



Information about Ecuador

Here is some background information I retrieved from the internet that I would like to share with you as you pray and consider if you want to be part of Engage Ecuador 2019.

Ecuador: Land of Contrast

Out of the chasm of time rose the Indians. No one knows for certain where they came from. Perhaps they slid over the ice from Siberia or crossed the Pacific by frail rafts. They settled firmly into the jungles.

In 1455 the Incas began their expansion. The northern half of the Inca Empire was located in Ecuador, with Quito as its capital. In Ecuador they reorganized the local Indian life. The Inca tongue of Quechua was taught as the state language. The Inca introduced their religion, their temples, their priests, their many fiestas and liturgies. And, although Inca sun worship was the official religion, the Inca influence was more material than spiritual. Magnificent roads were built. The Emperor supplied food and clothing in case of famine or disaster. But the wonderful organization and great expanse of the Incas were doomed to extinction. The Spanish conquistadores came in search of gold and glory.

Spain ended for all time the Indian rule of the Andes. Two hundred thousand Spaniards conquered all of South America and its 30 million Indians. For nearly 300 years Spain ruled. They ravaged, prayed and governed. The Indians fled higher and higher into the cloud-swept mountains or down to the jungles, while Spain built monasteries and palaces.

CAPITAL: Quito

LANGUAGE: Spanish is the official language. Quechua, the language of the Incas, is the most important Indian tongue.

GOVERNMENT: Republic

HEAD OF STATE: President

AREA: 109,484 sq. mi., including the Galapagos Island. Ecuador is about the size of Arizona.

ELEVATION: The highest elevation is Mt. Chimborazo which is a volcano at 20,561 feet above sea level. The lowest is at sea level.

POPULATION: 10,800,000

INDEPENDENCE DAY: August 10

MONEY: Sucre. One hundred centavos equals one Sucre.

LOCATION IN SOUTH AMERICA: Ecuador straddles the Equator on the Pacific coast of South America, is bounded by Colombia on the North and Peru on the South and east.

Middle and upper class Ecuadorians value literary, artistic and intellectual pursuits.

SPORTS: Soccer, basketball and volleyball are leading sports.

EDUCATION: Ecuador's educational system is tuition free and mandatory from ages 6 through 14.

EXPORTS: Ecuador is the world's largest exporter of bananas and shrimp. It also exports oil from the *Oriente* fields 300 miles across the high rugged Andes Mountains to the oil port at Esmeraldas on the Pacific Coast. Most of the oil is exported to the U. S.

ELECTRIC POWER: It also has huge hydroelectric power plants in the Andes.

AGRICULTURE: Agriculture remains the mainstay of Ecuador's domestic economy. Principal export crops are bananas, coffee, cacao and sugar. The most important domestic food crops are corn, rice, barley and potatoes.

INDUSTRY: Major manufacturing industries include food processing, textiles, leather products, paper products, wood and furniture and household appliances.

God Bless,
Carlos

