

I'm mailing this directly to all the others, including missionaries.

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December 14, 1991

Letters from Daniel: Guatemala City North Mission, 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84150 (Write "POUCH" in big letters and circle on outside of envelope--they take only letters, not packages).

"Dear Dad, I am sending this application form so that with your help it can get to the admissions people completed. It lacks: \$10., names of institutions where I've attended school with dates and degrees obtained.

"I'm really thankful for your helping me to get this in. Just remember that I have to marry a good BYU woman so that we can have lots of grandkids for you. I love you. (Draws big smiley face). Love, Daniel

(Last week we received his letter of acceptance for Spring Semester.)

Written 14 Nov 1991:

"Dear Mom and Dad,

Yesterday we baptized! Wow! Lately it seems that it's been very difficult to convert people, but we were extremely blessed [his last letter was pretty down--said baptisms in the entire mission were at an all-time low].

"Monica Diaz is her name, and she's nineteen years old and the girlfriend of an ex-missionary (who baptized and confirmed her).

"It was a very special experience and the members here helped out so much. It was a very spiritual experience.

"I'm feeling kind of hot right now because I got a shot. I got it early so I wouldn't have to get it later. Why, oh why didn't I procrastinate?

"I spoke to Hermana Lowe, and she said that if you decide to come here that you need to make your own arrangements beforehand because the mission doesn't get involved. [We're thinking of at least my joining Daniel for Dan Ludlow's Book of Mormon tour/cruise which starts at Guatemala City one week after Daniel's mission ends. They will tour various archeology sites in Guatemala and Mexico ten days and fly Daniel and me (and I'm hoping things will work out so Dan sees his way clear to leave work) back to New Jersey for his homecoming. Then Daniel has ordered a one-month genealogy tour of our Northeast ancestral roots and schooling on "how to do research"--my pleasure--and hopefully by then the house will have sold and he can help me move and drive back to Utah in time for Spring term. I am flying to Utah this Wednesday, December 18 (Mom Bartholomew's 50'th wedding anniversary is Dec. 20th--but we plan to attend the Hall Christmas party Dec. 21) and will return here January 4. By the way, Daniel's 21st birthday is January 3--I'm sure he'd love hearing from some of you.]

"Also, they need to know how long you'll be here, what your plans are, etc. The seventies have asked that we don't go to visit old areas, so you'd need to plan on sightseeing. Which is fine.

"I have some interesting news for you, though. Remember the family

I baptized in Zone 6 (the dental technician named Ricardo Morales and his wife)? Well, Ricardo's wife's sister invited us to stay at her home if we decide to go. Both she and her husband are doctors, [good to know, I've been scared I'll get "the amoeba"], and they understand English. She passed me by in her car and pulled over to tell me that now they (the family I baptized) are preparing to be sealed, along with another family whose father I baptized. They are going to be sealed within a week of each other, if all goes well.

"Anyway, the doctor's name is Eduardo and Marina Terraza (they are family of Sonia and Ricardo Morales). Their address is 11 Calle 22-07 Zona 11, San jorge, Guatemala, C.A.

"You can write them if you like. If you come to Guatemala, we can stay at their home, and they do not live in any area where I have been; neither do they even live in the boundaries of the mission.

"The only thing I worry about is that I know if we go there, Ricardo and Sonia Morales would visit us. I don't know if that would affect them for good or bad, so pray about it [just what is that supposed to mean]? I also want to talk to the president about it. If he asks me to tell you not to come, I know it will be for a good reason. He's a very righteous man.

"Oh yea, if you come, you aren't invited to the president's house or anything like that. Perhaps he's had bad experiences or even more likely, he has no time to entertain, so you'd have to wait until the day after I finish the mission to get together. That's all.

"Love ya, Elder Bartholomew.

"I talked to the president yesterday, and he said that it's fine, if you come, but that you shouldn't arrive until the night of February 11. Also, he needs to know about [sic]. If you come, we should really avoid investigators and baptisms so that something doesn't happen to impede their progress [I think during that month tour he'll get a few lessons on TACT- and CLARITY--I'm assuming this is for reasons other than anything I should take personally]. Therefore, if you want to come and you can--come right down. But come as TOURISTS. Cameras, money, flowered shirts, and stupid grins. BUZO! Love, Daniel Bartholomew."

I thought you'd all enjoy the letter I got from "Elder Neil" last week:

"Dear Aunt Sherlene,

Thank you for those copies of Daniel's letters you sent me (I sent him some of the low ones, too, so he wouldn't feel different if it hit him). Truly inspiring...(I hope I don't turn out like that!) Just kidding. I'd love to become perfect one day! I'm sorry that I haven't written back to you sooner. I've been so busy procrastinating (as usual).

"I wanted to stop by the family file on P-day in the MTC to do some work for you, but the family file didn't open until 6 a.m., and our district always went at 5:30. I hope you were able to get everything done you wanted to!

"That's pretty exciting that "Elder Bartholomew" is coming home in 2

1/2 months! You ought to call up my Mom and say, 'My son is coming home in 2 1/2 months. When is your son coming home?' --Actually, that probably wouldn't be healthy.

"My mission is going great so far. I love working with the Spanish people. They're so humble! Right now I have an Ecuadorian comp. w/ 7 months left, who's already trunky! ...A challenge of sorts!

"Your wonderful daughter has been very good at writing me! I got to know Laura pretty well last year at the Y. We had a great time! Sounds like things are pretty good with her this year, too.

Well, I just wanted to thank you for all the love and support you've given me! When Daniel gets home, I'll still have 18 months left. Gotta love it!

Take Care! Elder Neil"

Besides Daniel's coming home soon, I guess our happiest family news is that Monte Shelley and Jim Rosenvall have let Dan know they appreciate his work and that if he does not take the option to go with the start-up company (which would go commercial with the word-crunch program--and which has not yet materialized, as once hoped by them), they would be happy to have him stay humbly, but happily in the B.Y.U. environment, working with them.

Dan has been very happy working with Monte and Jim. Monte is a non-bureaucrat if there ever was one. It is so refreshing after all these years of working at AT&T. Dan has enjoyed a relatively free and flexible schedule (though certainly rigorous) and an environment where he can attend weekly meetings with the F.A.R.M.S. scholars and feel the work he is doing has lasting significance. Dan says his option definitely would be to stay at the "Y," so I guess I can sell this house without that lingering fear that he might announce a year later that we are moving to New Jersey!

The market here is DEAD. We have invested close to \$2,000 in ads and have not had one person come see the house. We lowered the price \$26,000 and that did not help, either. Fortunately I have good friends who are agents in most of the local realties, and I worked out a deal with them. The selling realtor gets 3% while I'm gone for selling the house and 2%, while I'm here. That's what they get in a normal split, anyway, and I'm doing all the advertising and don't get the benefit of multiple listing. I handed out 7 keys to the house yesterday, along with my write-up about the house features, and also took my publicity to the relocation company both Daniel and Laura used to work for and to another local relocation company and to the administrative offices of nearby AT&T. The agency which does the best job for me while I'm gone will get the listing if I finally have to give it over and leave.

Since our home is on a main road, I am trying to capitalize on that by advertising it as an in-house professional. I figure a doctor, psychologist, computer consultant, or whatever would be happy to hang his sign on Maple Ave. I have checked out the zoning, and that's no problem, as long as they can park 3-4 visitors off the road and do not hire more than 2 extra staff. I have had ads in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, NY Law Review, NJ Law Review, Admax (a database for homes for sale

by owner) and several local papers. Very discouraging, but patience and persistence is the name of the game in this price range and in this market. If it hasn't sold by early February, I will give it away. I'm not going to stay here beyond this spring, that's for sure.

I guess the most exciting event here, recently, was attending the dedication of the Westchester Ward chapel in Scarsdale. Dan and I gave 2% of our income over a decade to that building fund and skipped a lot of vacations, new cars, and furnishings to build that structure. In a way I feel sorry our children won't get that satisfaction of being able to specifically sacrifice to build a chapel. I saw our parents make and sell wreaths and jump hoops to build our chapel in Schenectady, and watching that commitment did a lot to build my testimony. We really felt this was OUR chapel. Laura was so excited when I called to tell her I was going to the dedication. I don't think she would have had those feelings had I called to say, "Remember that vacation to Barbados we had ten years ago?" By now our new cars would be rusted and the furnishings delapidated. But here stands this beautiful chapel which will be a spiritual home to thousands. It is home, always, for us, too. When we sell this house, no-one is going to welcome us back in the future with open arms. But we can always walk into Westchester Ward and feel this is still "our" home.

The service was splendid, and it was such a marvelous reunion with old friends who came from all over to be there.

I combined that dedication and reunion with my genealogy trip to MA and visit with Bob and Rita Bartholomew for Thanksgiving. I stayed overnight with Diane Monsen and spent a day at the Ferguson Library in Stamford, then went on up to do research in Springfield, Northampton, Deerfield, and that area.

What I did not get in Scarsdale was a tour of the Family History Center--which I helped pioneer. I did not make it to the Saturday Open Houses because I wanted to stay by the phone in case any ad calls came. But Daniel and I can see it together later. At the time the chapel plans were being drawn up, the bishopric did not want to think in terms of a Family History Center there. But I was active in the Westchester County Genealogy Society and was tired of having my friends ask when we would get a more local center. So, I had all my friends call the bishopric and ask about it. They wouldn't listen to me, but they sure were impressed by the requests of all those non-members--especially my Jewish friends were not exactly shy about expressing their opinions.

I got a letter last week from Claire Freedman, who now runs the Center (and is bishop Eugene's wife) telling me what a tremendous missionary influence the Center is. Rabbi Wohl sent me a half-page article from the Westchester Section of the New York Times last month which featured several photos and spoke glowingly of this LDS chapel, bustling with ecumenical FHC patrons on a rainy, week-night.

Claire says most of their patrons are Jewish, and that thousands of names are being submitted for temple work by non-Mormons (because they want their family names to show up on the internationally-researched I.G.A.). Joe Fibel, pres. of the JGS (Jewish Gen. Soc.), is one of the ones submitting his family names like crazy. I think I told you about my experience in their home when he and his wife invited me to their Seder.

I told Joe about this Catholic friend of mine here who has submitted

6,000 of his family names for temple work. Joe said he didn't think his Jewish members would be interested in that. I told him to tell them it was absolutely the best living memorial they could give their deceased family-much more important than any monument to their sufferings. I told him the first place any genealogist goes now for research information is to the I.G.I. (which is an alphabetized surname index of temple work completed).

Then I told him about Daniel's birth in a Catholic hospital when both of us almost died during the delivery. A nun, concerned that we might not make it, confessed to me after we survived, that she baptized us into the Catholic Church by sprinkling a little water, so we would be "saved."

I told Joe I thought that was very sweet of her and the kindest thing she could do from her perspective. I said it didn't bother me at all because I did not accept the authority of her baptism, and to me it was probably a bit of refreshment I could use at the time. In that spirit, he ought to tell his people to go ahead and let his people all be baptized Mormons. Sure enough, he's doing it by the hundreds! To quote Claire's letter: "I tell the bishop our converts far outnumber the 60 living who have joined since January through missionary work."

You would never believe the change there at the church in Scarsdale. When we moved in thirteen years ago, the congregation was lily-white, very German, and packed with wall-street executives. Last year alone, they had 60 converts, most from Yonkers. When we tried to adopt Andy, he was one of the few non-pale-faces in the congregation. I would say 65% of the congregation now is black or brown. They are thinking of splitting the ward and forming a separate Yonkers congregation, but for now it is a test of the charity of the original group. The pale-faces still provide most of the leadership, money, and time, and they are feeling pretty exhausted. Because of the recession, many LDS executives have moved out of New York City, which means they have consolidated stakes and are back to how it was when we first moved in (as Stake public communications director, I directed from 12-16 different ward PCDs, and I can't tell you how many miles I drove when I was on the R.S. board). We were so relieved when that one stake became three, and now it's back where it started. The Scarsdale people are manning most of the Stake and not only commute into the City to work, but also weekends to run the Church!

However, those more colorful new members provide an exemplary portion of humility, love, spirit, sweetness, and faith. Talk about cultural upheaval. Some of the old guard are upset, but I think it's going to be wonderful for all in the long run.

The real estate agent who has been trying to sell us that lot above the temple in Provo, says a similar situation is happening in Provo where those apartments near B.Y.U. have been built. He says Terry Warner is bishop of that ward and has been a good leader in aiding the transition. Maybe we should move into that ward. It's probably the only one out there where we might be needed.

Well, we pray all of you will have a glorious holiday. I missed our Morristown Stake Messiah Sing-In, which is a tremendous event here each year. This Sunday night I am going to a Christmas concert with some Presbyterian friends, at their church. I have two Presbyterian real estate agents from two different agencies working for me, who both invited me to this concert. I just can't wait until Rev. Pepper joins the Church and all my Presbyterian friends get word.

Love,
Sherlene

Sherlene

(sent to all)

Here's another letter from Daniel I forgot to include: Dated 25 Nov 1991

"Dear Mom and Dad,

Things here in Guatemala are going very well this month. So far we have baptized a girl named Monica Diaz and a couple named Juan Antonio Argueta and his wife Aura. We have also (yesterday) baptized a very special couple named Oscar Hugo Argueta and his wife Leticia. Oscar is the son of the first couple mentioned. He and his wife are parents of 4 children - 3 little boys and a little baby girl.

The Lord has blessed us tremendously this month. Yesterday we had no idea we were going to baptize anyone. Church meetings are in the afternoon, so in the morning we (Elder Carduca and I) dropped by to visit them to invite them to go to church (they've gone to church now three Sundays in a row). Well, the Lord blessed us because they hadn't really been planning on being baptized, either. Their problem has been accepting tithing. They have four small children and many debts, and it was difficult for them to exercise faith in the promise the Lord makes in Malachi. Sunday when we visited them, the Lord worked a change in their hearts and their baptism was accomplished.

The baptismal service was really special. Some member friends of the Argueta gave talks. A sister of another ward prepared some small children to sing a song right before the baptism. After Hugo was baptized, our bishop gave him the Aaronic Priesthood, and then Hugo baptized his own wife. It was a very special experience.

The mission is ending too fast. There are so many things I would have liked to do better. Nevertheless, the Lord has really blessed me, and I cannot complain.

I love you both. Thank you for the letters. They are wonderful.

Love, Elder Daniel H. Bartholomew

And last, but not least, a sweet card and note from Laura (we talk on the phone regularly, so don't write that much):

"To my parents, I know we don't always agree on things, but as I grow to understand myself better, I'm beginning to see you in different ways--to love you as my parents, and to know you and enjoy you as individuals. I will always love you as your child, but it's wonderful to be growing closer in new ways, too. Love, Laura." P.S. HAPPY THANKSGIVING. I just wanted to say I love you & I'm glad you are my Mom! Thanks for all that you do for me--you know those lemon bars you are sending next week! Just joking. My roommate and I were reminiscing on how delicious the lemon bars were on my b-day & how you'll have to make 'em for us again when you come for Christmas! Love ya', Laura Have a nice day." ('Thought those of you raising teenagers would appreciate knowing cards and letters like that do appear a bit later!) Actually, with Laura, we often found little notes like that under our pillows all along the way--she's very thoughtful that way. I'm excited to get out there and be with my family again. It's not fun to have all the candles in the windows and the whole house decorated for Christmas, Christmas stockings by the fireplace, Christmas music playing, and NO FAMILY. Those of you bustling around putting up decorations, stop it, and just enjoy your family. After they are gone, you can put up decorations forever, and it will never be the same.