

JoJo's Prayer Letter

Dear friends,

Let me start by wishing you all a happy new year. I still find it hard to believe that we are actually in 2016! I am sorry that it has taken me so long to get this prayer letter out. I am very grateful for all the love and concern that you have shown me over the past months and particularly the way so many have upheld me in prayer. It is such an

encouragement knowing that I have so many prayer warriors on the other side of the world daily interceding for me.

At the end of September Paula returned back to the UK for home assignment and Mo took on the ARCA presidency. With the boys home already closed and the street work suspended, with the departure of Paula, we were left with just the girls home and were working towards suspending the project. At that time we just had 5 girls. Taty was adopted by a couple who used to work in the girls home, Leandro and Helen, in October.

They live just down the road from the girls' home and so it was nice to still have contact with her and see that she settled in well. Later on in October Geane celebrated her 18th birthday and soon after went to live with one of the workers at the home called Zila. She started going out with Zila's son and they are now engaged and due to marry in April and are expecting their first child. With Taty and Geane gone we were left with Suane, Val and Juliana. Without

another Christian home in the area we were finally informed by the authorities that the girls could be transferred to another home in Mosqueiro about 40 mins from Benevides. We then had the difficult task of sitting down and telling the girls the news. The official paperwork came through just before Christmas. We were able to celebrate Christmas early with the girls and all the workers. This was a special time before we took them to their new home on the 23rd December.

I was grateful for the opportunities to live alongside these girls for a few days every week and for the way that God so often opened up doors for me to be able to have gospel conversations and opportunities to study the Bible with them.

We also started regularly having a devotional time with all the workers and girls on a Friday morning. These were very special times as each week a different person took the devotion and shared about what God had been teaching them and often testified as to how God had used ARCA to change their lives. There was a real sense of unity and it was such a joy to be part of it. Saying goodbye to the girls and taking them to their new home was really tough, particularly so because the new home is not Christian. It has not been easy for either the girls or the workers as we continue to come to terms with the reality that ARCA is now officially suspended. There are many things that happen that we do not understand and many questions that we do not have answers to. Yet I am convinced that God is up to something good and He has a purpose in everything. I may not be able to see or understand exactly what God is up to now and maybe never in this life but am convinced that one day when Jesus returns I will be able to see things from God's perspective and in this I find much comfort.



I have been able to keep up contact with Felipe and Abraão through regular visits. It has been great to see Abraão's behaviour improve. He has started visiting his mum and was able to spend Christmas and New Year with his family. There is a strong possibility that he will be able to return home to live with his mum later on in the year. He seems to have softened slightly towards the gospel and his last words to me were "maybe I will be a Christian the next time you see me" although said slightly tongue in cheek please pray that this would be a reality, that he would see his need of Jesus and respond with faith. Unfortunately it did not work out for Felipe to go and live with the Christian family in Santa Izabel. He continues to show signs of spiritual growth and it is a privilege to continue to be involved in encouraging him in his faith. He will turn 18 in May and is working towards living independently. Please do pray that he will be able to find work, something increasingly more difficult because of the financial crisis in Brazil. Recently I received the news that Rafael, who had returned to live with an extended family member back in April, had been transferred to the same home as Suane, Val and Juliana. I have been able to see him a few times when





also visiting the girls. It has been bitter sweet , sweet as I have been able to renew contact with Rafael who conquered my heart and will always hold a special place in my life and yet bitter because of the circumstances under which this has happened. Rafael has many behavioural problems and has caused some problems in his new home. His situation can seem hopeless and yet the gospel always offers hope. Please do pray that Jesus would transform Rafael and that he would know just how loved and special he is.

I finished my second module “helping relationships” with CCEF in December. It has been so exciting seeing God work in and through me and visibly seeing myself change through the work of the spirit in my life. I have seen relationships deepen as it has caused me to be more intentional. I am now studying the next module “human personality” which continues to stretch and challenge me as I seek to put into practise what I am learning.

I have continued to be blessed through my involvement in my local church, particularly through a project that reaches out to the kids and teenagers who live in the area surrounding the church. At the end of November we had a special event called Brasileirinhos which sees the children and teenagers performing for their parents showing them what they have been learning throughout the year. In previous years I have just been a spectator but it was special this year to be actively involved having built up relationships with the kids throughout the year. As a church we decided to visit the families of those who come along taking with us a Christmas hamper and invites to our Christmas event. It was fantastic seeing the church come together. It was a privilege to be invited into homes and have the opportunity to share something of the gospel and pray with many families. The highlight was seeing many of them come into the church for the first time for our Christmas service. The Spirit was at work and it was amazing seeing many respond to the gospel.



The beginning of 2016 was very busy for me as I spent the first 2 weeks involved in the Word of Life camps at the local Bible College. The first week was for kids aged between 7-12 and the second week for teenagers. It was a fantastic way to start the year and I was particularly grateful that this year I was able to be an officer for the two weeks which involved spending 24 hours a day with the campers. God gave me many opportunities to get alongside the girls and to encourage those who have a relationship with Jesus in their faith and challenging those who as yet have not put their trust in him. God was at work and it is always a joy hearing young people testify as to how God has transformed their lives.

Just a few weeks after camp it was carnival, which means it's the time we have our church camp. This year I was on the organising committee. Again it was a real blessing to be involved in the preparation and activities and to feel much more part of the church community. It was fantastic that a number of the young people who have come to the project run by the church were able to come along. A number of them come from very difficult family situations and so to be able to spend 5 days living in a Christian community had a real impact on them. We believe that one of the young lads has been converted. His name is Alisson and we have seen a real change in his behaviour and he has started coming to church. Please do pray that he would grow in his faith and that he would be a shining light to his family and friends.



As many of you will be aware I am currently back in the UK for a break and a time to rest and reflection. I arrived back on the 12th February and was able to surprise my family, which was great. I will be flying back out to Brazil on the 2nd of April with Paula. I will be in Nottingham from the 7th-28th of March and the rest of the time will be spent in Newport. The review of project ARCA is currently underway and we are seeking God to know what His will is for the future. Please do pray that God would guide us and that we would be united as a team and be convinced of the way forward. Please do pray for Paula as she heads up the review and for Mo who is currently the only missionary in Belém working on the review. The findings of the review will be presented in June and after this the future of the project will be determined.

Praise and Prayer points

- Praise God for his presence and daily grace.
- Praise God for the adoption of Taty and pray that Leandro and Helen would have wisdom in parenting her.
- Praise God for the opportunity Geane has to live with Zila. Please pray for her upcoming marriage to Dayvisson. Pray that they would put Christ at the centre and be godly parents.
- Praise God for the opportunity to serve at both the Word of Life camps and the church camp. Please pray for all those who were involved that they would put into practise all that they learnt.
- Praise God for the opportunity to visit families with Christmas hampers and for the many people who came along to our Christmas service. Pray for those who made a profession of faith and pray that as a church we would continue to reach out to these much needy families with the gospel.
- Praise God for the opportunity that I have to study and pray that God would continue to challenge and change me through the things I am learning.
- Praise God for the opportunity I have to be back in the UK. Please pray that it would be a great time of rest and reflection and that I would go back refreshed.
- Pray that God would continue to work in Abraão and that God would bring him to repentance.
- Pray that Felipe would remain firm and steadfast and would continue to grow in his faith. Pray that he would be able to find work and that this would help him prepare to live independently.
- Pray for Suane, Val and Juliana. Pray that they would remember all they learnt in ARCA and that they would be shining lights, putting Jesus first in everything and saying no to the world.
- Pray that Rafael would come to know Jesus and that this would transform his entire life. Pray that he would get the specialised support he needs to help him deal with all that has happened to him.
- Pray for Alisson that his conversion would prove to be genuine and that he would grow in his faith. Pray that God would use him to reach out to the many he has contact with in the community.
- Pray that God will lead and guide us and show us his will for the future of ARCA and that as a team we would be united and would work well together. Pray particularly for Paula as she heads up the review and Mo as she is the only missionary in Belém working on the review at the moment.
- Pray for the workers from the girls' home and the technical staff who have been made redundant. Pray that God would supply their every need.
- Pray that I would keep my eyes firmly fixed on God and rest in the knowledge that He is on the throne and in control.
- Pray for all the hurting and suffering kids and teenagers in Brazil - that they would have the opportunity to hear the gospel and would respond with faith.

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Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our Faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you do not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:2-3