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Querida Familia,

Happy Halloween!... looks like New Hampshire weather did a trick though, so I don't know how that is going to go... It is strange how that happens... I am very glad to hear that you are all doing well. This is the second Halloween I am passing on my mission. That is a bit weird. In the MTC we went Trick or Treating through the hallways in the dorm halls. It was pretty funny how we managed to get costumes. :D I don't expect to see anything for Halloween here. It isn't exactly celebrated or practiced here in Brasil. Oh well...

So these past 2 weeks I haven't been feeling satisfied on how I have been sending emails, so I have tried to prepare for this week.

I accidentally kicked the powercord a little, (dang I am tall.) and the computer turned off... But everything is good now.

So this past week has been quite the adventure, for you guys as well! Luckily we are all doing well.

I thought about it, and realized that I haven't really talked about my companions or told you much about them, so I'll tell you a little bit about Elder Ribeiro.

He is from the Brazilian State Amazonas, he's from Manaus. He is really short! And when we are walking he looks even shorter, (because I am really tall) It is funny, people have asked "Quem é o altão?" which means "Who is the really tall guy?" We have about the same time on the mission, and we have the same age. I have been teaching him English a lot, and he is doing really well with that. We always joke around, but we also teach well together. I have learned a lot of teaching techniques from him on how I can improve teaching.

I got letters finally! I am glad that the post office is out of strike, but I heard that it is

going to be a few weeks or months before they get back to normal still. But its moving now which is good.

Thanks Lori for the letter with all the letters from you guys and the family picture! I really appreciated it. I laughed quite a bit at the Phil? Connors!? BING! :P

This week we have been working really hard to get to know the members and gain their trust. Working with the members is key in missionary work. When you have the members helping, they know people here, and they know the area, it makes everyone join in with this great work! The ward here already is amazing with the integration that they have with the investigators. A funny thing, don't know if I said it last week. Elder Alonso always called São Luís Sião Luís. Sião means Zion. It really is an amazing area to be working in. We didn't get to do much last P-Day though because it was a holiday and everything was closed... -_- Holidays aren't really good when they happen on P-Day. We just relaxed at home, drank Guarana Jesus.

The house we live in is really good. After cleaning, and with only 2 missionaries, there is more than enough space! 2 missionaries with the washing machine, places to dry off clothes, fridge, and stove! We don't have a microwave though O_o. The member that lives underneath us is really awesome too! Several times already while studying, we hear a weird sound and find her little chi hua hua walking in our house. It was pretty funny the first time we found her in our kitchen. Dilma is the member's name. (Pronounced Jilma) She gives us SO much food. Lots of beans and rice. We never go hungry, (you can be sure of that mom.)

So when we arrived here in São Luís, we already had our work cut out for us. The ward baptized 2 people without missionaries in the area, and when we arrived we got to know a few investigators that were being taught by the missionaries. One family, Amarildo, Teresa, Amanda, Mariana, have been attending church for a little over 2 months now, and we invited them to be baptized. We are working towards their baptism for the 12th of November. I hope everything works out. They are a really awesome family! He is a metal worker, he makes doors and stuff like that which is pretty cool.

Another investigator of ours is Carlito. He has been attending church for over a year now. He has met a bunch of missionaries, yet he still is not baptized. We had already invited him for a date on the 5th, but haven't heard his answer. The rest of his family are all members. His wife is going to the Temple for the first time this month. We are teaching them still, and hope to help him realize that he has already recieved answers to his prayers about the truthfulness of the Gospel. He already has recieved answers. It is strange how he doesn't recognize it. He reminds me a little like Oseias, who was baptized the week after I left Parnaíba.

So one thing that I have been trying to work on, and I think it is interesting is Praying with Real Intent. We have Elder Bednar coming to our mission soon, and we were given a few talks to read before the conference with him. It is about faith, and praying with real intent. He talks about how when we say *amen* at the end of a prayer, that we are agreeing to do what we can to make those things happen. For example, "Please help me to be able to feel the spirit during this study session" then you need to do what you can to be able to feel the spirit: Being focused, reading with real intent, and trying to eliminate distractions. Just something that I really liked. I will send you the names of the talks so you can read them for yourselves. They are really good, and I am really excited to hear Elder Bednar talk and meet our mission!

The time is running out. Lots of damage happened in NH. Again I am glad that you are all doing well. Hope you have an enjoyable week. I miss you all a lot, and love you. Only a few more months until I get to call home again! 3rd phone call already...

Talk to you more later!

Love,

Elder Phillip Larsen

Some questions:

1. Was there a cultural celebration after the dedication of the Boston Temple? There is a Dvd that a lot of members have here about the São Paulo Campinas temple being dedicated, and wanted to know if there was one for Boston as well. Soon the Manaus Temple will be dedicated, my comp is really excited about that!
2. Does sleeping in a Hammock cause problems? I don't feel anything wrong with my back, but I remembered hearing about that. I have been sleeping in a Hammock since Parnaíba. There is a way that you have to sleep in it so you are lying flat.
3. Is there any way to order English Nametags for missionaries, not being a missionary? I might ask the mission office here about getting an english tag, just as a souvenir.
4. Dad, is there anyway you can get a line of priesthood authority? Who gave you your priesthood, and so forth?
5. Who finds all the names for the temples? Not counting family names, because I have been there many times and I have always done ordinances, but who is the one who finds the people?
6. Is there anywhere online or something to get patches made to attach to bags or something? I am trying to make my own mission symbol because the one we have isn't being used on anything, and I think it would be cool to put it on my mission bag.

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