

# Crònica Catalana

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## February 2010

Dear Friends,

It wasn't my intention to be writing this in February – December had been my first goal, followed quickly by every week thereafter! But as we are now in February, the first thing to be done is to welcome the new CMS which has emerged from the integration of SAMS (GB) and CMS. Do check out the web site and all the resources and information available: [www.samsgb.org](http://www.samsgb.org) or [www.cms-uk.org](http://www.cms-uk.org). But please be patient with the office staff as the integrating of processes and administration will take a while.

Apart from that headline, where to start after so long a silence? Perhaps a few items to praise God for:

- Since October the church has had a new sign outside, of more modern design and much more visible than the previous one. Within days, two Ugandans turned up saying they had been looking for a church for ages and had never known there was one here.
- I really enjoyed participating in the meeting of the Contact Group of the Porvoo Communion which took place in Finland in October. I had previously known nothing about the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches and found it all very interesting. Bishop Carlos has asked me to be the I.E.R.E. representative from now on.
- A wonderful "big-0" birthday weekend in November with visitors from England and much enthusiasm in the church in Sabadell which provided hospitality to my visitors and a lunch of paella for 70 people. Unforgettable, particularly the fireworks on the birthday cake – and they weren't just sparklers either! I was very touched by their thoughtfulness in especially commissioning from Bolivia a pair of "llama" earrings to replace the ones that were stolen from my flat in the summer.
- A Christmas party for the children of the families who collect weekly food parcels. The "Kings" distributed Christmas presents of toys to 69 children; it never ceases to amaze me how the Lord provides the right number of toys for each age group. The local Roman Catholic parish donated the sweets, biscuits, cakes and drinks for the children's snack pack.
- A lecture at the end of January in the same R.C. parish, entitled "More than merely neighbours? Is there anything else that unites us?" It was a year ago that they asked me to do it, and I chose the title then without having thought at all about the content. But in God's timing, it has been just during this last year that there has been active collaboration between us, through their collecting food for us to distribute. **Pray for this collaboration to continue and for contact and friendship to deepen between the two churches.**
- Several of the Ecuadorian children who accompanied their older siblings to our *Zona J* group a few years ago, have suddenly reappeared in church on Sundays, bringing some of their friends along too. It is encouraging to think that we must have done something right! **Pray for this group of up to six children, their integration into the Sunday School, and for a strong foundation of faith in their lives.**
- 2009 finished with the encouraging statistic of attendance up by four over the previous year. It's not many, but it is growth. **Pray for this growth to be consolidated, and that the Lord continues to bring new contacts across our path.**

- Early in January part of the ceiling in the church Sala came down. By God's mercy, no-one was on the premises at the time, but for safety's sake, we had to take the rest of the ceiling down. Now the PCC has to get estimates for replacing the ceiling and lighting. It is also wanting to replace the windows in my flat, taking advantage of the grants currently available from the Catalan Government. The problem with grants is that you have to pay for the work first and then wait (and wait....) for the grant to come through. It is not at all clear how we shall manage to do both major jobs, but God is faithful and I am sure He will provide. **Please pray with us for rather more than merely "our daily bread".**

January has already had quite a full diary, with the ecumenical Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (three services plus the lecture mentioned above), and the church's AGM. **Pray for the PCC:** Joan, Pablo, Jordi, Rafael, Lidia and Dani, as they shoulder their responsibilities. They will be a good group to work with.

Since the autumn, the little group in Barcelona has been in the hands of Andrew and Ralph (CMS Australia). I still go occasionally but no longer have to organize things nor pastor the group members. Nor have I been to Reus since the deacon there, Rafa, was priested in November. Those taken together have made for Sundays – and weeks - that are much more relaxed.

Looking ahead, some calendar points:

**February:**

- 9-13 Holiday at a hotel-spa in Andorra, the church's gift to me for my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday last November.
- 28 *Calçotada* after the All-age Service. *Calçots* are a catalan delicacy, a kind of barbecued spring onion.

And during the month: start up of the Growth Groups and *Alpha*.

**March:**

- 6 Ecumenical day in Barcelona, focussing on faith and the creative arts. Also a special day of prayer for Spain.
- 7 Service with a focus on prayer for healing.
- 13 Diocesan Standing Committee, Madrid
- 16-21 Sweden, for a couple of days with Bolivian friends followed by a Porvoo Communion Church Leaders' Consultation (18<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup>)
- 28 An Italian meal and a concert of classical guitar following the All-age service.

**April:**

- 4-11 Holy Week and Easter with its extra services on Thursday and Good Friday.
- 28<sup>th</sup> –3<sup>rd</sup> May Gathering of CMS mision partners in Europe and the Middle East, to be held in Tunis.

**May**

- 9<sup>th</sup> Visit to St. James Southlake, Woodley.

Thank you for your faithfulness in prayer and all the tokens of your continued support. I look forward to seeing some of you during the year, and hope to be in more frequent touch than in the past few months. Thank you for not giving up on me!

*With love in the Lord Jesus*  
Sue

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