

mission FRIENDS

Summer 1999

Dear Mission Friend:

Hola! This issue of *Mission Friends* introduces your students to the people and nation of Venezuela. Check your packet for the following items:

1. Large map of Venezuela

The map is on the reverse side of this letter.

2. Response card

Return this card for new *Mission Friends* subscriptions or if you have comments about *Mission Friends*.

3. Student pages

These pages are written at a 4th-5th grade reading level, but all or part of them may be enjoyed by younger and older students as well.

4. Primary page

This page is written especially for children in grades 1-3. Again, younger or older students may enjoy some or all of the activities on this page.

5. Teacher pages

These pages give additional information and teaching suggestions for both the student and primary pages.

6. Parent page

Please photocopy this page for each of your students and send it home with them, along with the *Mission Friends* student and primary pages.

These materials are intended to be photocopied. **Please make as many photocopies as you need.** If you prefer, you may order additional copies of *Mission Friends* from CPH Publishing for \$1 each.

Coming up! These topics are on the schedule for future issues of *Mission Friends*: Thailand (revised issue, fall 1999). **Back issues** of *Mission Friends* are available for \$1 each. Order by country or topic from Concordia Publishing House, 1-800-325-3040. Previous topics include: Philippines, Thailand, Ghana (updated 1998!), Papua New Guinea, Blind/Deaf/Disabled, Korea, Russia, Caribbean, India/Sri Lanka, Japan, Native Americans, Nigeria, Olympics (Hispanics, Muslims, Jews and Chinese in North America), Chinese People in Asia (China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan), Hungary, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Panama, Kazakstan, Guatemala, Togo, Refugees.

Until next time . . .

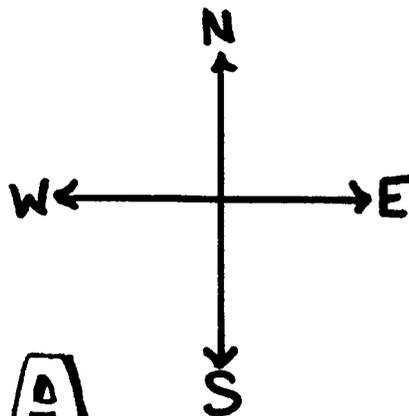
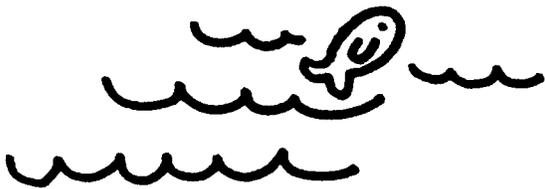
Your partners in God's mission,



Karin Semler
Editor, *Mission Friends*

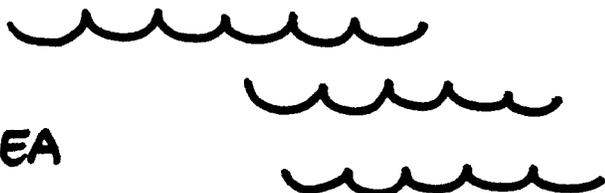


Rev. B. Steve Hughey, Director
Mission Partnership and Involvement



VENEZUELA

ATLANTIC OCEAN



CARIBBEAN SEA



Lake Maracaibo

★
Caracas

TRINIDAD
&
TOBAGO

Pico Bolivar

Orinoco River

Anoel Falls

COLOMBIA

GUYANA

S O U T H
A M E R I C A

BRAZIL

FRIENDS**Let's Go to Venezuela!****In this issue**

Palmer Parrot is back to take your students to Venezuela. There's plenty of information and lots to do inside *Mission Friends*. Here they will meet real missionaries and real Venezuelans. And they can get involved in God's mission in ways that will make a difference.

At this writing, the following career LCMS missionaries are serving in Venezuela:

- Rev. Rudolf and Ramona Blank are temporarily in the USA where Rev. Blank is a guest professor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO. In early 2000, the Blanks will return to full time work in Venezuela;
- Rev. Art and Elide Boone serve in Barcelona as evangelistic missionaries;
- Rev. Daniel and Kathryn Conrad serve in Valencia as evangelistic missionaries;
- Donald Ellcey in Caracas serves as business manager;
- Mark and Ruth Kempff serve in Caracas as missionary counselor and congregational consultant;
- Rev. Edmund and Frida Mielke serve as evangelistic missionaries;
- Dale and Sandra Saville serve as agricultural missionaries;
- Rev. Richard and Maritza Schlack serve in Maracay as church planters;
- Rev. James and Liisa Tino serve in Barquisimeto as evangelistic missionaries;
- Rev. Henry and Ruthie Witte serve in Barcelona as evangelistic missionaries.

Several long-term volunteers are also serving in Venezuela. For a list of current missionary personnel in Venezuela, contact LCMS World Mission at 1-800-433-3954, Ext. 1318.

If possible, use the missionary's prayer card, which has a picture of the missionary and his or her family on it. It also contains personal information about the family. Prayer cards can be ordered in quantity from CPH Publishing (Order desk: 1-800-325-3040). Allow students to take prayer cards home and encourage them to pray often for the missionaries.

LCMS mission in Venezuela

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod began work in Venezuela in 1951. Over the last 47 years, the young national church grew to a baptized membership of more than 1,300 in 27 congregations, preaching stations and church planting missions. A national staff of 125 pastors, lay preachers, evangelists, teachers, deacons, tutors and administration staff support the ministry as well as an expatriate staff of 23. More than a dozen short term volunteers serve each year. The church conducts an extensive Theological Education through Extension program in 12 centers throughout the country involving 101 students. It also operates four preschools, three primary schools and a secondary school with a total enrollment of 677 students.

Through direct congregational involvement, it operates two medical clinics, a prison ministry, and orphanage visitation, a food pantry and remedial education programs. The work of the Lutheran church in Venezuela is concentrated primarily in eight urban sites. However, there are congregations and preaching stations in the rural areas as well. A major outreach effort of the church is its radio and television ministry. Currently, this involves 58 radio stations and two television stations. Last year approximately 60,000 responses were received in the seven contact offices; 1,500 people are enrolled in Bible correspondence courses.

More class activities

Venezuela is a little larger than the states of Texas and Oklahoma combined. A variety of contrasting geographic regions exist within this area: Andes mountains, beaches, plains, rainforest, and tabletop plateaus. Is the geography in your area similar to some that exists in Venezuela?

Look at a relief map of Venezuela. Talk about how life differs in the different regions of Venezuela due to the geography.

Study more about Roman Catholicism. Are any of your students Roman Catholic, or have Roman Catholic friends? How are the beliefs of Catholics and Lutherans similar/different? It may be appropriate to take a class trip to a Catholic church or school to learn more about Roman Catholicism. Be aware that Roman Catholicism in the United States is usually very different than Roman Catholicism in Venezuela. For example, many Venezuelans see no contradiction in following certain Roman Catholic rituals while at the same time participating in pagan ceremonies.

Venezuela has many interesting animals and birds. Create a Venezuelan zoo bulletin board by having each child write a short description of a Venezuelan animal and draw an accompanying picture. Connect each animal with a piece of string to a map of Venezuela where that animal may be found.

Forty percent of the current population of Venezuela is under the age of 15. How would this affect mission work in Venezuela? What might a church be like that had 40% of its members under 15 years of age? Have your students pray for children their age in Venezuela.

Venezuela has been called a “land of superlatives.” After studying about Venezuela, have your students come up with as many superlative statements about Venezuela as possible. For example: Angel Falls is the *highest* waterfall in the world. Venezuela is the *wealthiest* nation in Latin America. The capybara is the world’s *largest* rodent and is found in Venezuela.

Ask your students to become travel agents and tour guides for Venezuela. Brainstorm a list of different types of special interest tours that could be led in Venezuela, such as Andes mountain, bird watching, Caribbean beach, Angel Falls, life of Simon Bolivar, etc. Have the students work in groups planning the tour. Plan where it will go, where to stay, what to eat, etc. The students can create brochures or make a commercial. Consider using the Internet for resources and ideas.

Study more about Simon Bolivar. What country is named after him? Why is he called the “George Washington” of South America. What other countries did he liberate? In what ways has Venezuela honored him?

Sixty-six percent of Venezuelans are considered “mestizos,” or people of mixed ethnic background—European, Indian, and African. Many people in the Americas come from a mix of ethnic backgrounds. Discuss the differences in how North America and South America were settled. Ask your students if they know what their ethnic backgrounds are; write these on the board.

More than 90% of the homes in Venezuela have TVs. Why has media been an effective way to evangelize? What are ways that your church reaches out to its community?

The oil reserves in Venezuela are second in size to those in the Persian Gulf area. How has the discovery of oil in the Lake Maracaibo area affected the economy of Venezuela? Where are the main oil reserves in North America? How much do North Americans depend on oil?

Where does oil come from? Where are the main oil reserves throughout the world?

Jimmy Angel discovered Angel Falls in 1935. Research and create a timeline for other events that happened in and around 1935.

Why did it take so long for Angel Falls to be discovered? Why have so few people seen it? How is it different from Niagara Falls? Are there waterfalls near where you live?

Discuss spiritual warfare with your students. In what ways are you faced with occultic beliefs and practices? How do things like horoscopes, Ouija boards, fortune telling, and witchcraft negatively affect our relationship with God? What can you say to people who are interested in such things?

Study more about the Venezuelan rainforest. What animals live in the rainforest? What plant life is indigenous to the rainforest? How is Venezuela protecting the people, plants, and animals that live in the rainforest?

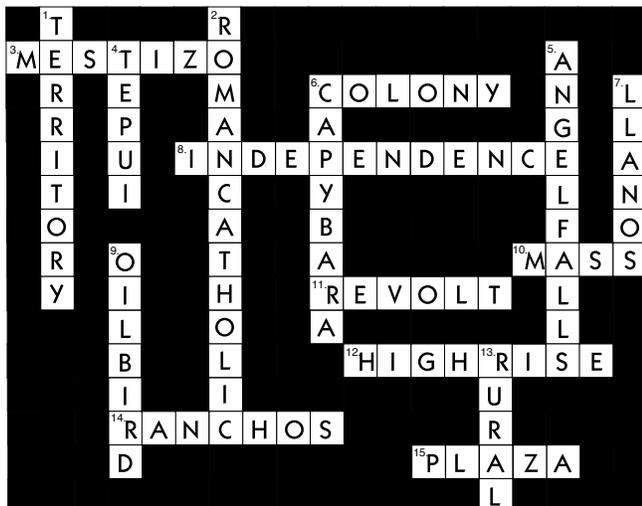
Ask your students to compare the heights of Angel Falls and Pico Bolivar to North American mountains, buildings, waterfalls, and other landmarks. Measure-

ments of Angel Falls and Pico Bolivar have been provided in meters. Learn to convert the heights of common landmarks into metric measurements.

Vocabulary words

- colony:** a region ruled by a distant nation. Venezuela was a Spanish colony.
- high-rise:** with many stories. High-rise apartment buildings are typical homes for Venezuelans living in the cities.
- independence:** being politically self governing; being free from the control of others
- llanos:** the central plains of Venezuela
- Mass:** a Roman Catholic church service which always includes Holy Communion
- mestizo:** Venezuelans of Spanish and Indian heritage
- plaza:** an open area, especially a public square, in a town or city; not to be confused with a shopping mall
- ranchos:** small houses that people in rural areas or urban slums may live in. They are initially made out of cardboard or plywood. Later, as their owners can make improvements, better materials, such as cement blocks, replace the cardboard and plywood.
- revolt:** to rebel against an authority or government
- rituals:** an action or set of actions people do according to custom
- rural:** having to do with the country or country life
- tepui:** A flat tabletop mountain found in eastern Venezuela
- territory:** region or area of a country

Answers to Crossword Puzzle



Resources

Videos

Library Video Company has more than 8,000 video and CD-ROM titles covering world geography and cultures, world religions, holidays, history, science, art and more. Order their catalog by calling 1-800-843-3620.

Computer

TCD-ROM: *Cartopedia: The Ultimate World Reference Atlas*, produced by Dorling Kindersley in 1995. This CD includes lots of basic information, charts, maps and photographs for 193 countries. Available from World Almanac Education (1-800-321-1147) or Dorling Kindersley (1-800-DKMM-575).

Internet

About Venezuela: venezuela.mit.edu

General: www.supersurf.com "World Surfari" takes kids to a new country every month with sections about the people, the society, the history and fun things to do at each stop. It also has a monitored message center for kids around the world to talk to each other about where they live, their schools, games and sports, or other topics.

Books

For students:

- Heinrichs, Ann. *Venezuela (A True Book)*. New York: Children's Press, 1997.
- Parnell, Helga. *Cooking the South American Way*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1991.
- Mayorga, Dolores. *The David Books: David Plays Hide-and-Seek in Celebrations, David Plays Hide-and-Seek in the City, David Plays Hide-and-Seek in Folktales, David Plays Hide-and-Seek on Vacation*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1992. This is a bilingual series for young readers in grades 2-5. The readers connect English words with Spanish words and the corresponding visual image as they search for David and his friends.
- Morrison, Marion. *Venezuela. Enchantment of the World Series*. Chicago: Children's Press, 1995.
- Morrison, Marion. *Venezuela. Major World Nations Series*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999.
- Winter, Jane Kohen. *Venezuela. Cultures of the World Series*. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1991.
- *Venezuela in Pictures. Visual Geography Series*. Lerner Publications, Minneapolis, 1987. Grades 5 and up.

For teachers:

- *Venezuela: A Country Study* by the Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Fourth edition, 1993.
- Fox, Geoffery. *The Land and People of Venezuela*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991.
- Ward, Hiley H. *My Friend's Beliefs*. New York: Walker and Company, 1988. Takes the reader across the United States to meet various worshiping groups, including Roman Catholics.

Especially for primary teachers

Christmas in Venezuela

Have the children compare their own families' Christmas customs to the Venezuelan customs mentioned. As you lead the children in the Christmas activities on this page, continually talk with them about the reason we celebrate Christmas—it's beautifully stated in John 3:16. God gave the greatest gift of all to His people—His only Son who would die and rise again to earn salvation for us. That is the mission message that our missionaries and we take to every part of the world.

Make a *nacimiento*

Discuss what Bethlehem and its environs may have looked like when Jesus was born. Find pictures of this area as it looks today to show the class. This will give them a some good ideas for their own drawings.

Provide each child with a large (12" by 18") sheet of white construction paper. There are several possibilities for coloring the drawings: crayons, water color, chalk. If you use chalk, spray the drawings with an adhesive (available from art supply stores) to give them a finished look and to help preserve them.

My gifts for Jesus

Before the children write down their gifts for Jesus, spend some time talking about what gifts Jesus would like. Help them come up very specific actions. Have the children suggest several gift ideas to the whole class until you're sure everyone knows how to start the list. These may include:

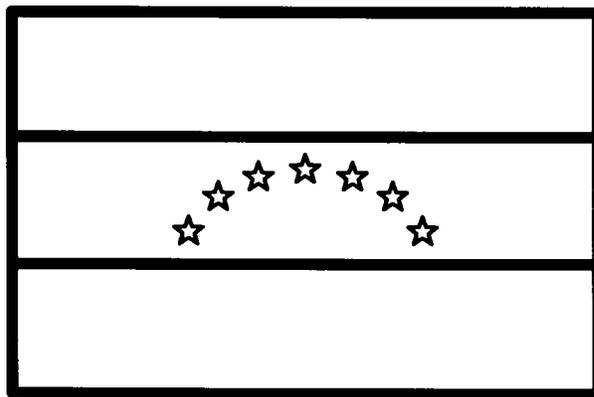
- do an unexpected job or favor for a parent or sibling;
- invite a friend to church or Sunday school;
- pray for our missionaries in Venezuela;

- earn extra money and give a special offering to church;
- make an unexpected phone call to a grandparent;
- write a letter to a grandparent or older adult from your church.

Coming up with 12 different gifts may be difficult for young children. Of course, they may repeat some if they would like. If students work with a partner or tow, they can suggest ideas to one another.

Make the Flag of Venezuela

Venezuelan flags are easy to make out of red, yellow and blue paper. To make this project simpler, you could have white stars already cut out or use white foil stars.



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FRIENDS

Let's Go to Venezuela!

Hola, Mission Friends! I'm Palmer Parrot—here to take you on a mission trip to South America. Let's pack our bags and go to Venezuela!

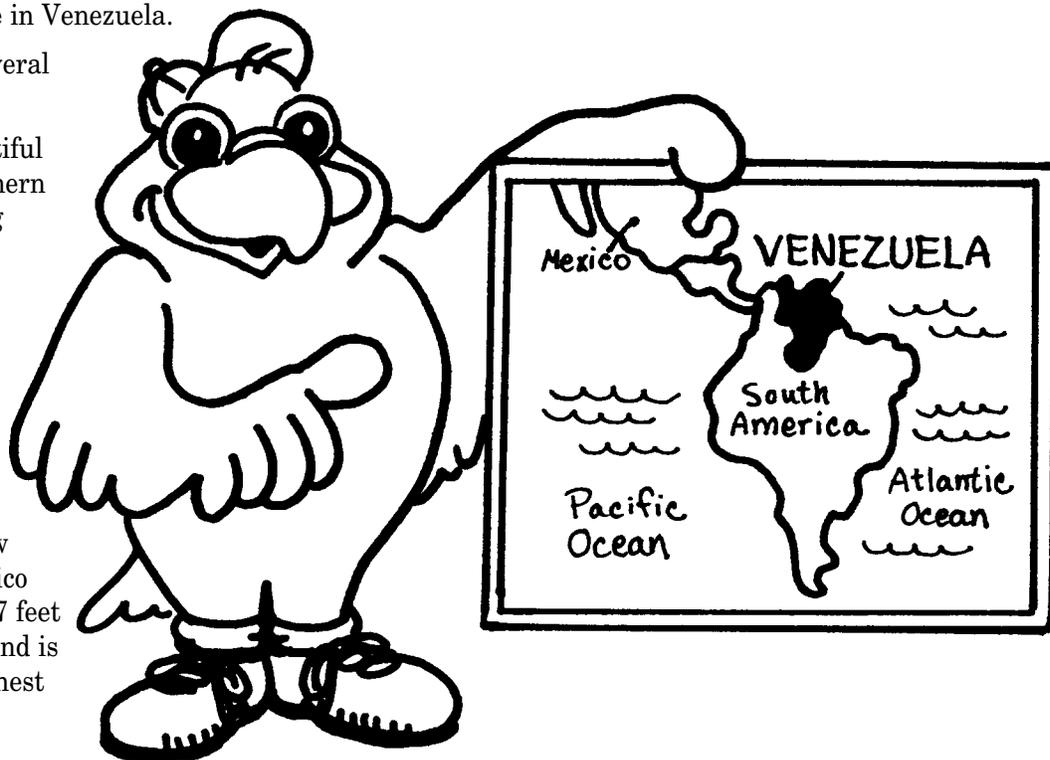
Land

Venezuela [ven eh zoo AY luh] is the northernmost country of South America. Both the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean touch its borders. Its closest neighbors are Colombia to the east, Brazil to the south and Guyana [guy AN ah] to the west. About 22 million people live in Venezuela.

Venezuela has several different areas:

- There are beautiful beaches in northern Venezuela along the Caribbean Sea.
- The Andes Mountains lie south of Lake Maracaibo. Some mountain peaks have snow all year long. Pico Bolivar is 15,427 feet (5,007 meters) and is Venezuela's highest mountain.

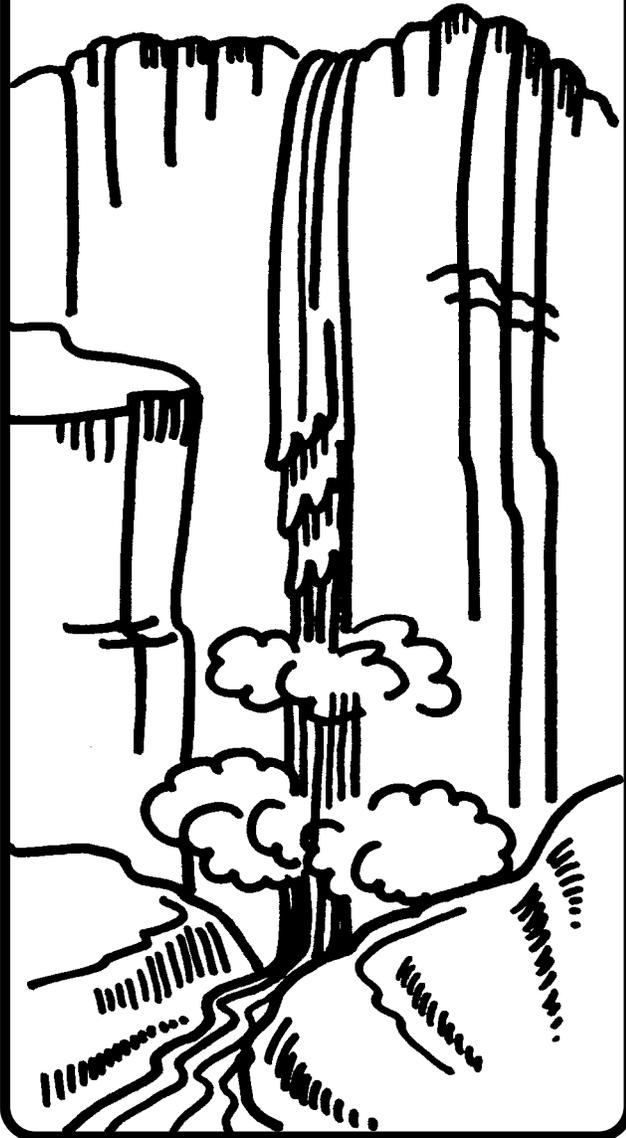
- The *llanos* [YAH nos] are in the central part of Venezuela. These plains are flooded in the rainy season and are hot and dry during the dry season.
- Southeastern Venezuela is called the Guiana [guy AN ah] Highlands. This area is famous for huge tabletop mountains called *tepui* [teh PU ee] and Angel Falls—the world's tallest waterfall.
- Rainforests cover the southern part of Venezuela that borders Brazil.



Angel Falls

In 1935, an American pilot named Jimmy Angel took his single engine airplane out to look for lost gold in eastern Venezuela. Instead, he found the world's largest waterfall on Ayuan [eye YU ahn] *tepuí*. Two years later, Jimmy flew out again looking for gold and crash-landed with three other people on Ayuan *tepuí*. They managed to get off the 8,400-foot high *tepuí*, but the airplane stayed there until it was removed in 1970.

Angel Falls drops 3,212 feet (979 meters). It is sixteen times the height of Niagara Falls.



Cities

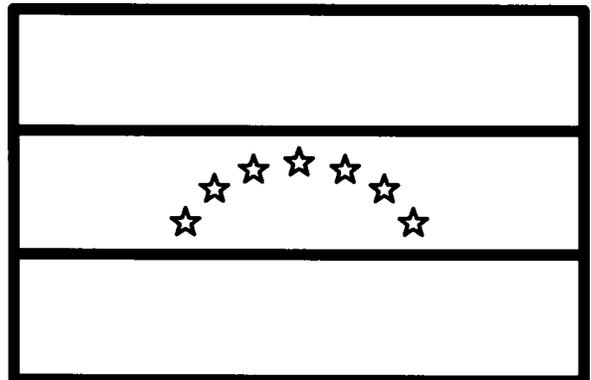
Close to 90 percent of Venezuela's people (about 20 million people) live in cities and towns. Caracas [ka RAH kas] is the capital and the largest city. Our missionaries live in Caracas, Valencia [vah LEN see ah], Barquisimeto [bar key see MEH toe] Maracay [mah rah KAI], and Barcelona [bar seh LO nah].

In the cities people usually live in *high-rise* apartment buildings. These tall buildings contain many separate apartments. Ten percent of the people (about 2 million people) live in the *rural* areas of Venezuela. Most live in small houses called *ranchos* [RAHN chos].



The Venezuelan flag

The flag of Venezuela has wide stripes of yellow, blue and red with seven white stars in the middle of the flag. The colors have special meaning. Yellow is found on the top and represents nobleness and love. In the middle, blue represents loyalty and justice. The bottom stripe is red; it represents bravery and strength. The stars stand for the first seven states of Venezuela that declared independence from Spain in 1811. Use crayons or markers to color the flag.





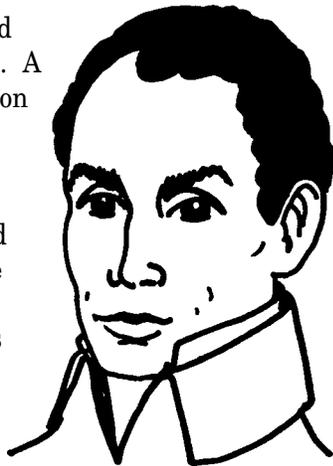
Map activities

1. Circle the capital city, Caracas, with a red crayon or pen.
2. Underline in yellow the other cities where our missionaries live: Barcelona, Barquisimeto, Maracay, and Valencia.
3. Color Lake Maracaibo, the Orinoco River, and Angel Falls blue.
4. Draw other mountains in brown around Pico Bolivar.

History

In 1498, on his third trip to the “new world,” Christopher Columbus reached Venezuela and claimed the *territory* for Spain. It became a Spanish *colony*. The Spanish explorers saw houses around Lake Maracaibo that were built in the water on stilts. It reminded them of a city in Spain with many canals called Venice, so the explorers named the new colony *Venezuela*, which means “Little Venice.”

In 1811, Venezuela became the first South American colony to demand its *independence*. A man named Simon Bolivar [see MOAN] [bow lee VAR] led the *revolt* that ended the Spanish rule of Venezuela. Simon Bolivar is a great hero in Venezuela. You can find a statue of Simon Bolivar in the main *plaza* of almost every city and town in Venezuela. The currency of Venezuela is called the bolivar. The highest mountain in Venezuela, Pico Bolivar, is named after him.

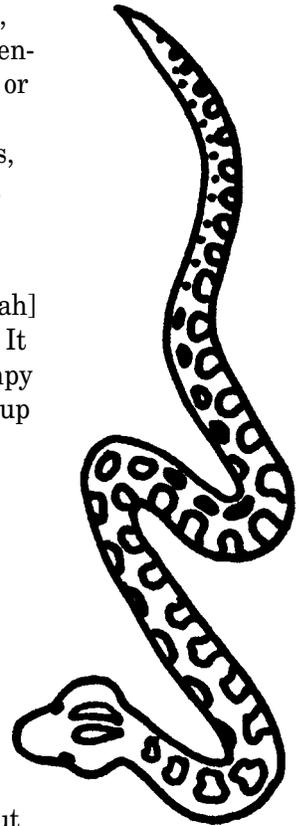


Simon Bolivar is an important person in Venezuela because he led the Venezuelan people to freedom from Spain. Our missionaries are in Venezuela to tell people about Jesus who did something even more important. Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead three days later in order to set everyone free from sin and death.

Animals

Many different kinds of birds, reptiles, and mammals live in Venezuela. You have probably seen or heard about some, like parrots, toucans, hummingbirds, macaws, iguanas, crocodiles, electric eels, snakes, jaguars, pumas, sloths, anteaters, and deer.

- The capybara [cah pee BAH rah] is the world’s largest rodent. It eats plants and lives in swampy areas. Capybaras can weigh up to 100 pounds!
- Orinoco dolphins live in the fresh water of the Orinoco River. The dolphins live in schools of 12-20 and grow up to 6 feet in length.
- About 10,000 oilbirds live in Guacharo Cave in Northeast Venezuela. Oilbirds are nocturnal; they sleep during the day in the cave, and fly out at night to eat oily palm nuts. Oilbirds navigate only using sound, like bats. These birds travel hundreds of miles each night in search of palm nuts.
- Anaconda snakes live near water. They are the world’s biggest snakes, weighing up to 350 pounds! Anacondas are not poisonous; they coil around their prey until it is suffocated.

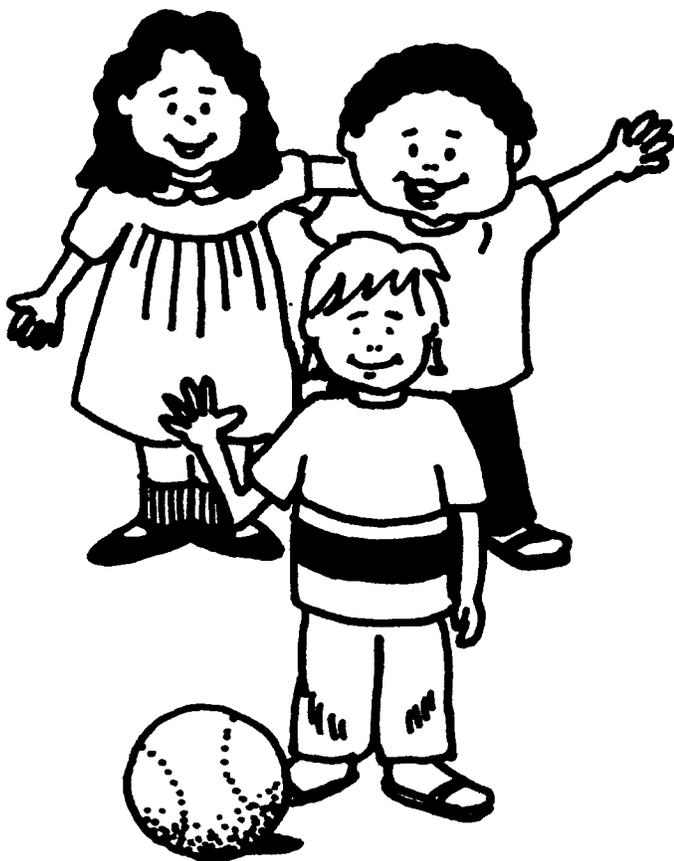


People

There were many different people groups living in Venezuela when Christopher Columbus arrived in 1498. He called the people “Indians” because he thought he was in India. These people groups have their own names, like the Yanomami.

Over the next 500 years many different people came to Venezuela, mainly from Europe and Africa. In the early 1500’s African slaves were brought to Venezuela. Spaniards and Indians married and had children. Africans and Spaniards did the same. Soon there was a new culture of people with a mixed ethnic background.

Today, there are 22 million people in Venezuela. About 67 % of the population is *mestizo* [mes TEE so], a combination of Indian and Spanish background. Around 21% of the people in Venezuela are European or European and African background. About 10% are black, and 2% are Indian, like the Yanomami. Even with so many different ethnic backgrounds, ethnic prejudice is not a serious problem in Venezuela.

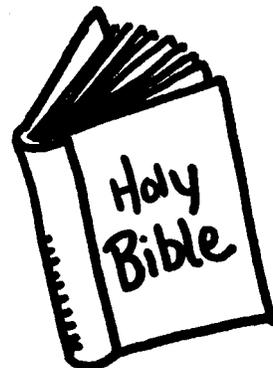


The language

In Venezuela, almost all the people speak Spanish. In order to communicate with the Venezuelans, our missionaries learned Spanish. Try to pronounce and remember the words listed below:

<i>hola</i>	[OH la]	hello
<i>gracias</i>	[GRAH see us]	thank you
<i>padre</i>	[PAH dray]	father
<i>madre</i>	[MA dray]	mother
<i>Jesus</i>	[HAY zues]	Jesus
<i>iglesia</i>	[ee GLAY see uh]	church
<i>por favor</i>	[PORE fah VOR]	please
<i>amigo</i>	[ah MEE go]	friend

A Bible verse in Spanish



Look up Psalm 139:14 in your Bible. Then see if you can read it in Spanish!

Te alabo porque estoy maravillado,

[Tay ah-LAH-bow pohr-KAY es-STOY mah-rah-vee-YAH-*tho*]

Porque es maravilloso lo que has hecho.

[pohr-KAY es mah-rah-vee-YOH-soh low kay ahs AY-*choh*]

De ello estoy bien convencido!

[Day AY-yoh es-STOY bee-EHN con-ven-SEE-*tho*]

Something to eat! *Platanos Fritos*

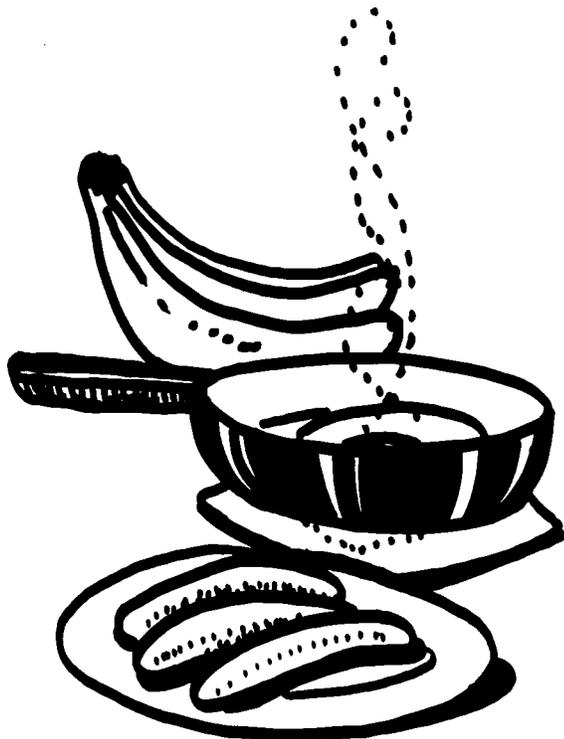
Platanos fritos [plah-TAH-nos FREE-tos] is a delicious snack that is common in Venezuela. It is made of fruit called plantains. Check at your grocery store if they have plantains. If they don't, you can use bananas for a similar taste. In Venezuela, people eat *platanos fritos* as a snack like potato chips. You can try it, too!

What you need:

- Plantains or bananas that are ripe
- butter or margarine

What you do:

1. Peel the plantains or bananas. Then carefully slice them lengthwise with a table knife.
2. Fry them in a pan with butter. Eat and enjoy!



Religion

The Spanish explorers who came and settled in Venezuela brought the Roman Catholic faith, the Christian religion of their own country. Now, most of the people in Venezuela say that they are Roman Catholics, but many do not practice their religion. They may not attend *Mass* regularly and may not know much about the Bible. Many know who Jesus is but may not believe in Him as their Savior.

Some Venezuelans mix beliefs and practices from Indian religions with their understanding of the Catholic religion. They believe that the spirits of dead people control their lives. They think they must gain the favor of the spirits. From their family members, they learn to perform *rituals* and offer sacrifices to please the evil spirits. (A ritual is an action that is repeated. A sacrifice is something that people offer or give up.) In Venezuela, some people sacrifice animals, such as chickens, in religious services. The animals are killed and their blood is poured out to please the spirits.

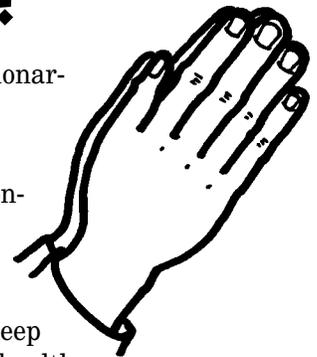
Something to talk about: What would you say to someone who believes that he must please evil spirits? Read John 3:16 and Acts 16:31. What does God's Word say is the only way to be saved?

Now read Ephesians 6:10-18 and 1 Peter 5:6-10. How does a Christian guard against the power of Satan and evil spirits?

Time to pray!

You can pray for our missionaries in Venezuela, and for the people they serve.

- Ask God to help the missionaries tell about Jesus clearly, so that many people will come to trust in Him. Also ask God to keep the missionaries safe and healthy, and their families too.
- Ask God to bless the Lutheran Church of Venezuela, and help its people to trust strongly in Jesus and to tell other people about Him too.
- Pray for Venezuelan pastors, teachers, and church members. Ask God to help them take care of the church and also tell the story of Jesus to people who don't believe in Him yet.



A missionary story

Around 90% of the people in Venezuela live in cities. Our missionaries have been focusing their work in cities so that they can reach as many people as possible. Barquisimeto has a population of around one million!

Imagine you are walking down a street in a neighborhood in Barquisimeto. You see many houses, but among the houses is a sign that reads, "Christ Is Love Lutheran Church." You may wonder, "How did a church get here?"

Christ Is Love Lutheran Church started worshipping in a rented building in 1994—now they have their own building! In five years there were 85 members. Some people came to church after meeting our missionaries or Venezuelan Lutherans. Others came to church through vacation Bible school. One year 50 out of the 65 children who attended VBS were not church members! Our missionaries and Christ Is Love church leaders visited the families of the unchurched children.

Members of Christ Is Love Lutheran Church are learning how to be leaders. We hope that the church will soon have a Venezuelan pastor and continue to grow. Our missionaries can then go to another place to tell about Jesus and start another church again.

A game to play: *Tapitas*

If you go to Venezuela, someone might ask you to join in a game of *tapitas* [tah PEA tas]. Venezuelan kids play *tapitas* with their friends out in the street. *Tapitas* is played like baseball, but instead of a bat and a ball you use a stick and a bottle cap. It takes some practice. Try it for yourself!



Time to sing! *Cristo Me Ama*

Try singing "Jesus Loves Me" in Spanish!

Cristo me ama, bien lo se,

[cree-stow may ah-ma, bee-en loh say]

Su palabra me hace ver,

[soo pah-lah-brah may ah-say vehr]

Que los niños son de aquel

[kay los neen-yohs sohn day ah-keh]

Quien es nuestro amigo fiel.

[kyen es nuay-stroh ah-me-go fyel]

Coro (chorus):

Si, Cristo me ama, si, Cristo me ama,

[see, cree-stow may ah-ma, see cree-stow may ah-ma]

Si, Cristo me ama;

[see, cree-stow may ah-ma]

La Biblia dice así.

[lah bee-blee-ah dee-say ah-see]



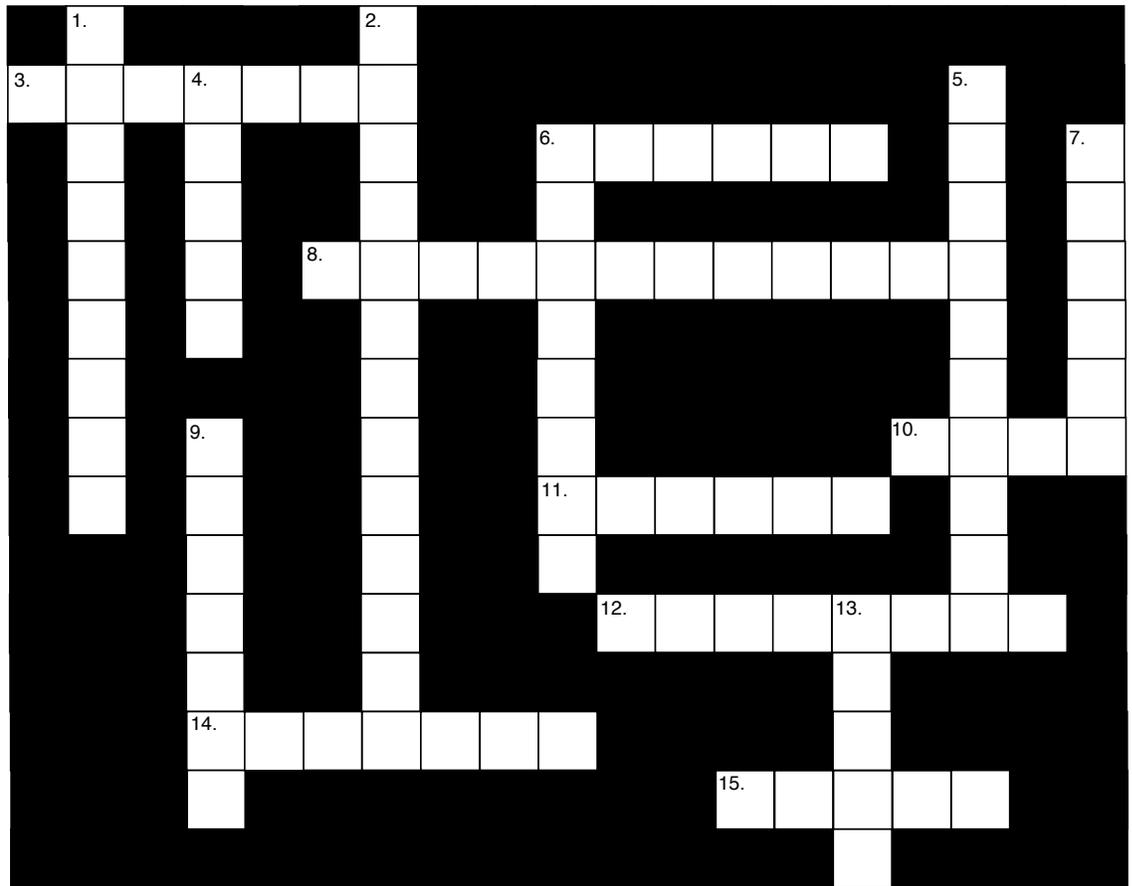
A crossword puzzle

across:

3. A Spanish name for people with a mixed ethnic background
6. An area ruled by a distant nation. Venezuela was a Spanish _____.
8. Being free from control of others
10. A name for a Roman Catholic church service
11. To rebel or protest against an authority or government
12. A _____ apartment building has many stories.
14. Small houses that people live in
15. A public square in a town. Many cities in Venezuela have one named after Simon Bolivar.

down:

1. A region
2. Most Venezuelans follow this form of the Christian faith, brought to Venezuela by the Spaniards.
4. A tabletop mountain. Angel Falls is on Ayuan _____.
5. The world's highest waterfall
6. The _____ can grow up to 100 pounds!
7. _____ are plains found in central Venezuela.
9. This bird lives in a cave and feeds at night.
13. 90% of the people in Venezuela live in cities. The remaining 10% live in _____ areas.



**Hasta la vista,
Mission Friends!**



I hope you enjoyed our trip to Venezuela. If you have more questions about Venezuela, our missionaries or how you can become a missionary, please write to me. Here's how—

Send regular mail to:



Mission Friends
LCMS World Mission
1333 S. Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295

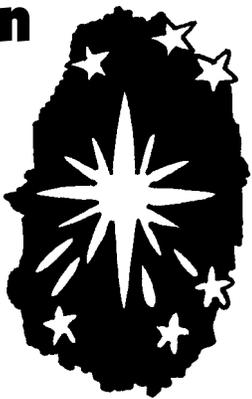
Or if you have e-mail, write to IC_MISSION@lcms.org.

primary mission 
FRIENDS

Let's Go to Venezuela!

Christmas in Venezuela

Christmas is a very special time in Venezuela. Families come together to celebrate the birth of Jesus in a special way. The celebration begins on December 16 with church services held every morning until Christmas Eve.

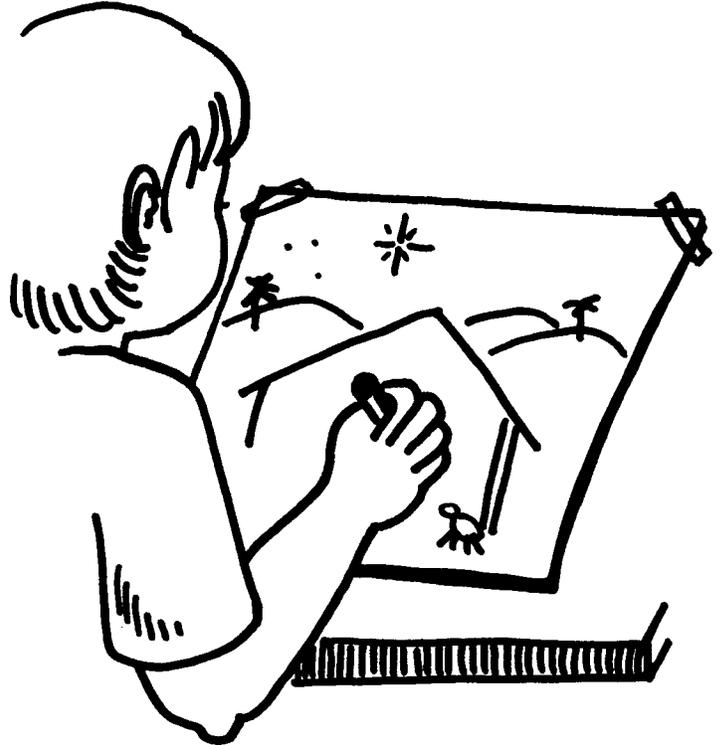


The main celebration takes place on Christmas Eve which is called *Noche Buena* [NO-cheh BWAY-nah], meaning "Good Night" in Spanish. On Christmas Eve, families eat a traditional meal that includes *hallacas* [hah-YAH-kahs], ham bread and papaya sweets.

Many families put up a Christmas tree, but most Venezuelans display a nativity scene or *nacimiento* [nah see mee IN toe]. Some families make their *nacimiento* very elaborate by including an entire region with mountains, hills, plains and valleys. They often participate in contests to select the best or most interesting scene.

Make a nacimiento

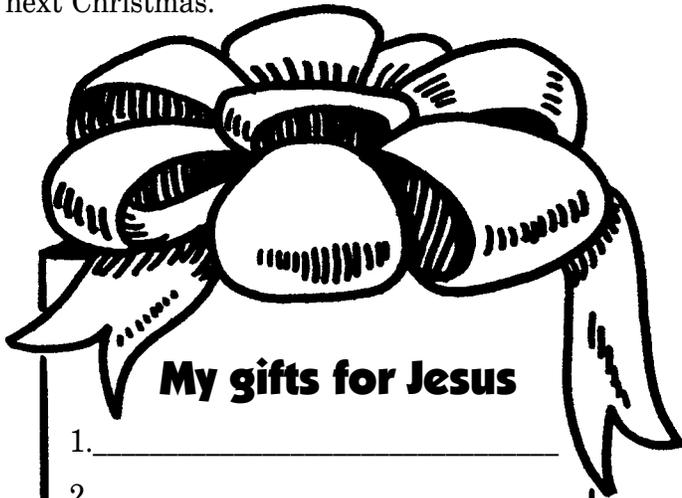
- On a large sheet of white paper, draw the nativity scene with Mary, Joseph, the Baby Jesus and the manger in the center.
- Now add the mountains, hills, plains, valleys and whatever else you would like to fill up the whole page.
- Color it.
- At Christmas time, put it up at home with the rest of your Christmas decorations.



A long celebration

On Christmas morning, children wake up to find their presents around the *nacimiento* or Christmas tree. Then they celebrate Christmas for 12 days until January 6, Epiphany, the day the Wise Men came to worship Jesus and offer him gifts. On that day, the children receive toys and candy.

Would you like to celebrate Christmas for 12 days? One way to do this is by giving a gift to Jesus each day from Christmas to Epiphany, the day of the Wise Men's visit. On the lines below write down a gift you can give to Jesus for each of the 12 days of Christmas. Then cut out your present and keep it with your *nacimiento* until next Christmas.



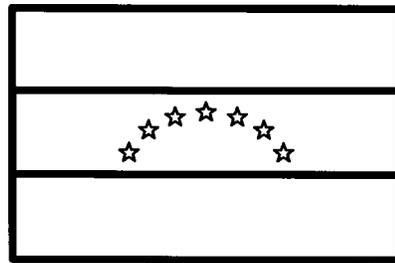
My gifts for Jesus

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____

Celebrate Christmas every day!

You don't have to wait until December 25 to celebrate Christmas. Every day you have the chance to tell your family and friends about Jesus. We can celebrate Jesus' birth and love for all people every day!

Make the flag of Venezuela



The flag of Venezuela is easy to make. It has three stripes of yellow, blue and red with seven stars.

What you need:

- Five sheets of construction paper (one for background, one blue, one yellow, one red, and one white)
- A pair of scissors
- Glue

What you do:

1. Cut three strips of construction paper—one yellow, one blue, and one red—all the same size.
2. Also cut out seven small stars from a piece of white construction paper.
3. Glue the strips length-wise onto another piece of paper. Place yellow on the top, blue in the middle, and red on the bottom.
4. Glue the seven white stars on the blue strip in the shape of a curve.

parent
mission

FRIENDS

Let's Make Friends in Venezuela!

Your child has been learning about the people and nation of Venezuela and about the LCMS missionaries who share the love of Christ there.

Review the children's (student and primary) pages of *Mission Friends* with your child and complete the activities inside. See if your child can answer the following questions:

1. What countries border Venezuela?
(Brazil, Guyana, Colombia)
2. Who was Simon Bolivar? *(the man who led the revolt that ended Spanish rule of Venezuela)*
3. What are some animals from Venezuela?
(Orinoco dolphin, capybara, oilbird, anaconda)
4. What religion do most Venezuelans follow?
(Roman Catholicism)



Here are some more activities you can do as a family:

FIND Venezuela on a globe or world map. What continent is it on? What ocean does it border? How far away is it from where your family lives?

LEARN more about Venezuela and the people who live there by checking out books from the library.

Also, search the Internet for information about many of the topics mentioned in *Mission Friends*.

PRAY at family devotion time for the Christian believers in Venezuela. Pray also for our missionaries serving there. Contact LCMS World Mission to get the prayer cards of LCMS missionaries serving in Venezuela.

LEARN a few phrases in Spanish together. If you have Spanish-speaking neighbors or friends, try greeting them in their own language. Can you carry on a short conversation?

SING “Jesus Loves Me” in Spanish during your family devotional time. You can find the words in the student pages of *Mission Friends*.

LISTEN to salsa music, which is very popular in Venezuela. You may be able to find recordings at your local library or through interlibrary loan.

PREPARE a Venezuelan meal. Check your local library for Venezuelan or South American cookbooks.

VISIT a local zoo. Look for animals found in Venezuela, such as anteaters, pumas, sloths, macaws, and electric eels. Take photos of the animals you find and make a scrapbook. Your child can draw pictures of Venezuelan animals not found at your zoo.

DISCUSS spiritual warfare by reviewing the Religion section of the student pages with your

children. Discuss the answers to the questions and read all of the Bible passages mentioned. Be sure to help your child understand that God’s word is more powerful than the devil. Your child should, however, understand that the devil is real and should be taken seriously.

ORDER these resources from LCMS World Mission by calling 1-800-433-3954, Ext. 1318:

- *Let the Children Pray* is a booklet that helps parents teach their children to pray for God’s mission and for missionaries. Filled with activities, information, and prayer suggestions. S12821. First copy free, extras \$1 each.
- Colorful children’s missionary prayer bookmark was designed by missionary children in Botswana. Helps children pray for the needs of missionary children. S12771. Full-color, one free or 25 for \$2.
- “Mission Focus: Venezuela” is a colorful single sheet describing mission challenges and opportunities in Venezuela, and how God is meeting them through the work of LCMS missionaries. Includes prayer needs and opportunities for involvement. S12641, free.
- “World Notes” includes facts about each country where the LCMS is in mission today: its history, mission opportunities and LCMS projects, number of Christians, percentages of religious beliefs, religious leaders, etc. You may order the whole set or request the Venezuela page only. Free.

VISIT the LCMS World Mission web-page for more information about Venezuela and for more links! Go to www.lcms.org/mission.

Mission Friends is a quarterly publication of LCMS World Mission, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295. The purpose of *Mission Friends* is to provide a realistic picture of missionaries and their work as well as the people they work with around the world. Questions about his publication and requests for free subscriptions may be directed to the editor by calling, 1-800-433-3954 Ext. 1318. Back issues are available for \$1 each from Concordia Publishing House, 1-800-325-3040.