



prayer guide



february

carnival

cups of water

hearing a need

Carnival. In Britain we indulge in pancakes, in Brazil they party – different ways to mark the start of Lent, traditionally a time of personal denial in the weeks that lead to Easter. Evangelicals in Latin America tend to steer clear of Carnival and the excesses it unleashes, preferring to engage in alternative activities. But let's not miss out on the opportunity Lent itself offers to take time out to contemplate our Saviour in a new way.

6 Square one. Brenda and Ian Darke (*right*) would appreciate prayer as they move back to Costa Rica after a year's sabbatical in Britain. They say, 'In terms of practicalities we are back to square one, needing to find both a home and a vehicle as soon as possible.' Pray for Ian, who will resume his work in Christian publishing in Spanish, and Brenda continuing hers with the Christian student movement.



14 Cups of cold water. 'These days it is normal to queue for at least three hours to get into a bank in Argentina. Temperatures are in the high 30s, and the wait is quite depressing. One local church in Bahía Blanca had the great idea of offering people chairs to sit on while queuing. They brought out stacks of chairs, stretching several hundred metres, and also offered cold water to the thankful crowd.' Latin Link's Stuart and Jenny Oliphant ask us to continue to pray for Argentina, and churches showing love in action.

17 Those who came to Latin Link's Latin Passion conference will remember **Winifred Every-Clayton**, one of the key speakers. She and Glenn are now back in Recife, Brazil. Winifred's intensive teaching programme started almost immediately and will continue as follows: until 6th in Recife on South American Christian History; 11th-16th in João Pessoa on Old Testament Mission Theology; 17th-22nd in Fortaleza on Mission Theology in Ezekiel and Daniel. Glenn has the luxury of preparation time until after Carnival before term begins for him.

Prayer Guide is designed for flexible use and the points may be used at any time during the month. We include a Diary of events, and for those who prefer to pray systematically, suggested dates against each prayer point.

diary



Latin Link's new Mission Development Worker, Chris Stansfield (above, left) with Spring Step candidates

1-3 Step orientation weekend at Fairfield church, north London, for Spring Teams going to Latin America in March. Pray for those leading the weekend, including Laurence and Sarah East, Katie Chapman, Chris Stansfield and Sarah Ewins from the London office, and for the 70 Steppers to be well prepared for the four months ahead.

9-12 'Carnival... a time when many evangelical churches in Brazil try to take their young people off on retreat to avoid the sensuality of the partying that goes on in the clubs and streets of our cities,' writes Jan Greenwood, who is planning a camp for 60 young people from her church and two other local churches. Please pray that this time away together would help them reflect on their commitment to Christ – as well as have a good time of fun and fellowship.

26 Alan Tower, Latin Link's Team Leader for Britain and Ireland visits **All Nations Christian College**. He asks us to pray for the preparation of the next generation of personnel for Latin America in European Bible colleges.

One Minute Window from Gwen Griffin (aka Aunty Quack-Quack) in Brazil

Every culture has its subtle social customs. In Rio Pequeno shantytown, São Paulo, if you want to find someone you use their nickname. Mine, translated, is Aunty Quack-Quack, Gwen being most easily pronounced 'Quem' here, the Portuguese for 'quack!' We've discovered these customs gradually, sometimes the hard way.



John and Gwen Griffin

Nobody actually said, 'I don't want to go to his house because I don't know him.' They just looked at me, nodded – and then didn't turn up.

Outsiders had suggested to us that the church building we were trying to negotiate land for would be an unnecessary encumbrance in the

shantytown. We could successfully run New Testament-style house churches. But over two years it has become more and more obvious that the group meeting in Gorete and Fernando's house has stagnated. Their relatives have been evangelised, a few very close friends and neighbours have joined the group, but there it has stuck... Many people have said to us, 'We will come to your church when you have your own building'.

Last August, William and Liliane were old enough to go up from the Sunday school to the youth group, which met nearby in the house of a family they did not know. We had a farewell outing, ate cake and drank *guaraná* (Brazilian cola), and the youth group was prepared for their arrival. But the following week they turned up at Sunday school again – with big smiles and no explanations!

So we have come to accept the fact that along with other unwritten laws, 'you only visit those you know well.' Doors are always open and you can wander in and out of your close relative or neighbour's house all day long without asking – but going into other people's houses is not on. So Lord, we really do need that plot of land soon, please!

For prayer:

- Praise God that the documents for the purchase of two adjacent plots in the shantytown are at last ready – but the owner and his wife have since separated and are arguing over the money. Please pray that the purchase can be settled, and that building can start on the church and school in April, as planned.
- The house church, described above, was started several years ago when parents of children in the Rio Pequeno school became Christians. Gwen prays that she will have time and opportunity to make regular visits to school families and share the Gospel with them.
- 2002 will be John and Gwen Griffin's last year in mission in Brazil – pray it will be a fruitful and happy one.

20 Hearing a need. Latin Link members working at the clinic at CCLE, the Evangelical Leaders' Training Centre, which serves a poor, local community near Santo Domingo de los Colorados, Ecuador, have become concerned about the number of children with hearing difficulties. They have started various initiatives to help them. Tim Pawson asks prayer for those involved as they –

- improve training for the teachers at a local school for the deaf
- make links with audiologists in England
- learn sign language
- start to use audiometers, and fit, clean and maintain hearing aids
- seek funding and donations of used hearing aids and moulds

22 Thanks from Bolivia (1). 'We would like to thank those who prayed for the event in the prison on 5th January. We were able to give away about 300 presents to prisoners with children. We also received donations of more than 300 cakes, and had clothes and money, which were also used for that day. The programme started late, but went well and the prisoners enjoyed it all. We are very grateful for all the donations, to the volunteers, those who took part in the programme through ballet and drama, and for the prisoners who worked with us to make the event a success!' Julie Noble, Oruro.



The main courtyard of Oruro prison

24 Thanks from Bolivia (2). 'Please pray for the setting up of the new craft workshop in Cochabamba, to help recently released women prisoners and their children. The premises are still not 100 per cent secured and we need to take a big step in faith for ongoing funding. A big thank you to God and to the 'Chain Event' (a sponsored cycle ride organised last year by Latin Link in Britain and Ireland) for raising enough money for us to open with.' Charles and Suzanne Windsor, Cochabamba.

28 Colombia ceasefire. Thank God for the extension of the ceasefire in Colombia after negotiations last month between government officials and leaders of the main rebel movement, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Pray for fresh talks which are being launched with immediate effect, aimed at a new ceasefire deal in advance of the new deadline set for the Colombian army to retake the safe haven controlled by FARC in April.

More ways to pray

Prayer Guide, sent on request by post or email each month, is one of a number of Latin Link prayer resources:

- **The 2002 Prayer Calendar** features all current Latin Link members, with a brief description of their country, team and work. With pages dated 1 to 31 and prayer points for each day of the year
- **Latinfile** – our full-colour news and information sheet, mailed three times a year
- **Members' prayer letters** – an insight into their work and country of service, as well as personal and family news – on request
- **Prayer groups** – an opportunity to join Latin Link's praying network. Ask for your nearest group, or we can help you start your own
- **Prayer cassettes** – recorded news and interviews, produced bi-monthly to provide additional material for prayer groups
- **Prayerline** – prayer pointers for the week ahead, on 020 7939 9018

For further details, please telephone or email us.

If you would like to make a donation to the cost of producing Prayer Guide, we suggest £5 annually.

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