

News from Gayle in Salta - April 2008

This will most likely be my last email from Argentina...awwwwww as I'm going home in about 3 weeks (this is the part when everyone hysterically screams "Nooooo" and hurries to book holidays in order to be out of the country for my return).



I know you have all enjoyed the peace and quiet (especially mum and dad) but all good things must come to an end eventually. In this email I plan to let you know what I've been doing since all the traveling came to an end but first I'd like to give you a bit of an insight into Argentine culture...

Today is the 1st of May and here that means Workers Day so absolutely everything's closed (like Christmas day basically) and for at least the last few years on this day everyone from the church meets there in the morning, helps build a bit more of the church, has a big lunch together and spends the rest of the day playing sports and enjoying each others company. Today we were supposed to be putting the roof on the church but its overcast, cold and a bit damp so NO ONE except me and the pastor turned up, after a 40 min walk in the rain I was hoping to get stuck in with the building work but that doesn't look like its going to happen. It doesn't stop to amaze me that when it's cold here people just don't leave the house even if that means missing school or work...hilarious.

Anyway I'll give you my weekly timetable.

Monday

Up early to get a bus into the centre and then a second bus out into the country (takes about 2 hrs) to go and work in a neighbourhood called Mirador where there is what used to be an orphanage but because of the economy crash almost a decade ago they didn't have enough money to run it and so now is a place where some kids from the country go to get some very basic education and food. So I'm there until after lunch after which I get a bus back into the centre and go to work in a primary school called Uzzi College where I help with the English classes and generally just mess about with the kids.

Tuesday

Up early again and off to the centre to work in the church offices as the pastor of our church runs the union between all the Baptist churches in Salta province so I do all the running about and messages for him. I'm there until lunch time and that's me for the day until we start going to the orphanage

again which we hope to do on a Tuesday evening.

Wednesday

I go with Cecilia's sister Sandra to work in the high school "Rio Ancho" again helping in the English classes until the afternoon. Most of the kids there are the children of tobacco farmers so are very poor and miss a lot of school when they are needed to help with the work in the fields. That night I go to a cell group in the pastor's house.

Thursday

Up early to work in the church offices after which I've a few hours to spend in the city centre because I don't have time to go home and get back for my afternoon/evening at Uzzi College (the primary school)

Friday

My day off...

Saturday

I take two buses to get to the house of one of the ladies from the church for the Hora Feliz or Happy Hour where we play games sing songs and teach Bible stories to the kids from the neighbourhood and Saturday night is the youth group meeting.

Sunday

Sunday school for the whole church in the morning and that night the church service.

So that's pretty much my schedule, in-between those things I go to music practices, meetings in the church, meeting up with people from the church and visiting people at their houses. So since my last email that's basically what I've been doing. I need to head back over to the church now so I will talk to you all very soon.

Chau

Cati/Gayle

As things are difficult for the people of Salta at the moment I thought I would attach an e-mail Cecilia posted on the Sams website recently