

5 October 2011

RECIFE



Hello again!

Here I am once more writing to you from Recife! I really can't believe I've been back in Brasil a month already!

Such a lot has happened in the last month and a half! Where to begin?! ...

My time back in the UK during August was spent catching up with friends, giving presentations about my 2 years in Brasil and meeting the new puppy at my folks!

Well the 25th August arrived really quickly and I headed back out to Brasil to spend a week working with a friend in Sao Paulo. Was a good week, as I got to see her work into the Crack drug culture there. We went on a prayer walk the first night I was there and we walked right up the main street where people take Crack. (It's known as "Cracklandia") It was unlike anything I've ever experienced and only ever seen on tv and in movies!! The street was



Catching up with friends!
(Shell&Nine)

Prayer Points:

Thanks:

- For a safe return to Brasil and a good time in Sao Paulo.
- For Verna and Luke as they serve the street folk of Sao Paulo
- That I was able to catch the plane back to Recife and that my card worked to buy another ticket!
- That I have settled back into life here without too many problems!

Requests:

- Strengthening of my voice again and general improvement in health!
- For protection as I now live on my own.
- For wisdom and guidance for Nane and I regarding where to lead Vineyard em Acao as we complete our first year!

literally jammed with folks smoking or dealing Crack and taking all sorts of other drugs too! All ages were crammed into this small area and sprawled out onto the surrounding streets. We had to push our way through the throng. The emptiness in the eyes of those who gave eye contact was heart wrenching!

Sao Paulo is a huge sprawling city and everywhere you go there are street folk! We worked hard that week, but still had time to have fun too! We went to one Chinese restaurant where Verna had heard they actually make the spaghetti in front of you! Was fascinating and delicious too!! Although it was the longest spaghetti I'd ever seen and really difficult to serve!!

Verna also couldn't believe that I was cold in Sao Paulo! (It was colder than in the UK!) I didn't take my jacket off the whole time I was there and once or twice had to borrow an extra layer too! When the sun came out as in the UK, people stripped off! Except me!

Whilst in Sao Paulo I got the opportunity, although very brief, to visit Luke, a friend of mine who is working at Abba, the project for street boys where I was originally ment to go and work! Was really great to get to see what he's doing and finally see this project that I've heard so much about! They are doing a fantastic work there with the boys!

I enjoyed my time in Sao Paulo but was desperate to get back to Recife, so when Friday 2nd September arrived, I headed to the airport not foreseeing any problems! To keep a long story short ...my name wasn't on the flight! I discovered my ticket had been cancelled! So had to buy another ticket for 4 times the price I paid!! I was informed there was only one seat available on the original flight, but they didn't think I'd be able to catch it! I explained that I'd already tried to check-in, which somehow helped me and I was fast tracked through! Basically I caught the flight, was reunited with my luggage in Recife and Nane was there waiting for me! So it all worked out ok! Thankyou God!

The apartment that Nane had found for me wasn't ready so I stayed with Rico&Nadir and shared a room with Nadir's 65yr old Mum, who snores loudly! This apartment still isn't ready (unfortunately 'cos I really liked it) so I found

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Verna&Bex with "that" spaghetti!

another which I was informed would be ready in the middle of Sept, also still isn't ready! I felt that I needed to move out as didn't want to overstay my welcome, so since last Thursday I am now living in a small apartment above a hardware store. I am having to get my head around having water in the taps from the street one day or so and then not and opening the tap for the water storage box ...it's not easy at the mo especially seeing as we've had no water from the street since Monday night and have had to regulate the amount of water used from the water box! It's all fun and games!

The area is normal Roda noisy! In that people seem to be deaf and need to have their music blasting out to distortion level! But it's not like it all the time!

I need to buy a fridge urgently (due to the heat you can't leave things out 'cos they go off so quickly) but haven't had time to get one yet, but I have bought a cooker. I also need to buy normal housey things, as the apartment is completely unfurnished!

I have included my new address, but really don't know how the postal system works here as I've no letter box!



My team at camp Alpha

Have settled back into Roda life! Church continues, at present the majority of church are undertaking the Alpha course and I along with my pre-teens small group are the servers (I did Alpha years ago, so am not allowed to do it again!) We went away for the Holy Spirit weekend into the Interior and practically everyone returned with a cough or bad chest due to the dust! But was a good weekend, hard work but good! I brought my sax back with me as no-one could believe I'd left it in the UK last time! I said I hadn't practiced for years, but that didn't seem to deter Rico and I have since played and or sung every Sunday since! Yesterday I couldn't sing, as yet again I am completely without a voice, but sucessfully played my sax!

Vineyard em Acao also continues, tho' how we do it has changed, as the main area that my team used to go is now too dangerous, so we all go the same route to the square and once there sing some worship songs and pray before dishing out the soup! Last week we arrived to a group of the younger street dwellers singing a song about our work that apparently they'd been practicing all day!

We are looking at shaking up our street work, as there is so much need but where to help best without spreading ourselves too thinly and therefore not really helping anyone is the question!

We visited the house of one of our families a couple of weeks ago, as they'd asked us. I've never seen anything like it! We walked for ages thro' an alleyway where you literally could just about pass a buggy (I was at the time trying to navigate a buggy thro' this area!) and had folks just sat there doing drugs. We eventually arrived at the river! Their "house" was a tiny wooden hut, without anything (no cooker, fridge, bathroom) Just a double bed for all 4 of them and a cupboard!

The house was on sticks precariously balanced over the river. We had to tread with extreme care, the floor was slopping towards the river and there were holes everywhere in the floorboards! I really can't start to explain the living conditions! I wanted to take fotos to try and show the appalling nature of the situation, but couldn't as I wanted to respect Nita (the mum) as when we arrived she broke down in tears and sobbed for ages! Where to start to help here?! I could continue about this story but won't! At the end of October our street work will have been going for a year! Amazing!



How to transport a oven? ...by taxi of course!

I returned to Vale to another fab reception from the kids! It's always nice to be missed! I now work Tues and Fri's teaching swimming! Thursdays is another Vineyard em Acao day. Altho' have only actually been in the pool the first week, 'cos developed a chest infection (lost my voice!) that I cannot shake, so teach from the side unless someone starts to drown! This has only happened twice! Oops out of room, until next time ...Lots of love

Ali x

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