

WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN 2021 EDITION OF SPOTLIGHT ON SPAIN

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INTRODUCTION



At the time of writing more than a month after the volcano in La Palma started to erupt, the island is like a war zone; thousands have had to abandon their homes not knowing what will happen to them.

They thought they lived in paradise, but it turned into a place of uncertainty and fear. One householder said they had lost control. Others remain philosophical saying that towns on the volcanic island were built on lava in the first place. That doesn't help the residents who have fled and now live in flimsy caravans which are suddenly safer than houses!

But even in that relative safety their future is now uncertain since they do not know if they can go home to celebrate Christmas there as usual or if there will be any home to return to at all.

Tension follows tension. Covid rules advise them to keep windows open for ventilation but volcano rules say that you should shut out toxic fumes and ash.

Buried under the lava are some beautiful churches and sentimental memories. Now some pastors will have to revive hope among their congregations and encourage families who have lost their home. Others must await news of their families and friends they left behind when they moved to the Spanish mainland maybe years earlier. It is a concern economically too since the only tourists going to La Palma are those who want to see first-hand the pyrotechnic display of the volcano!

Sergio and Chani have emotional ties with the Canary Isles since Sergio is from Gran Canaria and Chani from Fuerteventura. We should pray for God's people on the island and those with links to it.

NEWS FROM MANZANARES

In-person services were able to restart during late summer, although with some restrictions due to Covid still in place. One family in the church were seriously ill with the virus and all three were admitted to intensive care; Rafael was in intensive care for two and a half months. Please pray for them.

The normal outdoor evangelistic events could not take place due to the pandemic; however, Manuel and the other Mission pastors have already started to plan for summer 2022 when Holiday Bible Clubs and other outreach activities will, the Lord willing, run as before.

There are increasing requests for food from families in the town who are in need due to unemployment caused by Covid. One man contacted via this ministry gives his testimony to how this ministry helped him to recognise the Lord as his Saviour.

Family matters

Manuel's health condition has improved but he is not completely better after surgery for Crohn's disease and values prayer for physical and mental strength to carry out his work in the church. Toñy's mother is unwell due to a severe bladder infection.

Testimony: Aurelio Yanes

My name is Aurelio Yanes. I was born in Santa Cruz de Tenerife 68 years ago. My older sister and I grew up with an aunt, who took care of us because my father and mother had immigrated to Venezuela due to lack of work. When I was 14 years old, my parents, who had been living in Venezuela for several years, reclaimed my sister and me. When my sister and I arrived in Venezuela we found that our parents were separated, which was a shock and affected us a lot. I lived there until 2019 when I returned to Spain, specifically to the city of Manzanares. I have five children and six grandchildren; three are in Venezuela, one in Colombia and one in the United States. I am a widower.



As for religious upbringing, my parents were nominal Catholics, but they did not attend church, and my siblings and I were never introduced to the gospel or taught to attend church. So you could say that I grew up in a home where religion was not important, and I never showed much interest in the things of God.

The reason for returning to Spain was because of the political situation in Venezuela, where there is a great shortage of necessities such as work, food, medicine and transport, which makes life very difficult. Since I arrived back in Spain, things have not been easy. At first, for 18 months I was granted a €430 grant as a returned Spanish emigrant. This ended in August 2020, and since then I have been waiting for a lifetime grant for Spanish returnees over 65, but the administration has a two-year backlog of applications; this means that for months I have had no financial resources.

In my need, I have received some social assistance, including help from the Evangelical Church of Manzanares, who helped me with food and some rent payments. The first time I went to the church to ask for food aid, they invited me to attend services, which I started to do. Since I did not have any financial support, the church has been a great help to me.

They have been my family and have prayed for me constantly. And God has answered prayers by giving me a job as a receptionist in a hotel; God is good and is taking care of me by giving me this job until I get support from the state.

Never in my life have I heard the gospel as I have heard it here. In Venezuela I heard about evangelicals, Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostals, and I have attended some religious services on special occasions, but I never showed interest. But I know that the Lord has His times for each one of us, and He wanted to call me to His Kingdom in Spain; here I have been able to hear about Christ's love for me in spite of my sin; He has made me understand that I have lived all my life with my back to His law, but in His sacrifice on the cross He offers me His forgiveness. I have given my life to Christ, I attend worship every Sunday, and every Tuesday I am studying the Bible with the pastor and his wife to get to know the Word of God better, who He is and what He wants from me. It is not easy to live the Christian life, I know that I must change many things in my life; but I know that the Lord loves me and helps me in the whole process of my spiritual growth. This is my prayer to the Lord.

Finally, I want to thank so many of you in the UK who have been praying and continue to pray for me. May God bless you.

NEWS FROM MORAL DE CALATRAVA

A family in Granátula, a village ten miles away, contacted José Luís and asked for prayer for their adult son, who has epilepsy. This led to the family asking for help to study the Bible.



They have finished the first level and started the second. However, María is more interested than her husband, Ángel, who told her that he was a Catholic Christian and did not want to change his religion. Please pray for them.

The local radio ministry continues, with a Tuesday morning broadcast given by Encarna (one of the

church members), and a daily broadcast made by José Luís.

The food distribution to needy families in the town has had to stop as the church has few members and those who were involved cannot help due to health problems. It is hoped that the work can be taken up again, please pray that this may be the case.

Family matters

In the summer José Luís and the family were able to enjoy time with José Luís' recently converted brother and sister-in-law as they gave their testimonies in a church in O Grove, Galicia. They ask for prayer for Noemí's parents, especially her father who has cancer and the beginnings of dementia. Another prayer is that God would straighten out the life of Natanael, José Luís' and Noemí's son, as he is far from the Lord.

NEWS FROM SANTA CRUZ DE MUDELA

Sergio and Chani have been able to start Bible studies with a family in Almuradiel, a village 10 miles from Santa Cruz.

As Covid restrictions have eased these studies now take place in the home of the couple, Cristóbal and his wife, Rosario, rather than by phone or video call. Please pray for them and their children, Diego (13) and Samara (3).



Almuradiel showing the Parish Church of Pure Conception

Fernando has finished the fourth study in the series "New Life in Christ" and will be starting the next one; he is doing very well and is quite keen to continue learning. His father Eugenio continues to show interest and asks many questions.

Prayer is asked that the Lord by His Spirit would open their hearts to salvation.

Sunday School has started again, and it is hoped that the Children's Club can restart soon.

Family matters

Chani still has health issues and is waiting for a consultation with a gastroenterologist. Pray that she will feel well and have strength and courage for the work.

Jenni has started her second year in secondary school and is adjusting well. The school counsellor this year is someone who has known Jenni since she was seven (she is now 14) and is the person who discovered that Jenni had a language disorder. Sergio and Chani are happy about this and give thanks to God for His provision.

NEWS FROM MONESCILLO MISSION HOUSE

The SEFOVAN theology training course for 2020/21 was completed by the students below, some of them continuing into the current academic year. Some of the classes had to take place via Zoom, due to restrictions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. They are now able to have classes in person again.



Despite the difficult times of the pandemic, some other activities did take place during late summer and early autumn, such as a church retreat for a group in Madrid. A Christian bikers' group also returned for a second visit.

José was able to use the time to carry out restoration work on the patios whilst the Mission House was quieter than normal.



The ladies' craft workshop has now restarted, with many keen to meet again. Please pray for gospel opportunities amongst these neighbours living close to the Mission House.

Family matters

All but Lidia contracted the virus but were not too seriously affected by it.

In October José and Lidia's son, Josué, was baptised in the evangelical church in Valdepeñas – obviously a cause of rejoicing for the family and the church fellowship.

José and Lidia are ready to welcome visitors from the UK – whether individuals, families or church groups. If you are interested, please contact the Secretaries.

MESSAGES FROM THE SECRETARIES

Donations

Thank you to all who regularly give to support the work of the Mission. Please note, as Simon Nobbs, our Treasurer, will be away, any gifts sent in December or early January will take a little longer to pay into the bank, so don't worry if it doesn't appear on your statement straight away.

UK Mission Chairman

Prayer is valued for some of the members of the UK Council who have serious health issues. This includes Malcolm Lane, the Chairman, who has terminal cancer and is receiving palliative care. He is, however, still able to work from home and chaired the recent Council meeting held via Zoom.

Spanish Experience

Would you like the opportunity of visiting the Mission churches whilst staying at the Monescillo Mission House? We are hoping to organise for a group from the UK to go to "our" area of Spain to sample the food and culture and meet the Spanish pastors and members of their churches. The provisional date would be for a week in mid-September. Travel will be organised from Madrid airport to the Mission House in Valdepeñas and to the churches.

CONTACT DETAILS



SPANISH GOSPEL MISSION

***A work of faith and labour of love
for the glory of Christ
until He comes.***

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***PLEASE INDICATE YOUR INTEREST
BY***

1 JANUARY 2022

either by email, letter or phone.

***Contact the UK Secretaries,
David and Jacky Cogman.***