



In Canastra as missionaries

Crossroads are one thing. There we have to choose. That's where the devil is tempting us. About shortcuts we say they are no time-winners. Another dilemma is to be located on several ways at the same time. There are highways, cow paths, royal streets and life paths. Everyone has their own speed and content. Sometimes one has to be reminded that it may be good to turn off the blue alarming lights and not go forward in life like "chased rats". This year I have chosen to step off the road of "the Play of heaven" where I have been the president for five years, allowing me to concentrate on my research on "grandfather's ships". There are sea ways that have to be ice-free, storms that lame and transport who will give food on your dining table. I note that it must have been colder climate at that time. In 1876 several of my grandfather's fathers ships were locked in Lübeck, Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Grimsby due to ice, northern and eastern storms with strict cold! A thought in today's environment related climate position.

There have been many tears during the year, rivers of tears of empathy and compassion kept in life memory boxes. My sister Elise has set her last sail and has like our father landed from both calm and stormy segments of life. She got a brain tumour which could not be cured. A couple of days into this year, she took her last breath, calmly and peacefully without anxiety and panic, far from her angry, determined and a little impatient personality. Her husband Bosse wiped her tears, filled one glass of wine and made wraps that she could eat herself. It is empty and unreal.

Forty years ago we moved to São Paulo in Brazil for service in the Scandinavian parish. We returned to Sweden after two intensive years. There have been many visits to Brazil since then. This year we left Sweden by lent to celebrate Lent and Easter by the river São Franciscos source streams, invited by our friend bishop Mauro Morelli to be "missionaries" in Serra da Canastra in the state of Minas, a day trip north of São Paulo.

Rio São Francisco flows northward through Brazil, a distance of 3000 km. Canastra became a new experience for us in this huge country. We lived at the foot of the Canastra mountain plateau. It became a national park during military dictatorship. Before that, the plateau was extra grazing fields during winter- and dry times. Today, they grow maize as a reserve feed. The cows are milked in the morning, cheese making starts immediately after milking, no cooling or pasteurization. They get a cheese that is a best-seller. It has even received a gold medal in France. We visited a farm one of the first days, where we experienced the cheese-making procedure.

In Canastra's interior there are diamonds. It has been another source of income. For environmental reasons the extractions are stopped ... one could say that cheese and tourism have replaced the diamonds. There are many small hostels / inns and a few hotels. The roads are indescribably bad; four-wheel drive is as well needed there as by us on our winterpaths.

Canastra's many waterfalls are like the cheese, in everyone's interest; locals as tourists can not have enough of them. Fredrik preached, celebrated services and led contextual Bible studies in two of the parishes. A different experience to be their guest and part of the congregations, "foot-washing" on Holy Thursday and many new friends.

Immediately after returning to Leksand, Fredrik received recall as vicar in his former parish. A new vicar has been recruited by 1 September. Fredrik has now returned to composting resting life ... We have made juice of apples from Slite, Gotland in October. In November it was ice skating on our nearby lake and now in December the skitracks and skislopes are ready for premiere. This year we will celebrate Christmas in Stockholm, the first without own direction in 46 years! We wish you all a peaceful and a merry Christmas!

Charlotte och Fredrik

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Vår huvudadress:
Alvik Ängestäktsvägen 10
793 97 SILJANSNÄS

Vår andra fot:
Döbelnsgatan 1
111 40 STOCKHOLM

charlotte.lautmann@telia.com
fredrik.lautmann@telia.com

Charlotte 070 255 64 91
Fredrik 070 580 50 07

www.charlottelautmann.se