

- **Life experiences from the shantytown:-** We were chatting at lunch with some of our longest serving helpers from Huaycan when Martha, aged 42, told us, 'I didn't know him and I didn't want to marry him, but my parents arranged it and I had no choice.' Rosa, 32, joined in, 'I was 17 and wanted to study, but my parents said I must marry Cananeo - so I did.' Both couples later left the Highlands to settle in Huaycan. They now have 5 & 4 children respectively. Martha's husband is in prison, for raping her niece, (the baby, born with a brain tumour, died 6 months later), and Cananeo, recovering from a long illness, hasn't worked for 2 years. Martha, Rosa & Cananeo are fine Christians. Martha's husband has re-dedicated his life to God in prison and after 5 years should be coming out soon.
- We had been talking about suffering in La Campiña and asked the mums to share their experiences. One said her father was killed by terrorists, another that the village harvest was totally destroyed by hailstones, another that an enormous stone rolled down the hill onto the roof of her house and flattened it, four shared that their husbands drank, were violent and rarely brought money home and one explained that they and their two children had not eaten an evening meal the previous day as there was no money to buy food.

On a lighter note! Last week we went to the cinema. A huge label stuck on every seat said, 'FORBIDDEN TO COUGH!' We might have expected, 'Turn off your cell phone' or 'Don't talk', since Peruvians do those all the time, but 'Forbidden to cough'? However many Peruvians don't pay too much attention to rules, so it probably won't matter. For example, the other day our bus went through 3 red lights – a common occurrence! Also a year ago bus fares were increased from S/.1 to S/.1.20. Notices were placed on the buses. However, everyone refused to pay the increase, so we all still pay the old rate – and finally, a live llama was recently seen being loaded into the luggage compartment of a bus – we don't know what fare he paid!

How is it going? The new president is Alan Garcia – when in power 1985-90 he brought the country to the edge of bankruptcy. We hope he will do better this time. Recent statistics show 50% of the work force has no proper job and 51% of the population is considered 'very poor'. Most of our contacts live on something like £52 a month, which is not enough. (The official monthly minimum wage is £80). A state school teacher earns about £130 a month.

There are about 4,800 places in Lima where people have unofficially settled. (We call them shantytowns). Of those, 3,801 started after 1995. Many, including most of our contacts in



Part of Huaycan

Huaycan, come from Huancavelica, the poorest area in Peru. Over 50% of children there are malnourished. In April this year 200,000 children under 18 worked as domestics. About 75% of those aged 6 -13 did not attend school.

In Huaycan hundreds of children have benefited since our project began – and continue to do so. In La Campiña over 200 families have participated in our project for mums & their 0 - 6 year olds. Many have no toilet. Water is bought daily from a water tanker. Forty five of our

families, who had no toilet, have been helped to get a dry pit one, (which doesn't need water). Many families in both projects have been helped with housing, medical and educational needs. Most have received Christian literature. All have heard the gospel. This is because of your help and prayers. We and the Peruvians, who are always so grateful, thank God for you.



Ana helping with homework in Huaycan

Prayer for Wednesdays & Fridays - Huaycan Feeding/homework for 100+ children aged 5-12 years, helpers' training & a monthly parents' meeting. Praise for the increase in regular helpers. **Miriam** however continues in poor health as does **Florencio's** dad so they are absent at times. **Ayda's** mum is still ill after the birth of her 5th child four months ago so Ayda (17) does everything. Dad drinks! We are encouraging her to help us so she gets out of the house. Pray God's work will be done in all our lives!

The Adolescents, Saturdays 6 - 8 pm 50+ attend. Pray for good Christian input from the older church young people. We

want them to befriend the adolescents and adapt the meeting they have afterwards to include the 14 -17 year olds as they grow too old for the Adolescent Group.

Martha's family – pray as they adjust to the return of her husband from prison. The youngest son, born after a conjugal visit, doesn't know his dad at all, the eldest daughter, aged 18, has an illegitimate baby. They, 3 other children and mum, all sleep in the same room.

Cananeo – is training to use a sewing machine, since he may never be very strong. Pray he will learn quickly and soon be able to actually work and earn money.

Nelida - continues with her cancer treatment. Eldest daughter **Ana** helps in the project and is receiving professional training to be a seamstress/tailor. She is not a Christian. Pray she will become one as she hears the devotionals for the children and copes with her family situation.

Prayer for Tues. & Thurs. – Feeding/Education for mums & 0 - 6 year olds in La Campiña:-

Patty, who is gifted and wants to help us is still unable to. Pray the problems will be removed. The **church** where we are based is not growing. Pray for mature leaders and better teaching.

Pray for a deeper spiritual desire amongst all the mums - especially **Norma** who is afraid to trust God, **Virginia** who may lose her sight and **Elsa & Diana**, committee members who are not Christians. Pray the children will realise just how much God loves them.

Adolescents -Tuesday after everything else. Pray for the group of 12 -15 and for a helper.

New short termers from Germany arrive in September to work with us. Pray for **Katharina & Angelica** as they adjust to life & language in Peru and begin to get involved.



Mums' meeting at La Campiña

Reading Ecclesiastes recently we were impressed by ch. 5 v.7. 'Therefore, stand in awe of God.' We love Him and wish to serve Him to the best of our all too human abilities. Please pray that we may be obedient, persevering, healthy, energetic and spiritually discerning, doing His will. With many thanks for your fellowship,

love, **Bill & Jean.**