

## Link Letter No.11 Christmas 2013

**Dear friends,**

### **Greetings once again from Paraguay!**

I am very pleased to report that the translation team has now finished the Enxet Old Testament and that my colleagues Asuncion Rojas and Juan Martínez have begun revising the Enxet New Testament. They began reading through the 1997 New Testament during November, going through notes and commentaries we wrote down as a team on New Testament passages during our morning Bible reading sessions from 2003 to 2013. They are now beginning to edit the text.

With all the intensive final checking of the biblical texts, it was good to have the opportunity to escape from Rio Verde and enjoy a very interesting week of lectures at the headquarters of



*Tim in Brazil...*



### **Tim Curtis**

CMS mission partner  
***Paraguayan Chaco***

Tim is the Coordinator of the Enxet Old Testament Translation Team based at the Anglican Centre in Rio Verde, Paraguayan Chaco. He works alongside the translators Juan Martínez and Asuncion Rojas as they translate into the Enxet language and check completed drafts and keeps the Anglican Church of Paraguay, CMS and the United Bible Societies updated on progress.

the Brazilian Bible Society in Barueri, Sao Paulo, from 4-8 November. The course I attended was organised for the benefit of bringing Bible Society representatives and personnel from other Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela) up to date with the latest developments in translation studies, as well as with matters related to selling and producing Bibles.



*With Marlon Winedt*



*Next to Robert Bascom*



*Tim at the Brazilian Bible Society printing works*

I found myself as the only person representing Paraguay, not as somebody strictly speaking representing the Paraguayan Bible Society but as someone working on an actual translation project. It was a wonderful opportunity to talk about the Enxet translation and to seek advice regarding our options for printing the Enxet bible when it is finished, whether this be in Brazil, or in South Korea. We are aiming to print 1,500-2,000 Enxet Bibles but no more as the Enxet are a small language group. It was good to see top Bible Society consultant Robert Bascom, who I had not seen for a number of years and who had attended the launch of the Enxet New Testament back in 1997. Robert Bascom was one of the main lecturers and organisers of this course, along with Marlon Winedt from Curacao whom I met for the first time.

The Sao Paulo headquarters of the Brazilian Bible Society are extremely impressive. It is a hive of activity, where millions of Bibles are printed each year round the clock. There is an enormous printing

press, as well as the usual offices, shop, and large canteen which caters for the 250 staff. Needless to say, we were all received with wonderfully warm Brazilian hospitality and cheerfulness.

**Graduation of 9th graders at the indigenous school in Yatnata**

At the end of October, shortly before the trip to Brazil, I was invited to attend the graduation service and



*Nélida, Maria-Julia Beatriz and Hector*

end of school year celebrations at the indigenous school in Yatnata. This was where I was first based in the Chaco, when I worked as a volunteer in the very then small primary school in the mid 1980s.

Since then, the school has expanded in size. Money

from Spain in recent years,

channeled through the Spanish embassy, led to quite an extensive building programme of new classrooms in 2010, houses for teachers, and a well-equipped building with computers and a small lecture room and bathrooms, which was completed in 2012.

Whilst there have been problems at the school, such as very low attendance, and acts of vandalism, a minority of children have attended the school and stuck it out. This year four pupils at the school completed their secondary education, three girls and one lad: Nélida Fernández and her sister Beatriz Fernández, and Mariá-Julia Alvarenga and Hector Alvarenga, who are cousins.

Over the years, the Paraguayan government has been investing more money in indigenous education, and there are a dozens of school building springing up in the communities I visit. The school year ends very early in the Chaco, with most schools breaking up for the year at the end of October or beginning of November.



*Ninth graders*



*Translator Asunción Rojas in the Rio Verde translation office*

Asunción Rojas and his family will be staying in Rio Verde during my time in the UK for home ministry, looking after the centre and the office. Asuncion and Juan will resume work on the revision of the Enxet New Testament at the end of January, after the summer break, and I shall be joining them from early April 2014 onwards.

I end with a photo of Yatnata Enxet church member Francisco Cabañas reading John 14.23-24 from the Enxet New Testament during the graduation service for 9th graders. *“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”* (John 14.23)

**Points for prayer and praise:**

- It's just over 100 years since the British and Foreign Bible Society produced the gospels and Acts in the Enxet language, which was then known as the Lengua language.
- Give thanks for the completion of the Old Testament during 2013 – on time! Pray that Asuncion and Juan as they revise and edit the 1997 New Testament during 2014.
- Pray for wisdom, that we would know where to have the Bibles printed – Brazil or South Korea.
- Pray for spiritual protection for the translators and for Asuncion Rojas and his family as they look after the Rio Verde centre and translation office during the summer months.
- Pray for the Yatnata 9th graders who have now completed their studies.
- Pray for my time in the UK during 2014 and for the visits to the link churches.

I look forward to seeing many of you very soon

With every good wish and blessings for 2014

*Tim and the translators*

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 on [links@cms-uk.org](mailto:links@cms-uk.org)**

[www.cms-uk.org](http://www.cms-uk.org)



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