

Naomi Keefe

Location: **Olinda, BRAZIL**

Mission: **Church-based community development and evangelism**



In December and January the volunteers had been quite busy with a range of activities including:- handing out m&m's panettone gifts, purchasing school material for the boys and girls in the Good News Club, finishing up the study on Christmas through the eyes of Revelation 12 and the Dragon, organising devotional material for the Good News Club families, an outdoor training session for the volunteers of the Reading Room, starting to catalogue the books in the Reading Room with the plan for the children to borrow them for home use, delivering two beds kindly made and donated by one of the football players from our Sunday group; to name a few of the activities.

Imagine this scene - I'm talking to my dad on Facetime and hear "pop, pop pop", I automatically move back from the windows calling my dog over and we lie low down on the floor. (Someone once explained to me you never know where the shots will end up so "Duck or get under your bed!"). Someone has been shot outside in the street and a crowd of people from the favela are soon on the scene to see who it is. Within literally five minutes the whole matter was 'resolved'. The dead guy was put into the trunk of a police car and the crowd from the favela dispersed to their homes, leaving my street all quiet again as if nothing had happened. Never a dull moment!

As I walked the dog early in the morning I noticed that the waste land at the bottom of my street was in the process of being marked off by various families, each seemed to be claiming their plot. People from a nearby favela were attempting to invade and claim the council land and put up their makeshift housing.

The next day on my morning walk I half expected to see a new favela community up and running. Instead the markings had been taken down and the people had been moved on. Needless to say over the next few days this scene repeated itself. For the moment the 'invaders' appear to have given up marking the plots but instead have on a weekly basis closed off the road in protests with burning tyres etc.

The state of Pernambuco (Recife being the capital) has over 10,000 deaths due to the virus with Brazil as a whole having 200,000 deaths of which a relatively small number of 500 or so have been children aged 0-5 years. With over 2 million cases which are rising daily we would value your prayers. The Chinese vaccine arrived in Recife at the end of January for some frontline health workers.

Prayer points

- Wisdom and guidance for the government in the acquiring and distribution of vaccines for the population. (Several vaccines including ones from China, India (Oxford vaccine) and Russia are in the pipeline).
- The Good News Club children and their families as they undertake the devotional activities, on a weekly basis in their own homes, based on John Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress'.
- Health and safety for the volunteers as several have already had the coronavirus.
- Wisdom and guidance regarding when to start physical meetings again with the families in the favela. (Public schools are making tentative plans to starting back in February after almost a year of online teaching).