

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF URUGUAY

In 1988 the Anglican Diocese of Uruguay was formed and from the beginning the problems and the difficulties would be great. Uruguayans have the highest quality of life of any South American country and wealth is more evenly distributed. Yet due to rising inflation the poor are the fastest growing community.



The capital Montevideo, overlooking the mouth of the River Plate gives the impression of being "very European", however it is a city which is in real need of inward investment, with poverty and homelessness on the increase. Recent studies suggest that over 45,000 children under 4 who dwell in the capital are living in abject poverty.

The population of Uruguay is quite small in comparison to other South America countries with around 4 million people, but the problems which the nation and Church face are huge. For example: it has been estimated that around 40% of the population is either under 14 or else over 64. The social services are at breaking point which all increases the work of the Church in a society whose outlook and philosophy is totally atheistic.



THE WORK

Under the leadership of Rt Rev Miguel Tamayo and his wife Marta, improvements are being made and changes are being seen in the lives of many Uruguayans.

Like much of South America the work appears to be overwhelming, so what is the aim of the Diocese? What can the Anglican Church hope to achieve in this situation?

Their main four objectives are:

- To bring the Living God to a secular society in desperate need and hungry for God.
- To reach the people where they are, (such as the Colon housing project) and meet their social and spiritual needs.
- To be equipped to play their role in what God wants for Uruguay.
- To ensure they have the right human and financial resources to enable them to initiate their programmes of evangelism and social work.

THE FUTURE

So what are the aims of the Church in Uruguay for the future? Recently the Church has opened four new mission areas:

Fray Bentos: the Church closed down in the 1950's but has recently reopened and in a short space of time there is a congregation of over 30 people

Rivera: A larger church was built in September 2004 which was the third move the congregation have made since the Mission was established.

Progresso: Consists of a group of between 10 and 20 families which for the

small church community; principally women, adolescents and children. It seeks to respond in the most straight forward way to the idea that in the poorest people the face of God can be found.

Tacuarembó: This little mission, in the interior of the country, was born as a fruit out of a painful time for the family of Sra. Lilián Silveira – coordinator of the Saint Laurence Soup Kitchen, which functions out of the crypt of the Cathedral. A young congregation of less than 20 but seeking to serve the Lord in their area.

Working along side all of these new projects is the ongoing work of the Church which includes:

Youth Work

Housing

Health Care

Community Development

Feeding Programmes

Night Shelters

With only a few hundred members and the youngest Diocese in the Anglican Communion, the Diocese of Uruguay seeks to be faithful to the Lord and bring the Good



News of Jesus Christ to every part of Uruguayan life.

YOUR ROLE

If you would like to prayerfully or financially support the work of the Church in Uruguay, please write to:

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