

An Advent reflection from Bolivia



This month we are sharing an Advent reflection written by Eva Morales and Juan Castillo, husband and wife who work for Paz y Esperanza Bolivia. It is based on Matthew 1 v18-21:

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins."

The biggest mystery in the universe, the mystery of our salvation, takes place in the middle of everyday humanity. The story of real people shows us how God reveals himself in the middle of human history. A young Hebrew woman, who was about to marry, announces to her fiancé that she is pregnant and that it is the work of the Holy

Spirit. Her fiancé, who under the laws of the land had every right to abandon her for having betrayed their love, receives a divine revelation in his dreams telling him not to abandon her but accept her. These decisions taken by this man and this woman in Biblical history will bring about the coming of the Son of God to earth, the manifestation of the salvation of God for everyone.

So what can we learn from them?

- God appears in the middle of our circumstances, even if they seem complex.
- We can learn from the courage of a young woman who listened to God's calling despite the taboos of her time.
- Joseph hears the voice of God and decides to accept his pregnant fiancée, an admirable attitude. The story of the Gospel leads to a new society, one where old values and divisions no longer exist.
- The story of salvation and the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus begins a new order, one which involves the universality of the love of God. This is shown in the love story of Mary and Joseph, a love that breaks down barriers.



“Are you willing to take risks in God’s name like Mary and Joseph?”

God is calling us to show people his amazing love for each and every one of us through our own personal stories.”

GORDON’S TRIP TO SCOTLAND

Trustee Gordon Davies spent three weeks in October visiting churches in Scotland, sharing about the work of PyE. He writes: *“I was very encouraged to receive invitations from churches in the Glasgow area to introduce them to the ministry of PyE. It went well and the congregations seemed appreciative.*

I was already aware that Scots are great supporters of and participants in overseas mission, and this was borne out in people’s responses.

It has certainly added to the numbers supporting PyE in prayer, with finance and with general interest. Although some of the topics mentioned are inevitably challenging, to share and discover the positive fruit of much of PyE’s labours in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador is always encouraging.

Don’t forget, I am always available for other opportunities that supporters may want to offer.”



Gordon at Helensburgh Baptist Church

PLEASE PRAY FOR PAZ Y ESPERANZA BOLIVIA:

- Please give thanks for the staff and volunteers (Kevin, Judy, Guisela, Marcelo, Soledad, Juan and Eva) and pray they will receive strength and energy to do their work.
- That God’s light will shine bright in the churches of Santa Cruz.
- For the work of PyE helping women and children suffering from domestic and sexual violence.

BOOK A SPEAKER for your small group or church, to equip you to stand alongside those silenced by oppression and injustice across Latin America.

Email gdavies@pazyesperanza.org

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