



West Paraná Conference headquarters in 2016.

Photo courtesy of West Paraná Conference Archives.

West Paraná Conference

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The West Paraná Conference is an administrative unit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church located in the territory of South Brazil Union Conference.

The West Paraná Conference (Associação Oeste Paranaense or AOP) is headquartered at 2364 Nereu Ramos Street, Zip Code 85810-210, in the center city of Cascavel in the state of Paraná, Brazil. The total population in

the AOP geographic area includes 2,432,418 inhabitants with 15,516 Adventists spread across 111 organized churches. The Conference missionary territory covers the entire western region of the state of Paraná from the city of Campo Mourão to the city of Foz do Iguaçu, and from the city of Guaíra to the city of Pato Branco. In this region, the average is one Adventist per 156 inhabitants. Presently, 28 cities in the territory have no Adventist Church presence. This area also borders Argentina and Paraguay.¹ This Conference territory is an extension of the 3rd Paraná plateau and is located between the Guarani, Iguaçu, Paraná, and Piquiri rivers. The climate is humid subtropical mesothermal, with hot summers, a few frosts, and no dry season.²

The AOP maintains seven institutions of the Adventist Educational Network with a total of 2,767 students. They are: Cascavel Adventist Academy, in the city of Cascavel, with 583 students; Campo Mourão Adventist Academy, in Campo Mourão, with 595 students; Foz do Iguaçu Adventist Academy, in Foz do Iguaçu, with 355 students; Guaíra Adventist Academy, in Guaíra, with 319 students; Goioerê Adventist Academy, in Goioerê, with 196 students; and Umuarama Adventist Academy, in Umuarama, with 719 students.³ The seventh academy was opened in the city of Toledo in February 2020 with a capacity to accommodate 250 students.⁴

The Adventist Training and Recreation Center (Centro de Treinamento e Recreação da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia administrado pela Associação Rio Fluminense or CATRE) Cataratas also operates in the AOP territory. It is located at Cataratas Avenue, km 16 in the Vila Carimã neighborhood in Foz do Iguaçu. Its structure consists of an adult pool and a children's pool, an auditorium with the capacity to hold up to 600 people, a sports area, an outdoor gym, a camping area of 80,000 square meters, and 24 rooms for eight people each. It is located just three kilometers away from the Iguaçu Falls National Park, one of the main tourist attractions in Paraná and Brazil.⁵ For the preaching of the Gospel through the media, AOP has TV Novo Tempo [Hope Channel Brazil] on open channel in 24 cities in its missionary field, with a potential reach of 1.5 million people.

West Paraná Conference has 496 workers, of whom 42 are pastors (30 district pastors, four chaplains, two administrators, three department pastors, one evangelist, one auditor, and one coordinator for the Center of Influence). The other staff members work at the administrative headquarters and in the Adventist Educational Network.⁶

The Origin of the Adventist Work in the Conference Territory

The native population of the territory currently covered by the AOP was made up of the Guarani, Guaicuru, and Kaingang indigenous tribes. For their displacements, these indigenous people used the legendary "Peabiru path." This route of pre-Columbian origin, with an approximate length of 965 kilometers, started on the coast of São Vicente (coastal city of the state of São Paulo) on the banks of the Paraná River and crossed the Tibagi, Ivaí, and Piquiri rivers.⁷ It was exactly on this path that, in 1552, Álvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, in the company of 250 men,⁸ discovered the Iguaçu Falls, nowadays considered one of the natural wonders of the world. In 1610, Jesuit Catholic missions arrived in this region in the upper Paraná near Guaíra, a city bordering Paraguay.⁹

A total of three centuries had passed before the first Seventh-day Adventists arrived in the region during the first half of the 20th century. The region itself remained unknown to the rest of the state and Brazil since it is very far from them, being located close to the border with Argentina. Another difficulty in the evangelization of the territory was the Contestado War¹⁰ in the 1910s, during which the entire region of western Paraná was involved, especially the cities of Francisco Beltrão, Capanema, Pato Branco, and Clevelândia.¹¹ As a result, the geographical boundaries of southwestern Paraná and its cities were defined later. The conflict also generated a massive migration from the state of Rio Grande do Sul to the western and southwestern regions of Paraná.

As time went by, this movement intensified, and some Adventist families came from Rio Grande do Sul. The Raspolts family, for example, came from the city of Ijuí and settled in the city of Coronel Vivida in Paraná. The Raspolts were the first Adventists in the city.¹² In Campo Mourão, attorney Luís Losso “founded an urban center, which later became the headquarters of the city of Campo Mourão,” in the early 1940s.¹³ Losso discovered the Adventist message through canvasser¹⁴ Belarmino Pereira in the city of Guarapuava, where he lived. After finishing Bible studies, Luís and his wife, Maria, were baptized in 1944 in Campo Mourão by Arnaldo Rutz, then the district pastor of Londrina.¹⁵

The route from the city of Mandaguari – where Pastor Rutz was – to Campo Mourão was travelled by horseback riding, crossing open trails made by pig traders since there were no roads. He spent four days and three overnight stays in the bush. Upon reaching his destination, Pastor Rutz was able to perform the baptism ceremony, and on August 13th and 14th, he inaugurated the city’s first Adventist temple. The building was made of wood and had initially been promised to the Catholic parish of the new city. This did not happen due to the conversion of Luís Losso. The lawyer also donated funds to Butiá Adventist Academy (presently Paraná Adventist Academy – IAP) for the construction of a chapel.¹⁶

Also in the 1940s, some Adventist pioneer families in regions of the state of Santa Catarina came to Paraná in search of a more promising future.¹⁷ They settled in the city of Mamborê, where they built an Adventist temple that was considered one of the most beautiful evangelical wooden temples in Paraná.¹⁸ Among the founders of this congregation, the Zukowski and Gross families stand out. In 1955, other locations in western Paraná were reached by the Adventist message. In the city of Cascavel, Brother Paulo Marquart had the opportunity to work with a group of 80 people, 60 of whom were already keeping the Sabbath including 13 who had already been baptized.¹⁹ In the 1960s, there was also a group of Sabbathkeepers in the city of Santa Terezinha. The work of preaching the Gospel advanced in a surprising way, “something that resembles a miracle.”²⁰

In 1975, in Foz do Iguaçu, evangelist Helmuth Ari Gomes carried out a series of meetings in a mobile tent. As a result, nearly 100 people were baptized, so the construction of a temple in that city became urgent. The Adventist population across the region continued to grow quickly and solidly over the following decades. Adventist families from all regions of Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul settled in the western region of Paraná. New groups and congregations emerged, and new temples were built.²¹

In parallel to this movement, the work of Adventist education was established in cities such as Umuarama, Cascavel, Campo Mourão, Assis Chateaubriand, Goioerê, Francisco Beltrão, and Guaíra, as well as rural areas including Céu Azul and Mamborê. Adventist parish schools in the cities of Cascavel and Assis Chateaubriand were the first in the countryside of the state to implement the 5th grade in 1975, shortly after the creation of elementary school.²² Cascavel Adventist Academy was at the forefront of intellectual and religious education. It had a library and a museum, and 80% of its students had completed the first year Bible daily readings during the previous year.²³ By then, Cascavel Academy had 500 students and was considered “reputable in the city.”²⁴

During the 1980s, western Paraná had the full attention of Adventists in South America. That happened because, in 1983, the city of Foz do Iguaçu was the stage for the 1st South American Pathfinders Camporee²⁵, which took place from December 28, 1983, to January 4, 1984, near the Iguaçu Falls National Park. The Camporee was attended by 4,500 Pathfinders from the entire South American Division of the SDA as well as representatives from the Inter-American and North American divisions.²⁶

As of 1988, this region of the state, then served by Paraná Conference (presently the South Paraná Conference – ASP), became part of the newly created North Paraná Conference (Associação Norte-Paranaense or ANP). The new administrative unit started operating on January 2, 1989, and was headquartered in the city of Maringá, serving 17,584 Adventists in the northern and western regions of Paraná.²⁷ Four years after its creation (1993), the field already had 19,771 Adventists.²⁸

During the 1990s, the Adventist Church continued to develop in the region, now with a special focus on the Global Mission work.²⁹ The goal was to take volunteer missionaries to cities where there was no Adventist presence, and one of them was the city of Pato Branco. At the time (1994), the city, considered “capital of southwest Paraná,” was the headquarters of a pastoral district with 14 municipalities, of which at least eight already had an Adventist presence. There were 140 people baptized in Pato Branco and “fewer than fifteen members, on average, in the other congregations.”³⁰

Despite the challenges of preaching the Gospel in Global Mission regions, evangelistic efforts held in that territory were very effective. From 1994 to 1995, Campo Mourão Adventist Academy developed an evangelistic work that resulted in the formation of a group of Adventists with 10 people baptized and 20 others interested in knowing more about the Adventist message. In parallel to this, Foz do Iguaçu Adventist Academy also carried out an evangelistic series of meeting, and a congregation of 50 members was established in the neighbourhood of Jardim Petrópolis in the city of Foz do Iguaçu.³¹ As a result of all the work carried out in this region, in January 2000, the state of Paraná already had 50,268 Adventists (the number of the two Conferences added).³²

The 2000s were a period of great development for the Adventist Church in Paraná. At the end of 2005, there were already 65,733 Adventists across the state.³³ Four years later, the number had risen to 72,372 members.³⁴ Because the numbers were constantly growing, South Brazil Union Conference asked the South American

Division to reorganize the missionary fields in Paraná. After studies were completed, the SAD approved the request, and so a new administrative field was created--the Central Parana Conference (ACP), which was headquartered in Curitiba.³⁵ With the establishment of a new administrative unit, the results continued to grow, and a few years later, the possibility of creating new headquarters in the field of Paraná would be studied again.

The Conference Organizational History

Missionary work in Paraná went on, and after some studies and planning, the decision to create a new administrative unit for the Church in the western region of the state was made. In compliance with the (União Sul-Brasileira or USB) directive board resolution of July 24, 2012, the Denominational General Assembly of the Organization of West Paraná Mission took place in the Central Adventist Church of Cascavel on November 18 of the same year, when they also chose the leaders who would serve in this new field. With the vote no. 2012-143 of the South-American Division and with the approval of the other higher organizations, and due to the splitting of the ANP, the West Paraná Mission was created, and it was headquartered in Cascavel according to the vote no. 2012-057 of the Union.³⁶ After this reorganization, the new institution started its activities serving 12,400 Adventists who were distributed in 81 congregations among an estimated population of just over 2 million inhabitants.³⁷

The first administrative staff of the West Paraná Mission included José Elias Zanotelli as president, Isaac Almeida as secretary, and Eliezer dos Santos Almeida as treasurer.³⁸ During the year of West Paraná Mission's establishment, the headquarters of the field was located on 1564 Pernambuco Street in the center of the city of Cascavel.³⁹ As of 2015, the Mission headquarters moved to its current address at 2364 Nereu Ramos Street, also in the city center of Cascavel.⁴⁰ Among the working plans for the new mission, the main one was and still is the preaching of the Gospel to all people in the scope of their missionary field in Paraná. The goal is to encourage engagement in the "Cada Um Salvando Um" ["Each One Saving One"] vision through Communion, Relationship, and Mission. The mission of the field is to lead each member to give everything for the mission in order to have a living Church that is proclaiming the glory of a living God. It is in this direction that the various projects and actions of this administrative unit are oriented, with the entire structure of the Church mobilized to keep advancing towards the fulfilment of this duty.⁴¹

As a result of the West Paraná Mission work, 6,000 people were baptized from 2013 until September 2016. In the same period, nine new cities were reached within the scope of the Global Mission: Diamante do Sul, Iguatu, Maria Helena, Missal, Quarto Centenário, Santa Izabel do Oeste, São João, Sertanópolis do Iguaçú, and Tupanssi. In addition, 22 churches were organized, which had previously been groups, 29 new congregations emerged, and 26 temples were renovated, built, or expanded. Furthermore, 22 plots of land were purchased to build or expand churches and academies, and CATRE Cataratas had its swimming pool renovated and their kitchen and cafeteria modernized.⁴²

One of the missionary initiatives developed by the Church in this region was the establishment of Centers of Influence.⁴³ One of them is Espaço Vida e Saúde [Life and Health Space] located at 3222 Paraná Avenue in the Cascavel city center where courses and lectures are offered including Healthy Cooking, How to Stop Smoking in Five Days, Stress Control, Hypertension Control, Healthy Habits, Emotional Intelligence, Physical Activity, and Women's Health. From this initiative, six Bible classes were created at the site with dozens of people interested in learning more about the Gospel message. Some baptisms were a direct result of this work, showing in practice the validity of the method used by Christ to attract and reach people. Another Center of Influence was opened in the city of Cascavel, this time to work with Haitian refugees living in the city. In addition, a congregation was established next to the Center of Influence so they could worship God in their own language and reach out to other Haitians who have not yet had an experience with the Gospel of Christ.⁴⁴

West Paraná Mission also made investments in training teachers and servers. For four years, 131 undergraduate and graduate courses were subsidized, and several courses and systematic training were held through the Cooperative University.⁴⁵ The canvassing work⁴⁶ also received special attention in 2016. That year, the field had 50 evangelist canvassers arranged in two centers: The Specialized Canvassing Center (where each canvasser works in a missionary district) with 20 professionals, and the Canvassing Training Center with 30 professionals. Furthermore, this administrative unit received the collaboration and work of 496 student canvassers over a period of four years.⁴⁷

As a result of the work carried out, in 2016, West Paraná Mission had 16,422 Adventists in 102 churches,⁴⁸ which made the USB form an Evaluation Board for the Mission change of status.⁴⁹ On November 29, 2016, the change was approved, and the field had its status changed to Conference. So, as of January 1, 2017, it was named West Paraná Conference (AOP). Its headquarters remained at 2364 Nereu Ramos Street, its present address. So, there has been no change in location. The growth of the Adventist work in the region and the resulting change in institutional status show that the establishment of the AOP has helped greatly in reaching the population of that territory and has contributed to the advancement of the Gospel.⁵⁰

As of 2017, there have been several advances in infrastructure, mainly in the area of Adventist Education. Some of these advances included the renovation, expansion, and purchase of land for the Foz do Iguaçu, Campo Mourão, Cascavel, and Umuarama academies, the reopening of Umuarama Adventist Academy, and the inauguration of the early childhood education building in Campo Mourão. Furthermore, land was acquired in the city of Toledo, accompanied by the construction plan for the city's Adventist academy in 2018. In the same year, CATRE Cataratas, in Foz do Iguaçu, was renovated and expanded when a new auditorium with capacity for 600 people and a cafeteria for 350 people were built. Finally, the Manoel Soares Educational Institute (Instituto Educacional Pr Manoel Soares

Or IEMS), which is supported by the AOP and the USB, inaugurated a church with a temple that has a capacity to hold 600 people.⁵¹

In the first four months of 2019, a strong evangelistic activity began with the Sabbath School as the focus of this initiative. The objective was to enable each Sabbath School teacher to act as a “sub-pastor.” Before implementing this vision, the teacher’s main concern was to explain the lesson. Nowadays, the focus is to lead people to love God, do His will, and fulfil the mission that He has assigned them. This is the reason for the frequent councils and annual meetings with Sabbath School teachers from all over the field. As part of this work, the emphasis has been on forming missionary pairs in the Action Units and encouraging each student to make a difference in the community through the use of his or her gifts. With the focus on these practices, from 2014 to 2016, AOP quantified an average growth of 36 percent in church attendance, 27 percent in relationship, and 28 percent in mission. Likewise, communication is allied with the AOP in the work of preaching the Gospel. In the Conference field, there are 20 TV Novo Tempo [Hope Channel Brazil] open channels. Important cities in the region were graced by this gift from God and, due to this investment, the first fruits of this evangelism through television have already been reaped.⁵²

In addition to these fronts, the Adventist Church in the region engages in intense social work through initiatives and actions promoted by the SAD. One of them is the “Quebrando o Silêncio” [“Breaking the Silence”] project,⁵³ which in 2018 had as its main theme suicide awareness. Throughout western Paraná, around 80 thousand materials, including fliers and reviews for adults and children, were distributed during marches.⁵⁴ In 2019, the Adventist Educational Network was engaged in the “Setembro Amarelo” [“Yellow September”] campaign⁵⁵, including holding lectures on valuing life.⁵⁶

Another missionary project fostered by the SAD that counts on the massive participation of the Adventist Church in the AOP region is “Impacto Esperança” [“Hope Impact”].⁵⁷ In the territory of South Brazil Union Conference (Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul) in 2019, about 3.2 million copies of the book “Esperança Para a Família” [“Hope for the Family”] by Willie and Elaine Oliver were distributed. These books reached prominent cities in western Paraná such as Cascavel and Foz do Iguaçu.⁵⁸

All this intense missionary activity shows that, although it was recently organized, the West Paraná Conference has been building a solid journey in missionary terms since its establishment. Through the years, it has been possible to see the hand of God directing the course of this institution and, due to that, the SDA mission is being fulfilled in its missionary territory. With divine blessing and the effort of the faithful who dedicate themselves each day to work on this noble cause, it can be possible to bring the Gospel to every person in western Paraná. Adventists in this region expect to keep being instruments to save and transform many lives for the kingdom of God.

Chronology of Administrative Leaders⁵⁹

Presidents: José Elias Zanotelli (2012-2019); Sidnei Mendes (2019-Present).

Secretaries: Isaac de Almeida (2012-2015); Luiz Carlos Damasceno (2015-Present).

Treasurers: Eliezer dos Santos Almeida (2012-2016); Sávio Fernandes dos Santos (2016-2019); Edson Erthal (2020-Present).⁶⁰

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3. Juliana Muniz (AOP journalist), email message to Renato Gross, August 16, 2017.
4. *Portal da Cidade Toledo* [*Toledo City website*], "Escola Adventista de Toledo convida comunidade para inauguração na segunda (17)" ["Toledo Adventist Academy invites community to the inauguration on Monday (17th)"], accessed February 13, 2020, <http://bit.ly/2URITZV>.
5. *Catre Cataratas*, "Infraestrutura" ["Infrastructure"], accessed February 17, 2020, <http://bit.ly/2SyalWv>.
6. Eveline Silva (AOP secretary assistant), email message to Luvercy Ferreira, September 18, 2018.
7. Romário Martins, *História do Paraná* [*Paraná History*] (São Paulo, SP: Rumo Publishing house, 1939), 121, 158-160.
8. Wachowicz, *História do Paraná* [*Paraná History*], 102.
9. Nicolas Martin, *Guarani: as missões do século XVIII* [*Guarani: the 18th century missions*] (São Paulo, SP: Municipal Secretariat of Culture, n.d.), 6.
10. The Contestado War was an armed conflict that occurred from 1912 to 1916 in southern Brazil between "government forces (federal and state) and country people who lived in the region disputed by the states of Santa Catarina and Paraná. (...) It is estimated that it left more than 10 thousand dead." *Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação da Fundação Getúlio Vargas* [*Getúlio Vargas Foundation Research and Documentation Center*], "Contestado 100 anos (1912-1916)" ["Contestado 100 years (1912-1916)"], accessed February 14, 2020, <http://bit.ly/31RWP2S>.

11. Renato Gross, personal knowledge as a family friend.
12. Ibid.
13. *Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação da Fundação Getúlio Vargas [Getúlio Vargas Foundation Research and Documentation Center]*, "LOSSO, Luís," accessed March 19, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2HCQP4F>.
14. An evangelist canvasser of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the missionary who "develops his ministry by acquiring and selling to the public the publications edited and approved by the Church, aiming to share with his fellow-men the eternal Gospel that brings salvation and physical and spiritual well-being." *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil)* website, "Colportagem" ["Canvassing"], accessed February 4, 2020, <http://bit.ly/2J6tY11>.
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22. Renato Gross, personal knowledge for having worked as leader of Education Department at the former Paraná Conference.
23. "Educação é Notícia – USB" ["Education is News – USB"], *Revista Adventista*, September 1975, 12.
24. "Inauguração do Templo de Cascavel" ["Inauguration of Cascavel Temple"], *Revista Adventista*, July 1977, 18.
25. "Camporee is a large camp that gathers teenagers, youth and children who participate in the clubs maintained by the Seventh-day Adventist Church." *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil)* website, "Campori de Desbravadores da DSA" ["SAD Pathfinders Camporee"], accessed

February 4, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2uwY377>.

26. *Seventh-Day Adventist Church (Brazil)* website, "Origem histórica" ["Historical origin"], accessed January 17, 2020, <http://bit.ly/2Sz3N9T>; "Balanço geral" ["General evaluation"], *Revista Adventista*, June 1985, 18.
27. Eronildes Oliveira Chagas (ANP Executive Secretary), interviewed by Gustavo dos Santos Cidral (ANP Communication Advisor), September 14, 2016.
28. "North Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1994), 276.
29. "Global Mission is a branch of the Adventist Mission front line, a department of the world Seventh-day Adventist Church headquarters. The projects of the Global Mission start as local initiatives. The Global Mission supports the frontline ministry local initiatives in unreached areas [by the Adventist Church] and helps to integrate all church departments in this task." *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil)* website, "O que é Missão Global" ["What is Global Mission"], accessed February 4, 2020, <http://bit.ly/35Wz9e0>.
30. "Distrital convida missionários voluntários" ["District pastor invites volunteer missionaries"], *Revista Adventista*, August 1994, 16.
31. "Dinamismo marca início do novo triênio" ["Dynamism marks the beginning of the new triennium"], *Revista Adventista*, April 1995, 29.
32. "North Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 276-277; "South Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 279.
33. "North Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2006), 274; "South Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2006), 276.
34. "North Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2009), 285; "South Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2009), 287.
35. South American Division Minutes, February 12, 2009, vote no. 2008-142.
36. South Brazil Union Conference Minutes, 2012, vote no. 2012-057.
37. "West Parana Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2013), 294.
38. Juliana Muniz (AOP journalist), email message to Renato Gross, March 17, 2017.
39. "West Parana Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2014), 294.
40. "West Parana Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2015), 304.

41. *Tudo pela Missão: I Assembleia Quadrienal da Associação Oeste Paranaense da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia* [Everything for the Mission: I Quadrennial Assembly of West Paraná Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church], 2013-2016, 5.
42. Ibid.
43. "Holistic urban centers that can be used to meet community needs. Ellen G. White encouraged the existence of Urban Centers of Influence that would provide lifestyle instructions, health care, reading, restaurants, canvassing, lectures, instructions on how to prepare healthy food, etc. Currently, Urban Centers of Influence can offer and have different aspects and ministry services, but the principle is still the same – to be tuned with other people's needs." *Missão Urbana* [Urban Mission], "Centros de Influência" ["Urban Centers of Influence"], accessed July 31, 2019, <http://bit.ly/38U6V5P>.
44. *Tudo pela Missão: I Assembleia Quadrienal da Associação Oeste Paranaense da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia* [Everything for the Mission: I Quadrennial Assembly of West Paraná Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church], 13.
45. Ibid.
46. Canvassing is an "independent voluntary distribution activity of religious and themes related to health and family quality of life publishing." Those who work in canvassing are known as canvassers. *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil)* website, "Colportagem" [Canvassing], accessed February 14, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2RQirbB>.
47. Luiz Carlos Damasceno (AOP Executive Secretary), email message to Luvercy Ferreira, September 21, 2018.
48. "West Parana Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2017), 331.
49. South Brazil Union Conference Minutes, 2016, vote no. 2016-095.
50. Michelle Martins, "Sede administrativa da Missão Oeste Paranaense é inaugurada" ["West Paraná Mission Administrative headquarters is inaugurated"], *Notícias Adventistas* [Adventist News] (online), December 3, 2014, accessed February 18, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2JkOnnc>; José Elias Zanotelli, "Convocação da 1ª Assembleia Geral Ordinária da Associação Oeste Paranaense da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia" ["Call for the 1st Ordinary General Assembly of West Paraná Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church"], *Revista Adventista* 111, no. 1313 (September 2016): 11; "West Parana Mission", *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2013), 294; *Tudo pela Missão: I Assembleia Quadrienal da Associação Oeste Paranaense da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia* ["Everything for the Mission: I Quadrennial Assembly of West Paraná Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church"], 2013-2016.
51. Ibid.
52. *Tudo pela Missão: I Assembleia Quadrienal da Associação Oeste Paranaense da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia* ["Everything for the Mission: I Quadrennial Assembly of West Paraná Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church"], 12.

53. "Breaking the Silence is an annual project, developed since 2002, by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in eight countries of South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay) that aims to educate and prevent against the domestic abuse and violence." *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil)* website, "Quebrando o Silêncio" ["Breaking the Silence"], accessed February 4, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2WoDfIW>.
54. Juliana Muniz, "Adventistas conscientizam oeste paranaense sobre suicídio" ["Adventists raise awareness about suicide in western Paraná"], Notícias Adventistas [Adventist News] (online), August 27, 2018, accessed February 17, 2020, <http://bit.ly/32dzXeF>.
55. "The Yellow September is an awareness campaign on suicide prevention. In Brazil, it was created in 2015 by CVV (Centro de Valorização da Vida) [Valuing Life Center], CFM (Conselho Federal de Medicina) [Federal Council of Medicine] and ABP (Associação Brasileira de Psiquiatria) [Brazilian Psychiatric Association], with the aim to associate color to the month that marks the World Suicide Prevention Day (September 10). The idea is to paint, illuminate and stamp yellow in the most diverse resolutions, ensuring more visibility to the cause. Over the past few years, schools, universities, public and private sector entities and the population in general have been involved in this movement that goes from north to south of Brazil." Setembro Amarelo [Yellow September], "O movimento" ["The Movement"], accessed February 4, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2N8frFJ>.
56. "Escolas adventistas do oeste do PR promovem ações em torno do Setembro Amarelo" ["Adventist academies in western PR promote actions around Yellow September"], Notícias Adventistas [Adventist News] (online), September 24, 2019, accessed February 17, 2020, <http://bit.ly/3bO1QOv>.
57. The project "Impacto Esperança [Hope impact] is a program that encourages reading promoting an annual mass distribution of books by Seventh-day Adventists in the South American territory." *Portal da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia [Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil)]* website, "Impacto Esperança" ["Hope Impact"], accessed February 4, 2020, <https://bit.ly/34dZROO>.
58. Luciene Bonfim, "Em Curitiba livro missionário é entregue pelo serviço do CéuDex Carteiros da Esperança" ["In Curitiba, missionary book is delivered by the CéuDex Hope Postmen service"], Notícias Adventistas [Adventist News] (online), May 28, 2019, accessed February 17, 2020, <http://bit.ly/2vl3TTE>.
59. Willian Vieira, "Igreja Adventista no oeste do Paraná tem novo presidente" ["Adventist Church in western Paraná has new president"], Notícias Adventistas [Adventist News] (online), June 11, 2019, accessed February 13, 2020, <http://bit.ly/3bzSZzP>; Willian Vieira, "Igreja Adventista no estado do Paraná vota mudanças no quadro de administradores e pastores" ["Adventist Church in the state of Paraná votes changes in the board of administrators and pastors"], Notícias Adventistas [Adventist News] (online), December 2, 2019, accessed February 13, 2020, <https://bit.ly/36Ar4gx>; "West Parana Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2013), 294; "West Parana Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2018), 255. For more details on all administrative leaders of the West Paraná Conference, see the *SDA Yearbooks* from 2013 to 2018.

60. For more information about the AOP, access their website at <http://aop.adventistas.org> or their social media at Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @adventistasaop as well as Youtube: Adventistas Oeste Paranaense.

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