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Email from Mom, 26 March 2012

Joyce Larsen <linenlady9@gmail.com>

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To: Phillip Larsen <phillip.larsen@myldsmail.net>

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

Good morning, Dear Elder Phillip Larsen!

It looks like it will be another hot and rainy day for you. I guess a typical Monday in Teresina. How has your week gone? Have you eaten anything delicious and fun? It was fun to see the kite-flying videos you sent. I don't know what else is there, but it will be fun to watch! I could only watch a minute here and there because I was busy preparing dinner for Dad's birthday. At one point, I said to Dad, "What did he say?" I couldn't hear it very well, and he said, "I don't know! You're the one who speaks some Portuguese!" So, I'm excited to watch all of them, and watch them over and over, and try to understand what you said. In your apartment now, how does it work to do laundry? Do you have to take your clothes some place? Or do you have a machine there at the apartment? I would love to see pictures of where you live, so I can visualize things better.

This past week I got to have lunch with Sandy Cole (to celebrate my birthday, belatedly). That was fun. We used to get together all the time, but don't anymore, now that our lives have sort of gone in different directions, and she's in Brookline and I'm still in Nashua. But I'll try to reconnect with her more often. The next day (Wednesday), after Dad's doctor appointment, which he told you about, Bradford came to Nashua and did a little laundry, and he and I went to Alex's Shoes to get his Christmas present (and two pair of shoes for me), then to lunch at La Carreta, a Mexican restaurant near BJ's, then to the mall to buy him some jeans (his birthday present). We also looked for a shirt for him, but the one he liked was really, really expensive, and we were all shopped out by then, so we came home. Anyway, I really enjoyed the lunch, and I find I'm enjoying Mexican food more than I used to. I think developing a taste for Brazilian food helps with that, too. Though Mexican food is much more spicy, both cuisines use lots of beans and some beef. And I'm quite liking that. Oh, and I could even understand a little bit of what the workers were saying, because some of the words are the same as what I've been learning in Portuguese! (Numbers, and some discussion about time.)

I have been pondering the possibility of a trip to UT for me. It has been a year since I last visited UT, so it's about time, also your cousin, Shani, is getting married on the 19th of April. I thought if I'm going out anyway for a visit, it's just as easy to make it for

the time of the wedding, and that would be really fun. The only trouble is that I am limited on the time, on one end of the trip by Stake Relief Society Training, which I'm doing in large part, which is on the 12th of April, and the week after the wedding is April vacation, and I don't want to leave Julia all alone for that. So it would make for a shorter trip than I like (I try for about 10 days altogether, including travel) and when I checked a little while ago on prices, it's very expensive. So I'm not sure what to do, or how it will work out. I even checked Amtrack, which is quite a bit less expensive, but would take about three days of travel each way! I'll have to ask Patty about that, to see if that is a viable option, or if it would take too long. I also don't like the idea of three days with no shower. Maybe it would be better to take a more relaxed trip at another time when I don't have so many things going on at home. Leslie promised to send lots of pictures if I can't make it for the wedding.

You need to know, Phillip, that Beverly's sister, Dori, posted yesterday in the website that Beverly has only a couple of days to live. The staff at the Hospice House where Beverly is now feels like the time is very short. So, today, in just a few hours, I will visit there. Maggie called me yesterday and asked me to speak at Beverly's "Celebration of Life" (I think it's basically a funeral, but a nicer name). She wants me to talk about the importance of family because family is important to both Beverly and to me, and she and I have been friends for a very long time. I have been pondering what to say. It will be different than a talk at church. I will use some Bible verses, and some poetry, I think. There is one by William Wordsworth that I think he was inspired to write, and part of it goes like this:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, 60
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come 65
From God, who is our home:

That part talks about our birth, but it talks about things of eternity, and that's what I want to talk about, in a way that the people will understand and be ready to accept. I need to share lots of memories of Beverly, and say things that are comforting and uplifting. And I won't be ending in the name of Jesus Christ. So, somehow I will need to give my testimony in a very gentle way to these people.

So, as always, it's good to end the email telling you of how much I love you (a lot!), and talking of things of an eternal nature. I'm so glad you're teaching the people of Brasil about the gospel, about the Plan of Salvation! (Do you use your puzzle very often?) What a blessing it is for them, and for you and your own testimony! Keep loving your mission, and loving your companion and the people you teach, and loving

the Lord. Oh, and your family, too :).

Love,
Mom