

Link Letter No.1 May 2013

Dear friends,

Firstly I want to thank you for the messages, texts and emails that I have received since I left England.

It seems strange to have finally said my 'goodbyes' and arrived in Quito. As many of you know, I had my commissioning service on Palm Sunday. It was such a privilege to have so many friends and supporters there. Not only that, we were able to meet Archbishop Tito from Chile, who was over in England with Bishop Henry Scriven from CMS. They and Philip Bingham, also from CMS, were able to come to the service, which was very special.

How time flies. I have been here in Ecuador since 16 April, and it only seems like



At the commissioning service with Archbishop Tito from Chile, Bishop Henry Scriven and Philip Bingham from CMS



Sharon Wilcox

CMS mission partner
Ecuador

Sharon Wilcox is a CMS mission partner working and living in Ecuador. She is working with children and adults with severe learning and physical disabilities, in a culture where disability still carries a high level of stigma.

yesterday. I spent my first week with an English family (here with Latin Link), in the south of the city. The journey into Quito every morning, to get to the Spanish language school, took anything from an hour to 90 minutes!

Ecuadorian life

I am now living with my Ecuadorian host family, in the

north of the city, and my journey is anything from 20 minutes to an hour, depending on the day of the week. Mondays and Fridays are the busiest. The buses are very crowded, and most days I have to stand for most of the journey – great fun on buses which allow 40 standing passengers.

The family have been very welcoming, with everyone wanting to include me in conversations and family gatherings. There are three generations of the family living within the three-storey home, and altogether there are 13 of us living in the house. Each floor has been converted into an independent apartment, so we only eat together on Sunday.

One of the most striking things about living in Quito is just how loud thunder and lightening is when you live high up in the mountains! Most days it is hot and sunny in the morning,



Plaza Grande in Quito

but then the rain comes. I thought it rained hard in England, but not every day like this. The reminder of home is not the one I would have chosen, but it is amazing nevertheless.

Quito has a new airport that opened in February, which is over an hour's drive from the centre. I have been there three times already. Once was when I arrived and twice was trying to collect my air freight, which I arranged would arrive two weeks after me. The trouble is that nobody tells you exactly what you need to do when you have to get things from the cargo area.

I had to come away the first time, to go and pay \$40 into a specific bank, and return to the airport with the receipt. This I did, and then spent six hours the next time standing in queues.



Family party

It was only

through the kindness of an Ecuadorian man in front of me, that I managed to find the right queue and information I needed, in order to be reunited with my things. It was an experience to remember.

Spanish school is good, and I have four hours of 1:1 tuition each weekday. I am beginning to understand what is being said, though I expect that people laugh at my pronunciation when I reply. I have met and made friends with a couple of people at school. One of them, Dorothea from Germany, is going to be here for two years, and will be working with me when I get to Santo Domingo. God is so good, and it is great to be

able to get to know her now. I am not sure how long I will be at the school, but it will be at least three months.

I was met at the airport by Jill Ball (CMS mission partner) with others, and I have been able to meet her in Quito since then, and talk about the sorts of things I might do once I arrive in Santo Domingo. It will probably be teaching life skills



Spanish school

to the children in the school, and spending time getting to know the church and the other projects which Jill has set up.

For your prayers:

- Give thanks that my initial transition has been smooth.
- Praise God for bringing me alongside Dorothea.
- Give thanks for my Ecuadorian family, who have been pleased to help me and include me in their family celebrations.
- Pray that I will continue to enjoy the challenge of learning Spanish, and pick it up quickly.
- Pray that I will cope with the next phase of transition, when I arrive in Santo Domingo, as Jill will have returned to the UK, and won't be back until the New Year.

I give thanks to God for your support, and your prayers.

Blessings in Christ,

Sharon

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