

News from Paul and Sarah Tester: CMS Mission Partners in Lima, Peru



January - February 2012
Let it rain!



"The water I give will be an artesian spring within,
gushing fountains of endless life" - John 4 v 13-14

Dear Praying Friends,

Thank you so much for your prayers. We really enjoy seeing them answered! We are writing this letter after two of the three youth summer camps that the Anglican Diocese of Peru organises and in which we have been very involved. Both of the first two camps have felt like very hard work to turn into reality. The teenager's camp for those from Lima and Ica was held just south of Lima in the coastal desert where it never rains properly. Or so we thought until waking up early on the first morning to find the tents soaked and a decent rain settling in for the whole morning! As we dug trenches to drain the water from the main tent and trudged around in the mud (feeling very British!) Paul confesses he did just hope for survival for the next four days. We didn't have many leaders and we had what seemed like a very hard group of nearly 80 teenagers to work with. Yet God does his own thing

and we need to watch for it. On the final night, as Paul watched many of these "hard" young people worshipping God wholeheartedly he could only thank God for working in unexpected ways. Despite us feeling it was not as well organised as last year, lots of young people have given testimony that God worked in their lives including that it was "the best camp I've ever been to". *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."* (Isaiah 55:8-11).



Angel and Bryan playing the Peruvian box drum in worship on the last night of camp

Do pray for all the young people who attended both the camp for teenagers in Lima and Ica and the youth camp for those from Arequipa and Juliaca as they go back to everyday life and that the God they have encountered will remain "real" for them and that the transformations we have seen in their lives will remain. We still have one youth camp to come - for young people in Lima and Ica aged 17+, the dates for which are now 24th-26th February (later than mentioned in our previous prayer letter) so do also join us in prayer for that.

Christmas has passed since we last wrote and we were both involved in many celebrations including trips out with teenagers, parties for children and meals with youth leaders. We have continued with most groups as normal although we have now handed over our regular activities at San Patricio in Ventanilla. After 4 years making the 4 hour round trip at least once a week, Sarah has passed the leadership of the children's work there to David,

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Deacon at the mission. Paul has also passed leadership of the youth group on to Pedro Pablo, Lay Minister at the mission. This is all part of what we feel God is leading us on with and of course part of the preparations for the arrival of our first child. It has been hard to leave the mission but we feel that we have made the correct decision. We do ask for your prayers for David and Pedro Pablo and all those at San Patricio, especially the children and young people and that this would be the beginning of something new and not an end in itself.

The baby continues to develop well and Sarah's pregnancy has been free from complications meaning she was able to join us on the camp in Lima and continues with the children's and youth work at San Pablo and with the Sunday school in San Juan Evangelista. The youth ministry at San Pablo is at an exciting stage at the moment. There are regularly between 15 and 20 young people who gather for the group and 10 of them were able to come on camp. A number of them have encountered God, particularly in worship, and we pray that they will be able to be discipled in God's time and strength.



Jonathan and Willy play with their Christmas gifts at San Pablo Mission

Bite size highlights:

- We had a lovely Christmas with Paul's cousins Charlotte (who continues her gap year with us) and Eleanor her sister who visited us.

For your prayers:

Please thank God:

- For the summer camps so far and the transformations in the young people.
- For the youth ministry at San Pablo.

Please continue to pray for:

- Our baby, for his/her development and safe arrival (due 11th May).
- For the young people to continue to respond to God's love in life after the camps and that they will continue as his disciples.
- For the final youth camp, now 24th-26th February, for young people aged 17+ in Lima and Ica.
- The youth and children's work in San Patricio, Ventanilla now David and Pedro Pablo have taken on the leadership.

With love and prayers, Paul, Sarah and bump xxx



What would you do? - Going deeper No. 25

Getting to grips with cross-cultural mission and some of the issues we encounter. Take some time to chew over the issues! Here's this month's:

One for all of us, be it in the UK, Peru or elsewhere. Camps are great "mountain top" experiences (see Exodus 34), places to experience God powerfully and to be changed. Many of us have had such experiences. But life is not all "mountain tops", we also have "valleys of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4) to walk through.

When we have had powerful experiences of God, how do we continue in our daily lives with Him? How do we "fuel" our spiritual lives and help others to do the same? How can we help young people, often returning to very difficult home situations, to continue walking with Him?