

April 2003 Adventures

April has been a month of driving! We mentioned last month that our Toyota truck was in the shop to have its engine rebuilt. This month we were on the road for 4090 kilometers, or 2500 miles! However, we are now back up and running again – gracias a Dios!

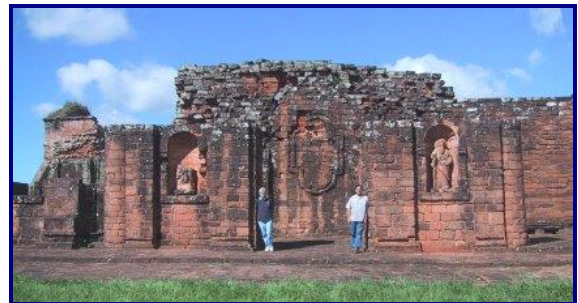
We started the month with a reunion of all the churches in the Yrybucua region, all the local pastors are pictured to the left. What a blessing to be a part of this celebration in Christ!



We got our truck back with a “new” rebuilt engine by the first week-end in April. By the way, the cost to rebuild the engine, including labor, was only \$700! However, after it was rebuilt, we had to break in the engine by driving

1000 kilometers. We decided to head south toward the Argentinean border, and visit the Jesuit Ruins. For those of you who have not seen the movie The Mission, it's a great movie about the Jesuits in Paraguay, and the ruins reminded us of their impact here. The ruins are spectacular, and we enjoyed our week-end of touring Southern Paraguay.

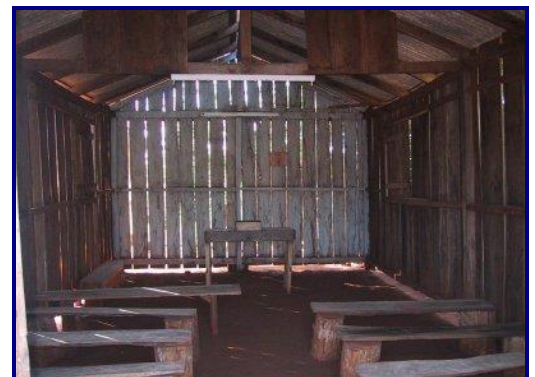
The remainder of April we have spent traveling from East to West, trying to finish the “never ending projects” of Colonia Guaraní and Puerto Indio. Colonia Guaraní has grown in dimension since we have added water lines to the 2 adjacent neighbors' houses. We pray that these projects will be finished in May.



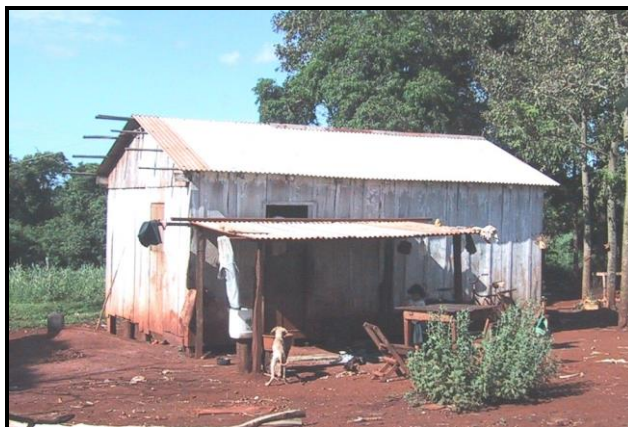
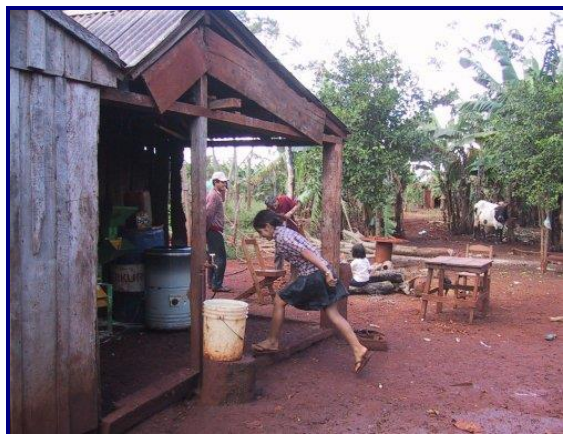
While in the Alto Parana region, we have also tried to drill a well at Puerto Indio. Actually, we drilled 3 holes at this church. This area of Paraguay has very shallow basaltic rock. We were able to drill the first 2 holes to 12.7 meters, then the 3rd hole was only 10.5 meters. After several days of trying, we finally gave up on trying to use the 12.7 meter hole as a production well, and will employ a local driller with larger equipment to drill a deeper hole in the rock. This location only needs a single bathroom for the church. The pastor does not live near the church. However, we plan to run a 450 meter water line from the church to his house.



Outside and inside the small church at Puerto Indio – note, the church has no floor, and the walls do not extend to the ground.



Eating at both Colonia Guaraní and Puerto Indio has been an “experience”. We have paid the local women to prepare our meals. We had ground peanuts mixed with hot water served as a breakfast drink. We had a bowl of “chitlins” served as breakfast. We even had fried armadillo one night. We now know that “pollo casado” means yard bird, and they are tough! However, for the most part, the food has been good, and we’ve not gotten sick – PTL! As you can see below, the local houses are humble, but we have enjoyed sharing meals with the locals and enjoying learning about their families, their culture, and their faith.



A major blessing this month – and thank you all for your prayers – is that we found a house in Santani! A Baptist missionary will be returning to the states after serving 17 years here in Paraguay. We had met her on previous visits, and stayed in communication with her. We had prayed for a house, then she notified us her house would be available May 15th. We went to visit it, and feel it is an answer to lots of prayer! We’ve met several folks in Santani, and look forward to relocating to a smaller, quieter town. More information in May.

The end of April we were back in Asunción attending a workshop with New Tribes Mission. This workshop focused on church planting for tribal groups here in Paraguay. We were also able to have most of the English speaking missionaries over to our house one last time before leaving Asunción. Our house has been a home for missionaries with the Methodist church for the past 7 years. The house will be missed as a place to congregate, pray, and visit.



A quick follow-up about Miter, the man with the snake bite on his foot. He has healed nicely and is attending the church at Colonia Guaraní. He even provided Pastor Blas’ family with a large stack of fire wood as a thank you! In May, we head back to finish our projects in Alto Parana and move into our house in Santaní. Thanks to all of you for your continued prayers and support.

*In His Service,
Ed & Linda Baker*