
RÍO ABIERTO SOLIDARITY – BULLETIN Number 2, March 2003

EDITORIAL

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Autumn Equinox

It has been one of the great satisfactions of my life to be able to meet and work together with such precious people as those I encountered in Sol Naciente and Camino Abierto: two undertakings made of love. The lack of resources, rather than being a drawback, became an incentive that put wills and intelligences at the service of the most needy.

I have also been moved on seeing how just a small step that one takes on the path of solidarity, invokes such immediate and great response. It has shown me how much the human heart needs to be able to do for others, to give of itself.

I thank all these who are contributing in many different ways to Río Abierto Solidarity; you have helped me to renew again my faith in the human race, in each one of us, my faith in LIFE.

I write this in sad times – an incomprehensible and grievous war has broken out. And yet, I also contemplate an awakening humanity, although it be by force of blows, and I hear a cry for peace from millions of people, of all colours and creeds, most of whom would heretofore have remained indifferent. Asleep, perhaps?

So, I greet this present moment with this tremendous inner duality, on one hand with pain, on the other with that greater sense of brotherhood and the blessing this means.

I invite you, from my heart, to look upon this shocking reality with new eyes and not to let oneself fall either into fear or into hate: these are feelings which wars feed on, although one be crying out for peace.

María Adela Palcos

ECONOMIC PROVIDENCE AND ACTION OF SOLIDARITY

In Río Abierto, we trust in “economic providence” and in the magic of actions of solidarity that invent resources and materialize realities where it seems impossible to carry out anything.

Economic providence affirms that if the economic necessities are real, the Universe always responds and the resources appear.

Today, from this immense River of solidarity we call answers from the Universe the following:

- Our supportive students and many other friends
- Our instructors who support and accompany with courage and love
- The people there – the neighbors of the neighborhood Arturo Illia who are willing and able to undertake a different kind of work: work on oneself.
- And all those who answer our call in any way.

Thanks to all, this month we were able to:

- Pay the rent
- Donate 200 pesos for the electric installation of the oven
- Even-off the floor of the large room and set down the floor in the home for mothers and babies
- Buy the glue for gluing down the linoleum covering for the floor
- Install the musical equipment and speakers
- Collect and buy almost 200 school pinafores
- Collect school supplies

Every little action that we succeed in, is like a party for us, because in it, we celebrate life, union and the joy of working together.

Thanks to all those who today are involved in this universe of solidarity.

AND IN APRIL... THE ACTIVITIES BEGIN

Because we believe that movement, work on oneself, art and poetry are like Bread for All and our blood runs not only our veins but also through the unanimous work of everyone who stakes on life...

The 5th of April, our children's group began and on Monday the 7th, the adults' group. The former is led by Carlos Carraro and the later by Viviana Britos.

The project for both groups is oriented around the axis of strengthening one's identity. In both cases, and always based on the tools of our system, the aims are:

- Facilitate the construction of a positive self-concept based on a realistic acceptance
- Develop expressive possibilities, thereby strengthening creative capacity
- Develop the construction of freedom and personal autonomy
- Enable autonomous decisions
- Develop empathy
- A positive and unconditional recognition of the existence of alternatives
- Develop the capacity for dialogue to enable a culture of consensus
- Develop the capacity for self-control

We know that the fourth way is this one that we can walk in our daily lives, "voluntary and conscious sacrifice, the result of prolonged efforts". We are many who are willing and able to do so.

Thanks to all who are making this possible.

KNEADING BREAD AND REFLECTIONS

One of the activities that we share with the people of Sol Naciente Soup Kitchen is work in the bakery. Yes, yes, kneading bread. All hands together, working to knead our bread.

And making bread is perhaps the best synthesis of what this Río Abierto Solidarity is about. Let's reflect on this together:

For making bread we need:

- Flour
- Oil
- Yeast
- Salt
- Sugar
- Water
- Soy

We go and get everything and put it all on the table. Up to here, everything is neatly separate.

We prepare the yeast, putting the contents of the package in a large cup with warm water and sugar. We leave it there until it foams. We don't have to do anything, just give it time. I observe this process; it's slow, imperceptible; it simply happens... Suddenly, the foam begins to form and it seems to grow and it's going to overflow the cup. And I think that in every little bubble there is a hidden dream of freedom, of growth, of joy and also some sort of nightmare... We didn't do anything; just put the ingredients together and wait... Then, we take a bowl and put in the flour, the oil, the salt... we mix them together gently and we add the foamed yeast... Yes, those thousands of bubbles of dreams... We mix it all together.

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Gradually we add more water and the miracle of union occurs... All these ingredients have now become one.

They have formed the dough. Slowly and being conscious of what I am doing, I begin to knead... I hit it hard, I stretch it; I squeeze it again... (it's something like giving a massage).... Do what I may, the ingredients are now all firmly united... There's no way to separate them once again into flour, water, oil, yeast, sugar, soy and salt... They have been transformed, they are now something else, a uniform dough. I like this unity; I like to smell it, to feel it in my hands, to perceive the flexibility of the dough... I realize there is no danger of its breaking or disintegrating. In reality it's all the opposite, the risk, if there's one, is that of integration of unity. We let it rise. Again, we don't need to do anything... just wait. I watch it but I can't quite fathom how the process of growth is produced within the dough. But, all of a sudden, it happens: it's double in size. We pick up the dough, knead it again – we repeat the action and the dough grows again. I wonder at the miracle, I enjoy it and I associate it with this time of my life, with this time in Río Abierto Solidarity. Then we form little balls in different shapes. We let them rise and again, the miracle happens. We put them in the oven and once again, we wait.

We take them out of the oven and I observe them with all my senses.

Another transformation: It's no longer dough... now it's bread. Another smell, another color, another texture and the possibility of taste.

While they were in the oven, the little balls did nothing, they simply accepted the heat that would transform them into bread. (And there, once again, they grew).

Gather together loose elements, mix them together to become transformed, to accept heat to enable a further transformation and fundamentally, allow time to act. Am I speaking of bread? Yes! but also and essentially, of my life, of our life at this time, in this wonderful project.

I want, we want to no longer be loose pieces; I need, we need to unite, to transform ourselves, to accept the heat and be like warm bread, fresh from the oven, soft, bearer of the message of unity that in the fragrance of the morning teaches us that peace is homemade bread and not a fiction story. Then, I think that the thousand dreams of little bubbles can be transformed into reality and that to be free must be the same thing as making bread.

I pick up the warm bread and hold it in my hands, I smell it, I feel it and I say to myself: freedom must be like this – so simple.

After this, I now believe that it's worthwhile to make the effort, the conscious and voluntary sacrifice, overall in this both painful and wonderful time that we are living... and this is another way to tell you what the work we began in April is all about.

Charito Alonso
Second Year Student