



Cassandra

Sharing the Gospel in Vanuatu

Dear Friends and Supporters,

The end is in sight, in less than two weeks I will be home.

How do I feel? A mix of achievement with God's grace, and learning, and thankfulness for surviving is probably the word, the small frustrations of everyday life here. These have also made me appreciate things like a microwave, a hot water system, good internet access and nearby shops! I laughed to my students yesterday that I will give my washing machine a pat when I get home! I will miss the students in all their variety, and the staff.

It has been good to see how the English of my students has improved, and also their confidence in speaking it, especially the women. Those who will be pastors, and that is nearly all of them really, need English for their ongoing growth and development since there are so few resources in Bislama, in fact hardly any at all. That is beginning to change. One of the lecturers has started to develop some online resources in Bislama, which is great! Printing resources for pastors when the total population here is less than 300,000 is not really viable.



Thongs outside a decrepit classroom.

I think that it has been good for the students to encounter a woman preaching and leading Bible Studies, even if not all of them are entirely comfortable with the idea, yet! The Presbyterian Church here has recently started to ordain women, but so far there are only 4 I think. One of these is on her way to probably be the first PCV Pastor to have a PhD!

In a more subtle way, I think it helps the isolation here for locals to know that there are people from other countries who know and care about and value them.. and recognise some of the problems of a small, poor and isolated nation.



Port Vila harbour and the beauty and some aspects of the culture of Vanuatu.



Local school teacher who uses hole in classroom wall as equipment store!

have. They won't allow a Christian, even a niVan Christian in (or a person of any other religion either) There are some amazing stories to tell about how the Good News enters anyway! The one exception that some of these villages make is that they will carry an 8 months pregnant woman to the nearest clinic, a days walk away or more, to give birth because they lose too many women and babies otherwise, and they need to keep their numbers up to remain a viable community.

So I leave with mixed emotions, I will miss many people and things, but I will also be glad to be home. I'm glad that I came.

Thank you for your prayers and support,

Cassandra

In two years' time, the UN plans to move Vanuatu from the small list of undeveloped nations to the "developing " list. In some ways it is quite "developed " if that's the right word. There is a flourishing parliamentary democracy, an independent judiciary, and more or less compulsory education to age 15, though it is not free.

The "less" part is due to some groups in the more isolated parts of Santo and Tanna taking a long hard look at western ways and deciding they don't want it them. These communities refuse to have a school, a clinic, phones, solar panels etc that even the most isolated villages can



Me in island dress with Class 4 at Tata school nearby, some of these are children of our students.