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Pray with Ecuador on Sunday, July 15, 2018

BY [MARY KATHRYN BALL](#) ON JULY 09, 2018

Lectionary Selection: Mark 6:14-29

Prayers for Ecuador:

Dear God,

As Ecuador faces a changing social landscape, I pray that you give them a peaceful resilience. I pray that you will give them courage in the face of challenges. John the Baptist chose to denounce leadership in favor of justice, regardless of what the consequences might be. In the same way, please help the people of Ecuador to remain kind, and compassionate toward those seeking refuge in their country, despite fears stemming from the hate-driven actions of few. Help them to remain strong as they face new and foreign obstacles that may at first seem insurmountable. FEDICE is also facing a time of new challenges. As the organization faces these times of change and transition, walk with them, ease their fears, and feed their drive. Please continue to guide them, strengthen them, and bless them. The faith they have shown me is unparalleled, and their commitment to your work is astounding, they truly embody what it means to serve all brothers and sisters faithfully. I am so thankful that they remain eternally optimistic and certain that you will bring them what is best. So I pray for guidance, wisdom, and peace for both Ecuador and FEDICE.



Amen.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Ecuador:

The countries of South America tend to get grouped together in the minds of a lot of people. Not maliciously, simply because it is hard to mentally distinguish different varieties of the unknown. While it is extremely important to acknowledge the individuality of cultures, Ecuador's current reality is deeply affected by its neighbors. I'm sure many of you have heard that the people of Venezuela are currently plagued by a broken economy and a corrupt political system, and the people of Colombia struggle with drug rings which cause fear to permeate the entire country. In contrast, Ecuador has remained relatively peaceful and stable, but as things worsen, more and more people are fleeing their home countries to come to Ecuador. Some are looking to settle there permanently, and others are merely passing through on the way to other safe countries. The influx of people has been so sudden that the migration offices are struggling to process everyone. Even worse, there have been kidnappings, killings, and a failed bomb near the northern border with Colombia.

All these things were beginning to change when I first arrived in the country, and continued to worsen throughout my time there. This definitely created an atmosphere of anxiety in Ecuador, even in Quito, a great distance from the border. I want to note that I never ever felt unsafe, and I was kept away from the communities FEDICE has near the border. However, the FEDICE staff continued to travel to those communities with bravery and determination. They said that yes, it is dangerous, but the women's group was expecting them, relying on their guidance.

It didn't surprise me that they chose to go; it was just another example of the fearlessness of FEDICE's team. They gladly sacrifice themselves if it can make a difference for those in need. They lead these groups of women, empowering them by teaching them to farm, raise livestock, and budget. The effect is improved quality of life. FEDICE has the remarkable ability to hold their women accountable while also treating them with kindness, and investing in their wellbeing. FEDICE's work is transforming cycles of poverty and sexism ingrained in many indigenous communities in a way that is highly uncommon. Groups of women seek their counsel, and FEDICE gives everything they have to help. They are so selfless, and they rely so much on generosity and support from their brothers and sisters in the U.S. to keep their organization running. Any donation to them is a huge blessing to groups of women all across Ecuador.

(Prayer and Mission Moment by Mary Kathryn Ball)

Mary Kathryn Ball serves with FEDICE working in public health. She is a member of Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Lexington, Kentucky.

More information on Ecuador:

<https://www.globalministries.org/ecuador>



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Ecuador

Ecuador is located in Western South America, bordering the Pacific Ocean at the Equator, between Colombia and Peru.

Quito, Ecuador's capital city, is one of the most colonial cities in the region, maintaining 17th and 18th century traditions established under Spanish rule. It also has a large indigenous population struggling to maintain its traditions and to survive in an oppressive, westernized society. Our partners are the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), the United Evangelical Church of Ecuador (IEUE), and the Ecumenical Foundation for Integral Development, Training, and Education (FEDICE).

Pray for: The indigenous communities of the province of Imbabura as they work together with FEDICE to provide water and sanitary conditions that will improve the quality of life of their people. The ministry of EIRENE, a family counseling organization and the Center for Integrated Family Services as they provide counseling and therapy to families in need, and training for future therapists.

Population (2014 est) – 15,654,411

Area – 176,200 mi

Capital – Quito

Ethnic Background

Mestizo (Amerindian and white) – 72%

Montubio – 7%

Afroecuadorian – 7%

Amerindian – 7%

White – 6%

Other – <1%

Exports – petroleum, bananas, cut flowers, shrimp, cacao, coffee, wood, fish

Imports – industrial materials, fuels and lubricants, nondurable consumer goods

Life Expectancy (2014 est) – M 73 years F 79 years

Infant Mortality (2014 est) – 17.93 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 8.4%