

Link Letter No.11 March 2014

Dear praying friends,

We hope you're well despite the bonkers British weather we keep reading about! Here in Joao Pessoa, Brazil, temperatures are 35-40°C, so from one extreme to another I guess... As for us, we thank the Lord that Rebekah (who turns four on 27 March) and Mateus (aged two) are settling in to the "Cidade Viva" (City Alive) bilingual Christian nursery/school. Tamara and I are also thankful that this has enabled us to resume our joint prayer life.

I (Marcus) have been busy putting the final touches on my PhD thesis (on Mark's Gospel) and am studying an average of eight hours a day in preparation for my Nottingham viva in May. Do please pray for me on that one. Although the final hurdle has to be jumped, I'm pleased with the end product. Inevitably there are still commitments on the ground here...

One project I've been involved with on and off for some months now concerns an Anglican school bringing quality free education to poor children in a needy town. As on previous



Construction work beginning on the school



Marcus and Tamara Throup CMS mission partners **Brazil**

Marcus and Tamara spent their first term in Recife, her home city, and nearby Olinda. They were involved in pastoral work and theological education. They now live in João Pessoa where Marcus teaches at the Pro-Cathedral and lectures at the seminary. Tamara has completed post-graduate studies in Psychology and supports Marcus in a ministry to couples. Marcus and others are working to initiate a major regional seminary.

occasions, I've had a mediating/translation role and have liaised with a North American Anglican relief agency. Happily funds have been secured for building work. Since the school building itself is in place (and functioning with 60 children), these funds will build a basic sports quad which is likely to be a resounding success!

Typically I'm still involved in

activities such as mentoring students, taking the odd wedding and doing training sessions for Bible study leaders in local churches. I was pleased with the feedback I got from the organisers of one such training event: *“We want to thank you for bringing a new perspective on the Bible to our leaders – all of them were pleased to receive the training and encouragement you brought us – you really opened our eyes!”*

Despite these activities, in order to concentrate on the thesis I’ve ended up turning some speaking engagements down. It was particularly difficult to decline a seminar on preaching and a

guest lecture in a regional conference on the theme of justification in the New Testament – right down my street! Still, there will be other opportunities and I’m inclined to think there’s more integrity in saying *“no, sorry”* than turning up half-prepared to a big event.



Rebekah and Mateus

Prayer points:

- Pray for Marcus’s PhD viva in May and the family as a whole (Tamara’s Mum will be around to help her!).
- God’s direction and guidance for the *“what next?”* after the PhD. We’re praying for discernment as to where (still Brazil as far as we know!) and how we might best serve a little further down the line.
- Pray for the Diocese of Recife, which, like evangelical dioceses in the USA, is on the verge of losing church buildings in lawsuits filed by liberal Episcopalians in a dispute which rumbles on (see my chapter in the *Blackwell’s Companion to the Anglican Communion* for more background).

Thank you for enabling us to do what we do in Christ.

Marcus, Tamara, Rebekah and Mateus

PS. Did you know that you can now receive link letters by email, sent as a pdf? If you would like to receive them this way and help CMS save money, please contact **the links team** at links@cms-uk.org

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