

Saludos desde Buenos Aires

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Dear Friends,

If this newsletter sounds rushed, it is partially due to making arrangements to leave for the United States, the Lord willing, in two days. In addition to trip preparations, upon returning here towards the end of February, the school year will be about to begin. So I'm going over last minute lists for both things at once. If you'd like to get in touch with me during my trip this month, you can do so through voice mail at the number at the top of this report, or through the e-mail address this newsletter is sent from.

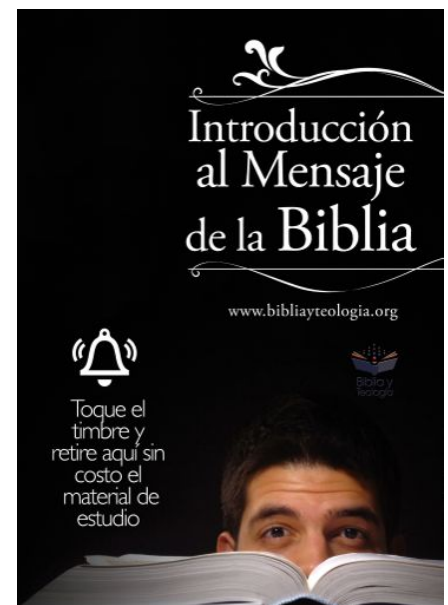
Update on print and internet outreach.

Those of you who are familiar with the Caballito congregation may know that Internet and Let's Start Talking are the two major ways our congregation finds new persons with whom to study the Bible.

When missionaries arrived in Buenos Aires in the 1970s a major area of our evangelistic outreach was through Bible correspondence courses. With the paradigm shift to internet the same material in slightly adapted form is available on our website, www.cursos.iglesiadecristo.org.ar

Much of this material is still also available in printed form at our church building. This month we added a poster to our windows to encourage people to stop and ask about the "*Introduction to the message of the Bible*" course. Please pray we can surface more walk in and internet contacts to invite to study God's word, and to events at church, so that they can eventually become part of God's people.

I've noticed that over the years a number of people have signed up for the internet courses after doing on line searches in Spanish for "Bible study" and related terms. However, over the last year or so enrollments have dropped tremendously. Even advertising for the on-line course hasn't brought in students! Does this



New poster in our windows at church: On the left it says: "Ring the bell and receive study material free of charge."

perhaps mean there is increasingly more competition for people's attention than before? According to one of our major newspapers, *La Nación*, Argentina is even more saturated with internet connectivity than other major Latin American countries like Brazil and Mexico. So, if this is the way people come into contact with ideas, we have to use it to share God's word.

For these reasons, we've decided to revamp the course and website. A local web designer is working with us to make it more attractive. We're preparing a new website to house present material and also to be a portal to find out about the Argentine Bible Institute (www.ibica.org), the Caballito church of Christ, and other congregations. Please notice that my part of the "we" in this process is largely finding trained people who can help in this area. For example, a free lance programmer, Gabriel Ferrarese, is in charge of keeping the online side going and worry free. He's a member of the church from the province of Córdoba.



Gabriel keeps our website running.

What it's like to be here in the summer.

Years of not investing in the electrical grid have caught up with Buenos Aires. Power shortages this summer have made auxiliary power generators a common site in the streets here. The up side of this time of the year is finding people who have time to read the Bible with you who may not schedules that are so free during the rest of the year.

It's great to have coworkers Laura and Osvaldo Valdez back in Buenos Aires and touch base with them before leaving for the States. I would appreciate your prayers for my travels and for the beginning of the school year in March, along with our efforts to bring more persons into God's Kingdom. Thank you for your continued support of the work of the church in Argentina.



Auxiliary power generators. A common site because of power shortages this summer.

Sincerely in Christ,

Joel Banks