

Greetings! From a very chilly but sunny Spain ...

It has been some time since I wrote a newsletter as I have been just so busy with building and renovating, the weather also has made it seem that our purpose here is not much more than just to survive a drastic winter. Its not that we have had a Northern European Winter, only a few snow falls and many weeks of unremitting rain; only that the house in which we live is so full of draughty holes and leaks that the little bit of warmth from our wood stove doesnt linger long enough to make our home comfortable. No matter, by next winter we hope to have fortified our home against the frosty weather.

Now with some sunshine at last we have begun to look to the future with hope in our hearts for what the Lord may do through our vision. Dorothea and I have been discussing it and we thought it is time to redescribe the vision for all of you our supporters, and indeed also for us so that we may run!

“inscribe the vision..so that he who reads it may run” Habbakuk 2.2

Last week we went to pick up the Title deeds for the house from the Government Notary, and we are now busy having the House registered into our name on the “Registro de Propiedad”. This is in itself a great miracle, as who could have thought a year ago that we would be able to buy a property in Spain?

Two years ago or more, as I was journeying up the Camino de Santiago from Seville, I prayed every day, and many times every day,

“Lord, I am trusting you for a House. A fairly large House, and it must be right slap bang on the Camino itself. (One should not have to deviate even ten metres to get to it). It should have a Barn, or the possibility of creating some accomodation separate from the main House, and it ought to be in a village that preferably doesnt have a Refugio already.

These three criteria were realized in finding this house a year ago on the Internet. We had been hoping to maybe rent a place which was suitable but had found it to be impossible. Then I had thought of scrapping the idea of a House and settling instead for a small piece of rural land to make a campsite. This almost happened, but due to circumstances we never achieved that Second Option, because it turned out that the Lord had heard the initial prayer and was answering it.....in his time. And what a time of testing it was! I had come to a place of desperation when I finally discovered this “Perfect house” for sale, the one in which we now reside, but we were initially disappointed as the asking price was Twenty Thousand Euros, an impossible sum of money and a challenge which seemed insurmountable!

A year later, a year mixed with equal portions of quiet trusting, panic struck supplication and hopeless resignation, I contacted the seller again to enquire about another different piece of land, and he informed me that they had not been yet able to sell the House (due to the credit crisis), and that they were now willing to sell it for half the asking price, in effect, Ten thousand euros.....which we had.....almost.

What a miracle that was! Within a week, and with some very timely help from some dear friends, we had the full amount to buy the very house that fulfilled all the criteria of my prayer of two years.

Allow me now to Redescribe the vision for you , so that we may run with it and so that you may pray for us and in so doing contribute to the work of the Lord in Europe.

Europe is a Dark continent , and many are being called now from the Colonies to return to the place from where the Gospel was proclaimed for many centuries to a frontier world which was lost in Darkness. At that time Africa was the “Dark Continent”, and many missionaries gave their lives in Malawi , Nigeria and Uganda to bring salvation to a people that were bound in witchcraft and crushed by the slave trade. The missionaries were successful at great cost to themselves and their families, and today in the places where they toiled the church is triumphant. Despite continuing poverty, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is to be found in abundance in Zambia , Kenya, Uganda, Brazil, Bolivia and Papua New Guinea. Even in China the Church is vibrant and dynamic, and throughout the Muslim world there are reports of a great stirring of the church, miracles , visions and powerful testimonies of God at work.

Europe on the other hand has become a stronghold of Atheism, Humanism and mindless iniquity, the Powers of Darkness have made the Church a despicable anomaly and a laughing stock to the “enlightened” mind.

However, the dark vacuum left by turning away from Christ has begun to be filled again with witchcraft and paganism. Buddhism, astrology and all the false religions of the world are competing in Europe to reclaim for Satan the dominance he once had.

This Spiritual emptiness has led to the resurgence of an ancient Pilgrimage, The Way of Saint James. Many thousands are walking this route every year in search of something spiritual to fill the emptiness of secular Humanism that has pervaded society. The Pilgrim routes to Santiago from Seville, from France and from England are filled with Pilgrims who are seeking discussion , experience and direction . They are coming from the great cities of Europe, Prague, Berlin and Warsaw, Stockholm Amsterdam and Paris, spiritual wastelands devastated by this Great Apostasy from Christ , something which never has been seen before in church history.

I have walked with these pilgrims and discussed the things of God, and I have found that they do not want more blinding religion, pat theological answers and religious boxes, there is a real hunger to know Truth, but their minds have become as dark and confused as the most ignorant heathen of yesteryear , moreso complicated by the fact that they have been immunized against Christianity by having received ineffectual doses of mediocre catholicism and religiosity at school and in the vestiges of their tradition and heritage. They need a new and living encounter with Jesus Christ and a way of understanding him and walking with him that is relevant to a Post Modern Europe. Jesus himself is reaching out to this dark generation but we are his hands and mouth for him to do it.

Our house lies on the Pilgrimage route to Santiago. (Saint James). For the last few months I have been restoring the house to a livable condition , patching the roof, floors and installing plumbing and electricity , and making sense out of a tumbled garden. When spring comes we will have a procession of Pilgrims from all over the world trooping past our front door, and we are now setting our sights on having accomodation for them to stay over for the night. Alongside the wall of the courtyard we have a number of small rooms that were used as storage facilities and housing for animals, and we intend to convert these into small rooms , or “cells” using the terminology of mediaeval monastic communities. A simple room, whitewashed walls with a bed and a small table with a Bible is what many of these seekers need to point them in the right direction. The front Porch we want to tile out and put a large table for vigorous eating and more vigorous discussion. A washing machine and a shower are necessities, and a small gas cooker and washing up place. We envisage times of meaningful discussion with Pilgrims from all over the world. We will place in the front porch area a computer for free internet access, Wi fi free zone and my old laptop for emailing. And on the wall next to the front entrance we will put a fountain for the pilgrims to fill up their water bottles. Our house is the last in the village, and with another seven kilometres to the next refugio the Peregrinos will need to fill up. If they can be induced to come in , we will be reday to offer them the water which will spring up in them to everlasting life!

Please pray for our vision, and support us financially if you are able. We would love to have visits from any of you, to help with the building or to get out onto the Camino to share your testimony with the walkers. Once we have accomodation we look forward in the future to have spiritual retreats for christians , but that lies in the future.

And by the way, I am praying for people to join us here in a community which extends beyond the Camino vision. Our village is abandoned and has a number of old houses which can be bought and renovated as we have done. Please pray that we may receive co workers who can help us with this mission!

Our love to you all in Christ.

Craig, Dorothea, Ursula and Francesca.