

Report From Nuevo Reto December 2010.

To all the members of the congregation and supporters of Nuevo Reto, I would like to say, both from myself and on behalf of all of the children and staff of Nuevo Reto, a very big thank you for your continued generosity and support. I am sure by now Nuevo Reto is a familiar name for some of you, but for the benefit of others, I would like to introduce the work of "New Challenge" and some of the faces who you may have seen in the display on the notice board.

New Challenge offers a home for disadvantaged children from newborn up to (provisionally) 18 years old, located on the outskirts of Guatemala City (the capital of Guatemala). Although the initial intention was to support the children through to adulthood, now that some of the first children have reached 18 or 19, they continue to be part of the New Challenge family, assisting the Pastor and the younger children whilst continuing with their studies.

Pastor Jacob established New Challenge in 1991 in a four room house in the centre of Guatemala City which today has relocated to the hills above the city and expanded to a purpose built house for boys and girls up to 12 years, with plans to construct another purpose built house for the teenagers (one made from bricks rather than a mix of corrugated iron, wood and concrete which is where they live at present). Although the houses have capacity for approximately 40 children, they are currently home to just 12 children. It is not a lack of space or need which keeps the numbers of permanent children low but limited resources. Pastor Jacob's aim for each of the children he accepts is to be able to give them, amongst other things, regular meals, clothing, medical attention, safe shelter and a

good education but not at the expense of the support offered to the other children. New Challenge therefore also runs an outreach programme in the local neighbourhood, supporting children who remain with their families with food, clothes and school supplies.

Many thanks to each of you for your generous support of Nuevo Reto this Christmas. The Pastor and the children are all extremely touched to know that there are people in "Santa Maria" thinking of them and would like you to know that it means a great deal to them that you are able to show your kindness even though you don't know them. I visited New Challenge in November, which was the start of the summer school holidays. The PCC had kindly arranged for part of the donations to be made early so I was able to take it with me, which was gratefully received. It allowed us to take all of the children out for the day to a shopping centre in the capital which has an indoor rollercoaster. I even managed to persuade the Pastor (despite his efforts to "just watch") and Margarita, the main carer of the children in the "first stage" house, to ride with us. Margarita, having never been on one before, ended up in the front seat but after a short pause at the end to let her heart stop thumping, decided it had actually been great fun. This was followed by lunch and ice creams and an afternoon roller skating. You may have already seen some of the photos from this event on the display and Janet Pritchard has a couple of videos.

Apart from the fun day out, the contribution you provide allows the children to have a new pair of trousers or a top for Christmas (new clothes are the traditional Christmas present), and there will be red apples and grapes on the table for Christmas dinner, (a tradition equivalent to nuts and satsumas

here). It will also help with the costs of returning to school, as the new school year begins in January.

Almost all of the children passed their exams this year which means they will progress to the next school year (Porfi is currently having extra lessons in the hope he will pass the exams during the holidays). Jose finished primary school, and Guillermo, secondary. You can see them in their graduation outfits in the photo album on the display. Both will continue with their studies, with Guillermo starting the equivalent of A' Levels in January. One of the parts I enjoy most about my visits is being able to watch the children develop and talk to them about their hopes for the future. It is wonderful to see that each of the older ones has settled on a future career which they wish to pursue, and with your support, they have the best chance possible to turn their dream into a reality and break the poverty cycle through access to education. Guillermo wants to become an architect, Francisco, an accountant, Vivian, a doctor, Jose, a professional skateboarder!

I understand that the last couple of years have been financially difficult for everyone and your continued generosity and support of Nuevo Reto is greatly appreciated. Any contribution you are able to make really does have a direct impact on the lives of the children - muchisimas gracias a todos!

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a peaceful new year,

Charlotte Pritchard.

December 2010