

**Land for Life**

**Fundación Refugio**

**Circular No. 43 September 2017**

Dear Friends,

Maria's father, Eduardo Crawley, passed away in July after a long battle with cancer. This sad event happened whilst we were on a short break visiting the kids in Cordoba. Maria, who had a trip booked, was able to travel to be with her mother in the UK for a couple of weeks. Although she did not get to see Eduardo it allowed for her family to have a brief-get together. We are grateful she had this chance, and that Andrew was able to be at home during this time. We would value your prayers for Maria's mum Elba, as she adapts to this loss.

Work wise we have been kept busy as ever, but happy with the way things are working out with the two jobs.

### **Conference cancelled...but there is a silver lining.**

Rather frustratingly, the ACEN regional conference we had been planning for October had to be called off at the last minute due to several Bishops who said they were not going to be able to attend. By then we already had our external speaker (from the US) lined up and his ticket booked..

In retrospect this hiccup may have had a silver lining. Our Bishop, Nick Drayson, was recently asked out of the blue and at very short notice to run a workshop on Creation Care for pastors in Peru, as part of a series of meetings he was attending there last month. This is what he reported back:

- People in various congregations are directly affected by environmental problems (mining, lack of water)
- Pastors are really keen to hold the regional consultation, and would send several people funds permitting.
- Churches are geared up to try and deal with environmental issues, but have yet to establish links with similar minded networks.

This apparent interest from Peru may yet prove to be the catalyst we need to enable us to be more effective in planning and executing the now postponed conference. We will be meeting some bishops next month to define a new date, which will probably be early next year. The bad news is that the meeting cancellation meant we had to give up on some funds that had been earmarked for the event, and which have since been reassigned to other ACEN work.

### **La Caldera**

We are now in discussion with architects developing a master plan for the La Caldera Diocesan Retreat centre. Andrew is working closely with Daniel Lezcano, a deacon in the city church of San Andres, and Aida Cuenca, the Diocesan Administrator.

Once the master plan for the site is defined and approved, we will select and proceed with prioritizing work and start with renovating and upgrading dormitories and toilet facilities. We will be ensuring access for disabled people, which is still rather a novel concept in this region.



**Deacon Daniel Lezcano (right) and Arquitecto Bruno discussing plans in La Caldera**

## Indians getting more attention ...

A series of recent events have led to indigenous land claims making it into the national news recently. Much of the coverage relates to the “disappearance” a month and a half ago of a young man (Sergio Maldonado) who was accompanying Mapuche Indians down south in protecting lands they claim. He has not been seen since authorities took action against the protestors.

There is also a lot of coverage being given to Law 26.160. This law declared an “*emergency with regard to the possession and ownership of indigenous territories*” for four years. During that time the government was supposed to delimit indigenous lands as a first step towards issuing land titles. In the meantime the law banned any evictions, even if court orders had been issued. Despite the government not making a significant advance on the delimitations, it is now intent on ensuring the law is not extended any further. A decision is expected in the next few days or weeks.

*“In all these years, many judges have continued to order evictions of indigenous communities despite the law prohibiting it. That is why we believe that if the emergency is not extended, the situation will get worse,” explained Belén Leguizamón, coordinator of the Indigenous Rights area of the Lawyers Association for Human Rights and Social Studies in Northwest Argentina ([ANDHES](#)).*

## Compassion International

During August Andrew spent a week in Addis Ababa, joining Compassion colleagues conducting research on programme effectiveness. This was Andrew’s third visit to the country, giving him a chance to meet up with people he had worked with several years ago. He has since been tied to his desk battling with report writing. His next trip is to Peru, but this time he is travelling with Maria. This trip combines work and a couple of days rest.

## Family

As mentioned, Maria had a good, albeit brief, time with her mother in the UK. Before that, we had travelled to Cordoba to take Carolina back to University. Maria flew from there to the UK and Andrew drove back to Salta with Ceci. The kids are all doing well with their work, and looking forward to the now rapidly approaching end of the year.

## Prayer Pointers

Please pray for the following points:

- Pray (really hard) for a successful second attempt at running the creation care conference with the Bishops..
- Continue to pray for the work in La Caldera – that we may use available funds wisely.
- Pray for safety in our upcoming trip to Peru and for the kids in Cordoba.

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