



BUENA VISTA

Winter 09 Edition



A warm welcome from our partners in mission

Dear Friends

Warm greetings from all of us in SAMS Ireland. As we reflect on 2009 we are conscious of the recession and how it has affected many people both at home and overseas. I therefore want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your continued prayers and financial support which has enabled our work to grow, and has encouraged the church both here and in South America to keep mission at the top of the agenda.

I would ask you to make a special effort to attend our Friday Night Live event on the 5th February 2010 when we can meet together and share in an exciting family

environment with more Latin Americans than ever present. We look forward to a new year full of anticipation and progress under God's guidance and I would ask you to pray continually for all the people and projects you read about in this magazine and for the spread of the Gospel throughout the world.

Yours in Him

Denis Johnston
General Secretary

News in Brief

The AGM of SAMS Ireland took place in Dublin in September and an encouraging report was presented to those present. The Chairman, Bishop Ken Clarke, spoke about the importance of the relational aspect of SAMS Ireland and of having a direction and purpose for the spread of the Gospel in South America, Ireland and beyond. A joint meeting of the General Council and Northern Committee is planned for 21st January 2010 in the Jethro Centre, Lurgan.

Paula Waite, a member of St Saviour's church Dollingstown in the parish of Magheralin, has been looking after the distribution and sales of the Argentine SIWOK crafts. If you are interested in having some of these quality items either to sell at an event or to purchase individually, please contact the SAMS House and we will put you in touch with Paula. We are grateful to Paula for taking on this role which contributes significantly to the indigenous people of Northern Argentina.

Claire Holmes, SAMS Ireland mission partner in Concepcion, returned home in mid December having spent a total of fourteen years in Paraguay. Claire will be on the SAMS books for six months to enable her to settle in, adjust and visit various link churches. In the next Buena Vista, Claire will share with us some of her reflections. In the meantime, please remember Claire in your prayers as she adapts to a major change of culture after so many years overseas.

Denis Johnston has recently been appointed Chairman of AMS, the Association of Missionary Societies in the Church of Ireland, and Geoff Hamilton continues to represent SAMS Ireland on the General Synod Central Board of Mission.

Pray for us and with us at this time of opportunity. The merger of SAMS in England and CMS in England will be complete in February 2010 and a new 'Community of Mission Service' will be formed. SAMS Ireland will continue as before working in partnership with other mission agencies.



beyond the norm

Annaghmore in Argentina

The 'Beyond the Norm' programme aims to give participants the opportunity to encounter South America within a supportive environment. It creates new experiences, new opportunities and new challenges. It provides the setting in which volunteers experience mission and cultural diversity at first-hand.

The Annaghmore visit to Argentina is part of an evolving story. The local parish has been supporting SAMS for generations but lately the relationship has become more personal with Argentinians being placed in the parish as part of the SAMS fusion programme. In the summer of 2009, Team Annaghmore travelled to Argentina to build two churches in partnership with the local church.

Before the Annaghmore team travelled to South America, I was quietly confident, as I knew the skill base was extremely high. I wasn't disappointed as the 12 lads definitely produced the goods on the two building sites and their work rate was exceptional. But projects are much more than laying blocks and sometimes teams with a focused task can miss out on the relational side.

Thankfully the Annaghmore team embraced the relational side of the project just as much as they grasped the practical side. It was an encouragement and privilege to share with them as they interacted with the local people with big hearts.



They worked in challenging situations, ate their fair share of dry bread, stood under numerous showers that didn't work, kipped in some suspect beds, and never once did they complain.

The team worked within different building methods, yet even though they had an extensive skill level compared with many of the local church members who worked alongside them from the host country, they never pointed the finger and told local people how to do things. They showed respect to the community and valued everyone who worked alongside them.

I probably don't need to tell you that the lads didn't let me

down when it came to eating everything that was placed in front of them! I could say so much, but maybe the local pastor summed up the imprint the team made as he shared with me that for generations the story of the Annaghmore team would be passed on as one of the best gifts that God had given them.

This team was worth its weight in gold and every team member was genuine in all they did, and excellent ambassadors for their local parish and community.

Geoff Hamilton
Team Leader

Monte Horebe



Local children involved with the project

This Brazilian project is based in the town of Itaperuçu (pop 20,000) in the state of Paraná. While the city of Curitiba (pop 1.7 million) is only 20 miles away from Itaperuçu, very few citizens know of the existence of this impoverished community, a community with many problems including drugs, guns and corruption.

The local connection with Itaperuçu has been developed by John and Phyllis Logan of St Patrick's, Coleraine who have been working for and

in Monte Horebe since 1994. More recently their work has been supplemented by Arnold and Louise McClean and Rena Lindsay, also of St Patrick's, Coleraine.

Monte Horebe teaches the Gospel through its practical work in the local community and in outlying rural areas. It works to raise the standard of living and the self-esteem of the people and to make them more employable. This it does through practical support including child sponsorship,

mainstream education (5-14 years), adult ICT education, childcare facilities, healthcare, home improvement/home provision, youth groups and outreach work in the Caçador community which, being some 30 miles from the Itaperuçu itself and being comparatively inaccessible, is not on the priority list for local government support. Thus it remains comparatively undeveloped economically, socially and in terms of education. Monte Horebe, in conjunction with community leaders and voluntary agencies, is working to improve the lot of the Caçador people.

In 2001 the Canadian couple who founded Monte Horebe handed over the reins of the mission to a Brazilian couple. While an effective leadership team is working to make Monte Horebe self-sufficient financially, the practical support provided from Ireland and from Canada, and received with much gratitude, still plays a most important part in the work being carried out in Itaperuçu.

Details of the work of Monte Horebe can be found on the SAMS Ireland website and in Portuguese, on the mission's own website, www.montehorebe.org

John Logan

Pray for the Monte Horebe initiative as it seeks to share the Gospel through its hands-on work in the local community and in outlying rural areas through practical support including:

- **Child sponsorship**
- **Mainstream education (5-14years)**
- **Adult ICT education**
- **Childcare facilities**
- **Healthcare**
- **Home improvement / home provision**
- **Youth groups**

Chaco Consecration



Bishop Nick Drayson at his consecration

Can you possibly imagine an archbishop, four bishops, eight presbyters and two ladies all travelling in a minibus for nearly 400 miles deep into the Argentine Chaco? The 'craic' was powerful. We were all heading to Juarez for the Service of Consecration of Nick Drayson as the new Bishop for the indigenous people of Northern Argentina. Beryl and I had the privilege and honour of representing SAMS Ireland and the Diocese of Down and Dromore at this colourful occasion.

After eight hours of travel through dry, dusty scrubland we finally rolled down the dirt

road into Juarez, a real cowboy town. The consecration was to be held in the evening on a floodlit basketball pitch, beautifully set out and decorated. The sound and lighting were excellent. The atmosphere was electric as 500 indigenous people awaited their new bishop elect and his guests. Then, from a room nearby, out came almost 100 deacons from the Chaco churches, both men and women all in their white clerical ponchos. The women wore colourful scarves on their heads. They walked in procession into the stadium and sat on chairs on either side of the large platform, followed by the presbyters and then the bishops.

The service was spoken in three languages; Spanish, Toba and Wichí. Bishop Abelino Apeleo of Chile led the service and brought a greeting in Mapudungo, his language from southern Chile. Bishop Pat Harris, a former SAMS missionary and first bishop to the indigenous people in N. Argentina, preached an emotional sermon in Spanish and Wichí from 2 Timothy. The Wichí Bible was only completed last year.

SAMS Ireland believes that mission is not the 'ministry of choice' for a few hyperactive Christians in the church. Mission is the purpose of the church.

There were some very powerful testimonies of God's faithfulness over the past five years whilst the indigenous churches were without Episcopal oversight. Although they are used to hardship in every area of life, they know how to persevere. I spoke to one pastor who has twenty churches under his care and cycles many miles to minister to them regularly.

The whole indigenous Church is sensing a new beginning, On Saturday 24th October they received their new Bishop Nicholas and his wife Catherine with love, excitement and expectation. Please pray for the vibrant indigenous church and its new leaders in the challenges of the days to come.

Gordon Whitehead



Bishops from the Southern Cone praying for Bishop Nick Drayson



Cecilia working with young people in Chile

Cecilia Valdivieso

It was great having the team from Anaghmore in Salta during July. They made a significant impression on all the people they met and they can build like machines! When the team departed I started again with my activities; this involves teaching drama at my church, running discipleship courses, having Bible studies for young girls, visiting people from the congregation, travelling once a month to Bermejo (Bolivia) to help the pastor with training, having a wee meeting at my house with teenagers from my neighbourhood who are not Christians (around 20) and continuing on with my theological studies. I feel blessed

by God for having this variety of activities that allows me to interact with these different groups of people who have the same thing in common, "the desire to be feed spiritually".

I am travelling to different places visiting churches, encouraging pastors and their teams and sharing my experience with them running workshops and seminars. Recently I visited a church in a place called Santiago del Estero where the pastor is working from a mission perspective which involves the whole church taking an active part in the local community, teaching people how to look after themselves in a healthy way,

especially since the water has been poisoned with chemicals and the lack of rain is so extreme that they have serious problems with the drinking water. I have also travelled recently to Chile where I visited mission partners Gerado and Suyai who are well-known in Ireland through their placement in Clogher Diocese a few years ago. I was involved in helping them with training for Sunday school teachers, youth ministry and cell groups.

Since we started Red Box Project, there have been numerous volunteers and this year Jordan Wilson from Newtownabbey has joined the project. She will be here for six months helping with the different activities we have.

Prayer points.

To thank God for my good health so I can keep travelling.

For my meetings at home so the teenagers can start realizing how important it is to be a Christian.

For Jordan so she can adapt to the climate, the church and the culture.

For my time in Ireland in 2010 I am really looking forward to seeing you.

Jordan Wilson

Before I left Belfast I had no idea what to expect from my experience in South America through SAMS. To be honest, I had no idea why God was sending me to Argentina in the first place. As for now, well, I've only been in Salta for a few weeks and, if anything, I now have more questions than I did before! The work itself I am enjoying immensely. My weekly programme is as follows: two mornings in a nursery; one morning and two afternoons in a primary school in the city centre; two afternoons in a high school, and one morning in a small school in a local area. My jobs vary from keeping children entertained, assisting with reading and writing, taking English classes and even supervising practices for the school play. The church I am involved with is small and poor in funds, but incredibly rich in faith. The people I have met since my arrival are so gracious and welcoming that it leaves me wondering what I could possibly have to offer them. My stay here has only just begun, but I am excited to see what God has in store for the months ahead.



Cecila and Jordan

Paraguay

Reflections from Eglinton Parish

At the end of July, nine excited and nervous travellers all in green hoodies sporting an armadillo and the words “una fe practica” (a practical faith) met up at George Best Airport in Belfast... Destination Paraguay, via London and Brazil.

All went well. We arrived safely in Asuncion with our first stop being a shopping centre to change money into the local currency. We did wonder why we had lugged

40kg of luggage half way across the world when surely we could have just bought all we needed here! Oh, the naivety of the first timers!

After an overnight stay at the parish centre, seven of us were off on the bus to Concepcion, a six-hour journey on a good day and one shared with animals and enough supplies for a small country - an experience indeed.



The green army from Eglinton Parish

The other members of the group headed off to the Chaco in two jeeps equally laden down and packed with such precision.

In Concepcion our group were hosted by Bishop Andreas, his family and Claire Holmes, who were outstanding hosts for the next fifteen days. While there we accompanied the Bishop and Claire to many communities in the town and further afield in the Chaco, mainly working with children.

The group based in the Chaco worked on an aljibe and “long drops” while running sewing workshops, multi-tasking indeed. I would need the entire magazine to recount the wonderful experience we had in Paraguay but, as I am restricted to a few words let me try to articulate our feelings.

When I asked the group to sum up their trip, all agreed it was the happiness on the children’s faces. We gave so little but received so much in return; so little made them happy. Just being there was enough for them! Such gratitude.

The trip was extremely well organised and we all want to acknowledge the input from David Orritt and the team in Paraguay.

There was little if anything we would change for our next trip! Our thanks to everyone involved and our prayers continue for the very valuable work carried out by all those in South America.

Michele Sheridan

The rationale which underpins Mission Paraguay focuses on serving people living in different circumstances, assisting the ministry of the local church, helping those in need and sharing the love of Jesus. The volunteers from Ireland this year worked in communities throughout Paraguay, bringing a wonderful range of skills, humour and enthusiasm and consequently many blessings to the people they met.

David Orritt
Co-ordinator Mission Paraguay

A big thank you to David from SAMS Ireland for the time and effort which he gives to Paraguay. He has become a valued friend to many in the SAMS Ireland family.

An Evolving, Relational and Resourceful Link

During the summer, SAMS Ireland in a joint venture with Love for Life visited Northern Argentina to explore with the diocese the possibility of resourcing the local church in specific areas of development. The SAMS representative, Alison Crawford (Willowfield Parish) and Graham Hare (Magheralin Parish) from Love for Life travelled extensively in the diocese sharing with church leaders, teachers, community representatives along with numerous young people.

At the end of the visit, SAMS, Love for Life and local Diocesan members evaluated the initiative, agreeing that the best way to allow for the programme and vision to develop would be for one person or a small group of Argentinians to be trained to deliver presentations to youth groups and schools. There are several possible ways that this could happen, so pray that God would give wisdom as local people consider possible ways forward. A reciprocal visit to Love for Life here in Ireland was suggested as this would also allow key people from the Diocese of Northern Argentina to understand the breadth of work that Love for Life does and be better equipped to understand the purpose and daily



Alison & Graham with diocesan workers Hans & Hugo

workings of the organisation. Pray for all those who are working through this evolving link.

It is hoped that Love for Life can continue to work alongside the Diocese of Northern Argentina and SAMS in the future, helping the young people of Argentina to develop a healthy understanding of who they are. We are excited about the impact that we can make through partnership. May we all live with an attitude that encourages, equips and supports young people.

fusion

participate * learn * develop

From Chile to Craigavon

I am 26 and I am a SAMS Ireland volunteer working in St Saviours Craigavon. This is my second year in Northern Ireland and I am really enjoying my work here, trying to learn as much as I can and to share my Christian faith as much as possible. I know that all this learning will be very useful for my future as a minister, in God's will, in the Anglican Church in Chile. As Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

Steven Alvarez

From Argentina to Lisburn

I come from Salta in Northern Argentina. I am living in Lisburn, working within the youth and children's ministry for Lisburn Cathedral. I participate in various programmes and in various ways such as Kidzone, Sunday school, school assemblies and youth cell. I am also involved with a Saturday night initiative called 'Fusion', where we get up to 350 teenagers attending every Saturday. 'Fusion' is a safe place for teenagers to come, hang out and have a good time and I have the opportunity to share about God.

David Alanis

From Spain to Bangor

I am from Barcelona in Spain. I am working alongside Rev. Francis Rutledge in Christ Church Primacy on the edge of Bangor. My remit is varied, as the local church is committed to serving the local community, which means there are lots of activities; for example I work in the Toddlers and Parents group helping the leader, also with the Alpha course and Youth Fellowship, but one of my jobs at the church is in the office. I am so glad to be working for this lovely church. I thank God for this great and wonderful opportunity.

Saray Martín

From Chile to Cookstown

I'm based in Cookstown as a church worker in St. Laurant's Derryloran Parish Church. The people here are very kind, warm and gentle, so up to now I'm feeling pretty much at home. I am helping with the cubs in the scout group. I've also been visiting and getting to know some of the parishioners that are unable to attend the services. On Sundays I've been attending the confirmation class and doing some of the readings and prayers in the services. I hope the future will be packed with learning, good moments and blessings.

Cristian Ascuí

Friday Night Live in Craigavon Civic Centre on
Friday 5th February 2010 7.30pm

Pray For:

Claire Holmes as she settles into Northern Ireland

Cecilia Valdiviezo & Jordan Wilson - Argentina

Steven Alvarez - Craigavon

Cristian Ascui - Cookstown

David Alanis - Lisburn

Saray Martin - Bangor

Bishop Nick & Catherine Drayson - Northern Argentina

Bishop Peter & Sally Bartlett - Paraguay

Dani & Flavia Lescano training for ministry in Argentina

Gerardo & Suyai Gimpel - Chile

Raquel Greco Diocesan Youth Ministry Co-ordinator in Paraguay

Lizbeth Varillas Diocesan Youth Ministry Co-ordinator in Peru

Samuel Lago training in Chile for the ministry

SAMS Ireland is extremely thankful for legacies which are left by individuals for the benefit of the work in South America. Legacies can make a real difference to the ongoing work and the extension of God's Kingdom both here in Ireland and overseas. For further information in confidence contact the SAMS House.

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