

Wednesday of Week 1.

Dear Everybody,

What a prat I feel having mislaid my Tuesday letter to you! Even if I re-find it down at the Pilgrims main office (where I do my photo-copying), it is now firmly out-of-date. Do you ever do things that make you feel an idiot and which could easily have been avoided by paying the right amount of attention?

For me a strong moment yesterday was when you expressed your wonderment and maybe, in some cases, disbelief at how it could be that the old European class system still lives on here. A second strong moment was during the discussion about our birth order roles. I felt quite affected by what the other first-borns told me.

In a group like this we belong to a whole number of "clubs" that bind us together. I feel in a little club with you, C█████, in the area of things Japanese which also fascinate me. I have been to their archipelago, I think 5 times, over twenty years. I have actually learnt more about Japan while working with people who have come here than by myself going there.

How have you found your Japanese pupils, Ase and Egin, in your international school in the place where springtime flashes by in an incredibly beautiful week?

I have a fascination for the extraordinary, quiet tumultuous soul of Basqueness and have often worked with teachers of Basque, dealing with methodology. What HUGE people and what massive dedication and hard work! I have also been in the Basque country as a tourist and experienced the closedness of Basques to outsiders. After five days we fled the place, feeling like bits of waste paper. So, as you see I view the place from two contradictory angles.

There is a "parent" club in our group. Those with kids obviously have much in common at a basic human level and despite vast cultural differences.

Over the next few days we will discover more and more of these together-binding "clubs".

Mario

ps: tonight is our meal-out time and we will meet at the Thomas Beckett pub on the corner of Orange Street, in the shadow of the Great Mosque!