

Marcés Mailing

May 2020



The LORD is with me;
I will not be afraid.
(Psalm 118:6)

Our Night-Blooming Cactus – this flowers during the night for one night about once a year and chose to do so, with 2 flowers right together, (first time that has happened), on our 30th Wedding Anniversary. Better than shop-bought flowers! (Photo taken 10.30 pm)

Please pray for:

Juan Carlos: Responsibilities in J el Nazareno and Social Help in the Diocese during the Covid 19 crisis

Penny: Responsibilities in J el N and Children´s Ministry

Bishop Jorge Luis: wisdom in leading the Diocese

Jesús El Nazareno: ability to keep in touch with the Lord and with each other

Country of Peru: President and Cabinet taking important decisions; economic stability in the current crisis; temporary Congress (Mar 2020 – July 2021)

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Dear friends

We didn't expect to write again so soon, but nor did we expect still to be in lockdown (and will be until at least 24 May). It really IS lockdown here, especially for children, who have not been out of their houses since lockdown began 8 weeks ago, but from 18 May they may go out for half an hour a day, within 500m of home. Apart from key workers, and soon-to-begin certain mining, fishing and food delivery services, the rest of us stay in (except for the essential food or medical supplies shopping, or visits to banks). Curfew, currently 6pm -4am each day (& all day Sundays), returns to 8pm on Mon; makes little difference to most of us at home anyway! We can't go to El Nazareno – 6km so hardly the local shops... Unfortunately, whilst this lockdown may well have slowed the rate of infection, the number of daily deaths is certainly not over its peak yet.

The verse is from “Aprendo con Pedro” – “I learn with Peter”. Realising that Holy Week would be in lockdown, we started sending teaching each day to children via WhatsApp; they had time since although a few were getting online teaching, most were not, and couldn't even revise previous work this school year since state schools still hadn't started the school year. Easter took place; we decided to continue. Most families receiving this do not have a computer, but DO have a mobile, so each day they receive a sequence of photographed pictures, video clips of Bible story & songs on the day's theme, linked with audios by Penny. At the end there are activities. Over the weeks older children have increasingly had more online schoolwork, & in some cases there may be 4 children trying to share one mobile for schoolwork, so there is not much time left for Bible teaching. But the latest commitment is that I send it before 7am, so they are encouraged to start the day with the Bible. Apart from our JEN children, many in other Church groups or individuals, including some in N Argentina, receive these materials.



Please pray; it takes longer than anticipated to find appropriate videos, activities etc and put it all together, 7 days a week. However, how encouraging when sent a video of Mum (only exposure to Church was Messy Church on one occasion) helping her 6 year old, telling the story whilst he acted it out with the finger puppets he had just made.

Our work with the families seems to be more effective now than when we tried visiting, since people are at home! Is it easier for them to pray for the first time over the phone where no one is looking, than with you there physically? It was wonderful to discover yesterday that Julio (recently returned to God after an emergency operation) and his wife were praying together about a family concern – it's good to have things to praise God for. Please pray for Julio, wife Susy and children & granddaughter.



Carrying out services etc with limited technological possibilities for most is challenging. Between Zoom, WhatsApp groups and WhatsApp chats, and with some people using borrowed phones, we succeed in a Bible study, prayer meetings and Sunday service. Apart from Church members, there are "Friends of the Church", invited to Zoom meetings (sometimes attend) & sent WhatsApp chats. Prayer meetings and services are immediately followed by WhatsApp group alternatives; two phones here gives a possibility of another 6 phones taking part. The most successful service format is WhatsApp chat - a sequence of audios and video clips.

As may be imagined, economic repercussions were felt here almost immediately, since a large proportion live from day-to-day. The Cabinet announced handouts for the most vulnerable at the beginning, which they did eventually receive; most of them are now in the process of receiving a second quota. For independent workers a second list was prepared; they too are currently receiving their 2nd quota. HOWEVER some people did not receive either. Also, an increasing number no longer have jobs; the govt has schemes to pay a certain rate to some for 3 months, but the high level of informality in "contracts" means many do not comply with certain legal requirements on terms of employment. In addition, apart from food, finding the gas cylinder is empty is a major problem, to say nothing of needing to pay rent. Thankfully, we have been able to give help to some families, thanks to gifts from here and overseas. In JEN this began by sending "vouchers" (by the oh-so-valuable WhatsApp), for use at a grocery stall in the market owned by the family of Karla (one of our young people); they had literally opened this stall the day lockdown was announced and it has proved a real God-send. The recipients show the voucher (of which Karla has also received a copy) to acquire what they want; part may be given in cash in order to buy veg etc, No one in Karla's family has a bank account, but our treasurer DOES, so she takes £50 at a time (the max possible from an agent; no ATM near). Some of this help is shared with others in the wider Diocese; both of us are involved in both trying to find support for the Diocese (which includes how to pay clergy stipends), and how to distribute gifts that come. A challenge that will last for some time. Sad details come to light on the family situations – eg the discovery that in one case the family of 5 children (from 4 different fathers) are NOT all currently with the mother since the 3 oldest (aged 11, 14 and 17) have been sent to respective fathers /paternal grandparents – none of whom really wants them but nor does the mother.....



Has Covid 19 affected many we know? Someone from a nearby Church was amongst the first 100 deaths, making it very real in El Nazareno. Juan Carlos follows up her son who has psychological problems. JC has also been contacted by others, contacts from years ago, who no longer attend any Church, but seek guidance as they face different situations, health being one cause but family dysfunction usually also a significant factor.

Our children? Jonny is working from home, as is Becky (in Leeds). Lizi (also in Leeds) currently has no job. Juan Carlos' mother Hilda continues with one of his brothers, but may come here at some point.

- those coming closer to God –
- strengthened relationships with parents of children in the area
- technology to continue communicating the Gospel
- ability to help with material needs



Please pray.....



Weekly activities in Jesús el Nazareno

Sun-Sat (every day): WhatsApp children's devotional – pray for inspiration & practicalities

Sun: 6.30 pm Zoom service
7.45 WhatsApp groups

Tues: 7.30pm Zoom Bible Study (Ephesians)

Thurs: 7.30pm Zoom prayer meeting

General prayer requests

- Coronavirus emergency:
 - health (workers, supplies, etc)
 - economy (provision of govt funding or other help for all who need it)
 - attitude of population towards respecting measures taken
- Becky (Leeds), Lizi (Leeds), Jonny (Lima), Hilda (JC's mum – Lima)

Thank you for your fellowship with us; you too are part of what happens in Jesús el Nazareno, in the Anglican Church in Peru, and in Peru, . Please keep in contact, by email or WhatsApp at +51-942612987

God bless and protect you, now and always

Juan Carlos & Penny