

Introduction to the Anglican Diocese of Paraguay

The work in the Anglican Diocese of Paraguay began over 100 years ago and since that time the work has grown considerably. The Diocese itself covers an area of over 400,000 square kms, which is about 5 times the size of Ireland. Rt Rev John Ellison oversees this vast area and it is very much a team ministry. Both he and his wife Judie, travel extensively throughout the country giving help and support to the people who are working in the various facets of Church life in the Diocese.

So what sort of work is the Church in Paraguay involved with?

Bible Translation

In 1999 the Lengua or Enxet New Testament was launched and the joy



of the Indigenous people could hardly be contained. This

was the first time that their language was written down and while the spiritual importance of God's word in their own language is crucial, the New Testament is also being used to teach the Lengua people to read and use their own language more effectively.

Education

Education is seen as a crucial part of Mission in Paraguay because through the work of Christian teachers, the whole of society can be influenced for the good of all. The education work was begun in Asuncion in 1963 with the opening of the St Andrew's College. It is here that Stephen & Eileen Trew from Monkstown, are currently working. The education programme was further enhanced with the opening of the Annexe School in 1972 for the children of the Chacarita shanty town in Asuncion.

In the 1990's the Board of Governors

along with the Diocese had a vision to build Paraguay's first Christian infant teacher training Faculty as part of the Evangelical University of Paraguay. The aim of the Faculty would be to train teachers to a higher standard and then pass that knowledge on to their pupils. This was a vision which was realised in 2000 with the enrolment of 23



students. The aim of the education programme is to endeavour to cover all aspects of teaching from a Christian perspective.

Youth Work

In Paraguay it has been estimated that around 50% of the population is under 16 years of age. With that huge number of young people, youth and children's work is part and parcel of the Church's ministry. There are a number of Youth Workers in the Diocese and Claire Holmes from Richhill is working in Concepcion area.

Church Planting

Without new growth the Church would die, and the number of Churches, especially within the indigenous community, continues to grow rapidly. The number of indigenous Pastors and Deacons also is increasing. Church planting in certain areas can be extremely difficult, due to the fear of the local shaman or witch-doctor. However with a number of witch-doctors coming to faith, their hold and influence on the communities is considerably less.

Personnel

There have been long established links between the Diocese of Paraguay and the Church in Ireland. Over many decades people have gone from Ireland to serve with the Church in Paraguay.

So who are the personnel serving in Paraguay who have links with the Church in Ireland?

Pastor Guillermo & Rossi Diana
Rt Rev John and Judie Ellison

Raquel Greco

Claire Holmes

Rupert and Samantha Parsons

Rt Rev Andres & Estela Rodriguez

Stephen & Eileen Trew, with their
children Elijah & Hannah.

The Church in Paraguay continues to grow and be an effective witness to its society and culture. If you would like to prayerfully or financially support the work of the Church, please contact:



SAMS House

1 Irwin Crescent

Lurgan

Craigavon

BT66 7EZ

Tel: 3831 0144 / 3832 2044

Email: info@samsireland.com

Web Site: www.samsireland.com



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