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**July 16, 2017**

**Two Impossible Prayer Requests Lead to Wife**

By Andrew McChesney, Adventist Mission

One of the most perplexing questions that people ask is how to choose the right spouse.

For Mario Brito, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Inter-European Division, it was simple to find the perfect match: He asked God to answer two seemingly impossible prayer requests.

A mutual friend introduced Mario to his future wife, Maria, while they were studying at the Spanish Adventist Seminary (now Spanish Adventist College) in Sagunto, Spain. Mario was 22 and taking his second year of theology studies. Maria was 19 and in her first year.

Mario and Maria shared much in common. Both grew up in Africa. Mario was born on the African island of Cape Verde and lived there for 18 years before immigrating to Portugal in 1973. Maria's Portuguese parents lived in Angola for 27 years and moved to Portugal after Angola gained independence in 1975.

More important, Mario and Maria shared similar theological viewpoints.

"I got to know my future wife, and we became good friends," Mario said in an interview.

By the end of the school year, he wondered whether Maria might be the one God intended to be his wife.

The Spanish seminary only offered two years of studies, so Mario had to transfer to the Adventist University of France in Collonges, France, to complete his undergraduate theology degree. Maria stayed in Spain.

After moving to the new school, Mario began to pray. "God, I want to serve You, and I want to find a wife who has the same missionary spirit to serve You."

While praying, he remembered Maria and had the strong impression that she might be the one. But he wasn't completely certain, so he prayed, "God, if You see that Maria should be my wife, put it in her heart to write me a letter." To Mario, this was an impossible prayer request. At the time, a woman would never take the initiative in a relationship with a man.

Much to Mario's surprise, he received a friendly letter about a week later. In response, he wrote a warm, friendly letter back and prayed the second impossible prayer.

"Lord, the normal thing would be for Maria to answer," he said. "She wrote to me, and I'm sending a friendly reply. But if she is to be my wife, make it happen in such a way that she doesn't answer. This will be the sign."

Weeks passed, and no letter came. The two didn't communicate again until the next school year when Maria moved to the Adventist University of France for her third year of studies. Soon, Mario and Maria were dating.

One day, Mario asked Maria, out of curiosity, why she hadn't answered his last letter.

"I felt it was a cold and very formal letter, so I decided not to answer," Maria said. The reply dumbfounded Mario. He couldn't believe her description of the letter, and he asked whether she still had it. Maria retrieved the letter from her room, and the couple read it together. It was as warm and friendly as Mario had remembered.

"What was wrong with it that you didn't answer?" Mario asked again. Maria didn't know what to say. She acknowledged that she couldn't see anything in the letter that had prevented her from writing back. Mario then told her about his two prayer requests.

Thirty-seven years later, Mario remains confident that he chose the right wife.

*By Andrew McChesney, Adventist Mission. Reprinted with permission.*

## **Inter-European Division Prayer Focus for July 16 - 23**

**BRIEF FACTS ABOUT THE EUD:** The Inter-European Division is made up of 20 countries which include: Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Holy See, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Spain, and Switzerland.

The total population in the EUD is 350 million people, with a great diversity of languages, historical backgrounds, cultures, and traditions. These countries have been inundated with large numbers of immigrants and refugees, who bring with them their own languages, beliefs, and cultures. This potentially challenging situation is being seen, by the leaders of the EUD, as fertile ground for the advancement of the mission that God has entrusted to them.

**PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for Mario Brito, Division President; Barna Magyarosi, Secretary; and Norbert Zens, Treasurer. Pray also for Union and Conference leaders, and the local pastors of the EUD.

**PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for the immigrants and refugees to the EUD, as some are receptive to the Gospel. Church members who minister to the newcomers are being blessed.

**PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for the growing number of young people who are willing to recommit their lives to Jesus and be involved in mission service.

**PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for church members, young and old, to hunger and thirst for a deeper walk with Jesus. We are told, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

**PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for those newly baptized members who have joined the church in response to the Total Member Involvement events this year.