

In charity work there are times when you feel a real need to share good news, especially when it concerns young people in our care. Just before Christmas we received the following email from Osvaldo Recalde, Director for OSA in Paraguay and responsible for the work which goes on there:

Hi all and greetings from Asuncion,

Sandra, Cristina, Carmen ,Rode, Sylvana, Julia, Fermina, Belen are here to be presented to the Church at Asuncion. It is a presbyterian church called Eben-Ezer. Today we took them to the shopping mall, Mariscal-Lopez. All of them were very happy and enjoyed it enormously. In the evening we had pizzas.

On the Sunday we had the church presentation and I was very moved; especially as the programme centred girls. Carmen, Sylvana portions which applied (OSA) work in them. testimony and spoke of they did two of their was very touched and end they offered us really struck by the education that these God. They have presentation. I think amazed by the going on. The girls loved it as well. It is their first experience of a church in Asuncion. They were really good and Marie-Luisa and I enjoyed it as well.



round witness from our and Cristina read Bible to their own lives and our Then Sandra gave her the Home (El Puente) and dance routines. Everyone grateful to you all. At the refreshments. They are moral and spiritual girls have had, thanks to invited us to do a future that they were truly outstanding work that is

On our return we stopped in Paraguaria to have lunch at a restaurant that is opposite the greengrocers [some of you (volunteers) have been there] Again this was another first for most of them and they loved it. They ate well and they certainly deserved it. Thanks be to God for everything.

Many hugs and much love from all the children.

Osvaldo

We have always run OSA on Christian principles, although we are delighted to have supporters from other faiths and none, as we all share a desire to improve the lives of young people from a small township in Paraguay. Nevertheless it is heartening to hear that so many of the girls from our Home in Quayquyhó are willing to share their experiences and faith without coercion and to bear witness to the changes which we have helped to make in their lives.

Moreover it does one good to be reminded of the differences in living standards when you read of the girls' reactions to their first visit to a restaurant, something which many of us take for granted in UK. Thanks to the commitment of Osvaldo and Marie-Luisa and the

essential and generous support which our readers and volunteers provide, these girls, many previously victims of poverty and abuse, are developing into confident young women with a love of life and an increasingly secure future as they learn new skills and values. This is at the heart of OSA principles - to help give young people from deprived backgrounds hope for the future.

If you read Update 16 you will know that Osvaldo's daughter, Rocio, is currently staying in UK and visiting some of our supporters, as well as taking in some aspects of life in Britain. We took the opportunity to ask her a few questions:

Why did you want to come to the UK?

Rocio: The most important reason was to learn English, to be able to understand and to speak it. I also wanted to visit the churches that support OSA and to see my friends again. When there is the opportunity, I want to see more of England, especially the castles, the cathedrals and the coast.

What do you think of the UK and the people?

Rocio: It is very nice and very different to Paraguay. The pace of life here is quicker and is more ordered and organised. The people are very friendly and help others a lot. It is very cold!

(Temperatures in Paraguay at this time often reach 40° C! - Ed)

What do you hope to take back to Paraguay?

Rocio: When I go back to Paraguay, I shall have some lovely memories of my friends and the places I have visited and especially celebrating my birthday in the snow and cold!

How do you feel that what you learn here will help you personally in the future and also aid the work of OSA in Paraguay?

Rocio: I shall be able to get a better job because I can understand and speak English. I will also be able to help the girls in the home with their English and my father to better understand the communications with the UK. Having attended management committee meetings I can see how OSA works and will be able to explain to my father the challenges of fundraising and running an overseas charity from the UK.



Although she is not permitted to work during her stay, Rocio has been busy visiting our two main supporting churches in Aldridge and Stony Stratford and, in particular, the youth and children's groups. She has also found time to visit at least one castle, one cathedral, the East Anglian coast and visit friends at Craigavon in Northern Ireland. She has attended regular English lessons, been to a Pantomime and seen her first snow. Oh, and did we mention the shopping?



El Puente Profile:

I'm Julia, Carmen's sister and I'm 12 years old. I was 10 when I came to the home. While my Mum was ill I was living with a woman who used to beat me. When my Mum died, Osvaldo and Maria Luisa took me in with my other sisters. I am very happy because all 4 of us can be together in a home where we receive lots of love.

El Puente is the name given to our Foster Home in QuyQuyHó for up to 20 girls, all of whom have suffered poverty, deprivation and, in many cases, abuse. Thanks to the hard work and tough love of the Recaldes and the support of our wonderful contributors in UK, these girls, aged 3-17 are blossoming into happy, hard-working young ladies of whom we are very proud.

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