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Brasil Week 14

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Querida Familia,

So this week has been pretty eventful, well it was another one of those longer feeling weeks but it was good. I am glad for the opportunity to email you today though, I really needed a P-Day haha...

Tuesday, Elder Magalhães was transferred to a city on the other side of the river of Teresina, and I got my new companion Elder Alonso. He is Brazilian and he is also from São Paulo. He has the same time on the mission that I have left, which is pretty funny. Still getting to know him but this week has been very good.

At first I wasn't really looking forward to being the senior in the area, but I have actually enjoyed this past week a lot more than other weeks. Having a responsibility is extremely important because this past week I felt like I was needed a lot more than I felt other times in Brasil.

Callings are a blessing because it gives the people who receive them a responsibility. It helps them live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and progress towards Eternal Life.

Also something really really cool happened this week.

I had an experience with the gift of tongues, mostly noticeable to me because I was able to understand for several days in a row pretty much 95% of what people said to me. Of course it was when I was talking to them and had attention, I have still not gotten to the point where I can understand what everyone around me is saying in the streets, although that is coming along as well. I do not know why exactly I had my ability to understand increased like it was, but the past few days I have felt like it slowed down and I am struggling more, but I am not giving up hope, I was glad to be able to notice that blessing. My understanding is a lot better than it was when I arrived anyways.

So this past Saturday we had another Baptism, Johnny. I baptized him. It was a bit discouraging because when we got at the time we scheduled the baptism to happen,

no one was there. We didn't have a member of the bishopric, or people to support him. The baptism was delayed for about an hour but it happened. Then on Sunday, he and Francisco, who was baptized last Saturday were confirmed.

Also this past Sunday I gave a talk. In Português, which was towering over the week. I was nervous because when I have shared my testimony in Sacrament meeting I would get nervous and when I shared my testimony at Zone Conference as an incoming missionary to the mission, I was also nervous. After the experience at zone conference I had remembered the story of Moses and his complaints to the Lord and had made an effort to study that and understand how I could not be nervous during a talk.

During the talk I was able to speak, without shaking, and without getting nervous, (except getting a little nervous at the beginning but once I got started it was easy). I have thought back on my experiences of giving talks in Sacrament meeting and how it was always an experience of where mom, you would ask me if I had completed my talk, and it was usually the Saturday before, or the Sunday of the talk, and so it was a rushed effort without any real preparation.

Preparation is key. Fasting and praying for help is important too. I had prayed about what I should teach and I taught the Restoration of the Gospel, and even though many of the congregation was smiling because of my accent, they understood my message and all in all it was a success.

By the way, I recieved 9 letters this past week. Our district leader went to the house of the Zone Leaders and picked up supplies from there as well as letters. Several of them were the prestamped ones that you handed out Dad, and I really appreciated them.

We're moving today! However, it is really annoying because it is conflicting with appointments that we have! But everything will work out. The new house will be much better for both companionships, and it is closer to the church which is going to be great.

Oh, one thing I bought recently was a new pair of sandals, one because the ones that I had don't dry fast, and I wanted a new pair too.

Its been very hot this week, as usual.

I hit 3 months in Brasil on Friday too. The time has flown by.

Well that's all for this week I think. Talk to you next P-Day!

Love,

Elder Phillip Larsen

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