

June 2008

IN THE PLAZA

Operating in two languages means that there is always a risk of becoming 'mixi-lingual'. This is our made-up word to describe sentences that mix English and Spanish together. It is forbidden, although Elizabeth and Benjamin regularly get away with one particular sentence: 'Can I quedar?' The Spanish verb 'quedar' means 'to meet up'. So 'can I quedar?' is a short way of saying 'can I meet up with my friends somewhere in the village?' Benjamin has started to 'quedar' a year earlier than Elizabeth did because living in a small mountain town is quite different from the Madrid suburb where we lived when Elizabeth was nearly 11. And Benjamin's group meets up in the Plaza (village square).



The Plaza has added security protection in the 'Plaza Police'. It is true that the local police have their office in the small Town Hall which over looks the plaza. But the 'Plaza Police' are what we call the quite substantial and formidable group of mothers who sit on the small wall surveying the whole scene. In a culture where the majority of people live in flats, the first rides on trikes, scooters,

bikes, roller blades, etc. usually take place in the plaza. So it's the main meeting place for families, extended families and friends. It's also naturally the scene of many events during the year. On 6 January we celebrate the arrival of the Three Kings with a live nativity scene complete with real camels and fireworks. On certain long summer evenings it is full of traditional music, dance and costume. Last autumn we joined a peaceful demonstration against the closing of the municipal music school.

On Saturday 7 June it will host the largest Gospel Choir in Spain, comprising 300 young people. This is an enormous event for our small church. It's also extraordinary considering the history of the town. Although some of you will read this after 7 June, it doesn't matter. Please pray for the effects of this concert to be felt long after the stands and chairs have been cleared away and the Plaza scene returns to normal—including Benjamin, his friends and their football.

For Prayer

- For us all to focus on the resurrected Jesus and work for His kingdom
 - For students to register for the new course, Understanding Christianity
 - For the Hilary as she leads the Women's Group at church
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