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Querida Familia,

I am glad that everything was alright with the problems with the van. When you had told me about the brakes failing, it reminded me of that one day I was picking up Rachel from school and we were stopping by Walmart in Manchester and on the offramp of the highway the brakes on the Van died and the pedal sank to the floor.

I forgot to add it in my email last week, but I remembered to celebrate it: Happy Birthday Stan! I had chocolate cake that I bought from the bakery that we always go to. It is pretty funny because I have been in this area for quite some time and they have seen my Portuguese grow. A lot of people have commented on that actually which is reassuring, and it is also reassuring that I am feeling the same way about it too.

So this week has been a pretty interesting one, a good week and also, as usual a tough week with some things. We had another week of appointments and visits falling through. Elder Alonso and I talk a lot while walking to different houses. I have learned a lot from him. I have learned a lot from all my companions already, it is amazing, and a testimony that God knows what he is doing.

One thing that I find that is interesting Dad is that you said you shared your testimony about experiences that we don't necessarily want happening. I had also shared my testimony about pretty much the same thing to the ward here, although I had mentioned about how with revelation and the gift of the Holy Ghost we understand the lessons that God wanted us to learn. Just one thing I thought was interesting.

Today we went to the Zoo here in Teresina! We went with Benicio, a member of the other ward, yet we are still close with a bunch of members in their ward even though we don't frequent their ward in the morning. Every monday we eat lunch at one sister's house. It is cool. A lot of people between Taquari and Uruguai are related. I didn't figure this out until the beginning of last transfer.

The Zoo was cool, well hot, but a fun experience. We walked about 20 minutes to get there, and then inside we walked another 15 minutes before getting to the part with

animals. It was R\$2,00 to enter. The amount of animals that they have is smaller than other zoos, but they have several animals that are not at others as well in the states. We saw a baboon, it was really funny because it kept moving back and forth in front of the camera. We saw Ostriches and almost got spat on by them. They had a lot of really cool birds, huge owls. Seriously, huge owls. A Hippo, tiger, lion, some pigs native to Brasil, several snakes, turtles, peacocks, oh and Monkeys that were hilarious. It was a good visit. After we swung on a vine that was on the side of the road in the Zoo like Tarzan and took pictures. They also have a bunch of palm trees in the zoo grounds.

This past week we spent a lot of time preparing Luis to get baptized Sunday, and when Sunday came and we passed by his house, his grandma answered the door and said that he got very sick and had to go to the hospital. This was a big downer on the week. We already knew that he had problems with his heart, and bones, but I didn't know that he isn't able to get angry, or really happy because his heart will act up. He was extremely excited that he was going to get baptized and his heart started to act up. The thing that was hard to hear was that he told his Grandma to say sorry that he didn't get baptized. I am glad that he is okay, he is an awesome kid. We're going to reschedule the baptism for this upcoming Sunday.

Tomorrow we have Zone Conference. I am really excited for that. Also we have Stake Conference this Saturday and Sunday. That is also something I am excited for. I am really excited for this upcoming week.

Last P-day I bought a hammoc. Every single house in the North East Brasil area has hooks in the walls for Hammocs. Mike Ogden would like serving here, hah.

Elder Alonso bought a tennis racket that is electrified. It is for killing flies and mosquitos. We have a **ton** in our house, well the bathroom. It is rather fun fighting off the bugs with it.

Also this week we have been lacking water a lot during the nights, but luckily we have it in the morning. Ah life on the mission. Haha,

That's all for this week that I can think of. I need to improve my writing down things to say in my planner.

I am glad to hear that you are all doing well. Love you a bunch and love hearing from you. I am glad I have this opportunity to serve in Brasil and help bring the Gospel to the Brazilian People. Missions are great blessings in the lives of those that serve, the families of those serving, and the people being served. This is the Lord's Work.

Até mais,

Love,

Elder Phillip Larsen

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