

Would you like to
help us share
the gospel in Brazil ?



Peter and Nice Armati

SOUTH AMERICA



Brazil's need for the gospel

Brazil is 10% bigger than Australia in area, and is as wet as Australia is dry. It is the fifth most populated country in the world, and the eighth biggest economy. It is the only Portuguese speaking country in South America, occupying nearly half of that continent.

Not only is Brazil the world's largest Catholic country, but is also the largest spiritist country in the world. Many Brazilians are involved with the occult while still professing to be Christians.

Brazil has a population of about 192 million. The government is a presidential democratic republic with 26 states and a federal district. The biggest city is São Paulo with about 20 million people, the largest city in the Americas and arguably the third largest city in the world.

Since the 1960's Brazil has been undergoing a period of serious social change.

Massive inflation, crippling foreign debts and gross disparity between the rich 30% and the poor 70% brought Brazil to a turning point. Since 1992, the government has begun to address the needs of the economy and of the people.

Brazil is a melting pot of mixed people groups including European, Mixed Race, African, Asian and Amerindian (49.4% White, 42.3% Pardo (Brown), 7.4% Black, 0.5% Asian, 0.4% Amerindian).

According to the 2000 Demographic Census: 74% of the population follow Roman Catholicism; 15% - Evangelicals (Protestants); 1% - other Christian denominations; 1.3% - Kardecist spiritism; 0.3% - traditional African religions; 0.1% - Buddhism; 0.05% - Judaism; 0.02% - Islam; 0.01% - Amerindian religions; 0.6% - other religions; 7.4% - Agnosticism, Atheism or without a religion.

Many protestant churches are teaching a false gospel (focusing on prosperity doctrine and liberation theology). Despite the growth of the evangelical church in Brazil, the true gospel is hardly ever presented. In the area where we will be living, it is not possible to hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, there is a genuine hunger to know the truth about Jesus. Many people are disillusioned about the church and the evasive answers they have been given to many important questions throughout their lives.

Of key concern to people is their unspoken question “What will happen to me when I die?”. We are eager to share the answer with them.



Rio Preto - near bus station

Who will go?

We will go!

I, Peter, was born in Sydney. I started attending St James, Turramurra in 1953. I was baptised and confirmed at St James, and have been a member of the congregation, on and off, for the last 56 years. In 1959, I came forward to receive Jesus Christ at a Billy Graham crusade rally. In 2005 I completed the Moore College PTC course. I have been Registrar of School of Christian Studies for the past six years. In the last 18 years my faith and enthusiasm for evangelism have grown in leaps and bounds.

Nice was born in São Paulo, raised in Mirassol, and she has spent a great part of her life in Toronto, Canada and Sydney, Australia. Nice's father was the Mirassol Roman Catholic church organist for most of his life and he was a very religious man. Accordingly, Nice was raised strictly, within the Roman Catholic teachings. Nice accepted Jesus as her Saviour and Lord at the end of 2001, and has been blessed with the desire to work for God ever since. Nice has helped share the gospel with primary school children in Warrawee and North Turramurra Primary Schools with St James. She is a good evangelist, sharing the gospel one on one or in small groups, with enthusiasm, love and sensitivity.

Nice has been very active in creating materials to support our mission to Brazil. She has translated a number of publications such as "Just for Starters" and some of the PTC materials and has made a series of audio CDs on John's Gospel.

Some years ago we created an evangelistic website:

www.JesusForLife.net in English and Portuguese. There is a link to our website in the "Resources for Christians" section of the St James website.

Where will we be based?

We are planning to base our mission work in Mirassol, S.P.. Mirassol is about 455 Kms North-West of São Paulo (the capital of the state of São Paulo) - five hours drive on the expressway.



Mirassol from the air

Mirassol has a population of about 55,000 people. The nearest big city is São José do Rio Preto with a population of around 420,000. Rio Preto, the dominant city in the region and the 50th biggest city in Brazil, is 15 minutes drive on the expressway from Mirassol.

The plan for sharing the gospel - house churches and university students

We are called to witness for Jesus Christ in Mirassol. We have prayed for many years regarding what we should do to bring the truth of the gospel to people in the region. In a similar way to the way Christians gathered together in the early years after Christ's ascension, 'house churches' will be the best approach. These house church meetings will be simply called 'Bible Study'. This is because in Mirassol and the Rio Preto region, the word 'Church' has been totally misused and abused, and currently has very poor connotations.

Because of the way most of the Protestant churches in the region

practice prosperity doctrine, we do not anticipate ever asking our 'congregations' to contribute money to the 'house churches'.

We pray that God will raise up leaders for the house churches that are formed.

We also intend to assist University Students with their English oral skills. We plan to set up an English-speaking Bible Study group for them to practise their language skills - and get to know God and perhaps to follow Christ in the process.



Peter with Mirassol homegroup



Nice with Mirassol homegroup

Affirmation and God's approval

We have had many signs of God's approval of our mission. In the last five years, every time we have been back in Brazil, God has presented us with a number of people asking questions and wanting to learn more about the work of His Son on the cross.

We have been distributing Bibles and the booklet 'Jesus for Life' (translated into Portuguese) to many people. So far we have been blessed with one true conversion, and this person, our dear sister and friend Teresa, has been leading a bible study group in Mirassol for the past five years. Teresa relies on God for strength to carry on her work for Him. Also, with God's help, we have supplied her with much material to assist her work, including many sermons from St James.

Who will send us?

CMS does not operate in Brazil.

St James Anglican Church, Turramurra is planning to hold a commissioning service at the end of August 2010, to send us out to Brazil. St James will support us as Link Missionaries.

The positives we bring to the mission

We work together a little like Moses and Aaron (without the golden calf episode). I, Peter, have had good theological training the past 15 years. Nice was raised in the region and besides being a native speaker of Portuguese, she is totally familiar with the social and cultural aspects of the community there. We are both 'on fire' for God and we are strongly motivated to share the gospel. We have an extensive library of theological and mission-focussed books as a resource to help us with our work. Also, we have good technology skills which should facilitate keeping free-flowing communications of our activities with everyone who is supporting us.

Visas and Licenses

Nice holds a Brazilian passport. Peter has a Permanent Resident's visa which permits him to live in Brazil indefinitely. We both hold Brazilian Drivers licences.

Travel, accommodation and finances

Our travel to Brazil is already booked and paid for - we leave on 1 September 2010, God willing.

We have a place to live in Mirassol, so our accommodation is already organised.

We will be living on my (Peter's) Australian age pension, so our daily needs are assured. We believe that we should have enough capital to

buy one small old vehicle, but ideally we need a second old car as well.

One item we cannot afford is health insurance. This is expensive in Brazil - Basic health insurance (equivalent to Medicare) for people over 59 years of age would cost A\$6,800pa for the two of us (2010 price). This cost will increase over time.

We need to be very prayerful concerning this potential problem.

Challenges

One challenge will be to show people that we are not there to take advantage of them, as the local evangelical churches do. Another challenge is that whilst it is wonderful that Brazilians are so open to and receptive of the gospel, they are also open to other so called 'religious practices' such as spiritism and black magic which they elevate to the same level as the gospel. A further challenge will be the reliability of Brazilians to stick to a commitment: they are very attracted to immediate experiences.

And what is our challenging mission?

As John Stott has written "All authentic mission is incarnational mission. We are to be like Christ in his mission in his incarnation, in his service, in his love, in his endurance and in his mission." We pray God will empower us to be Christ-like in the region of Mirassol, and that we will live lives which are faithful to His commands, bringing glory to God.

Will you help us to spread the gospel in Brazil ?

Much prayer is needed! Without God's help we will fail in our mission. We especially need prayer support for:

- People to be transformed by God's gospel
- our security - physical and spiritual
- God's empowerment, guidance and leadership
- Peter to quickly develop improved Portuguese language skills
- God raising up leaders for the house-churches
- us living Christ-like lives and displaying the fruit of the Spirit
- us sharing the gospel in love and truth
- us being patient and enduring all things
- us remaining in good health
- us remaining faithful and productive in God's vineyard

Financial help with the mission work is also needed. We will have very limited financial resources when we arrive in Brazil. We need help with at least the following items:

- Bibles
- Evangelical materials
- Petrol
- Basic medical insurance

We have opened an ANZ Bank account to receive financial help from anyone who would like to partner with us in this mission work. The BSB is 012327 and the account number is 527032367. The account is a cheque account in the name of Nice Curti-Armati.

Contact us

We would love to have feedback from you about our plans. If you have questions or suggestions, and/or would like to receive email updates, please contact us using any of the following means...

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www.JesusForLife.net/brazilmission.htm

www.JesusForLife.net



Mirassol street scene - Rua Santo Antonio



Rio Preto from the air, showing the location of Mirassol in the distance