

29 March 2012

RECIFE



Hey!
Well March has come and gone and was a busy month as ever, but principally at Vale, as during March we hosted the aforementioned woman's conference.

We started work on the Tuesday before the conference, preparing, cleaning and decorating the place ready for the 150 women signed up and the team of 15 American women who were flying in and finished the following Monday after the conference over the weekend! We were then given the rest of the week off to recover! We needed it 'cos by the end (as each day the conference started at 8am and finished after 8pm) we were all looking very much worse for wear!

The theme was "Broken Lives, God restores" and this was evident during the three days! The principal speaker from America was inspiring and the ladies really related with what she had to say and the stories she told. Aswell as having Shari speak, there was a time of worship during the morning and in the evening, three different manual craft activities for the women to undertake, games and small groups, where the ladies had a



chance to discuss what they had heard and other things too. There were six such groups each with an interpreter. I was assigned to the "white" group. I have never officially translated before at an event like this! I've translated for my Mum, brother, Jo, various Step teams and other folks that have come out from the UK and whenever I've needed to at Vale, the Roda and in general, but I don't really class these as "official"! Just a part of daily life!

However I was quite nervous about doing this and had to ask God to help me, because I didn't want to hinder what the ladies needed to hear or wanted to share. It went really well and I only had the occasional blip when I couldn't remember a word, so had to think of another way to explain it! All the ladies in my group were fab and very patient.

The two American ladies that were leading my group (Sherry and Nancy) it was their first time doing something like this too, so we were learning together, but they did great and we really worked as a team!

I was also told by various people during the conference that I spoke Portuguese well! Which was nice and I am trying to accept it and use it to encourage me, although I really don't believe it! Never have done! Will try though!

There was also one Brazilian woman who thought it was very amusing that I use various words that are typically Nordestino (from the North East of Brasil) in my daily conversation! My colleagues at Vale were like ..."well she's in the NorthEast, living and working with Nordestinos, what do you expect?!" Didn't bother me, just glad she found something to amuse herself during the crazy business of the conference!

The kids returned to Vale on the 20th March and there were alot of new kids! We now have nearly 50 kids signed up for the mornings and 80 for the afternoons! We only started back into swimming lessons this last week, much to the kids joy ...and mine too! We haven't been able to use the pool since well before Christmas! I have many new little ones who have never been in a swimming pool before, so have to take it slow with them, but already after only a week some are

Prayer Points:

Thanks:

- For an awesome time at the woman's conference
- That the lives of many of the were women were touched by the power of God!
- That God helped me with all the translating I had to do!
- That we have 16 regulars doing the Alpha course at church

Requests:

- For finances for Vale to arrive
- For wisdom and guidance for Nane and I regarding where to lead Vineyard em Ação



“White” group!

confident enough to enter the big pool with me! However the rest of the kids are back to flinging themselves into the pool without a care in the world! I have an assistant, in one of the Mum’s is being another pair of hands and eyes while I try and teach swimming. Hopefully this will work out well and she’ll come and help me regularly!

Having redesigned the majority of the other classrooms at Vale I am still the process of putting my mark on my “arts” classroom. This year I’ve been given a classroom, so instead of as previously having to go to where the class was, they will now come to me! I’ve already screwed the empty paint pots that we used to paint pretty much everything at Vale, to the wall and am using them as storage space. Am trying to use recycled items as much as possible. Principally because I don’t have the money to splash out on “arty” things and I also think it will give more of a “me” look to the place, as I have been given the authority to do pretty much what I want to the

classroom! I also found a large old wooden table that was being thrown out and asked if I could have it for my classroom. Will paint it and design something with the kids, so they feel they own something too!

We nearly had one interesting event at Vale this last week. One of the main television stations was wanting to come and do a report about recycling and the reward system that we have in place for the kids and had arranged to come last Wednesday. I don’t work on a Wednesday but was requested to do an arts lesson using recycled material, I had to come up with something on the Tuesday afternoon as this was when I discovered that I had to do this! We all arrived earlier than normal on the Wednesday in preparation, but they didn’t come! They have said they will come next week, but we don’t really believe they will!

Life at the Roda is going well.

At church we’ve started another Alpha course, this time for folks from the community. The first “taster” night we had 19 people turn up which was amazing and since then 23 have committed to undertake the 12 week course. The first week only 15 turned up but more promised to come next week, so we’ll see. I’m on reception, decoration and am responsible for the music and therefore am singing too!

Vineyard em Ação continues, thought as I mentioned in my last newsletter our team has diminished in size alot, due to more or less 6 people who are now unable to help because they are studying at night. However we still have a regular crew of around 10. The second Monday in March however didn’t happen because everyone, yes everyone was ill! The day before was our communion service, where after everyone eats together. Usually everyone brings something different to share, but this time Ricardo made vaca atolada (a delicious traditional Brazilian dish) for everyone!



Sherry, Nancy and their translator!

He’s done it before. However this time everyone suffered from diarrhoea and or vomiting too, due to the quantity of tomato puree and whole tomatoes that he used and the heat which helped in the rotting process! Hence no-one was disposed to go out on the streets that night, apart from Gabriel and I! This was because I was working at Vale and he hadn’t suffered badly! So we cancelled it.

Since then we’ve been out every Monday since. These last few weeks have been very different in the square. We were looking for a new challenge and maybe a change in location. But after last week we are thinking that maybe we are to stay put for now in the square, as the majority of the folks that are arriving there, we don’t know and although during the singing they are messing about, trying to unsettle what is happening and alot are very drugged up and aggressive, there’s a desperation there and they are wanting to be there. An example of this was last week, another group arrived to distribute soup whilst we were still singing and they knew this but many said they would stay put with us and didn’t want to go! We were expecting a mass exodus when they saw the other group arrive.



We will stay put for now, but we are still wanting to know the will of God and are waiting to hear his voice and direction, as we are quite unsettled there. It sure is a spiritual battle! Prayers gratefully received!

Out of room again, oh well just leaves room to wish you all a Happy Easter. Feliz Páscoa!

lossa love *Alí x*

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