

News from Brazil - Our new missionary is turning around our country

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We have certainly come a long way since I arrived here on February 14, 1973, fresh out of the winter of Belvedere into the summer heat of Rio de Janeiro. It was a big change, in the physical as well as in the spiritual sense. For several months I felt like a true "voice crying out in the wilderness." Once, while witnessing to a girl in Rio, she asked me whether or not I was a spirit man, so different was my way of speaking and acting. It seems that in this country the appearance of spirit men is a common occurrence.

From the very beginning, my physical family responded in a positive way to the Divine Principle. A younger brother and sister quickly accepted and joined our church. Later, my sister went to Barrytown for training. My brother wrote a summary of all the lectures in a 40-page booklet, and that was our textbook until the Study Guide, Part One, was translated.

In Rio de Janeiro, I always managed to gather large amounts of people, but the difficult part was to make them grow. They were quick to move in, but also quick to leave. In our center, a three-bedroom apartment located in one of the best areas of Rio, we had lectures every night and workshops on weekends, but the growth of the members was slow. I understood that I needed help, if I was to really build a church.

After the 1800-couple blessing, I returned to Brazil with new hope, because I was to receive the help of three Japanese missionaries, blessed also. They came and brought lots of ginseng tea, and our church began to have a brand new look. My wife spent a few days in Brazil in May of last year, before going to Colombia, and that made the theory of the Divine Principle become very real all of a sudden, and many undecided members became strong members after that.

The Little Angels visited Brazil in September of 1975, with four performances in Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia and Sao Paulo. It was an absolute success and brought a new level of spiritual growth to all our members, particularly due to the visit of Col. Bo Hi Pak.

Right after that a new missionary arrived in Brazil. He took over the movement and brought an entirely new direction to our church. Our goal for 1975 was to have three centers and three prayer grounds. This was achieved on December 30. We also had a seven-day and 21-day workshop, with excellent results. A boy from South Africa, who was fluent in Portuguese, came to our 21-day workshop. We have since received visitors from the Paraguayan family.

A special guest arrived in Brazil in April. His visit brought a spiritual rebirth to our church. He called a national meeting in Passos, where we have our training center. Passos is located in the State of Minas Gerais, about 300 miles away from Sao Paulo. About 55 members attended. The importance of Yankee Stadium, and present worldwide activities of our church were some of the topics he spoke about. On the situation of the world today, he spoke about the decay of Christianity, Communism, and corruption. His four-hour speech brought a brand new vigor and enthusiasm to all our members.

Our guest had an opportunity to visit our four local churches, spending about three days in each of them, teaching us Rev. Moon's style of leadership in praying and teaching. He visited our prayer grounds, accompanied by our members. Many of them cried while everyone prayed together. Brazil is a large country, so he spent 20 hours in one trip and 70 hours by bus in another. In Brasilia, he opened a pioneer center. New exciting plans for the future include a Barrytown-style Latin American Training Center, with lectures in Portuguese, Spanish, English and Japanese, and the translation of the Divine Principle book into Portuguese. In July, pioneer missionaries will be sent out, bringing the total of local churches to seven, covering the whole territory of Brazil from Manaus to Porto Alegre.