

In Buenos Aires, an Olive Tree for Peace

Miguel Werner
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Buenos Aires, Argentina - Social activists and religious leaders attended the ceremonial planting of an olive tree in Buenos Aires on Dec. 14, 2014.

“For dignity and social inclusion” was the motto of the event, which took place in the Villa 31 section of Retiro, which is known as “Father Mugica’s neighborhood,” in honor of the late Roman Catholic priest and activist Carlos Mugica.

Speakers urging a commitment to peace were Rabbi Damián Karo from the Israelite Congregation in Argentina; Dr. Ahmad Jassim Muhammad Al Azzawe, in charge of religious affairs at the Islamic Center in Argentina (CIRA); and Alejandro D’Alessandro, member of UPF-Argentina’s Peace Council and host of the radio program “Peace Action.”

UPF-Argentina Secretary General Miguel Werner congratulated Juan Domingo Romero, an Ambassador for Peace, César Sanabria and Mr. Sanabria’s wife, Graciela Villarpando, for their success with “The Little Princes of Retiro.” The youth organization seeks to prevent children and adolescents from turning to drugs and delinquency. The young participants attend seminars and have the chance to have their own radio program on “The Millennium Continues” FM radio station.

Included in the event was the first presentation of the Father Mugica Awards to social activists and leaders committed to solidarity. The awardees included the murdered journalist Adams Ledesma, whose certificate was received by his widow, Ruth; golf prodigy Dylan Reales; the priest Guillermo Torre, pastor of the Christ the Worker Church; and footballer Alberto César Tarantini, a member of Argentina’s world champion team of 1978.

The olive tree planting, coordinated by UPF-Argentina, was supported by the “Ranches of Buenos Aires” foundation (“sustainable human development and constructive growth”) which is led by Andrea Vega.

Along with the ceremony there was a Christmas party for hundreds of children from the neighborhood. Many children wore traditional costumes in a diverse program that went on until sunset, with snacks, games, songs, presents, the clown Pulserita and a show of Metropolitan Police dogs. The activities were organized by the Little Princes of Retiro organization. Other organizations supporting the event included the United Migrant Peruvian Women, led by Ms. Orfa Pérez.