

Loja Cafe and Student Centre

Loja Cafe and Student Centre, Ecuador — 91065



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The sounds of laughter, conversations, and the clinking together of dishes drift through the door and to the streets of Loja, Ecuador. At *El Sendero* (The Path) many young people are hanging out and enjoying a snack, talking, and playing games. It is becoming a popular place for the hundreds of university students that populate this small college town.

El Sendero is a unique place in Loja. Although the city has a large population of students, there are very few safe places for them to hang out, and even fewer resources for them to be cared for, counselled, and introduced to a living relationship with Christ.

After months of planning and work, Bob and Millie Collins opened the café in December 2005. God has blessed the ministry tremendously. In their first two months, they served the average monthly number of people they expected after one year! They had numerous opportunities to share Christ. Most were initiated by the students themselves who asked questions about faith, love, marriage, drinking, dating, and other issues faced by young people.

In 2011 The El Sendero project is now trying to provide finances for the following: 1. Provide monthly support for the Missionary Internship Programme which has the purpose of growing young people into strong ethical workers for their future in whatever field God calls them to. 2. Provide finances to improve the facilities so that there are options for its employees and clients. 3. Emergency fund that would step in and help should El Sendero encounter financial difficulties.

A friend brought Gabby, a young, divorced, single mum to the café so that she could hear about God. After many conversations, she has come to church, but she feels unforgivable and is not ready to give up her alcohol.



Josiah, a friend of the Collins, walked into the café and said, 'I want to change my life.' He started coming two to three times a week to talk to Bob about Christ. He decided to receive the love of God, and a few weeks later he was baptised.

Claudia is a Christian who first learned about Jesus through the SIM radio ministry. She is volunteering at the café, and there have been many opportunities for discipleship.

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for the students who come to the cafe and the conversations that take place

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