



BUENA·VISTA

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MISSIONAL ○ RELATIONAL ○ INTENTIONAL

Seeds & Service

a message from the SAMS Mission Director



“40 years married...would you lead us in the renewing of our marriage vows?”

This was the request I received recently from two very good friends. Both are keen and active supporters of SAMS and it was a pleasure to lead them in a short service of renewing vows. As I

thought about them, their lives together, and how the Lord has used them I thought of seeds and service. These two words sum up their lives together. In the Lord’s service, both in South America and here in Ireland, they have been used to plant seeds which are bearing much fruit and everyone who knows them sees their servant hearts. Mission is about sowing seeds and reaping a harvest. Neither sowing nor reaping will happen without humble Christ-like selfless sacrificial service.

Recently when I was in Lima Peru I had the joy of meeting a remarkable Christian couple called Julio and Norma. You will find their News/Prayer Letter on the SAMS website. In 1980 Julio was the first Peruvian to be ordained in the Anglican Church in Peru. I asked both of them if they knew an Irish missionary called Raymundo Mills who had worked in Lima with his wife Beth some years ago. Their faces lit up and her eyes filled up. Norma said to me "El es mi padre espiritual!" (He is my spiritual father).

Julio and Norma's home is now a school in a poor area of Lima. They had a vision for reaching the children of the area for Christ and giving them the opportunity of a good education. Now 128 children and 10 teachers occupy their home. As the school expands their living space contracts! As money comes in more classrooms are added by building up. I was deeply moved when I saw the quality of their work and ministry. Their daughter Isabella is the Headmistress and is doing a superb job. This has all come about by seeds planted many years ago through a missionary family

from Ireland. The Mills family knew the Lord had called them to serve in South America and they did. Julio's family have that same heart for service and they are making a difference in the lives of many children and families.

I wonder is the Lord calling some of us to new adventures of obedience. Are we being called to new steps of faith? Are we being prompted to new waves of generosity? Are we passionate about service or have we lapsed into lethargy? Jesus, the Servant King calls us to serve! Some of us will sow and others will reap but the Lord Himself will give the growth. May seeds and service be marks of our lives and churches!

As I finish, and in case you were wondering who I was referring to...Happy 40th Wedding Anniversary to Gordon and Beryl Whitehead! The seeds they planted continue to bear much fruit in Santiago Chile. They are still planting seeds here in Ireland. May they, and we, keep going!

Bishop Ken



PERU

written by Alison Crawford

In July last year, I travelled to Lima, Peru in order to spend some weeks getting to know the Diocese and it's work, and also to meet those who serve in Peru. I was offered wonderful hospitality as I stayed with Paul and Sarah Tester and they helped me understand the context of the Anglican Church in Peru and to gain insights into Peruvian culture.

I had the opportunity to visit several congregations and many social outreach projects within Lima, and also joined Paul Tester and Lizbeth Varillas (the youth diocesan worker) and several young people from Lima on a mission trip to Huancayo and the surrounding area. One of the strengths of the church in Peru is

the opportunity for training. The day after I arrived I went along to the youth workers retreat with Paul, Lizbeth and two other youth workers from congregations in the greater Lima area. This was an opportunity to worship together, study the Bible and pray, seeking God's direction for the work amongst the youth. They are eager to share skills and knowledge and support those working with youth. I learnt about the seminary based at the Diocesan centre which allows for the training of church leaders and is now headed up by Alan and Rachel Hill. They are developing an online training course, a practical way to train future leaders in a country the size of Peru.

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Another characteristic of the Anglican Church in Peru is that each congregation has a social outreach project. Several churches run the Compassion project, where children have sponsors and they meet on a weekly basis for teaching and are given a hot meal. These projects have seen many children through the programme in the last few decades and I was able to visit the classrooms of the project in the church San Juan Evangelista, under the leadership of Pastor Luis Villalobo and his wife. Paul and his wife Sarah also belong to this church and Paul had been leading a Youth Alpha course with the young people there, which culminated in a weekend away. Many of these young people had been part of the Compassion project since the age of 3 or 4 and it was wonderful to see

them serve as leaders and invest in the younger generations.

Lima is a huge bustling city, with houses and people stretching as far as the eye can see. Sarah leads a work amongst the children in a shanty town in the Pamplona area of the city. The housing is poor and the area is bleak, however, when we arrived, children came running to meet us and help set up for the meeting. There is a faithful group of children who come together every Friday for play and Bible lessons, which is followed by a meeting for teenagers with Paul in the evening.

Please pray for Paul and Sarah, working with children and young people in Lima as they seek to show the love of God and communicate Kingdom values. Pray for them as a family, with their little daughter Sophia, and for the relationships Sarah is building with other mums in the area. Pray also for Lizbeth as she travels round the Diocese, teaching and training. Pray for the growth of leaders and for wisdom in knowing how to support and sustain youth groups in this large Diocese.



MISSION

Paraguay



Virginia Morales returned to her home after spending a year with Shankill Parish through the SAMS FUSION

programme. In July, Virginia who is originally from Uruguay, returned to South America for six weeks as part of the Mission Paraguay 2013 team. Virginia writes of her experience:

The people I met on the Mission Paraguay team are Kingdom people with a passion for justice. They gave of their best every day. The summer mission trip to Paraguay, from my perspective, was an encounter with people called by God to share and serve. In the simplicity of everyday life in Paraguay the team both gave and received.

We served by visiting communities; some volunteers did construction work in the Chaco, others organised sewing workshops and distributed spectacles.

We also painted a hostel for Indian people in Concepción.

All of us worked with children, many of whom you would like to hug and take care of because of the many needs they have. We laughed a lot and experienced the hope that only God can bring. We had blessed moments full of the presence of the Holy Spirit; healing moments with many special personal experiences, particularly when working with the group of young people Claire is leading in Concepción. They have great enthusiasm. I pray for many blessings for each of them. This was a treasured opportunity.

God provides for us and equips us to serve him better wherever he places us. What matters is our availability to say 'Yes' to God, to serve Him, the one who calls us by name. 'Come and see' was the invitation that Jesus Christ made to us, this past summer. I thank God for each person He caused to cross my path in Paraguay.

A full report of Mission Paraguay 2013 and plans for 2014 may be found on the SAMS website.

Many of the world's poorest people live in rural areas and are indigenous peoples whose daily struggles seldom capture world attention. The Anglican Church in Northern Argentina works within a vast and challenging context. Scattered around the

Chaco region are over 100 rural congregations all led by their own indigenous leaders. Bishop Nick and Catherine Drayson are committed to encouraging, training and mentoring church leaders across this vast region and supporting these rural communities both practically and spiritually.



The Garden Project

Alejandro Deane, affectionately known to us at SAMS as “Alec” grew up in the bustling city of Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. He left his familiar surroundings and moved to Northern Argentina where he has been working for 30 years alongside the Wichí people. He remains a passionate advocate for the rights of this indigenous group. Alec is now using his expertise in agriculture to develop a garden project with local Wichí.

The idea to develop the Garden Project came about after a young Wichí girl died of protein deficiency. Wichí families have traditionally grown a few crops to supplement their diet, but this has proved more difficult in recent times, due to the rapidly changing environment. Vast areas of Chaco land have been cleared for commercial farming. The environmental changes caused by this deforestation means that there are higher summer temperatures and more frequent droughts and flooding. Alec, who has a background in agriculture, felt sure that the situation for Wichí families could

be improved, if they had some support and good gardening techniques were adopted. Thus the “Yachuyaj wo” (Wichí word for Gardener) project was born. The secret to good harvests is incorporating drip irrigation and providing people with good seed. Alec’s vision is that the Wichí can live sustainably and with dignity in their own land.



SAMS is committed to supporting Alec and we have created a resource which is aimed at informing and inspiring local churches to really grapple and engage with Alec’s work. We have resources for specific groups such as Children’s Ministry, Youth Ministry and Home Groups. For further information contact SAMS and request a project pack or go to the SAMS website and click on PROJECTS and then click on The Garden Project to see the various resources.



ESCOLA MONTE HOREBE

EDUCATING BRAZIL



One of the first requests made to the founders of Monte Horebe in 1984 was that a school might be established as part of the mission. The state education system was indeed in existence in Itaperuçu at that time, as it is now, but, with poor resources and class sizes up to 60, the quality of teaching and learning left much to be desired. Despite a number of set-backs, Monte Horebe School developed from an initial 30 pupils to its current 300 plus and from makeshift classrooms to a purpose built school building. The school now teaches pupils up to 14 years of age through the employment of part-time teachers who are subject specialists. Much of this development is due to the continued generosity of supporters here in Northern Ireland as well as others in Canada.

Although delivering a common curriculum, Monte Horebe is deemed to be a “private school”, that is one outside the state system, able to charge fees but still open to state inspection and with the capability of benefitting from some of the initiatives which emanate from state and federal governments. While the fees are far from exorbitant, and are necessary to pay teachers’ salaries, a large number of children from impoverished families, who would otherwise not

be able to study at Monte Horebe, benefit from the support of “sponsors” whose gifts ease financial pressure. Parents who cannot afford to pay even a small part are encouraged to pay in kind, for example by helping with cleaning or gardening. The education offered by the school, based on Biblical principles, is in great demand in the community and has led to a number of students gaining places in high quality schools in the equivalent of our Key Stage 4.

John and Phyllis Logan have been involved with the school since their first visit to Monte Horebe in 1994 and while John now does less teaching he remains heavily involved in Principal support as well as in matters of school improvement. They have seen continued improvements in resourcing and teacher education in the Itaperuçu school as well as positive developments in Caçador where the community centre based school nears readiness for opening.

Please pray that Escola Monte Horebe continues to be a positive force in Itaperuçu.

SEND ME

In September I had the joy of travelling to Paraguay and Peru with SAMS Mission Director, Bishop Ken Clarke. It was my first time to visit South America and although I had learned some basic Spanish I was so thankful to God for placing me with not only a wonderful Christian leader but also someone who speaks Spanish very well!

My hope from this trip was to identify projects that my parish could assist with for the coming years. God had so much more in store for me. There were countless projects we could be involved in but God also showed me the value of building meaningful relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ who live in South America.

Although this was my first experience of mission in action abroad I could quickly see mission partners working side by side with local people to bring Gods word and love in abundance. A big thank you to every one I met along the way.

In going with the hope of helping others I felt I was the one who gained so much from the warmth of the people I met. I experienced every emotion and throughout it all I felt Gods hand guiding every step of the way. I can honestly say that my life has been changed and enriched by this experience and I would recommend this to anyone who is thinking of going. I remember the words of Isaiah chapter 6v8 Here am I, send me!

Finally, it has shown me that it is good to step outside your comfort zone now and again and allow God to develop and shape you.

"To grow involves a choice between risk and comfort. To be a follower of Jesus you must renounce comfort as the ultimate value of your life."





As we enter 2014 be prepared for complete saturation on all things linked to the World Cup in Brazil. World Cup packages range from £2,999 to £14,999, but SAMS wants to update you on alternative tactics for the 2014 World Cup.

churches here at home to reach out locally. A really useful resource for such outreach is the **SAMS World Cup Weekender**.

If you are interested in receiving this resource then contact SAMS for further details.

As a mission agency committed to South America we have a natural interest in Brazil, but we are also committed to helping



CONCEPCIÓN CALLING

A message from Claire Holmes

Time just flies and a lot has happened in these last months. I know that you will be receiving Buena Vista in early January, in Concepción early January means an oppressively humid subtropical climate!

In Concepción there is a lot of unemployment which means that people are often desperate for work and therefore consent to unacceptable work conditions. Many people work around 60 hours a week for about half of the minimum wage and often without a day off or holidays. Business owners get away with this because people need the work and because there are ways of covering up what they are doing. Please pray for more employment in Concepción and that the government will find a way to put a system in place where this type of injustice can't and won't happen.

Lack of employment impacts many areas of life. Our church community has lost some leaders, at least temporarily, either because they have moved away to look for work, or because they have had to withdraw from their ministry due to their working hours. This always leaves a gap. On the positive side a lot of the young people are really growing spiritually and are full of enthusiasm to serve.

Most of them started off at the Children's Clubs and it fills me with joy to see their commitment to the Lord and to others. Please pray for them and for us as a team as we teach them, lead them and walk with them. Many of them receive a form of persecution at home for the life they are choosing but we try to encourage them and more importantly God's Word is encouraging them.

- Compassion asks us to go where it hurts, to enter into the places of pain, to share in brokenness, fear, confusion, and anguish. Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears. Pray that as a church community in Concepción that we will be serve with a compassionate heart.

- In May 2014 Bishop Andres will retire as pastor of the church here in Concepción. Please pray that God will guide the church about its future and that there will be the right people to lead it and also that we will all work together in unity.

Thank you for all your support and God Bless.



FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

7th February 7.30pm in Craigavon Civic Centre.

BENEFITS OF DRINKING TEA!

St. Canice's Parish Church, Eglinton, Diocese of Derry & Raphoe has been a committed partner with Claire Holmes in Paraguay for several years. According to SAMS Development Officer Geoff Hamilton, the Rector, the Rev Canon John Blair can be a dangerous man to have a cup of tea with, as he always has an idea to share! SAMS would like to take this opportunity to thank John and the Parish for financially supporting a leadership training manual. It was written by Claire, designed professionally, and it is now being used in Paraguay as a key tool for training leaders in children's ministry. Not only is the resource being used in Paraguay it is also being utilized in Argentina and Peru.



LEGACIES

SAMS 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. Thank you for partnering with us. For further information in confidence contact the SAMS House.

Thank you for being part of the SAMS family. If we can serve you in any way please do not hesitate to contact us.

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