



John Larsen <theclaw56@gmail.com>

Brazil!

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Cc: John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

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Hello, Phillip! Dear Elder Larsen!

It was so nice to talk to you on Wednesday! So nice to have a bonus phone call. What a wonderful time! People here are very excited for you, excited your visa came!

How exciting to be in Brazil, finally! We don't know when you will be emailing us next, but want to be sure you have some email to read in your in-box, anyway! Please let us know all about your journey to Teresina, and the things you find when you get there! Who is your companion? Where are you serving? I sent the mission home address to Bro. Hawkins for the back of the Sacrament Meeting program, which may be where all your mail goes for the rest of your mission, but I don't know. I found a website that tells the current time and weather in Teresina, also how to call there, for when it's time. On Mother's Day, I know the Ogdens call Karen at the number she gives them to call. So we may do that for you, too.

Two boxes came today from the TLM, filled with things you sent! I'm eating some of the candy right now, and I've looked at everything. That's cool that the ties have on the back the name of the Elder giving it to you! Should I organize the letters in a binder for you? (And if so, in chronological order, or grouped by person sending them?) Or just pack the things up for you to sort through when you are back? Hmm, maybe a binder would be nice, also putting the photos in a protected page for you. We'll see.

It was interesting to see the difference in weather and time between Teresina (90's during the day now) and Sao Paulo (70's during the day now). Also, Teresina has no daylight saving time, and Sao Paulo does, and that changed in February. So you are two hours ahead of us, and after this weekend when we go into Daylight Saving Time, you will be one hour ahead of us. Good to know.

It is raining a lot today. And they warned of flooding. We tend to not have problems in our house, but I know some people have flooding in their basements, also sometimes roads get washed away. Mrs. D. has had difficulties this year with it. When Julia and I were there on Monday for our piano lessons, her husband was busy mopping up their lowest basement, and had been home all day to take care of it.

Also, there was a big earthquake off the coast of Japan about a day ago, which is now causing tsunamis. Geoff Insch is fine (he finishes up his mission in Japan in about six weeks), Jackie already posted that on FB. Chile is bracing for a tsunami, but Sis. Hansen said Mark is up high, so is in no danger. I just read that the waves on the west coast of the US are not as big as they were fearing, so that's good. When things like this happen, I worry a bit, I pray for the people affected, and I'm grateful for the gospel, and my testimony is strengthened, knowing these are just the things that were prophesied in the scriptures. I joked that it was because of global warming (because some people blame every weather thing on global warming and what people do to the Earth), and Dad said he thinks it is because of wickedness on the Earth. I think he is right, not that Japan or Chile, or wherever is more wicked than other parts of the world, but the scriptures say (somewhere, I don't know where, now there's a focus for next scripture study time) that the Earth will groan because of the wickedness of the people.

Last night I went to Peterborough for their RS Birthday Party. It was a lovely evening, and so nice to visit with those sisters. The Spirit was strong. They had a nice dinner which several of the brethren served to the sisters, and a carrot cake for a birthday cake. There were some fun games, and some musical numbers, and some brief but inspiring words. One really neat thing is that the program for the evening had on the back of it a photocopy of the original notes taken from the very first Relief Society meeting! Dad said he thinks Eliza R. Snow was the one to write those notes. It looks like it was written on yellow accounting paper, though I'm not sure if the paper was originally yellow, or if it has been yellowed with age. They were able to get this copy from Church Archives. This was one of those evenings where I really did not want to leave home (rainy night, busy week, as always), but I'm so glad I did! Also, they were thrilled I came, so that made me feel really good, too.

I've been listening to some tapes to learn a bit of Portuguese. There are five tapes in this set (from the library) and there is another set with lots more. I've listened so far to the first one a couple of times, and I'm on the third time. I'm trying to learn the words. I have found out that other people do this, too, when their kids are on missions. Reta Brown tried to learn a bit of Spanish, but I think it was harder for her because she has never before studied a language. I'm finding that because I've studied German, Spanish, and French, at least I understand how sentence structure can be different, and how word endings are different depending on male or female doing the speaking. But the sound of the language is still unfamiliar to me, but is becoming better as I listen to the tapes. Leslie is trying to learn Dutch along with Ian in the MTC. I think that would be a harder language to learn.

Well, I am anxious to hear all about your trip and your adventures in the first days in Teresina! About the mosquitoes, you have good bug repellent, also, didn't Bro.

Rackliffe say the mosquitoes don't land much on you, but mostly just blow away. Just use wisdom in daily living, as I know you do, and know that the Lord looks after His missionaries. You're doing wonderful work, and I'm so pleased! I can feel that our family is being blessed by your service. I love you very much.

Love,
Mom