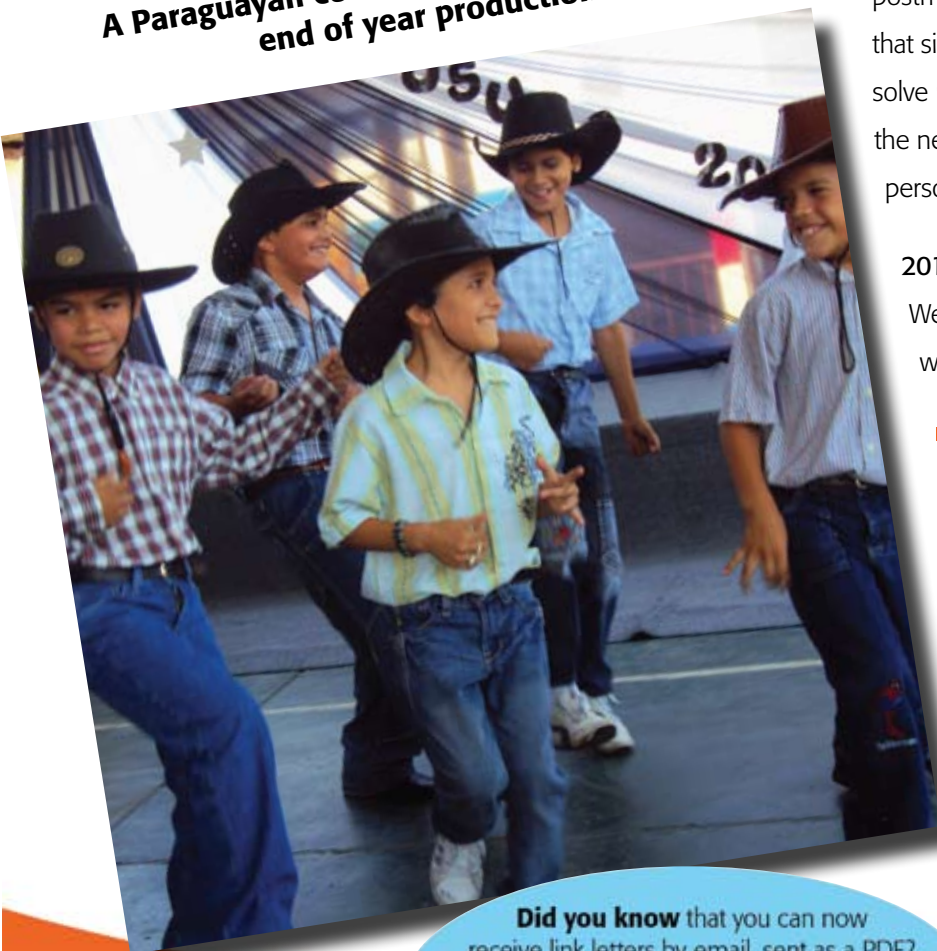


Link Letter No.2 January 2012

Dear friends,

A young expectant mother recently commented to us on how fun but also how difficult it can be to pick the right name for a baby. Baby 7 billion was born at the end of October and the United Nations declined to name any particular baby, stating that it was not feasible to do so. It's incredible to think that Father God knows each one of us 7 billion world inhabitants by name and that in virtually every corner of the world Christians recently celebrated Jesus' birth. We pray that you were filled with the joy that Zechariah expressed when he prophesied that the Saviour would usher in salvation

A Paraguayan cow dance - Annexe School's end of year production



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Peter and Sally Bartlett
CMS mission partners
Paraguay

which would not only rescue us from our enemies but also enable us to serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness all our days – *now that is some promise!* No wonder He is known as the Name above all names.

Students graduating from St Andrews Annexe School were given a personalised bible, with the class photo and their name on the cover (*see photo on page three*). The challenge for each of those young people will be to discover how their lives fit into God's Big Story. In our post, postmodern days it is easy to be deceived into thinking that simply instilling Jesus values into our societies will solve many ills, without being willing to understand the need for the members of each new generation to personally be transformed by the Living God.

2011 – The Year of the Bed

We have lost count of the number of different beds in which we slept last year. Beds slept in included...

- England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland
- Chile – on a brilliant whistle stop tour of the Diocese of Chile
- The Paraguayan Chaco – including a

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**Left: Not all the beds were as comfortable as this bed in San Bernardino
Right: Visiting in the Paraguayan Chaco**

weekend trip by Sally with Regina, a pastor's wife, to join in with a Mission Paraguay sewing workshop; the Rio Verde ladies were so proud of their creations that it was a sheer delight to be with them

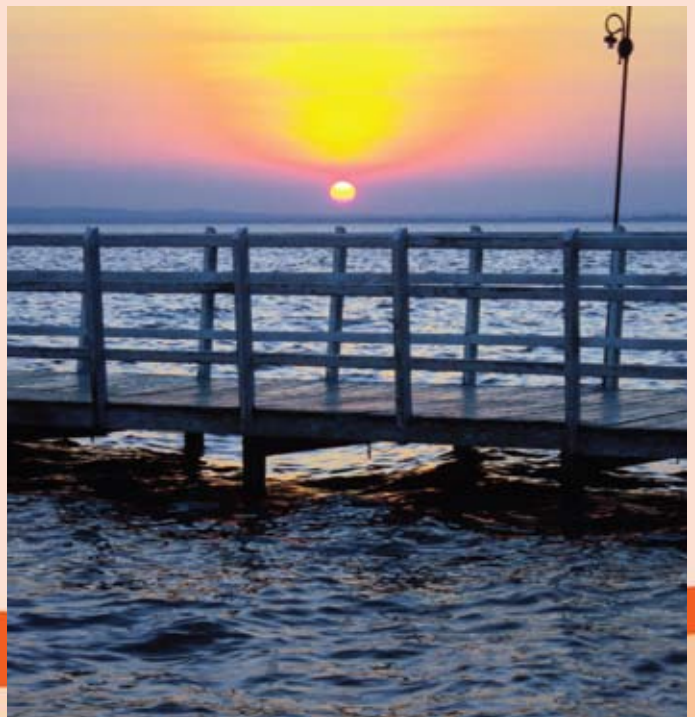
- Concepcion – landing in several difficult pastoral situations in the church, very much one of those God ordained times
- San Bernardino – a favourite Paraguayan holiday haunt where we relaxed and enjoyed the beautiful sunsets and creature comforts of a stately hotel from a bygone era (1888)
- Bolivia – where we were treated to the most generous hospitality and the 25th Anniversary Celebrations of Christ the Saviour Church
- San Lorenzo – where we participated in a romantic and challenging Marriage Encounter Weekend

- The Argentine Chaco – where we celebrated the installation of Diocesan Bishop Nick [Drayson] and the arrival of the Gospel 100 years ago brought to this place by people from our very own Maxklawáya in the Paraguayan Chaco

- Peter also recently returned from a two-day trip to Uruguay, acting as a Synod supervisor.

In each of these places it has been humbling to watch how God is at work in ushering in the Kingdom in greater measure, and it has been a privilege to travel alongside people from many different cultures and to learn from them.

San Bernardino





Left: Annexe School's presentation of bibles - left to right with the student is: Head, Victor Santa Cruz; Gwen Carlisle, Head of St Andrews, and Bishop Peter
Right: A young dancer showing off her dress, proud to be Paraguayan

Healthy Living

Peter's many and varied responsibilities outside and within the Diocese of Paraguay – its churches and institutions, including his mentoring and supervising of the pastors, dealing with pastoral issues and occasionally disciplinary matters – suggest that a job description for a Bishop in Paraguay ought to include juggling skills!

We try very hard to keep Tuesdays as a day off. On visits to the Health Park, Peter speed walking and Sally ambling around the health circuit, we read big signs giving advice on a healthy life style – eight hours sleep, eight hours work and eight hours family time.

The demands of ministry make this seem a bit simplistic but our time on the Marriage Encounter Weekend reinforced for us the need to keep reviewing our priorities. The local churches continue to work at becoming healthy churches and several are making quite significant progress and growth.

In September Sally had five weeks with stitches and a dressing on her left little finger after cutting it badly on broken glass. Her inability to wash dishes or shower quickly reminded us on a daily basis of just how true St Paul's

Left: A young harpist waiting for her concert to start
Right: Sally, Regina and the ladies showing off their makes from the sewing workshop



comments about the church are about being like a body: "So if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it." 2 Corinthians 12:26. Most of the congregations have identified the area of loving relationships as being an area of church life where there is plenty of scope for change and growth.

Fun!

Not all ministry is tedious by any means. During the parenting classes which we have been running for St Andrews School parents, the short teaching scenarios played out by ourselves and Chaplain Ronnie (CMS Latin Partner Ronnie Irene) have delivered both serious teaching points as well as being light hearted and enjoyable.

Sally is a member of the Christian Ladies in Action group at St Andrews Cathedral, and our previously sedate sewing and craft club (to make things to sell to raise funds for several of the Church's ministries) has seen an unexpected and delightful change this year. The teenage girls from the Puerta, a substance abuse rehabilitation centre, have joined the club! This has meant impromptu dancing shows, cake baking, birthday teas, many jokes, laughter, tears, Bible meditations on subjects such as being a peacemaker and God doing the impossible, embroidery, bag making and dressmaking. The ladies have received the girls with open hearts and arms and for the girls the club is a safe place where they are loved and given the attention they crave.

Paraguay 2011

One highlight of the Paraguayan Bicentenary celebrations in May was the concert in which 200 young harpists delighted the Sunday morning crowd in the centre of Asuncion with their talent and enthusiasm. The celebrations were an extravaganza of colour and creativity, encouraging Paraguayans to value their culture and the gift of their beautiful country. Paraguay in the centre of South America is a country whose inhabitants love harmony and peace. The challenge of the EPP terrorist

group in the north is of national concern and the recent foot and mouth outbreak has been successfully contained but in a country which was recently ranked ninth in the world for beef production, it was a serious crisis. Last year saw seen unusual weather patterns and thankfully rain, although some areas have suffered drought conditions.

Life song

The Friday morning pastors' group have completed the Towards Maturity in Christ course and the sessions have been times of growing trust and fellowship, spiced with great honesty and also humour as we studied the Bible together, prayed and sought to grow more Christ like. Our prayer for each pastor is that they will be more fully equipped to lead others to freedom in Christ and to be disciples of Jesus.

One of the mums in Sally's Bible study group put it quite succinctly – "You can't hear from Jesus and follow Him if you don't take the time to sit down, be quiet and listen." The band Casting Crowns challenge us to consider our life song: "May the words I say and the things I do make my life song sing to You."

As 2012 offers opportunities and challenges may we take time in prayer to talk to God and to listen to Him. The psalmist shares his life experience with us noting that "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage" (Psalm 119:54).

We pray with you that no matter where the pilgrimage takes each one of us during 2012, that the Lord's ways will be the songs that fill all our hearts directing our lives and actions.

Thank you for partnering with us in mission and for your prayers,

Yours in Him

Peter and Sally