

Advent is a time to reflect and wait as we remember Jesus coming in flesh to make all things new.

We interviewed two members of the Paz y Esperanza **Bolivia** team to hear how Jesus has been making things new through their work, and what they hope for and expect in 2022.

Fernando Teran is the President and Marcelo Rodriguez is the Director, and together they lead the office in Santa Cruz.



Fernando Teran



Marcelo Rodriguez

The focus of PyE Bolivia's work is to respond to and intervene in cases of sexual and domestic violence. They do this by working with churches, schools and other organisations, coordinating with police and volunteers to provide support for survivors. Bolivia has faced significant instability this year due to political crisis and labour strikes. The Covid-19 pandemic has added more challenges to already complicated situations. Marcelo said: *"As Bolivia faces its fourth wave of Covid-19, everyone is at risk of infection. Those who are in extreme poverty find themselves in even more difficult situations and vulnerable to violence"*. This year PyE has managed over 40 cases of direct intervention with over 100 additional people receiving some form of support.

In spite of the challenges, the team continue to see the impact of their work. One mother they helped this year was abused so badly by her husband that she was bedridden for two weeks and unable to look after her children. She connected with PyE through a church, and the team was able to provide her with psychological and legal support. The husband claimed the mother was trafficking one of the children, making the case even more complicated. The legal proceedings are ongoing, but PyE has connected with Compassion International to organise sponsorship for the

children and the mother now has a cleaning job. We praise God that the mother and her children are able to attend church again, and the mother is also receiving support from a community group of survivors as they build new lives. Marcelo said: *“Although it is complicated, we trust in the Lord that we can do all things through Him.”*

In another distressing case, a 13-year-old teenager was exploited by someone she met online. He drugged her and sexually abused her. PyE was able to provide her with psychological, legal, social and spiritual support. The team also coordinated with partners such as World Vision to provide food and clothing.



Some of those involved in PyE Bolivia's programmes

Marcelo shared with us a verse that gives him hope in the face of such difficult and complex injustices.

The Lord your God is with you,
the Mighty Warrior who saves.
He will take great delight in you;
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,
but will rejoice over you with singing.”
(Zephaniah 3:17)

Looking forward to 2022, Marcelo offers some perspective that keeps the team going: *“In the midst of all the challenges, we know God will renew us with his mercy and love. He will delight in us, and we will delight in Him, and this gives me hope.”*

The team also faces the challenge of being able to fund their work. The need is great, and God is at work so let's join the coming King this Advent in advancing His Kingdom by giving generously to support this critical work. Thank you for your financial support and prayers.

Why not make a Christmas gift to support our brothers and sisters in Bolivia. Just click on this link: <https://www.justgiving.com/pazyesperanza>

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