

## Paul, Sarah, Sophia & Emily Tester



September 2015  
It has been too long...!

## CMS Mission Partners in Lima, Peru



“The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life” - John 4 v 13-14

### *Dear Praying Friends,*

We must begin with an apology for having not put together a prayer letter for too long now. Over the last few months we have been involved with so many things that writing this update has got pushed down the list. We hope that this letter gives a flavour of all that has been happening and we will look forward to being in touch again much sooner next time.

#### **Studies:**

Much of August was consumed with Paul finishing his dissertation which he handed in on the deadline which was also his birthday! “The Critical Principles of Christian Discipleship with Young People in Lima, Peru” considered how the young people here in Lima can be best made disciples of Christ and focussed on the changes needed in the church to help make this happen. It linked in so well with his youth ministry and discipleship work across the diocese that God’s hand in it was clear.



A few days away post-dissertation!

#### **Ministry:**

The Diocese of Peru is currently looking to grow into four regional dioceses. Paul is part of the electoral college that nominated the three recently consecrated missionary, suffragan (assistant) Bishops. The electoral college is now looking to nominate four diocesan bishops in the coming months. Do please pray for God’s hand and guidance in this process.



The three newly consecrated Bishops, Jorge (left) and Juan Carlos and Alejandro (right) who were given bags with a bible and communion set and sent out in mission.

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The change to multiple dioceses has meant that the national youth ministry and discipleship movement have, along with all the other diocesan ministries, had to prepare a vision, strategy and plan for the next six years (leading up to Peru's bicentenary of independence in 2021) to support the work of the new dioceses. This took lots of prayer and thinking, plus consultations around the country, but we now have both of these plans prepared. The challenge now is to put them into practice!



Paul about to engage in "sock wars" at Happening!

In Lima the youth ministry has run a Happening retreat for teenagers from Lima which was very successful. Led and organised by younger leaders, and with around 60 in attendance, it was a great success with many young people encouraged in their faith and challenged to go out and live it. There have also been two student age "youth days" which are an attempt to change the way we work with our 18+ young people. Because of work and study pressures, Sundays seem to be the only available day for most and so we have prepared these days to encourage and strengthen the young people and equip them for the lives they are leading in their work places, universities and homes. We have taken them out of Lima and on the second day, led by other youth leaders, we were camping and trekking in the foothills of the Andes!



Jennifer and Roxana, two young leaders from San Juan Evangelista decide they've had enough of Paul on the trek and want to push him into the waterfall!

Locally the San Juan Evangelista and San Pablo youth ministries continue. The students at San Juan Evangelista have just completed the "Purpose Driven Life" course and at San Pablo we are half way through "Alpha". The teenagers at San Juan Evangelista are going through the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments and are also part of two tribes competing for the prize of a trip to a Christian concert!

As part of the discipleship ministry, Paul has been part of the initial visits to six parishes around the country to observe current practice. The team is now working through the data collected and planning for the visits to the rest of the parishes and mission. We are seeking to gain an understanding as to the state of discipleship across the diocese from which we then hope to help each parish and mission make disciples with a strong faith that they put into practice.

As part of the discipleship



Demonstrating the importance of discipleship with clergy in Huancayo.

### Family Life:

Time seems to have sped up now we are a family of four! Emily is very true to her name meaning 'industrious'. She delights in emptying (and sometimes refilling) drawers, in running, climbing and reading (at least fifty books a day!) She is such a smiley, sociable little girl and had a great time celebrating her first birthday with family and friends.

It seemed crazy that with Sophia only just turning three we would already need to be applying for a school place that will effectively determine where she will be studying when she is 17! Peru has one of the poorest standards of state education in Latin America so we always knew that we would want to find a private school. After having visited five schools, and much discussion, we hope to have a place at a school that runs the international baccalaureate throughout the school confirmed by the end of September for Sophia to start in March 2017!

Sarah being able to drive and venture onto Lima's slightly crazy roads has made Sarah and the girl's world much larger! Sophia has picked up on Mum's need to pray before each journey and on one occasion got in and said 'Thank you Jesus, amen' in order to speed up our departure.

We recently had a wonderful couple of weeks with Sarah's mum. Sophia had a never-ending list of things to do with Grandma and particularly enjoyed their afternoon at 'Disney on Ice'. A few days away at the coast gave us a much needed break and the chance to see penguins, pelicans, flamingos, dolphins and sea-lions in the wild.

Sophia on a nursery school trip to a farm with her friends. She does now like wearing her uniform more!



**In Brief:**

- We've run fundraisers selling hot dogs, jelly and clothes so young people could attend the events we mention and took a group of them to the zoo!
- We've helped with the visit of a team and also had the visit of a small group with Bishop Ken "Fanta" Clarke, all through SAMS Ireland, long term supporters of the Youth Ministry here.

**For your prayers:**

Please thank God for:

- Helping and guiding us through so much in the last few months and for his blessing on our service.
- Young people committing their lives to Christ and growing in their faith.
- So many young people who have been encouraged through Happening and the youth days out and for younger leaders taking on more responsibility.
- The consecration of the new Bishops

Please pray for:

- God's leading and for wise decisions regarding the girls schooling.
- Wisdom to know if we need to help Sophia, struggling to pronounce several sounds, or if it's a natural part of her bilingual language development.
- The new missionary Bishops and the move towards the formation of new missionary dioceses.
- The Youth Ministry and also for the Discipleship movement, and for the Church as a whole to get fully behind both, particularly in this period of change.
- The young people and children of Peru, and especially for those who have decided to follow Christ and for those young leaders continuing to serve others.
- For the upcoming events: Family Festival (26<sup>th</sup> September), Youth Gathering (17<sup>th</sup> October) and National Youth Leader's Retreat (6-8<sup>th</sup> November).
- The Alpha course in San Pablo and upcoming Alpha weekend.
- For wisdom to know how to help Maritza (one daughter back at home, two still in care) without making such a difference that the girls are returned to her before she is capable of caring for them.

**What would you do?**

We have been making decisions about Sophia's (and by extension Emily's) schooling that will affect them for the rest of their lives. Lots of children here in Peru are in State Schools but the general level of education is very poor. Most parents who can afford to put their children into Private Schools, many of which are very affordable, although the standards of education vary greatly. Others are exceedingly expensive and are comparable to very good schools in the UK, but out of reach of the average Peruvian. Sarah and Paul made the decision to come to Peru, not Sophia and Emily, and so is it fair to them to put them into a school that is not at the level of education that they would receive in the UK? Is it right to spend what many Peruvians can't earn in a month just on one of their monthly school fees so that they can be at a good school? What decision would you make?

*With love and prayers, Paul, Sarah, Sophia and Emily XXX*