

16th Anniversary of the Buen Samaritano. February 28th, 2011.

The day in which Andalucía celebrates the anniversary of its political and parliamentary birth, we as an evangelical entity also celebrate our beginnings, when a young Portuguese man arrived 16 years ago.

So when all of the Andaluces are celebrating “their day” we also have an extra reason to celebrate—the day in which the Buen Samaritano Association, in 1995, began its journey to aid those needing a helping hand in order to rest and recover.

We have helped almost 400 people over the last 16 years...no easy task! A journey full of hard work, sacrifice, times of happiness and sorrow, and many beautiful stories that remind us that it is worth the effort.

Behind are the days in which the center was directed by the gifted Elisabeth Bolduan who offered a special touch that only maturity and experience in ministry can teach. She is now retired but she is constantly in our thoughts and memories as we remember days full of countless struggles but also joys. Following a short period of time in which I also had to take a turn as director, a fighter from El Salvador arrived named Raúl Vázquez. He served as director of the center for several years, also leaving unforgettable memories of tenderness and care, as well as a good sense of humor that he used in every situation. A year ago, leaving behind a piece of his heart with us, he moved north to continue his ministry. Another seasoned fighter, Roland Weinmann, replaced him, who, after functioning as second in command for 12 years while being the property’s caretaker, became the director after the Board asked if he would. He is a seasoned man, full of knowledge and passion for his job, who also develops the leadership and development of the center through his daily tasks.

Currently, the members of the Buen Samaritano team are: Miguel, Víctor and Milton as monitors, Asún as the cook, and Yoly Soto as the psychologist. Nathalie Farelly takes care of the administrative and financial tasks, any official documentation needed, and also serves as coordinator for the various Buen Samaritano offices in Spain.

February 28th was a sunny day this year and, thanks to the Town Hall of Alcaracejos that fixed the road leading to the property (which was a gift from above), about 130 people came to the center this day. We are very grateful to the Mayor, D. Luciano Cabrera, and the entire municipal corporation.



The Montilla church stands out as they rented a bus in order to transport everyone that came from this town. Also attending were some pastors from Córdoba and friends from other churches. Thanks to all.



The program was a relaxed and pleasant one, and it gave us the opportunity to be in nature. Following the obligatory presentations, a Christian Psychologist, Malú de Cardona, gave a very good presentation about the importance of communication in the family.



A wonderful group of volunteers, some members of our church and some friends from Pozoblanco, delighted us with a great paella, which we were glad to take care of properly!

During the afternoon, we all participated in several family-oriented games in which, as teams, we took on various challenges. We laughed about our lack of athletic skills and ability. The last activity was the traditional baking contest, from which we had three great finalists, one on whom is the wife of a rehabilitated man—pure “coincidence.” After

tasting these delicious treats, we said goodbye having enjoyed an excellent day of fellowship and friendship, and with the satisfaction of having celebrated our best day of Andalucía as well as the victory of many over the evil of drugs. Where there previously were tears, sorrow, sadness, and death, now there is laughter and happiness. It is a great joy for us to see families of men who have been rehabilitated at the Buen Samaritano now happy, with their wives and children. They are the best indicators of a job well done.



As a final note, I'd like to say that we had the presence of a few reporters from a television program that pastor Donald Cabeen runs in the town of Puebla de Cazalla (Sevilla). One reporter asked me several questions and also

interviewed quite a few of those present. When the interview finished, the reporter ratified all that I had said as he is a man who was rehabilitated in our center 14 years ago. It was exciting and also moving to see the work of God in an entire family. To God be the glory!

As president, I want to thank all of you who have participated in the ministry of the Buen Samaritano Center, those who pray for us, those who give financially, those who adopt an olive tree, and those who make this a dream come true on a daily basis. Thanks to all.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27). It was after saying this that Jesus told the story of the good Samaritan.

Signed,
Francis Arjona.