towards the end of June in Jerusalem. He has called it 'a rallying point for those Anglicans who share our trust in God's Word'. The gathering brought together close to 1200 lay and clergy participants, including 291 bishops representing a clear majority of the world's practicing Anglican Christians. All these leaders cherish their Anglican heritage and the Anglican Communion and have no intention of departing from it. The final resolution addresses the crisis gripping the Anglican Communion over scriptural authority. The Jerusalem Declaration calls for the creation of a new council of Primates overseeing a volunteer fellowship committed to mission and biblical Anglicanism as well as a new structure of accountability based on the Declaration. It also signals the move of most of the world's practising Anglicans into a post-colonial reality, where the Archbishop of Canterbury is recognized for his historic role, but not as the only arbiter of what it means to be Anglican. The statement clearly values confessional unity over institutional unity.

Zonal Pastor (equivalent of Rural Dean) Rev Ernesto Avendaño will be organizing a **Regional Conference in Sauzalitos** over the weekend 8-10th of August. He and his team have many plans for projects in the area and seek God's wisdom for taking these forward within the diocesan structure.

August 7th – 8th: Andrew Leake is coordinating an **ecumenical conference** aimed at getting local churches to consider where they stand *vis-à-vis* the environmental problems that increasingly affect Salta province. Main speakers will be Anglican biologist Maurice Rumboll and Baptist theologian René Padilla. The event has caught the attention of politicians, press and caucus groups.

Pray for **tensions between leaders and congregations** in the region of Los Blancos and San Patricio on the far eastern side of Salta province. Archdeacon Ignacio Guillalba needs much discernment in resolving these conflicts.

Although the official **inflation rate** in Argentina is 8.8%, many economists estimate the real figure is closer to 20%. Last month a deal between trade unions and government obliges employers like the diocese to implement a pay rise of 21% in two stages and this reflects the real increase of the cost-of-living. As the diocese is struggling with these numbers and adjusting its budget, we are witnessing God's goodness in a sizeable gift from one of our link dioceses. It is intended for holistic mission and outreach. Pray for the implementation of the proposed health projects, the educational support schemes and evangelism.

We are grateful to the Lord for our many and varied **international links**. A number of dioceses and parishes have decided to express that link by getting their hands dirty in Northern Argentina. The diocese of Down and Dromore (in conjunction with SAMS Ireland) sent a high-calibre team of twelve under the able leadership of Stephen Trew. Their main work and stay is at the La Caldera conference centre, but this will not prevent them from visiting parishes and contributing to church life in Salta, Tucumán and San Salvador de Jujuy, until July 24th. Please keep them in your prayers. A volunteer team from St Michael's, Newton (Diocese of Chester), is getting itself ready for departure to Salta on August 14th. They will work, visit and stay till August 29th.

René Pereira asks us to intercede for a **training week** (July 22-26th) for leaders of Wichi youth groups. All participants will stay in the school building in Misión Chaqueña and the emphasis will be on vision building and holistic mission. Many Wichi young people are succumbing to the temptations of substance abuse.

The **Lambeth Conference** is about to start and Bishop Greg Venables will attend. Humanly speaking, the gathering is fraught with difficulties and marred by a lack of love and listening. But, as the Bishop expressed in a recent BBC HardTalk interview, "We are Christians and we believe in miracles".