



THE PERUVIAN JOURNAL

Dear Sisters, Associates, and Friends,

We write to you just after having seen the most beautiful rainbow outside our window. It was totally complete, and there was a mirror image of another one just behind it. This came after a very sudden storm whose winds, lightning, and downpour were almost frightening. When the sun came out during the storm, Yuli said, "there must be a rainbow" and ran to the window to look.

Supposedly the rains are over. But every now and then they come again, just to remind us that even the change in seasons is not infallible.

But back to the rainbow. Even in this time of resurrection one finds herself searching for signs of hope, something tangible that permits me to continue singing alleluias while standing firmly in a world of life and death contradictions. These past weeks have been colored with the spattering of blood of the innocent and, in the judgment of some, the not-so-innocent. Both my head and my heart are grappling with the taking of any life, no matter what public opinion colored by the news media tells us about justifying our violent actions.

Sometimes it seems that living Easter gets harder every year. So the rainbow was a welcomed sight! It reminded me that such different colors can blend together in harmony. And what makes the rainbow so beautiful is the blending, the merging of one color into another without destroying the previous one. And the rainbow affirms my belief that we can continue to work to end the war in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the many corners of the world where the acts of war and violence have not hit the press.

SAN MIGUEL, CAJAMARCA

The Good News as reported from Cajamarca is that work is advancing on the retention wall that will protect the new center for the handicapped. The support group for the handicapped met with the mayor who has promised to give attention to this need.

Kathy also reports that the soup kitchen for children, a dream the pastor had for several years, is now coming to reality. One of the associates has given her home for

the use of the soup kitchen and Kathy along with others from the parish, helping to get the project started. The need is great, as there are many children from San Miguel, as well as from the surrounding areas who would go all day without a hot plate of soup and rice if it were not for the soup kitchen.

CALLAO

Carol has been very busy these past weeks with welcoming visitors. Our good friend, Woody Miller, came with his son and daughter-in-law to visit and do some touring. It was good seeing him again.

Pilar and her daughter are visiting now while Pilar continues her check-up in one of the hospitals of Lima. Pilar is an associate from San Miguel.

The new president of Healing Touch International was also visiting the various centers where Healing Touch is being practiced. Carol is a super tour guide and can give you the best comprehensive overview of the social, political, economic, and ecclesial situation in the country.

HUARIPAMPA

Yuli and Sue are certainly managing to stay drier in their "new" home in Huaripampa. They are on the second floor of the parish center. The house was constructed in such a way that there is a lot of natural light that enters the house and gives a feeling of warmth, life, and energy. There is a garden on three sides of the house - and a beautiful blue hummingbird that visits the flowers growing outside the window! Watching her activity is a meditation on simplicity.

Huaripampa is actually the parish seat for the three areas in which we work: Huaripampa, Muquiyauyo, and Muqui. It is a half-hour's walking distance from Muquiyauyo, where we lived previously. We are in full harvest season for corn, lima beans, potatoes and other gifts of the earth. And the people have been very generous in sharing the fruits of their harvest with us.

We enjoyed the visit of Yuli's Mom during the month of April and part of May. And she enjoyed walking the paths in-between corn fields and limas. Yuli



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accompanied her to Lima to celebrate Mothers' Day with the rest of the family.

The workshop for children continues to grow. As we respond to the needs of the children who come, we become aware of other needs and raise the question of what to do.

PERU

The political debate continues between the two run-off candidates: Ollanta Humala, who has the vote of the poor and marginalized but who is mistrusted by big business, and Keiko Fujimori, daughter of the imprisoned Alberto Fujimori whose presidency in the 90s was noted for corruption and mass killings. The percentages of popularity go up and down on a daily basis. The confusion among the voters reflects much insecurity and a lack of confidence. The political mud-throwing is a daily part of the evening news. And many ask the question, why does fighting for democracy have to be such a vulgar and degrading experience. Many people are considering nullifying their ballot or simply not marking their ballot out of the frustration of not knowing for whom to cast their vote.

June 5th is the date for the election. Please keep all of us in prayer.

Peace! And Hope in this Easter season!

Yuli, Kathy, Carol, Sue

The St. Agnes Parish Outreach Committee in Louisville has awarded a \$2,500 grant to assist Sr. Kathy Neely with her work in the new Rehabilitation Center for people in the Province of San Miguel, Cajamarca, who are physically, mentally and occupationally challenged.