

Tim Curtis

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The call in action

Dear praying friends

Greetings from Rio Verde.

There has been good news on the health front recently with the Paraguayan government declaring the end of the COVID-19 state of emergency on 19 April. Most restrictions, such as the wearing of face masks, have been lifted, including a lifting of some travel restrictions. The 19 April also happens to be the Día del indígena, or First Nations Celebration Day, so there was extra cause to celebrate. It has been encouraging to see more indigenous people vaccinated in recent months, especially in La Herencia and El Estribo where there have been effective health auxiliaries working for the Paraguayan ministry of health. However there has been considerable resistance in some of the Angaité communities in La Patria, where some people have seen the vaccination campaign as a diabolical plot.

During Easter I visited the Énxet speaking community at Dos Palmas, where I was able to show The Jesus Film for Children. Now that there is electricity there I was able to help prepare the main Good Friday service on PowerPoint, which meant that the congregation at the Encuentro con Dios church was able to follow the hymns and readings, some of which they requested as the service progressed. I was struck by how well the congregation joined in the singing, which was led by local musicians from the village. Then on Easter Sunday I attended the service at La Herencia, over which pastor Elvio Cabañas has oversight. Here again, the singing was joyful and moving. After the service there was a community meal in the church.

One of the major events so far this year in the Anglican Church in the Chaco has been the ordination as presbyter of Gumerindo Torres, who is one of the indigenous members of the executive committee of the Anglican Church of Paraguay. He was ordained by Bishop Andrés Rodríguez in Gumerindo's home village, at Colonia 24, on Sunday 20 February. Members of the Chaco team including the vicar general and Bishop Andrés Rodríguez travelled to La Patria on 19 February, the day before the ordination service. An afternoon service was held at Corralón, just a mile or two from Gumerindo's community. All the indigenous Anglican pastors from La Patria attended this service, and their licences to officiate were renewed. Bishop Andrés and Agustin led the service and I preached in a mixture of Guaraní and Spanish, which was quite a challenge.



Name: Tim Curtis

Location: Paraguayan Chaco

My call: To promote use of the Holy Scriptures, making people wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

My role: To focus on discipleship training materials within the Énxet language and the production of study materials.



Gumerindo Torres, in the light blue shirt, and his family at the ordination service in La Patria

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After the service the team split up into three groups and stayed overnight in different villages within the large La Patria tract of land. Then on Sunday morning all the pastors and deacons were together again for the ordination service. It was wonderful to see Bishop Andrés in action again, both ordaining Gumerindo and preaching at the service. Everyone was happy and very surprised to see Bishop Andrés again after spending a number of years battling against ill health.

We continue to make progress on the Northern Enlhet Bible in Filadelfia. We finished work on Numbers in March, and have begun checking Deuteronomy with Evencio, Brígido, and team coordinator Arnold. Arnold's son Christoph recently joined the OM team on board the Logos Hope, so it has been fascinating to hear of its progress visiting different ports from here in landlocked Paraguay.

I continue to work on and produce printouts for pastors and leaders. Recently we have been looking at the meaning of the word **hope**, examining its general meaning, but also seeing how it is used in the New Testament, and how it has been translated into the three different languages used by the Énxet and related indigenous people (Énxet, Guaraní, and Spanish). For example, we have looked at verses such as, "To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles, the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory", Colossians 1:27. The latest printout I have been distributing examines the definitions and uses of this word "hope". I also continue to print out sample pages of the Énxet dictionary, which are very popular. Asunción Rojas continues to help me with these materials.

Finally, I had an interesting experience recently when a large group of demonstrators came to stay at the centre. I had just returned from a trip to Asunción and was somewhat alarmed to be approached by a couple of political leaders asking if it was all right for 70 stranded demonstrators to stay in our bunk bed building. A few days previously they had blocked the highway, holding up traffic for hours. Then, afterwards, they had been unable to get home because rain had closed the roads. The group included women and children. They assured me that transport would be organised in the next day or two, so their stay would be short. It turned out that I knew a number of the demonstrators, so I said they could stay. Their only request was for some large plastic basins to do their washing in! Clothes were hung up to dry all over the place. On the Sunday we held a service in the classroom next to the translation office, which was attended by most of the demonstrators. Eventually everybody got back to La Patria. I still don't know what political group or organisation was behind the demonstration.

I give thanks for the Lord's protection and presence day by day, and for your prayers and support.

Tim Curtis



Photos from top to bottom: Bishop Andrés with the La Patria pastors and deacons in February; lunch after Gumerindo's ordination; Tim with the Northern Enlhet translation team; stranded demonstrators stay at the Rio Verde Centre

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