

## A Musical Blessing

**Introduction** This August 4, 2003, *Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) Net* release about *peacemaking in Colombia* was written by Lisa Brightup; it is used with permission. This story of courageous peacemaking is added in conjunction with the inspirational story about Colombia's *Popular Women's Organization (OFP)*.



If a tree falls in the forest, and no one is there to hear it, does it still make a sound? As we raced upriver in our motor canoe, I found myself rewording that old question: If a song of peace is sung in the forest, and no armed person hears it, does it still produce the fruit of peace? Musical note



Three days earlier, members of our Christian Peacemaker Team had been present in the countryside when a group of paramilitaries carried out an exercise that they said was meant to test their weapons and scare any guerrilla forces lurking nearby. In an area between two houses, the men launched grenades and sprayed the trees with automatic gunfire for several minutes. Many people within hearing range were terrified that a battle might be taking place.

After reflecting sadly on how unjust it is that seeds of fear are sown in such a verdant land, we left the campo again with my flute, some music, and a plan. We would go to each house that was within hearing range

of the ugly noises of warfare, and we would bless and cleanse the air by replacing the frightening noises with songs of peace. CPT logo

Each family we visited told us how they had experienced the sounds of the paramilitary exercise, and they accepted with a grin the offering of music to chase away the noises of hate. We sang a song which reminds us that the angels are not given the task of transforming a world of pain into a world of peace. That job is ours to accomplish with God's help. Many people nodded in agreement as we sang. Our hands are ready to help God build a better world. As we left, families returned to their everyday work of fishing or laundry or planting, showing their determination to live out their lives with integrity and courage, regardless of the efforts of armed groups to instill fear.

So, if a song of peace is sung in the forest, and no armed person hears it, does it still produce the fruit of peace? I think so.

Committed to reducing violence by

