



# Tim Curtis

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**Location:** Paraguay



**What I do:** Building up the body of Christ through writing, translating and producing discipleship training and study materials in the Énxet language.

Dear praying friends,

Greetings from the Paraguayan Chaco.

At last the cooler weather has arrived after very hot weather from January to April. I give thanks for abundant rain in recent weeks, and for increased energy levels that the much cooler weather has brought.

It has been quite a year for travel. During January the Sínodo Indígena, the CMS sponsored indigenous mission group, met in Cochabamba, Bolivia, to plan for the year ahead. It was a privilege to travel there with colleagues pastor Elvio Cabañas and Hermenegildo Torres. The team was lead by bishop Joel Millanguir from southern Chile and Mirna Paulo from northern Argentina. Bolivian bishop Walter Toro was our special guest. Particularly on our minds was the forthcoming indigenous congress to be held in Chile in October this year, but we also looked at ways to continue to fund or increase support for existing indigenous pastoral training ventures and strengthen Christian leadership. For example, in Paraguay, pastor Gustavo Flores' Bible teaching ministry amongst the indigenous Southern Énxet and Angaite continues to be supported by CMS. We evaluated the different educational needs in areas where indigenous people have faced the greatest challenges, in particular lack of access to higher education. I am very pleased that Hermenegildo has secured support from Sínodo Indígena to finish his high school education.



*Sínodo Indígena group, Cochabamba, Bolivia.*

Towards the end of February I took my annual holiday, returning to the UK for a few weeks to rest and to stay with my father, Tom Curtis, in Tewkesbury. I was very encouraged to see that Dad is in good health, and still able to live independently at his home. He is very much involved in the life of St James, Stoke Orchard, and St John the Baptist, Tredington, where he has a good circle of Christian friends and where enjoys playing the organ and leading the intercessions. I had time for a short visit to Oxford, where I stayed with friends Donald and Elizabeth Hay. I enjoyed browsing and buying books at Blackwells. It was good to see my sisters Roz and Zoe and manage a visit to see my Aunty Peggy, who is in a home in Malpas, Cheshire. I came back to Paraguay refreshed, and with a good supply of tea.

Just after I got back, the Synod met in Asunción with the full participation of the representatives of the Chaco, Concepción and the churches in Asunción. The Synod voted overwhelmingly to accept the proposal that Argentine bishop Brian Williams act as bishop elect Ronald Irene's mentor. As usual, all the churches gave their reports on the past years' activities. I was an observer on this occasion, not a delegate, as I have

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been during some of the Synods I have attended since the late 1980s. I gave my report on the translation work, the indigenous mission group with its plans for the congress in Chile and discipleship training materials. I also helped with the logistics, driving some of the delegates back to the Chaco when the Synod ended on Sunday 23 March after a service at the cathedral.

From 15 to 18 April, there were several days of Bible teaching at the centre in Rio Verde for the pastors of El Estribo, La Patria and La Herencia. On Friday 19 April, the pastoral team, led by Rev Ronald Irene and Gustavo Flores, traveled to La Patria where around 400 Angaité indigenous church members were confirmed by Bishop Emeritus Greg Venables.

From 25 April until 3 May I took part in a training course run by the Jesus Film Project and the Paraguayan Bible Society. This is a course designed to enable the dubbing of the 1979 Jesus film into different languages. My Southern Éñxet colleagues, translator Asunción Rojas and Sunday school teacher Guillermo Gonzalez from Makxawayá, took part, as well as translators and pastors representing Maká, Nivacle, Chamacoco, Northern Enlhet and Mbya speakers. The first stage of the project is to translate the script of the film into the language required, and to ensure that the utterances fit into the loops provided and coincide with the lip movements of the characters. A provisional or “dummy” recording is done for this. The temporary recordings and the translated script are checked by community members: in our case, speakers of Southern Éñxet. A back translation of the translated script is also produced and later checked by consultants. When the script is approved, the dialogues for the different characters are printed out and distributed among the 20 or so characters so that they can practise their parts. Technicians are then sent out by the Jesus Film Project to do the recording for real.

Asunción and Guillermo are currently translating the script into Éñxet using our translation office in Rio Verde, and doing the temporary recordings to fit into the loops provided using a computer loaned by the Jesus Film Project. I am now very excited that this project has got off the ground. Please pray for us as we translate the script, do these temporary recordings and become familiar with the programme, solving the occasional glitches that arise. Please also pray for protection for the Rio Verde centre and the computers and other equipment stored here. We had another attempted break in this May.

Please also pray as I continue my involvement in the Northern Enlhet Bible revision with colleagues Arnold, Evencio, Brígido and Melvin. We are continuing to work on Isaiah and Jeremiah in Filadelfia. Arnold's son Christof will be returning to Paraguay after spending over a year on the OM's ship Logos Hope. He is seeking to continue his studies in Germany later in the year.

“I will extoll the Lord at all times, his praise will always be on my lips” Psalm 34:1

Many thanks for your prayers,

Tim



**Photos from top to bottom:** Tim with his father, Tom Curtis, and sister Roz; Bishop Emeritus Greg Venables confirming church members in La Patria; the Jesus Film Projects participants in Paraguay; Tim, Mexican technician Ivan, Guillermo and Asunción working on the Jesus Film Project.



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