

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you intimately...” (Jer. 1:5)



Dear friends,

João Pessoa, Brazil, March-April 2008

Greetings from hot and sunny Joao Pessoa!

Tamara and I are well. Over the past few weeks we've hosted various visitors from overseas. Unofficial (but very welcome!) visitors were my parents; it was good to get a few days off and spend time with them. Official visitors included mission volunteer Andy Roberts who preached at our English service and John Sutton from SAMS. John came to get to know the area and personnel and to discuss ministry and future plans for theological education. The plan, as most of you know, is to build a centre for theological and mission training for Northeast Brazil. Presently we're training our future staff and thinking strategically as to the best way to develop the existing seminary. We may look to buy a property soon given that the time to invest is now, so please pray for wisdom and the Lord's direction as we work the issues out.

At the end of March Archbishop Greg Venables made a pastoral visit to Recife. It was a joy to have him with us and a joy to translate for him. Archbishop Greg will be at the Global Anglican Future Conference in Jerusalem this June, a conference which I've been invited to attend as one of the delegates from the Diocese of Recife. It promises to be an historic occasion, and I'm particularly looking forward to visiting the places where our Saviour walked.

In terms of our varied activities here, we did a day's "medical mission" at a church plant in a poor fishing village with the aid of Tamara's Mum (she's a paediatrician), attending around forty children. It was a successful event and one we intend to repeat. I continue with the Wednesday night service and our studies in Ephesians are going well. I'm enjoying Sunday preaching and a couple recently came to the Lord after one of my sermons so I must be doing something right – or rather, God must be doing everything right!

The clergy meet monthly for breakfast here, as do our seminary students for whom I'm chaplain. Our Archdeacon, Rev. Souza had prostate cancer and recently went under the knife. Thankfully the cancer has been entirely removed, and now Souza will probably undergo radio or chemotherapy as a precaution, please remember him in your prayers as he's still contending with sickness and incontinence. Other prayer points:

- Please pray for us and others at church as we initiate a new Saturday night ministry for couples. There's also a monthly family service to be held on the last Saturday of the month – and – as they say, "it's my baby".
- Pray for the students and for me in my role as chaplain.
- For job opportunities for Tamara – she will take a test for a possible post next month, though there are about 20,000 people going for just 20 places!
- For preparation regarding the forthcoming conference in the Holy Land.

Many thanks for all your love, prayers, and support. We appreciate it!

With love in Christ, Marcus and Tamara.