



newsletter 92

autumn 2018

'May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy.' Psalm 72:4

The Big Event



Camp held at Peniel Farm in August

Children and teenagers from the Bogotá and Fusa programmes spent three days at the Peniel Farm in August – 58 children aged seven to 17. Recreational activities were mixed with times of learning from the Bible and worship. There were opportunities to talk about their lives and experiences, with one another and with counsellors. Games encouraging cooperation and teamwork developed social skills and creative thinking.

The support team for this event was made up of IMiC staff and volunteers from a number of churches who filled the roles of tutors and counsellors. Of course, food enjoyed in the company of others played an important part for the many children for whom family gatherings round a table are a rare or new experience.



Children enjoyed food for the body, mind and spirit at the camp

Please pray and give thanks for the volunteers who helped at the camp. Pray that the children will learn and grow from all they heard and did at camp.

Volunteers and Visitors

In the last few months IMiC projects have welcomed volunteers and visitors from Germany, Canada and UK.

Jenny and Lydia from Germany have been volunteer workers in Fusa, helping out with activities and also teaching classes in German and English, playing the ukulele and piano. As students at Bible College they have taught lessons from the Bible and songs with Christian messages. Emily, who some 19 years ago was a volunteer, returned on a visit from the UK, this time with her husband and three children.





Carlos, programmes director, wrote, 'It's very special to know that people who have been involved in the IMiC ministry in Colombia in the past, want to return a long time later to visit and enjoy the work that is being developed.' They visited the programme in Fusa and had a great time sharing with the children. They were impressed to see the advances in the programme and what is now being done for families and children. Emily's first visit was at the time when IMiC only had a small house in Bogotá for about a dozen boys. They also made a trip to visit the families in La Guajira (see below). Liliana and her husband, Brian, from Canada visited the programme in Bogotá.

Please pray and give thanks for the volunteers and visitors and the support they give. Pray for the children and families who are encouraged by the experiences shared at these times.

Young Entrepreneurs

A new project has been started with the children in Fusa on Saturdays to teach entrepreneurship and saving. The project is being run by Maritza Rodriguez who coordinates the activities and guides the children through the learning process.



Economic activities

In a place where finding work can be difficult, learning how to create things to sell is a valuable skill and then to save and usefully invest part of the money earned in generating more sales will set them on a good path for the future. The project

has generated a lot of interest from children and parents, and two groups totalling 31 children are involved.

Please pray that the lessons learnt and the experience will encourage the children to have confidence in themselves and hope for their future. Give thanks for Maritza who has dedicated herself to helping the children.

La Guajira

The situation in the region of La Guajira continues to be difficult and the poverty and malnutrition in the area has been highlighted in an article in the newspaper, *El Heraldo*.

It reports that in one month seven children of the Wayuu community died of malnutrition: all were under the age of one. Also reported is that up to 31 July, the Department of Health had recorded 30 deaths of children under five linked to malnutrition or associated causes. There have been 592 cases of acute malnutrition in the under-fives in the region.



Family grief

The article goes on to say that the community is desperate because there is hunger, thirst and lack of medical services.

Added to this problem it has been reported that about 700 children have been born to families that have come across the border from Venezuela because of political instability there, and are now living in Riohacha, the La Guajira capital city. This massive exodus from Venezuela has put enormous pressure on an already struggling region and generates both economic and social problems.



As mentioned earlier Emily and her family visited the families in El Brasil with Nancy to share in the work going on in this Wayuu community. They saw the results of the projects of the last year or so, the completed well and school building, and met the children and helped deliver their new school uniforms provided through donations from the UK.



The girls orange dresses are typical of the area and the boys have shirts of the same material. New shoes were also provided by a donation left by Liliana and Brian after their visit from Canada.



Dely and her mum will benefit from her chair

Food support continues for this community and also on this visit a wheelchair was given to a

small girl, Dely (pictured), who is disabled as a result of malnutrition.

Please pray that the government in Colombia will recognise the need and act on the situation in the region of La Guajira. Give thanks for the visits made to the families of El Brasil and the gifts and food that have been distributed. Pray for more support for this area of Colombia.

The Voices of Girls and Boys

IMiC participated in a forum organised by the Mayor's Office in Bogotá that gathered together representatives of churches and religious organisations to consider the needs of children.

The purpose of the meeting was that the leaders and representatives, together with the District Administration, who form the interreligious movement in favour of children would define commitments based on the proposals of children and adolescents who live in Bogotá. The movement works to eliminate violence against children, taking into account the fact that a third of the violence within families is directed against them.



IMiC delegates at the forum

In the period before the forum IMiC staff held a number of meetings with the children in the programmes to give them the opportunity to express their thoughts on what could be done to protect the wellbeing of children.



At the forum, several children from the various institutions were given the chance to question the leaders of the invited organisations. Joseph, aged 10, and Ximena, 15, from the programme in Bogotá were selected to ask questions. This was a significant time as the church leaders, pastors, chaplains and priests gave answers to the children and committed to doing all they could to stop violence against children.

Annual Fun Day

The annual Fun Day was held in Petersfield, Hampshire, in the Rams Walk precinct in June, with its now traditional 'mile of pennies'.

Stalls selling a variety of things were manned by volunteers ready to engage with the passers-by and share about the work in Colombia. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make the day a success.



Fun at the annual IMC Fun Day

Meet Nancy

IMiC Director Nancy Centeno will be making a brief visit to the UK in October. Do come to one of these church services to hear her speak:

**7 October: Sholing Baptist Church, 10am;
West End Chapel, Fareham, 6.30pm**

14 October: Life Church Petersfield, 10.30am

Contact the office for more details.

Gospel Cards

Just a reminder that once again IMC is one of the beneficiaries of the sale of Gospel Cards products. You can find a full range of their cards, books and music at gospelcardsetc.com

Quiz Night

Test your general knowledge and have fun raising much-needed funds at an IMC quiz night on Friday 2 November at Petersfield Methodist Church Hall in Station Road: 7pm for a 7:30pm start. Tickets are £12 including supper: book yours at the IMC office (see below). Our grateful thanks go to organiser John Arnold.

And Finally...

The text at the beginning of this newsletter comes from a prayer of David for his son, Solomon, who would rule his people after him. (It also speaks prophetically of Jesus Christ.) It is a reminder for all of us to pray for those that have leadership in organisations like IMiC, that they have the strength and commitment to fulfil their calling to help families and children in difficult circumstances. It is also a prayer for those in government to do what is right and just for the poor and marginalised. Thank you for your continued support. It cannot be said enough: your prayers and gifts are changing lives.

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