

Ray's Back Page

My last one for the year! It should really end on a high note, yet, a few things are in limbo at this moment.

As I write (1.12), the materials for **Beon Prison** in Madang PNG, despatched from America 23.10, had not yet arrived. The Bibles are in place and Terry was scheduled to establish the ministry during the second week in December, but what to do? We are praying about this and yet, Terry and I decided that he should go and take lesson 1 & 2 from here and trust the rest will all come together. Importantly, the inmates will be blessed with the Word and at least with two lessons.

We are also still waiting to see if **Ezra** will take on the chaplaincy in Rove Prison in the Solomon Islands, replacing Japhlet who is now applying his skills to counselling sex offenders and violent inmates. In the meantime, Jair is doing a great job. They close Dec 17th, and resume January 14th with new enthusiasm.

Another thing in limbo is the **family Simpson's visas** which enables them to stay in Australia. Jack as Office Manager is a vital part of CBI's ministry, and Amelia his wife inseparable from it. So, I have just given you three urgent points

of prayer.

Finances – it's pretty sure we will finish our financial year (Dec) on a high. This month's income exceeded expenses by \$ 15010 eliminating some of the deficits of recent months. Donations of \$10,000 and \$5,000 help of course. I loved the \$5,000, not for its size but the long-serving Instructor donating it, wrote "*We made a lot of money on the sale of our house..... and we are dividing some of the spoils, with pleasure!!*" I am in awe of God who continues to surprise us - who never lets us down. Our profound thanks is to Him, yet, our heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the wellbeing of the ministry, established to reach prison inmates with the Good News of Jesus – and for His Glory!

Christmas is just around the corner. Many involved in the ministry will take a breather but our students, being incarcerated, don't. We trust sufficient numbers of Instructors will remain available to take a lesson or two. Instructors and students will receive a Christmas card with our season's wishes over the next few days. They are our good wishes but fruition is from the Lord. That goes for my best wishes to all our readers – enjoy the season and stay safe. Shalom!

Crossroad

Bible Institute

Networking in Australia and the South Pacific.

December 2013



Favours – the angel announcing to Mary that she was to be the mother of Jesus, he said: **Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.** (Luke 1:28) This favour from the Lord was ultimately extended to all who believe in Jesus, for the angel, praising God, said: **I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.** And he then said: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests** (Luke 2:10 & 14). It is so true, for as much as God had a plan for Joseph and Mary, the shepherds and the wise men, so God has a plan for all of us.

Mary in giving birth to the Saviour brought Him into our world. Even though the event was around 2000 years ago, it is and remains a message of 'new life' that evolved through Jesus birth and life, and it needs to be proclaimed. Yes, the Christmas message is "**good news of great joy**" that all of us ought to eagerly pass on.

We then note that the angel called Mary "**highly favoured**" - a great honour! But in response to Mary asking him "how will that be", the angel said, **The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.** Mary responds with faith and submission – "I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me as you have said." When we come to faith, the Holy Spirit has

not just overshadowed us as a one-of event, but entered our hearts and dwells there empowering us to be the Lord's servants. With the fervor of the Spirit in us, we cannot but praise and thank God for our salvation; and out of gratitude we feel compelled to share the good news of great joy, of Jesus.

You know, this is the core of CBI's ministry – reaching out to the least, the last and the lost, which has been instrumental in God saving many lives. What more, better and rewarding is there than to tell others that God loves them so much, that He sent His Son into the world as a tiny baby, to live and die and pay for their sins. What glory is that! The Christmas child in growing up and through His lifestyle, showed the love that God has for His people. In reconciling people, He brought God and people together again. We can rejoice with those who have this new life.

Happy, joyful Christmas - glad tidings it brings for now and always!

From Anne's desk:

This happy season gives us much reason for thankfulness, for the lessons never stop coming. Other areas of our ministry are also thriving e.g. there have been great responses to the 'Tessa letters' sent to inmates when they have stopped doing

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their lesson. We rejoice as a result when many start again. Sometimes after an inmate experiences several moves or hospitalisation, he is glad to receive the letter and wants to resume, even after six months.

Before an inmate is released, we send him a letter encouraging him to continue his studies, find a Bible-believing church and Christian friends. If they call for help, we try to satisfy that – sometimes assisted by Throughcare Jigsaw Group of which CBI is a member. Vicky and I attend their meetings.

Then recently, **I attended** their annual **Networking Breakfast meeting at State Parliament House** in Sydney. (see website) I have established and am maintaining contact with the Global Children's Ministry Network which puts me into contact with the Executive Director of the **Juvenile Justice Detention Centre**. They have many young people - their ages ranging from 12-18 years.

For the women in prison, we recently entered into partnership with Kairos. Their representative wrote: *The Board is in favour of partnering with you in this endeavour*. This is one area in which Vicky—who has a big heart for these women—shines.

The birthday card Mary sends to the inmates is still experienced as a lovely gift – Mary is often surprised with the reactions she receives.

There are now 17 prisons in NSW receiving the Christian Challenge Magazine. It is wonderful reading and is action-packed. Another six prisons receive the same every second or third month.

CBI America has excitedly announced and with good reason, for there are now **half a million inmates doing CBI studies in 111 countries**. This is amazing and much reason for thankfulness. We are family to the students – they are our brothers and sisters.

Through the Instructors' and CBI's letters, we are enabled to establish wonderful personal contact – like I'm mentoring a Fijian student with the Centre of Advanced Studies, who with his last lesson told me of an incident that sent shivers down my spine.

This is the last Update for 2013. May we with renewed strength and love be ready to start in another year of our Lord—2014! Oh really? Yes - *because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit*. (Romans 9:9)

In His Grace,
Anne

Statistics :

Lessons received for November:

AUS=175, FIJI=104, PNG=227 SI=119, NZ= 148

Enrolments for November:

AUS=41, FIJI=3, PNG=6, SI=3, NZ=40

We had 24 GT01 lessons this month

From the Fields

Greetings Friends

At a NSW regional prison this month I had a most remarkable conversation with a new student James (name changed). He told me how in those long hours locked away each day, he started to pray and to read a bible that had been left in the cell by

the previous inmate. James also began CBI studies. After several months in custody the day arrived for James' trial. He asked God what to do, plead guilty or fight the charges (James told me of the charges against him and although he was not completely innocent there was certainly a degree of corruption with the charges). At his trial, and to his credit, James gave his version of events and then pled guilty. Our Lord blessed James with a lesser sentence. He now has a real peace and a desire to learn more about Jesus and to follow him.

This month I had the pleasure of training Nicole from the North Coast. Nicole is the partner of a current inmate and CBI student. She is only the second Instructor we have whose partner is in prison. It was great to spend time with her and observe her obvious faith and hear of her commitment to her partner.

As you read this I should be in PNG to establish CBI ministry in Beon Prison, Madang. Please pray for my time there, for health and safety but most importantly that God continues to lead and direct us. During my time in PNG I will be also visiting the prison in Lae and the women's prison in Port Moresby. Many new Instructors have been trained this month to be ready for the lessons from Beon. Chris and I have spoken at the Tregear Presbyterian Church, Coffs Harbour Presbyterian Church and the Grafton Presbyterian Church. Instructor training sessions have been held at those churches plus sessions at Chatswood Presbyterian Church and 2 sessions at the Ballina Presbyterian church. We do thank the

ministers involved for allowing us to address their churches and I encourage all those trained to post in their Application Form and Pastoral Recommendation Form as soon as possible.

Also this month I have had prison visits to Cessnock CC NSW, St Heliers CC NSW (Muswellbrook), Long Bay CC Sydney and Kempsey CC NSW.

As this is the last newsletter for the year, I would like to sincerely thank all those people, from all over Australia, that have opened their homes to me on my travels. You make my time away from Chris much easier and also for being a financial saving to the ministry. Again, thank you and may God bless you for your servitude.

To the prison chaplains, thank you for the access to the prisons, for your friendship, for your support, for promoting CBI and sharing in the command from Jesus to remember those in prison.

And to you, the CBI Instructors. Our students think the world of you. You are their church and their Pastors. I am in a privileged position to see and hear the effects of what you do. Well done good and faithful servants.

Please remember the Sydney Seminar that has been organised for the 22nd of February 2014. Put it in your diaries now. The main speakers will be an ex Tier 2 student and his wife and a high ranking (Christian) Corrective Services Officer. Invitations will be out mid January.

We thank you for your prayers, support and generosity
Terry and Chris