



*Paz y
Esperanza*



Human rights crisis in Peru

This month we will be focusing on the work of Paz y Esperanza Peru, looking at several areas of their work as the team mark the 40th anniversary of the case of human rights abuse in Callqui (picture above), which is the case on which Paz y Esperanza was founded.

We spoke to Jorge Arboccó, who heads up PyE Peru, and he shared the latest developments and his prayer requests. The team continue to work to promote the rights of the most marginalised in society, including indigenous communities, disabled people, children and victims of violence. They also continue to seek justice for the victims of terrorism.

Peru is facing many challenges and according to Jorge the situation has worsened in recent years and is even worse than during the Covid pandemic. The country has had five presidents in six years, there is very low confidence in the government, poverty levels are very high, protests have ended in serious violence and the economy is suffering. One of the challenges facing organisations such as PyE, is groups who are against non-governmental organisations and actively trying to shut them down.



Marking the 40th anniversary of the Callqui killings

In August, the team will be joining with churches to mark 40 years since six Christian indigenous men were murdered by the military on 1 August 1984 in Callqui. A ceremony will be held at the *Ojo que Lloro* (The Eye that Cries) in Lima. This is a memorial that was designed to honour the thousands of victims who have died as a result of terrorism, to strengthen collective memory and promote

peace and reconciliation. The state has admitted responsibility in the Callqui case and the court case began in March 2022. However, the quest for justice in this and two other emblematic cases (Putis and Ccarpaccasa/Sillaccasa/Sankaypata) is still ongoing. For years, PyE has been working on these. In 2023, there was progress in all the cases, achieving compensation for families of the victims who were murdered and prison sentences for some of the perpetrators. This help is key to achieving reconciliation and to ensure that these types of situations are not repeated in the future



Jorge shared that the Peruvian government is seeking to leave the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which may mean some of the cases will be stalled - or even dropped altogether as many powerful interests in the army and politics want to seek impunity for crimes committed before 2000, in other words during Fujimori's dictatorship. This leaves Peru in a dangerous position without a functioning and just legal system, and would leave human rights abuses unpunished.



Protecting indigenous rights and the environment

One of the ways that PyE is trying to help indigenous communities is by promoting their rights to their land and trying to stop contamination and deforestation. One of PyE's projects is to help communities mark the boundaries of their territory. They have helped 36 communities draw up maps and lay physical boundaries to help them safeguard their lands



Working with vulnerable people

In the San Martin region, the team have been working with the deaf community for 12 years to fight for the right for deaf children to access education and be taught in sign language. They work with the children, their families and communities to help them avoid the isolation that deafness can sometimes cause and give them access to opportunities. The education ministry has hired a deaf person, so this has been a big step forward. The team wish to expand this work with deaf children to many schools.

In Lima, the team are helping Venezuelan migrants and indigenous migrants from the Andes, especially women with young children, by teaching them skills so they can support themselves. They are also trying to tackle domestic, sexual and psychological violence by doing preventative and educational work within vulnerable communities to tackle the roots of violence as well as supporting victims with psychological therapy.

Please pray



Jorge asked for prayer for the many issues facing Peru. Please pray for the ceremonies in August, the threats to democracy posed by corrupt groups, for the families facing violence, poverty and poor mental health and for those such as PyE who are working to promote human rights and feel intimidated. We will share more detailed prayer requests in our August prayer update.

Thank you for your continued prayer and financial support for PyE.

Do please join us with a regular or one-off donation at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/pazyesperanza>