

*Alameda Nazaré, 39 Vale da Bênção Araçariguama/SP
CEP 18147-000 Brasil*

garythompson2@hotmail.com

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Hello everyone

Thank you for your continued support. Without your prayer and financial support we would not be able to continue to serve God in Brazil.

We had a quiet Christmas and New Year. My sister and nephew stayed with us for two weeks. It was lovely having family to stay at this special time of year. Gary was off for two days at Christmas and had New Years day off.

We are currently in the middle of summer and the temperature up until now has been very high. However, over the last few weeks the temperature has dropped, it seemed like winter (or a Northern Ireland summer) had arrived.

This year the Valley of Blessing is celebrating 25 years of social work with children and adolescents. There are various events organized to celebrate starting with the Annual General Meeting on the 13th of March. Various people who worked with the Valley since it began have been invited to attend. At the moment a service of celebration is planned for the 21st of March and a service of thanksgiving for September.

Two of the office staff left last year and were not replaced so the work was spread out over the remaining staff. Gary was very busy during January and February, along with the normal day to day work he had a lot of documents to get ready for the auditor and for the AGM.

An accumulation of very hot weather and extra work left Gary very tired both physically and mentally. He went to the doctor who told him he was suffering from stress. He has been able to go into work later and leave earlier and with the medication the doctor has given him he is now feeling a lot better. Please pray for Gary, that God will touch him and restore him to full health.

The school year began on the 1st of February and we now have 180 pupils. It was a very busy time for me registering new pupils, classroom allocation, lesson planning and getting the necessary documents ready for those who were transferring to other schools. As we mentioned in our December prayer letter we had to recruit new teachers and staff for the school. Praise God that we were able to have everyone in place for the school starting.

Besides the normal objectives of the school I am planning some new projects. One of them is Project Volunteer for pupils, ex-pupils and parents. We intend to have projects such as recycling, computer classes, reading groups and other activities. The second project is Family Club, which holds monthly meetings with the families of some of the pupils so see what help we can give in the area of family relationships.

From getting to know our pupils and their families we have realized that there are numerous couples who are not married. We are planning to offer to organise a wedding for those couples who would like to get married. We hope that at least one family will want to take part.

At the end of February we had a visit from two women to see about the grant to build the two classrooms, they have requested additional information again which is a good sign. Although it would be great if we receive this grant what we really need is a new school as most of the classrooms in our current school are too small.

Nicholas continues to develop well. He loves music and books and has lots of energy. He relates very well with people even with those he does not know.

Praise God for:

- 25 years of social work with children and adolescents in the Valley
- Christian teachers and staff recruited for the new school year
- New pupils
- Nicholas' continued development

Pray for:

- Direction from God
- Events organised around the 25th anniversary
- The grant for the classrooms
- New school projects
- Health and strength

Claudia, Gary & Nicholas