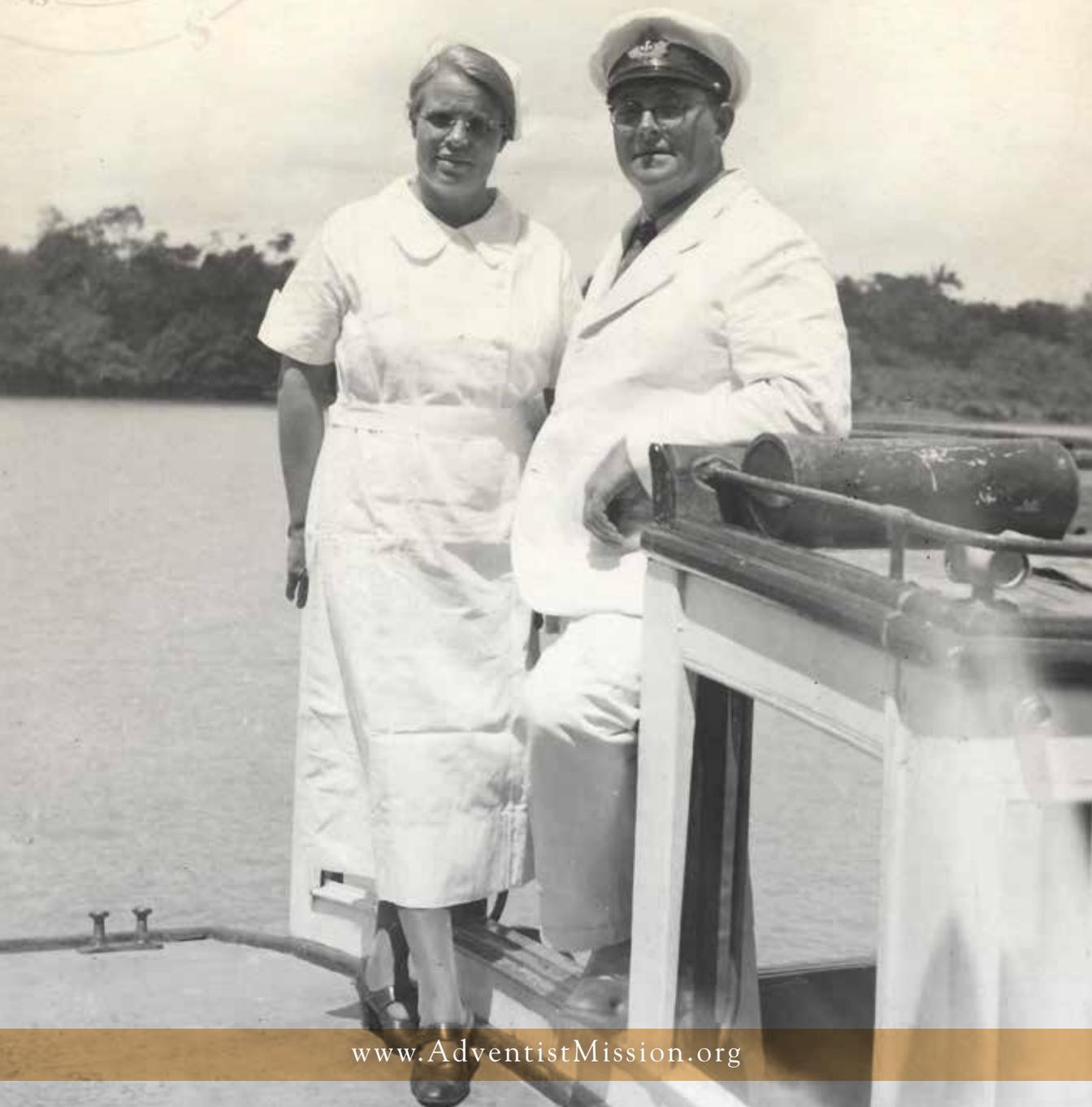




YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

2016 • QUARTER 1 • SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION



Contents

On the Cover: Najabuliso was afraid to attend the evangelistic meetings because she feared the people there were Satanists. Read her story on pages 20 and 21.

BRAZIL

- 4 Angels on the Amazon | January 2 
- 6 A Dream Come True | January 9 
- 8 The Boatman's Change | January 16
- 10 The Missionary Gramophone | January 23
- 12 Finding Peace, Part 1 | January 30 
- 14 Finding Peace, Part 2 | February 6 

PARAGUAY

- 16 Pedrito Prays and Pablo Preaches | Feb 13 
- 18 The Policeman Who Prayed | February 20

- 20 From Policeman to Pastor | February 27

URUGUAY

- 22 Blind Man Sees | March 5 
- 24 Finding God | March 12
- 26 The Book in the Shoe Store | March 19

RESOURCES

- 28 Thirteenth Sabbath Program | March 26
- 30 Your Offerings at Work
- 31 Resources
- 32 Map

 = stories of special interest to teens

Your Offerings at Work



In 2012, the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering Children's Project went to provide training material for children so they can learn how to lead small Bible study groups for children in northern Peru.

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering also helped to build a church for the students at the Central Brazil Adventist Academy.

Thank you for giving!



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Dear Sabbath School Leader,

This quarter we feature the South American Division (SAD), one of the fastest-growing divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The countries include Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Falkland Islands, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and adjacent islands. More than 330 million people live in these countries, and nearly 2.3 million are Seventh-day Adventists.

We have exciting stories from the jungles of the Amazon, to a child preacher in Paraguay, and a blind man in Uruguay who can now “see.” We also have a special nature item, “Amazon Animal Facts,” featuring one animal each week.

Brazil

As with any large country, Brazil displays great diversity. Modern cities with populations in the millions lie along the Atlantic Ocean. São Paulo, is the third-

largest city in the world. Much of Brazil, however, is less developed. Tribes and other unreached people groups have lived along the Amazon river for centuries.

Beginning in the 1930s, Leo and Jessie Halliwell were missionaries to the people here as they navigated the river on their hand-built boat, the *Luzeiro*. Today *Luzeiro* mission boats again sail the Amazon, bringing hope and healing in their wake. Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help to build a “floating church” boat that will follow the *Luzeiro* into the villages to help start Adventist churches in the communities.

Paraguay and Uruguay

For years, the Adventist Church in Paraguay and Uruguay struggled. But now the church there is growing, thanks to the help of many in SAD and around the world. Currently, there are 12,807 Adventists in Paraguay, with a population of 6.9 million. Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help to build a new church there.

In Uruguay, considered to be the most secular country in South America, there are only 8,016 Seventh-day Adventists out of 3.4 million people. Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will build a center of influence and a new church.

Thank you for your dedication to mission and helping children connect with their spiritual brothers and sisters around the world.



Gina Wahlen, *Mission* quarterlies editor

Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help to:

- build two floating church/clinics on the Amazon and Solimoes Rivers.
- a church at the Agro-Industrial Adventist Trans-Amazon Academy Brazil.
- Construct a center of influence in Asuncion, Paraguay.
- plant a new church in Asuncion, Paraguay.
- build a center of influence in La Teja, Montevideo, Uruguay.
- establish a new church in Goes, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Angels on the Amazon



BRAZIL | January 2

The Halliwells

villages too. The man who built most of the *Luzeiro* mission boats was Leo Halliwell.

Many stories are told about the wonderful things that happened when the Halliwells worked along the Amazon River. One of those stories is called “Angels on the Amazon.”

The longest river in South America is the Amazon. It flows from the Andes Mountains of Peru, only 85 miles [140 kilometers] from the Pacific Ocean, and almost 4,000 miles [6400 kilometers] to the Atlantic Ocean.

The *Luzeiro* Mission Boats

The large city of Manaus [mah-NOWS] lies along the Amazon. [*Locate Manaus west of Belem, on the coast.*] Outside the city on a quiet inlet rests a boat called the *Luzeiro* [Lu-ZAY-roh], which is the Portuguese word for “light bearer.”* This boat and others like it sail along the Amazon, bringing medical care and the good news about Jesus to the people who live along the river.

The boats take doctors, dentists, nurses, and other missionaries to the people living in the rain forest. They take teachers and preachers to their new workplaces in riverside

The Three Hitchhikers

Pastor Halliwell steered the *Luzeiro* along the river. The jungle trees formed a green canopy overhead. Jack, Pastor Halliwell’s 15-year-old son, stared into the jungle hoping to see a jaguar, the “jungle leopard.” Overhead a brilliant red, blue, green, and yellow macaw flew by, squawking loudly. In the distance a woolly monkey howled. Then the boat’s engine slowed, and Jack noticed three well-dressed men waving at the *Luzeiro* from a canoe.

“Hello!” one man called out. “Can you give us a tow upstream?”

Pastor Halliwell knew it was dangerous to give hitchhikers a ride. But something impressed him to stop. “Throw them a line, Jack,” he called to his son. Jack threw the men the rope, and the men attached it to their boat.

Avoiding the Rocks

Two men climbed aboard and stood

beside Pastor Halliwell as he steered the boat up the river. Suddenly one of the men grabbed the wheel and turned the boat around. The boat shuddered and moved suddenly away from the riverbank and out into the middle of the river. The sudden movement nearly threw Jack overboard!

Pastor Halliwell stared at the waters they had just crossed. Not 20 feet from where they had been heading, the jagged points of hundreds of rocks lay just beneath the surface of the water. If the boat had hit those rocks, it would have been ripped apart. The missionaries might have lost their lives that day!

“Whew!” Pastor Halliwell exclaimed. “Thank you! You saved our boat and probably our lives!”

The man smiled but said nothing as he steered the boat through the rocky waters.

Then the man gave the wheel back to Pastor Halliwell. “Thank you for the ride, Sir,” the man said. “If you stop, we’ll get out now.”

This is strange! thought Pastor Halliwell. *There are no signs of a village nearby.* Nevertheless, he stopped the boat, and the two men climbed back into their canoe and pushed off into the current.

“Watch where they go,” Leo called to Jack.

“Dad, they’ve disappeared!” Jack called.

Leo turned from the wheel. The river was empty. There was no bend in the river, no ripples in the water. The three men and their boat had disappeared.

They must have been angels! Pastor Halliwell thought as he steered the *Luzeiro*. *Thank You Lord for sending Your angels to protect us today! What a wonderful God You are!*

The Halliwells served for many years along the Amazon River, caring for the health of the people and sharing the good news of Jesus. Our mission offerings supported their work and continue to support the work among the people living in isolated villages and large cities along the Amazon River today.

This quarter part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go to build two new “floating church” boats that will follow the *Luzeiro* into many unreached villages along the Amazon River. The floating church boats will go into the villages and stay for a while, holding evangelistic meetings. Afterwards, a new church building will be erected in the village, and the floating church will move on to the next village. Thank you so much for planning to give generously toward this special offering. 🌍

Mission Post

- Leo B Halliwell established a medical-missionary boat ministry among the Indians of the Amazon with the *Luzeiro* (light-bearer) in 1931; since then there have been 25 *Luzeiro* boats, bringing much needed medical help up and down the Amazon River.
- The missionaries who served on the *Luzeiro* boats that traveled on the Amazon River have made a forever impact on the people living there. They helped establish churches and clinics and schools.
- A few years ago part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped build dormitories and classrooms for a new Adventist university in northern Brazil. Now many students can study there instead of having to travel many days from home to study in another part of the country.



A Dream Comes True

Samantha

Ever since she was young, Samantha loved listening to exciting stories about the Luzeiro mission boat. Fascinated, she imagined what it might be like to work as a missionary along the Amazon, just like Leo and Jessie Halliwell. Little did she know that one day her dream would come true.

After graduating from high school, Samantha studied nursing at the State University of West Paraná in southern Brazil. When she finished with her training, Samantha had many job possibilities, but her heart was in mission, so she was delighted when she received an invitation to be a volunteer missionary in the Amazon region. She prayed, “Jesus, if You want me to go, please open all the doors.”

Doors opened quickly. “I was given money for the tickets, and people gave me everything I needed. I knew that Jesus had a plan for me,” said Samantha.

In the Amazon

Soon, Samantha was in the heart of the Amazon, training with “Salva Vidas,” a

supportive Adventist mission organization that teaches volunteers to work in the jungles. Three months later, the project coordinator told Samantha: “I have a place for you in a small village, and you’ll be the nurse on the *Luzeiro*.”

Samantha could hardly believe the news. “I was so happy!” she recalls. “Here I can use my nursing skills all the time. The people are very simple, with simple problems, and I can help them. This is exactly what I want to do—to educate people who don’t have any knowledge about health.”

The Luzeiro Nurse

As a *Luzeiro* nurse, Samantha now works with ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) and is based in a village where she operates a small clinic. Every week she goes on the *Luzeiro XXVI*, providing the only health care available to thousands of people along the Amazon.

Whether on the Luzeiro or in the village clinic, Samantha often faces emergencies where she knows only God can help.

Early one evening, a man arrived at the clinic, holding his hand in bloodied bandages.

“What happened?” Samantha asked.

“I was using a grinder and my hand got caught in the blades,” he answered.

Samantha and her assistant, Gloria,

carefully cleaned the hand, applied antibiotic ointment and rewrapped it tightly in clean bandages. As they prayed with the man, they knew that he needed a higher level of care than they were able to provide, and asked God for help.

Venomous Snake Bite

A few minutes later, a mother, father, and 10-year-old boy showed up in front of the clinic. The boy had been bitten on the foot by a Surucucu, a venomous pit viper—one of the most poisonous snakes of the Amazon.

“How long ago was he bitten?” Samantha asked.

“About five hours ago,” came the reply.

Samantha was shocked. According to all the medical literature, the boy should have been dead long before now. Quickly she provided emergency care, doing all she could to stop the spread of the poison.

Samantha knew that it was only through a miracle that the boy was still alive, and to survive he would continue to need divine help. She also knew that both boy and man needed to be taken to the nearest hospital—an eight-hour trip by regular boat, or two hours by ADRA’s fast boat—the Jessie Halliwell.

While the fast boat was clearly the best option, it also took the most fuel, and would completely deplete the clinic’s reserve for the month. The fuel reserve had been saved for emergencies that might arise from a visiting group who had come to make improvements to the clinic and village.

Knowing that two lives were in jeopardy, Herber Kalbermatter, the ADRA Brazil director for the Amazon region, approached the group and explained the situation. Immediately they told him to

Fast Facts

- Brazil is the largest country in South America and the only one in which the people speak Portuguese.
- The Amazon River flows through Brazil; it is the second longest river in the world (after the Nile).
- Around 60% of the Amazon rain forest is located in Brazil.

use the fuel and that they would trust in God for protection.

Precious Cargo

It was dark and rainy by the time Samantha, her two patients, and the boy’s mother climbed into the Jessie Halliwell for a fast two-hour ride to the nearest hospital. Pelting-down rain mixed with river spray as the little boat and its precious cargo sped down the river. At last the little group arrived at Manacapuru, the closest town. The boy was admitted to the local hospital, but the man was taken to the large hospital in Manaus.

Samantha didn’t see the man again, but after a week was able to visit the boy in the hospital. “When I see the boy now, I think ‘Jesus is awesome!’ He put His hand on the situation and saved two lives.

Village Life

Life in the village isn’t easy—with limited water and electricity (three hours a day), no phones or internet, and very little contact with the outside world. But Samantha doesn’t mind. “Just in the time I’ve been here, I feel my life has changed. I realize now what’s really important in life. I understand much more about Jesus, and I believe that He brought me here. 🌍

The Boatman's Change

BRAZIL | January 16

Eraldo



throw rocks at them, or even burn their house down—it's not a problem.”

Before long, Eraldo caught sight of the *Luzeiro* on the Amazon. Thinking to frighten those on board the unwelcome craft, Eraldo quickly positioned his boat immediately in front of the *Luzeiro*, causing them to narrowly avoid a collision. Turning to look back, Eraldo was surprised and irritated to see the *Luzeiro* pilot smiling and waving at him.

“It's All Wrong!”

After some time, Eraldo received news that his mother had become a Seventh-day Adventist! He refused to speak to her for three months. Finally, he decided that he should confront her.

“You shouldn't accept these people,” Eraldo scoffed. “They don't eat pork, they keep the Sabbath—it's all wrong! They're like the Pharisees!”

On another occasion, Eraldo visited a family who had become Adventist. Hoping to deceive them, he told the family that he had brought them some beef (although it was actually pork). Wanting to be polite, they ate it. Only afterwards did they realize that it was pork.

Eraldo told the family, “I'm going to tell your pastor that you ate pork. Then the other Adventists will stone you, just like the Pharisees stoned people!”

Eraldo followed through on his threat to tell the pastor, but he was very

Eraldo knew the Upper Amazon well, having spent several years as a trusted riverboat pilot for the Roman Catholic Church. He navigated the famous river with ease, sometimes taking a priest to visit the parishioners, but often going alone to carry on the various religious tasks. Although not a priest himself, the locals considered Eraldo to be a “holy man,” and he carried the authority of a priest.

One day, some villagers told Eraldo about another boat that was trolling the Amazon, looking for unsuspecting people to join some strange religion. The name of the boat was the *Luzeiro*. The people on this boat went from village to village, offering medical help to the villagers and then inviting them to attend religious meetings.

“Be smart,” Eraldo told his informers. “Accept their medicine, but don't listen to them, and don't go to their meetings. And if they ask to live in your village, you can

disappointed when nothing happened to those who had mistakenly eaten the pork.

“I Know You Are Right”

Still hoping to somehow win back his mother, Eraldo persuaded the priest to visit her. Eraldo went into the kitchen where he could listen in on the conversation in the other room. He heard the priest asking questions and his mother giving answers from the Bible for her new beliefs. Then he heard the priest say to his mother, “I know that you are right.”

Shocked and disgusted, Eraldo asked himself, *If what my mother believes is true, then why am I in the Catholic Church?*

The following day, the Adventist pastor visited Eraldo, and one month later Eraldo accepted the message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

On the day of his baptism, the priest he used to work for was waiting for him outside of the Adventist church. “This is your place now,” the priest told Eraldo. “It’s not just my place, but your place too,” Eraldo responded.

Back on the Amazon

For a while, Eraldo worked cleaning the Adventist church, but before long he was back on the Amazon River; this time as the pilot of the *Luzeiro*!

“I couldn’t believe it,” Eraldo recalled. “Here I was back in the same place, doing the same job, driving the boat to the same communities, but this time to preach as a Seventh-day Adventist!”

When the villagers saw Eraldo arriving in the *Luzeiro*, they were shocked. “What happened?” they asked. “Jesus is in my life,” he responded. Eraldo stayed in one village for two months. In the end, all of the village leaders accepted the Adventist message.

Fast Facts

- Brazil is home to a wide range of animals, including armadillo, tapirs, jaguars and pumas.
- Human activities such as logging, mining, fishing, and agriculture are important to the Brazilian economy, but are also a serious threat to Brazil’s diverse environment.
- Football (soccer) is the most popular sport in Brazil with the national team consistently among the best in the world, winning the World Cup a record five times.

“I’m happy because they could see that I was a new person. They could see the change in me, just like the apostle Paul—who used to be a very bad person,” said Eraldo. “When I started reading the Bible, I saw how God could change him, and had hope that He could change me too.”

Eraldo continues to pilot the *Luzeiro*, as well as other boats owned by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA Brazil), and he is integral to the church’s medical and spiritual outreach along the Amazon.

“I’m very happy because I can work with love,” he said. “I love what I do and I know that God has mercy on me. Today I am commander of the ADRA boats and it’s good to work together to help every family that we attend to. Now I have the opportunity to show Jesus to the people,” said Eraldo. “This is the job that I love—this work of Jesus.”

One of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects is to build a “floating church” that will be used to reach people living in Amazon villages. 🌍

The Missionary Gramophone

Waciri



Waciri grew up listening to stories from his grandmother about Leo and Jessie Halliwell, the *Luzeiro* missionaries who brought health and hope to the people of the Amazon jungle.

His grandmother told how her father, the tribal chief, made the first contact with Leo Halliwell. At the time, they could only communicate using signs, because the tribal people did not speak Portuguese. But he understood that the Halliwells had come to help the people, and welcomed them into his tribe.

A special friendship and trust developed between the chief and the Halliwells, and little by little the chief introduced the Halliwells to neighboring tribes. He told the other tribes, “These people have come to help the community; they haven’t come to kill anyone. They want to give life to the people.”

The Gramophone

One item of special interest to the villagers was a hand-cranked gramophone. When the Halliwells first entered a village, they set up their gramophone and

played recordings of Christian hymns. The people loved the music, and word about this special machine spread quickly along the river villages.

Sometimes the Halliwells traveled to unentered villages without their friend, the tribal chief. On one such occasion, the *Luzeiro* was headed into a very dangerous community, known as the “head cutters”—a tribe known for its cruelty.

As the *Luzeiro* was approaching the village, a young man who was helping the Halliwells on the boat caught sight of some of the tribesmen along the shore. The men were pointing at the *Luzeiro*, and then pointing to the side of their heads. They repeated this gesture, and the young man was certain they were preparing to cut off their heads.

Running to the Halliwells, he pleaded, “Let’s not land here! They’re going to cut off our heads! Let’s go back!”

“No,” said Leo Halliwell, knowing that they needed to enter this village too. “Be calm,” he told the young man as the *Luzeiro* pulled up to the shore.

Stepping off the boat, Leo Halliwell greeted the tribesmen, who kept pointing to the side of their heads. Suddenly, he realized that they were pointing specifically to their ears—they wanted to

hear the gramophone!

Quickly he set up the gramophone. As the hymns began playing, the tribes people gathered around, with smiles spreading across their faces. The way was opened to reach even this feared tribe with the Adventist message of hope and healing.

Teaching the Chief

Leo Halliwell was careful to keep in touch with his friend, the tribal chief. Little by little he taught him distinctive Biblical teachings, such as how to keep the Sabbath, and about clean and unclean meat.

“My great-grandfather ate a lot of animals,” said Waciri. “So the Halliwells taught him animal by animal. The first to go were wild pigs, then monkeys, followed by turtles. After that he gave up eating unclean fish. At last, just one jungle meat remained—deer.”

Since Waciri’s great-grandfather was the tribal chief, he introduced the concept of clean and unclean meat to the community. It caused a great division, and some people left. The tribe became smaller, but the remaining group continued to practice this rule in their eating habits and it carried to the second and third generation.



Several years ago, the tribe had to leave their jungle village and move to a set apart area on the outskirts of the city of Manaus. Not everyone in the tribe believed in God, and many of them drank alcohol. This led to a lot of fighting within the community.

When Waciri became chief, he banned the use of alcohol within the tribe. Next, he invited everyone in his tribe to keep the Sabbath—currently, half of the tribe members are Sabbathkeepers. Waciri longed however, for his people to have a proper place to worship *Tupan*, (the word for God in his local language).

The Dream

One night, Waciri had a dream. In his dream he saw a beautiful “House of Tupan,” complete with roof, floor, and walls. When he awoke, Waciri immediately sketched what he had seen in his dream. But he had to wait 12 years for his dream to become a reality.

“At first we didn’t even have one real (the Brazilian currency) to start building with,” Waciri recalled. “But I believed that God would send the money, because He sent me the dream.”

Then one day, the dream started to become real. A load of wood was sent as a gift to the tribe—it was enough to build a roof. Then more material was given—bricks, chairs, a pulpit. Suddenly it all came together and the church was built.

The people worship together each Sabbath in their new church building, and peace has come to their community. “In the beginning we had a lot of fights,” said Waciri. “But God has brought peace to our community. The angry people have become calm, and now most of them are friends. Now, my tribe is at peace.” 🌍

Finding Peace Part 1

BRAZIL | January 30

Michael



Michael lived in a cave at his grandparents house. It wasn't really a cave, but his room felt like one with the lights always turned off and the curtains closed. Darkness penetrated everywhere, including Michael's mind. Suffering from deep depression, he rarely left his darkened room, except when he had to go to school.

Life had never been easy for Michael. Born to a 17-year-old mother, he was given to his grandparents for them to raise. His grandparents did the best that they could for Michael, and took him to their church each Sunday. But Michael was turned off by what he experienced at the church. "There was just too much noise," he recalled. "All the time there was preaching, screaming, and asking for money."

Spiraling Down

By the time he was 11 years old, Michael decided that he wasn't going to go to church anymore. "But this took me away from my family, and I felt alone," he said. And that's when he started spiraling down into depression.

"If there is a God, why is my family like this?" he asked himself. "Why do I have so many complicated situations? Why can't I just have a normal life?"

Unlike other boys his age, Michael had no friends and never went anywhere except to school. When he was about 12, Michael discovered the internet and became totally absorbed, creating a "perfect" virtual life for himself. Every possible moment was spent living in his virtual world.

“Stop at This Channel!”

One day, however, things changed when a thunderstorm hit and knocked out the internet. After the storm had passed the internet connection was still down, but the electricity was working.

Michael turned on his television and started surfing the channels. Suddenly he heard a voice say, “Stop at this channel!” A group called The King’s Heralds was singing: “Happiness was close, but I did not notice . . . God woke me up and showed me love . . . a gift from God . . .”

Listening intently, Michael thought *I want this for my life*. Following the music, a Bible study began. Michael switched off the TV. *I don’t want to watch this! I don’t want religion—I want peace!* But that song, “Gift From God” stayed in his mind.

Hoping to somehow recapture it, every day Michael went back to the television channel where he had first heard the song. Although he didn’t hear that particular song, Michael enjoyed listening to the other Christian music on the “Music Box” program. Tuning in each day, Michael discovered that he was watching *Novo Tempo*, the Seventh-day Adventist Hope TV channel in Brazil.

Who Are These People?

During a national holiday, Michael turned on his television and watched *Novo Tempo* continuously for 16 hours, hoping that he might again hear the “Gift From God” song. While he didn’t get to hear his special song that day, Michael listened to many programs featuring Bible study, preaching, health, and music.

Hearing for the first time about the seventh-day Sabbath and about the heavenly sanctuary, he thought to himself, *This can’t be in the Bible*. My

pastor never preached about this. And besides, when are they going to start asking for money. But they never did, and this caught Michael’s attention. Who are these people? he wondered.

Now Michael had a new addiction—the Adventist *Novo Tempo* TV channel! Instead of spending all his time on the internet, he constantly watched *Novo Tempo*. Over the course of a year, Michael had seen all the programs of *Novo Tempo* and became a Seventh-day Adventist inside his room!

His grandparents worried about him, thinking that he was becoming even more depressed because he stopped eating pork. But they were in for bigger surprises.

Talking to the Television

One day as Michael was watching *Novo Tempo*, the on-screen evangelist said, “I want to appeal to you—you who are an Adventist inside of your home. Your family knows that you are an Adventist because you used to live a bad life, but now you are living for God. . . . Why aren’t you baptized? Why are you waiting? Why not get baptized now?”

Michael began talking back to the television, but then the evangelist said, “Stand up, and come close to the TV. Why aren’t you baptized?”

“Because I don’t want to be a member of a church,” Michael responded.

But the evangelist continued, “You are a part of this church. You just need to confirm this by being baptized. Give your life to Jesus in baptism.”

Michael’s heart was touched. He was sure that the evangelist was speaking directly to him. 🌍

To be continued next week.

Finding Peace Part 2

BRAZIL | February 6

Michael



The story thus far: Michael was very depressed, and stayed in his darkened room except when he had to go to school. He was constantly on the internet until one day a thunderstorm broke the connection. Turning on the television, Michael found the Adventist Novo Tempo station and began watching. After watching the programming for a year, Michael wanted to be baptized.

Michael found a Seventh-day Adventist church in the city center and decided to go there the following Sabbath. Arriving at the church, he looked for the head elder. "I want to be baptized," Michael said. The elder was happy to hear this but told Michael that he first needed to have Bible studies. "But I've already studied the Bible for a year," he told the man.

Later that week the elder visited Michael in his home and brought a series of 27 Bible studies with him. The plan was to have weekly Bible studies, but on the

first visit, Michael asked if he could have the entire set. The next week when the elder returned, Michael had completed all the studies and was eager to be baptized!

"You Will Not Join That Sect!"

When his grandparents learned the news they were very upset and told Michael, "You will not join that sect!" But Michael was determined to follow what he had found in the Bible and told his grandparents that he had to obey God rather than man, and that he hoped they would come to his baptism.

After fasting and praying for three days, Michael again asked his grandparents to attend his baptism. This time they agreed, and after his baptism they hosted a special lunch in Michael's honor.

Incredible Changes

Everyone at school was amazed at the incredible changes they had seen take

Mission Post

- The *Instituto Adventista Agro-Industrial* (Adventist Agricultural-Industrial Academy) was established in 1968.
- The school belongs to the Amazonas-Roraima Conference, which is part of the Northwest Brazil Union Mission.
- This quarter, part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help to build a much-needed church on the campus of IAAI.

place in Michael's life. No longer was he depressed and living the life of a recluse. He started a Bible study group and many of his fellow students came, wondering what had caused such a huge change in their classmate. He attended Sabbath School and church regularly, made several friends, and became involved in the church. He also joined the South American Division's "Mission Caleb," a unique youth project that focuses on discipleship by challenging young people to dedicate part of their summer break to do evangelism in places where there is no Adventist presence.

"God Will Find a Way"

It was while participating in Mission Caleb that Michael met the boys' dean from an Adventist boarding academy. The school, Instituto Adventista Agro-Industrial, is more commonly known as IAAI (pronounced "E-I"), and is located in the Amazonas region in northwest Brazil.

In recent years, IAAI has undergone a transformation and has become well known in the community for its caring, Christian students and excellent

academics. Only those students willing to abide by the school's strong Adventist values, including spiritual, lifestyle, social, and academic standards are accepted. As a result, enrollment at the academy has skyrocketed, growing from 100 to 400 students in just three years.

After hearing about the academy, Michael longed to study there. "I can't promise you that it will work out," said the dean, "and I can't pay for you. But God loves you, and He will find a way."

Michael learned about literature evangelism and went to Manaus, the largest city in the Amazonas region, to sell books and earn money. He worked hard and saved as much money as he could. One day, however, after drinking some contaminated water, Michael became very ill and ended up in the hospital. After paying all of his medical expenses, he had only 1,000 Real (pronounced ree-AL), the Brazilian currency. It cost 1,500 real every month to study at IAAI.

Michael was discouraged, but didn't give up hope. He prayed "I don't know what is happening, but You [God] didn't bring me here for nothing."

Now I Have Peace

Michael decided to talk with the school's principal, Saulo Albino, who told Michael there were several people willing to help him financially so that he could attend IAAI. In addition to his classes, Michael works two hours every day to help with his school bill, and during the summer works as a literature evangelist.

"Now I have my dreams completely, and I'm studying in an Adventist school," said Michael. "Today I can say that I have peace." 🌍

Pedrito Prays and Pablo Preaches

PARAGUAY | February 13

Pablo



The country of Paraguay has a population of 6.8 million, of which approximately 112,848 are indigenous people. These natives represent 19 people groups from five different linguistic families.*

The native people of Paraguay live in their own communities, located mostly in the northern part of the country. Unfortunately, many of them don't have access to clean drinking water, electricity, or basic education.

One Big Family

A leader of one of these communities had heard good things about a Seventh-day Adventist primary boarding school—*Escuela Adventista de Coaguazu*—situated in the south-central part of the country.

He wanted his young grandson, Pedro, to receive a good education and so

enrolled him in the school. Even though he was just 7, Pedro loved this school where he felt he was a part of one big family. He learned how to read and write, do arithmetic, and even more important, where he learned about the God who loves him. He also learned Christian lifestyle and habits, such as offering a prayer of thanks before eating a meal.

Eating Outside

When Pedro came home during a school break, he was excited to share his new experiences with his family. As they sat down to eat a meal together, Pedro noticed that everyone just started eating. Feeling somewhat awkward, the 7-year-old boy bowed his head and offered a silent prayer of thanks.

“Why are you doing that?!” thundered Pedro’s father. “We don’t do that! If you want to pray, then take your food, go outside, and eat alone!”

Obediently, young Pedro took his food, went outside of their humble home, sat on the ground, and started eating.

Before long, the grandfather came by and asked Pedro why he was eating outside. “My daddy doesn’t want me to pray for the food, so I came out here,” replied the boy.

Being Thankful

Anger rose in the grandfather’s heart and showed on his face as he went into the

* From the “International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs,” <http://www.iwgia.org/regions/latin-america/paraguay>, accessed August 4, 2015.

Mission Post

- Paraguay has 62 churches and 10,804 church members.
- There are three Adventist academies and one university in Paraguay.
- Paraguay has two Adventist hospitals, a clinic, and a health education and lifestyle center.

house to confront his son. “Why are you doing this to your son?” he demanded. “You should be happy that he wants to pray! He has changed and you should be thankful for that! I’m going to visit that school and ask them to come to our community and teach us what Pedrito has learned.”

The grandfather returned to the Adventist school and explained how happy he was with the changes he had observed in his grandson. “Would you be willing,” he asked, “to send someone to our community to teach us about your God?”

Community Witness

Happily, the school sent a pastor to the community, where he mingled with the people and taught them from the Bible for three months. The grandfather, Pedrito’s mother, and 17 other people from their community were baptized.

As time went on, more baptisms were held, and now more than 40 people are baptized members of the new Seventh-day Adventist church in this community—a church planted by a little boy who wanted to thank God for his meal.

While he has not yet been baptized, Pedrito’s father often attends church with his family. Because of Pedrito’s testimony, seven more children, including his younger brother, are now

attending *Escuela Adventista de Coaguazu*.

Pablo Preaches

Pablo lives in the capital city of Asuncion, where he attends church each Sabbath. When he was very small, Pablo enjoyed sitting in the front row and drawing pictures of the preacher. Being an excellent artist, Pablo’s pictures captured the expressions on the pastor’s face as he preached. As he drew, Pablo listened intently to the sermon, and by the time he was 6 he was preaching his own sermons.

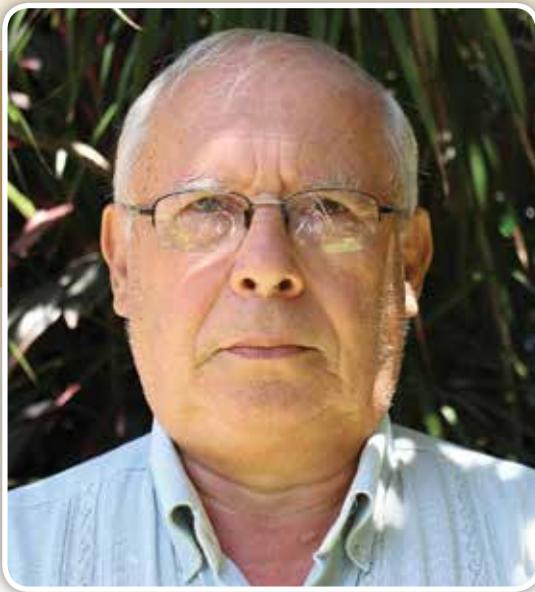
“I like to preach about Joseph or Daniel, or sometimes about kids who don’t want to obey their parents and then I compare what they’re doing with what the Bible says,” Pablo explains.

Pablo’s preaching started when he was invited by a Sabbath School teacher to have a small part in the sermon that would be presented at church. He was so excited that he quickly memorized what he was going to say.

Many Invitations

After preaching, Pablo was told by his teacher that he was very gifted and that she believed God was calling him to preach. Surprised and happy, Pablo started accepting preaching invitations from many other Adventist churches in Paraguay. During the past six years, Pablo’s preaching ministry has grown, and he continues to preach in both small and large churches, and will often preach during evangelistic campaigns organized by the Paraguay Union of Churches.

Pablo loves sharing the Bible with others. His favorite text is Psalm 91:15,16, “because,” he says, “it tells us that if we call on God, He’s going to be with us, and we can be sure of that!” 🌍



The Policeman Who Prayed

Policeman Isaac

Isaac Diaz was a high-ranking officer in the police force of Paraguay when his brother-in-law started talking to him about God. “I had questions, but I was afraid to get close to that topic,” recalls Isaac.

Isaac Ruiz Diaz was born into a Catholic family. His mother was kind, but his father drank heavily. Isaac grew up barefoot, and by the time he was 13 he had to walk 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) to school every day—without shoes.

At age 15, Isaac joined the police academy, and graduated four years later. For more than 20 years, he faithfully served in Paraguay’s police force.

Isaac enjoyed conversations with his brother-in-law, but was afraid to become a Christian because he knew he’d have to change his lifestyle. He viewed the Christian life as an unknown, weird world.

An Invitation

One day Isaac received an invitation to attend an evangelistic series. He invited a friend, and they both attended. In the end, his friend was baptized, but Isaac

wasn’t. “I was proud, because I held a very high rank in the police force. I didn’t want to leave my job,” Isaac explains.

A year later, more meetings were held and the friend invited Isaac. They both attended, and this time Isaac was baptized. Coming up out of the water he felt happy, but also worried. He had no other profession—what would he do if he left the police force? But how could he remain and not work on the Sabbath?

Sabbath Challenges

The following week Isaac was transferred to another department and was told to begin working on Saturday morning. Isaac started praying. Within 30 minutes the phone rang and he was told to return to his previous department, where he was assigned to command police students—no Saturday work required!

Delighted that his problem had apparently been solved, Isaac worked happily for two months—until he received notice that his commander wanted to meet with him the next day—a Sabbath.

The police commander was known to be an angry man, and Isaac was very concerned. He spent most of the night in prayer, crying out to God—and God answered. In the morning there was such a severe rainstorm that the meeting was canceled. On the following Friday, the

commander again told Isaac to come in the next morning. Once more Isaac prayed. Another rainstorm came and again the meeting was canceled!

While God was clearly intervening, Isaac knew that he needed to do something. *God*, he prayed, *I know that I can't ask You for rain every Sabbath. I have to do my part.* Isaac then explained to his commander why he needed to be off duty on Saturdays. To Isaac's great surprise, the commander agreed! "No problem," he said. "You can have your free Saturdays. I don't want to have a problem with God!"

More Challenges

Things went well for several months, but then more trouble came. The Paraguay police force celebrates "National Police Day" every year on August 30. It's a day of recognition and celebration. All police officers are expected to attend. When Isaac realized that August 30 fell on a Saturday, he determined not to attend, choosing instead to worship at church.

On Monday the police chief was waiting for him. "You're being demoted, and will spend three days in jail," he told Isaac. "Then you're being transferred to the worst possible place!"

While in jail, Isaac pled with God for help. Once released, he returned to his superior, but the man refused to see him. After a week the supervisor called—Isaac could return to his previous position.

Three years later Isaac was transferred to the central police office in Asuncion. Although already known as "the policeman who refuses to work on Saturdays," the goal of Isaac's new commander was to force him to work on the Sabbath.

One day, the commander demanded

Fast Facts

- Spanish explorer Juan de Salazar founded Asuncion (now the capital) on the Feast Day of the Assumption, August 15, 1537.
- California-size Paraguay is surrounded by Brazil, Bolivia, and Argentina and is completely landlocked.
- Paraguay is 90% Roman Catholic, 6% Protestant, 1% other Christians and 3% other or none.

that Isaac report to work at 7 a.m. Saturday. He did, but only to deliver a message. "I request to be transferred or will resign my position, but I will not work on Saturdays," Isaac bravely told the shocked commander. Then he calmly walked away, changed from his police uniform to a suit, and went to worship.

A New Job

Arriving at the church, Isaac explained to the pastor what had happened. "Maybe this is providential," said the pastor. "I've been looking for a coworker, but I haven't been able to find the right one. I think you're the one!"

Isaac resigned from the police force. He attended pastoral training in Argentina, then returned to Paraguay to serve as a very effective church planter and pastor.

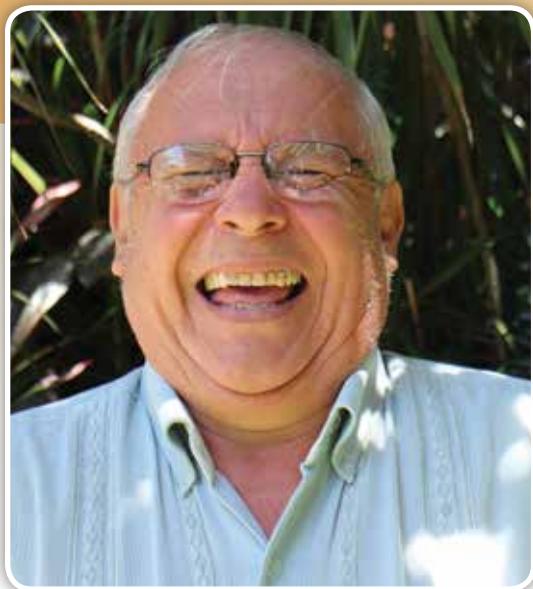
For those facing Sabbath challenges today, Isaac has the following counsel:

"First, you need to be secure in WHOM you believe in. If I believe in my God, I'm secure. Second, the devil doesn't give us small problems—he gives us big ones. But God is bigger than the biggest problems. We need to go forward and trust God. He sees the end from the beginning, and with God, everything will be OK." 🌍

From Policeman to Pastor

PARAGUAY | February 27

Pastor Isaac



When God called Isaac Ruiz Diaz to work for Him as a minister of the gospel, Isaac had already served for more than 20 years in the police force of Paraguay. But God had bigger plans for him. During the next 24 years Pastor Diaz won countless people to Christ and planted 29 churches scattered across six cities.

One of the most effective soul-winning methods used by Pastor Diaz is evangelistic outreach during what is known throughout the Christian world as “Holy Week”—between Palm and Easter Sundays. During this time of widespread religious reflection, Pastor Diaz presents special evangelistic programs and home group Bible studies reflecting on the life and sacrifice of Jesus.

Engine Wouldn't Quit

One evening, after driving 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) down a very bumpy, rocky road, Pastor Diaz and a church member

arrived at the home where they would be giving a group Bible study. But there was a problem with his jeep—the engine wouldn't turn off! After trying numerous times, he left it parked with the engine running as he and his companion went inside to give the Bible study. After some time, they finally heard the engine quit—it had run out of gas.

Since it was already late, the two men would have to spend the night in this humble home, which didn't even have a door. The house itself was just one small room with two beds. The parents and children slept in one bed, while the two Adventists slept in the other one. That night as it began to rain, the pigs and ducks came inside and stayed under the beds all night.

Rain Wouldn't Stop

The rain continued for four days, so Pastor Diaz and his traveling companion stayed with the family and continued preaching to a big group of friends that crowded into the small home.

At last the rain stopped, the jeep was repaired, and the two returned to their homes. However, Pastor Diaz continued giving Bible studies to the group, and after three months eight people were baptized in a nearby pond.

More Bible meetings were held outside, this time with 150 people attending. At the conclusion, 16 people were baptized, and 30 wanted to have more Bible studies.

A Changed Life

During one Sabbath afternoon program, Pastor Diaz asked if anyone had noticed changes in the lives of those who had recently been baptized. One man stood up and, pointing at the woman who owned the small house, said, “This woman used to be very violent. She used to beat up other women in the neighborhood because they gossiped about her, but she’s not like that anymore. Now she is calm. Because of this woman’s testimony, I believe in your God, and I, too, want to be baptized.

Turning to the woman, Pastor Diaz asked her, “Is this true?”

“Yes,” she replied. “There was a time when my husband left me, went to another woman, and almost married her. One day, I took a sharp knife and found my husband in bed with this woman. I was so upset that I turned the bed over! Then I beat up the woman and nearly killed my husband. I went to jail for that, but now I’m a new person.”

Today, a Seventh-day Adventist church sits on their property, beside the little house. The woman and her husband donated part of their land for a church, and they are baptized members, along with many others who have joined because of their testimony.

Fast Facts

- About 56% of Paraguayans live in urban areas, making Paraguay one of the least urbanized nations in South America.
- A popular Paraguayan food is chipá, a cheesy bun or doughnut, and is a festive food found in every popular religious celebration
- Indians speaking Guaraní—the most common language in Paraguay today after Spanish—were the country’s first inhabitants.

Angels Drive Trucks

On another occasion, Pastor Diaz was driving to the city of Curuguaty one night to hold evangelistic meetings when the lights of his vehicle went out. As they were traveling through a dark, forested area, he asked his traveling companion to shine a flashlight on the road, hoping to be able to see well enough to keep going. This helped for a while until the flashlight went out. Slowly they kept moving along the dark road. When another car or truck came along, Pastor Diaz tried to drive by using their lights until they passed by. At this rate, it would take them a very long time to reach Curuguaty.

Suddenly, another truck appeared. The driver pulled up beside their vehicle and said, “You go in front of me, and I will give you my light.” The truck stayed close behind Pastor Diaz’s vehicle, and with the help of his lights, they were able to quickly travel the rest of the way. As they entered the city, they turned around to thank the driver for his kindness, but the truck and driver had disappeared. All they could see behind them was a dark, empty road. 🌍

Blind Man Sees

Francisco



Francisco is no stranger to sorrow. Sadness came early as he started out in life as an orphan. When he was 9 years old, he worked at the local cemetery, cleaning tombs to earn some pennies. By the time he was 12, he started working in candy stores and other small shops. As he grew older, Francisco continued working at various odd jobs, just trying to survive.

Then after three decades of mere existence, happiness entered his life. Francisco fell in love with a wonderful Christian woman, and the two married. Their joy increased when they had their first child. Sadly, the child lived just three months. The two were unable to have any more children.

Influence of Prayer

Some years later Francisco was diagnosed with cancer and told that he only had only a very short time to live. If the doctors can't do anything for me, I

might as well leave the hospital and die at home, thought Francisco. But before he left, the hospital chaplain spoke encouraging words, telling Francisco that his life was in God's hands, and that He would determine what was best. In addition, Francisco's wife was a woman of prayer who continually prayed for her husband. As the days passed, Francisco began to feel better and stronger. When he returned to the hospital for a check-up, the doctor was astonished to see him in such good health. It was clear that a miracle had saved Francisco's life. More than two decades later, he is still cancer-free.

A Downward Spiral

Francisco and his wife enjoyed 33 wonderful years together—until one day tragedy struck and his wife passed away. The loss was devastating to Francisco and he spiraled down into a deep depression. Why had God allowed this to happen?

How could he live without her? She was all he had.

To make matters worse, Francisco's vision rapidly declined until he was completely blind. The doctor told him that he would never see again.

Francisco lived alone in his dark, depressed state until one day a friend told him about Nuevo Tiempo, the Seventh-day Adventist radio station in Uruguay.

A Constant Companion

Francisco began listening to this station at 101.3 FM. As he heard the beautiful music, practical presentations, inspiring sermons and thoughtful devotionals, his eyes were opened in a whole new way. No longer did he feel alone. Nuevo Tiempo became his constant companion.

"I learned the gospel news from the Seventh-day Adventist Church," Francisco said. "I learned about a healthy lifestyle, the Sabbath, the Ten Commandments—all from listening to Nuevo Tiempo."

Seeing More Life

Francisco contacted the radio station to request Bible studies. A Bible worker came to his home, and together they

went through a series of lessons. Soon, Francisco was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He says that even though his physical eyes can't see, he has come to see much more life because Jesus is in his heart.

Since his baptism less than two years ago, Francisco faithfully goes to the local hospital every week to share the Bible and pray with the people there. He also gives Bible studies to people at the local institute for the blind. Because of his influence, others are now attending the Adventist Church.

Even though he is single, Francisco no longer feels alone. "The church is my family," he says. "I feel peace and companionship there."

A Strong Influence

The Nuevo Tiempo radio station plays a major outreach role in the secular country of Uruguay. It is well known and respected for providing outstanding programming in the areas of health and wellness, marriage and family, Biblical study and practical Christianity.

Throughout the country, the Nuevo Tiempo brand is visible at every Seventh-day Adventist church and center of influence through large signs featuring the radio station's name and logo. This connection between the local Adventist churches and the radio station has made a very positive impact on church attendance, baptisms, and retention.

Part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help to build a new church for the church plant where Francisco is worshiping in the Goes district of Montevideo, Uruguay. Francisco and his church family thank you so much for your generous support. 🌍

Fast Facts

- Uruguay has 54 churches and 8,233 church members.
- Uruguay has one Adventist academy, in Progreso, just north of the capital, Montevideo.
- Radio La Voz de la Esperanza Uruguay is the Adventist radio station, located in Montevideo.



Finding God

Mirna

I always believed God existed, I just couldn't find Him," said Mirna, a special-education teacher who struggled with severe depression. Whenever possible, Mirna stayed at home, with the curtains drawn. Then one day she turned the radio on and found *Nuevo Tiempo*, the Adventist FM radio station in Uruguay.

"It was an answer from God," she says. "It saved my life because I couldn't keep going the way I was."

Listening to the programs on *Nuevo Tiempo* gave Mirna a sense of hope and happiness, and, most important, helped her to find God. "I started listening to the station every day, and began praying," she said.

An Invitation

One day as she was listening to the radio, she heard the announcer inviting listeners to visit the *Nuevo Tiempo* center in Montevideo and enjoy the many activities offered there. Mirna was especially interested in the health and cooking classes and decided to attend.

"I had always tried to take care of my health," she says, "but I didn't drink enough water. But I do now and I can feel the difference. And now I eat a good breakfast, and that helps me too."

While coming to the center, Mirna met two young people who were serving in the One Year in Mission (OYiM) program. She accepted their invitation for Bible studies and was very surprised to learn about the Ten Commandments.

"I had never heard about these commandments before," she said. "And the most impressive part was about the Sabbath. As we went through the Bible, I could see that it [the Sabbath] was repeated over and over."

Faith Into Practice

As soon as Mirna learned about the Sabbath, she started keeping it. Before long, she was baptized and became even more active at the center, where she now teaches a class in sewing.

Mirna's family has noticed the changes that have taken place in her life and are happy that she has been lifted out of

her depression. They remain skeptical, however, of her newly found religious beliefs. Mirna continues to pray that one day they, too, will find the peace and hope in Jesus that she has found.

The Nuevo Tiempo center now offers Sabbath morning services. Many of those attending first came to learn about Adventists through the Nuevo Tiempo radio station or classes offered at the center.

Sign on the Street

Nellie, a practicing lawyer, was walking down the street one day when she noticed a sign advertising Portuguese classes at the Nuevo Tiempo center. Eager to learn another language, Nellie decided to attend.

The main textbook used in the class was the Bible. First, Nellie read the passage in Spanish, and then in Portuguese. It was her first experience approaching the Bible as a book of faith.

“When I was in the fifth or sixth grade, I learned something about the Bible, because at school they told us we should read a little bit of it as it was a historical book. But it was just from an academic point of view, not in order to become a Christian.”

But this time Nellie found her Bible reading experience completely different. “I started reading in Genesis, and I couldn’t stop! I just kept reading and reading!” She has now read through the entire Bible and enjoyed it all. “Everything [in the Bible] is connected, and it will make you happier,” she said.

Reading to Learn

Nellie was especially impressed by the life of Jesus and the miracles that He performed to help people. “And miracles still happen today,” she said. “Even if we don’t know they’re

Fast Facts

- Uruguay was the first country in the Americas to achieve complete digital telephone coverage which occurred in 1997.
- By land area, Uruguay is the second-smallest nation in South America.
- The guitar is the preferred musical instrument, and in a popular traditional contest called the *payada* two singers, each with a guitar, take turns improvising verses to the same tune.

happening, they still are happening.”

Although trained as a lawyer, Nellie never approaches the Bible as a critic, as if to judge it. “I read it to learn,” she affirmed.

When Nellie learned about the Sabbath, she had no doubts. “It was clear, and I knew that it was right.”

When the *Nuevo Tiempo* center started offering Sabbath morning services, Nellie attended regularly and was soon baptized. “I just couldn’t leave the Bible: it is the reason for everything, and that’s why I started coming to this church,” she said. “And I wanted to show my love for Jesus through baptism.”

Setting An Example

When Nellie shared her new faith with her family, however, not everyone was happy. Her eldest daughter became very upset, but her son began to have a different image of his mother as a person, and felt that she was setting a very good example of how to live.

Every Sabbath, when she comes to the center to worship, Nellie’s face lights up with joy. “Everyone here is like family,” she says, “and I want to be a part of this family.” 🌐

The Book in the Shoe Store

URUGUAY | March 19

Graciela



Graciela always had a place in her heart for Jesus. As a teenager she attended a small church group that met in a home. While she was happy to learn about Jesus and His love for her, some of the noisier aspects of the worship service made her feel very uncomfortable.

Years went by. Graciela grew up and married the son of the owner of the home where she attended church. The two had children. More time passed and she became a grandmother. One day she was at home watching a Pentecostal television program. The preacher started talking about someone by the name of Ellen White, saying that this woman had written some deceptive books and that she was a very bad person. As Graciela listened to the preacher's rant, she decided that she wanted to read a book by this Ellen White so that she could form her own opinion.

Looking for Ellen White

Graciela went to the bookstore and to the local library, but no one seemed to know anything about an author named Ellen White. Graciela kept praying that she would find a book by this elusive author.

Then one day, her grown son came by with a book in hand. He had been to the shoe store with his daughter, and while there he noticed a book that was being given away. While he wasn't a Christian, he picked up the book thinking it was something his mother might like.

He handed Graciela the book—*La Gran Esperanza*—an eleven-chapter abridged version of *The Great Controversy* by Ellen G. White in Spanish.

A Gift From God

Graciela's hand began to tremble when she saw the author's name, realizing that this book was a gift from God.

"I had been looking for a book by Ellen White, but couldn't find it," she recalled. "But God brought it to me from a shoe store! It was a little bit crazy, but it was one of those mysterious ways that God has."

Graciela began reading the book right away and found that it was straightforward

Fast Facts

- With an area of 200 square miles, Montevideo (the capital city) is the largest city and the chief port of Uruguay. Almost half of the population of the country resides there.
- Montevideo is the southernmost capital city in the Americas, and the third most southerly in the world (only Canberra (Australia) and Wellington (New Zealand) are farther south).
- Football (soccer) is the most popular sport in Uruguay. The first international match outside the British Isles was played between Uruguay and Argentina in Montevideo in July 1902.

and Biblical. She wanted to learn more.

Instead of watching television programs, Graciela listened to the Adventist radio station, *Nuevo Tiempo*. When the announcer offered free Bible studies, Graciela contacted the station and arranged for someone to come to her home to study the Bible with her. She especially enjoyed studying Bible prophecy and after completing the lessons was baptized.

Graciela Meets Sonia

When Graciela started attending the Adventist church, she met a woman named Sonia, and the two became close friends. Sonia had joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church with her family when she was 12 years old. Later her family left the church, but she stayed. “I always loved reading the Bible,” she said, “and knowing that Jesus really loves me means a lot.”

Sonia loved working with the children at her church, but when she moved to a new neighborhood, she wanted to do

something special for the many children who lived around her. She started planning what she could do, and decided to open a branch Sabbath School in her home. But first she began with a type of Vacation Bible School program each evening during “Holy Week” (the week between Palm and Easter Sunday). In South American countries, this week is a time when people are especially open to religious topics.

The first evening eight children came to Sonia’s house, but each evening the group grew bigger. Sonia invited Graciela and some of the other women in the church to help her with the program. After Holy Week, the group met once a week and continued to grow. Six months later so many children were coming to the program that Sonia needed to find another place to meet.

A House of Prayer

By this time Graciela and her husband had inherited the home where they had worshiped as young people. “This has always been a place to serve God,” Graciela said of her home. “The children can come here.”

This branch Sabbath School has continued to meet every week for more than a year. They sing Christian songs, listen to Bible stories, do crafts, and play games. The Central Adventist Church in the capital city of Montevideo donates most of the materials they use. The children love coming to what they affectionately call “Sonia’s house,” and many are now attending a new Adventist church plant. “We plan to continue having this branch Sabbath School as long as God allows us to do it,” said Sonia. 🌐

Thirteenth Sabbath Program

➤	Opening Song	““Work, for the Night Is Coming” <i>Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 375
➤	Welcome	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
➤	Prayer	
➤	Program	“Providence Intervenes”
➤	Offering	
➤	Closing Song	“Go Forth, Go Forth With Christ ” <i>Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 377
➤	Closing Prayer	

Note: If the children’s divisions will not be presenting the Thirteenth Sabbath Program in the adult Sabbath School, please use the following:

Participants: A narrator and one reader.

Props: Pictures of Leo and Jessie Halliwell and the *Luzeiro*.

Narrator: This quarter our mission focus has been on South American Division, and we have heard many wonderful stories from the countries of Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. For our final Sabbath this quarter, we thought it would be appropriate to share a story from the classic book *Lightbearer to the Amazon* by written by Leo Halliwell. As you may recall, Leo and his wife, Jessie, were pioneer missionaries to the people of the Amazon. Today’s story is titled, “Providence Intervenes.”

Reader: On one trip we made several years ago we stopped at the city of

Santarem. At this time we had no believers in this city. One evening I held a meeting in one of the back streets. A large crowd came out. After the meeting a well-dressed woman came to me, and told how she had enjoyed the message. She informed me that her father was an American, and that she had two sisters in the town. One of them had a large home. So she invited us to hold a meeting in her home the next time, and not to speak in the street any more.

A few months later we returned to this place, and I went to their home to make arrangements for a meeting. Although the

father was a member of another Protestant church, they received us very kindly. So we soon made the arrangements for a meeting to be held that evening. While we were still visiting with them, the minister of the man's church came in. He was very much excited. Slamming his fist on the table beside which he was sitting, he said, "The Adventists can't hold a meeting in this home. I protest!"

The lady, who was the owner of the home, arose and hammered her fist on the table, saying: "This house is mine, and they are going to hold the first meeting tonight, and you are the first person to be invited!"

Well, we held that meeting and many others, and those three sisters are now baptized Seventh-day Adventists.

Some time later one of our colporteurs, who was working in that city, sold a book to a family in which was a son who was infected by leprosy. This young man and his mother both accepted the truth, and when we had the baptismal service he had to go around by a back street to get to the river, for he was not allowed on the streets of the city. He came into the water with his poor face disfigured by that dreadful disease. His body also was spotted with many large sores. I well remember that when he came up out of the water, he said, "Pray for me. Some day I shall be a worker in the Lord's cause."

He went back to his home, where he lived in a room separated from the rest of the family. One of our friends in the United States had sent us a little money to buy medicine. So we bought some chaulmoogra oil, and began treating the youth. He did not waste any time, but began at once to work for souls. His sister, who is not an Adventist, would invite the

neighbors into the parlor, and he would stand in the door of his room and explain the prophecies to them. He would draw maps and charts, and thus explain, the 2,300 days of Daniel 8: 14. Soon he had created a good interest among his hearers. The following year I baptized nine persons won to Christ as a result of his work in spite of the fact that he could not even go outside of his room. Surely this is a challenge to the young people whom God has blessed with a good education and a sound, healthy body.

That boy has now taken well over 200 injections, and his body has not a sign of the terrible disease. Two examinations have produced negative results, and he is at liberty to walk the streets again. He now works for others who are suffering from the same affliction, and is giving them injections as well as working for their spiritual welfare.

Some years ago I visited a city that is situated on the Amazon below Belem. We had never had a meeting there. So we went to the mayor and asked for a hall in which to hold a meeting. He did not receive us very kindly, and flatly refused to let us use a hall. When I suggested that we might hold the meeting in the street, he refused to let us hold it anywhere. He stated that the people were all Roman Catholic and were satisfied with their religion, and that there was no need to change for another about which they knew nothing. I reminded him that the federal constitution of Brazil guaranteed to all religious liberty and the right to any one to preach whatever religion he might desire. He said, "Yes, but in this city I will not assume the responsibility of protecting you if you attempt to preach in the street."

While we were talking, a man came running up and told him that the

governor of the state had just arrived by automobile. Nearly every one left at once for the place where the governor had stopped. My first impulse was to approach the governor, for he was a friend of mine. But I remembered that if he should return to the state capital, I would still have to deal with the same mayor and the police force. While I was there wondering what course to pursue, a young man dressed in white stepped up to me and asked me to serve as witness to his wedding ceremony. In Brazil all marriages are performed by civil authorities. Hence all must be married by judges. There was the young man with his bride-to-be in the courtroom, but his chief witness had gone with others to see the governor arrive. I consented to help him out, and the judge pronounced them man and wife. I then signed my name as a witness. The bridegroom then invited us to his home to drink orangeade and eat some sweets.

While we were sitting there in that home, a well-dressed man came in and thanked me for taking his place at the wedding. Then he said, "Perhaps you would like to know who I am. I am the

chief of police here, and this boy that was married is my brother's only son."

Then he asked what we desired that morning when we were talking to the mayor. I told him, and added that he had refused to grant us permission to hold a meeting in the town. Then he said, "Bring your boat over here in this river in front of my home, and you can hold the meeting in my parlor. I will have all the police in town here to protect you if anyone should try to interfere." We did as he said, and that night we had to hold the meeting in front of his home, because his parlor was not large enough to hold all the people who came.

Narrator: Your mission offering today will make a significant difference in reaching the people of the Amazon, building a church for the students at IAAI Academy, and building churches and centers of influence in the capital cities of Paraguay and Uruguay. Thank you for giving!

[Offering]

Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects



Next quarter the South Pacific Division will be featured. Special projects include a Hope Channel broadcasting and recording studio in Auckland, New Zealand; a Family Wellness Center in Suva, Fiji; and Children's Discipleship Centers in Papua New Guinea, the Trans Pacific Union Mission, and New Caledonia.

Leader's Resources

YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

For more information on the cultures and history of Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and other countries within the South American Division, visit your local library or a travel agency, or visit the websites listed below.

For cultural information and pictures:

Brazil: www.lonelyplanet.com/brazil

Uruguay: www.lonelyplanet.com/uruguay

Paraguay: www.lonelyplanet.com/paraguay

You may also find the following websites helpful:

South American Division: www.adventistas.org

(available in Portuguese and Spanish)

The Luzeiro: www.amazonlifesavers.org/archives/565

Paraguay Union of Churches Mission:

up.adventistas.org (available in Spanish)

"Into Uruguay": www.adventistworld.org/2008/june/into-uruguay/1320-into-uruguay.html

The Adventist Mission website contains additional material that can add flavor to your mission presentation. You will find recipes and other activities in the Children's Mission Quarterly section.

Mission Spotlight video reports are available to download or stream at am.adventistmission.org/mission-spotlight

An offering goal device will help focus attention on world missions and increase weekly mission giving. Ask your Sabbath School council to set a quarterly mission offering goal (set the goal a little higher than last quarter and divide it by 14, one part for each of the 12 regular Sabbaths this quarter and two parts for Thirteenth Sabbath). Chart the weekly progress toward the quarter's goal on the goal device.

Remind members that the ongoing work of the world church depends on Sabbath School mission giving every week, and that one quarter of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go directly to the projects in Southern Asia-Pacific Division. On the twelfth Sabbath, report on mission giving during the quarter. Encourage members to double or triple their normal mission giving on Thirteenth Sabbath. Count the offering and record the amount given at the end of Sabbath School. This immediate feedback will encourage members to continue their mission giving.

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PANAMA

SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION



UNION	CHURCHES	COMPANIES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Argentina	567	434	106,192	41,267,000
Bolivia	347	707	98,403	11,020,000
Central Brazil	1,069	738	229,359	41,569,040
Chile	670	375	109,062	17,560,000
East Brazil	905	1,341	185,105	15,348,870
Ecuador	235	416	59,031	15,789,000
North Brazil	1,426	1,263	233,206	14,293,024
North Peru	1,169	1,674	205,601	13,637,563
Northeast Brazil	823	1,303	198,893	36,113,837
Northwest Brazil	838	680	140,374	6,315,522
Paraguay	61	70	12,823	6,798,000
South Brazil	1,001	1,058	183,575	27,608,412
South Peru	1,055	1,486	214,286	16,837,437
Southeast Brazil	1,160	1,082	180,115	38,616,582
Uruguay	54	34	7,986	3,392,000
West Central Brazil	606	702	107,578	15,661,713
Total:	11,986	13,363	2,271,589	321,828,000

- PROJECTS**
- ① Two floating church/clinics on the Amazon and Solimoes rivers.
 - ② A chapel at the Trans-Amazon Academy, Altamira-Itaituba, Brazil.
 - ③ Church plant in Asuncion, Paraguay.
 - ④ Center of influence in Sajonia, Asuncion, Paraguay.
 - ⑤ Center of influence in La Teja, Montevideo, Uruguay.
 - ⑥ Church plant in Goes, Montevideo, Uruguay.