

Received July 10, 1990 (not dated again)

Dear Mom, Dad, and Laura,

I'm sorry. I keep getting these letters about birds that leave their nest and don't come back to visit and how that makes Mom cry. I promise to write and send at least one letter per week from now on.

Right now I've completed 5 months in the mission, and I've been made a district leader which means nothing. All I do is help out and take dats (information) from 2 hermanas, as well as being involved in the work of my own companionship.

I've come to a new theory. The more contacts you make and the more Book of Mormons you give away, the more people you'll find ready to listen to the gospel and thus the more baptisms will be realized. The past two months I've been working with a companion (the old district leader who got a change two days ago) who frankly doesn't do much personal contacting. As a result, we only had 3 baptisms last month. I love the guy, but working hard isn't enough. One needs to work constructively, as well.

In the past week and a half I've personally given out about 65 Book of Mormons with some really pleasing results. We started the month of July (in fact on the first day of July) with 2 baptisms (2 parents with 3 very young boys--all of course future missionaries [draws smiley face]).

This family is very poor. The man (Hermano Hugo Rolando Piveral Medas) has good skills and has a job, but doesn't get paid what he should; and his boss (who drinks) lately hasn't been paying him on time. One time there wasn't anything to eat and he ended up feeding his kids sugar water.

Anyway, this stuff is really painful to watch. It's hard for us to do anything about it. We have money to give, but can't because when the news spreads that elders give money, investigators line up (for all the wrong reasons). Despite that, I'm seriously thinking of buying them a bag of the necessities (beans, rice, perhaps some honey, bread, etc.)

Please don't worry about me. I've never been happier in my life. All because of the basic principles taught to me by loving parents. I'm sorry I didn't write. I know you need to hear from me, and it was very irresponsible of me to wait so long before getting mail off. I promise (unless there's a mail strike) that I'll be sending regularly from now on.

Another thing about the work. I found that giving out Book of Mormons isn't enough. One has to extract a specific date when they can return to give a plot [he's starting to sound like he's translating Spanish to English!]. All you do is say something like..."Can we return on Wednesday at 5:30 to share a little bit

about our beliefs?" If so, they say "yes." If not, but they're interested, they'll change the time or day or both. If they're not interested, they'll say they don't have time or whatever, and you smile and politely say goodbye and look for someone else to share a Book of Mormon with.

I have a very strong testimony of the Book of Mormon. It is the perfect missionary tool. If a person reads it, thinks about it, and prays sincerely, he can come to a knowledge that not only the Book of Mormon is true, but that the Church is true, modern day prophets exist, and that baptism is necessary. It (the B.O.M.) is what sets us so distinctly apart from other churches. Of the thousands of other imitations of the truth, only one has the existing truth of modern day revelation. I love teaching others about it.

I can hardly believe I've just about finished a fourth of my mission. There's still so much I want to accomplish. I've really come to appreciate how precious time is (especially here under these circumstances).

Oh, by the way. President Romney has left. He was a great president. Very intelligent, very capable, and there wasn't a good missionary who didn't have respect for me. I'm sad to see him go.

The new president is here! President Frisknecht. He's young (35) with a large family. He has never been a bishop, bishop's counselor, or anything else big like that. He has been an Elders Quorum leader. He's a very good guy. He receives inspiration. I have a testimony of that. Last change conference, he spoke to us about how he did changes without having met the missionaries. The answer is inspiration. He's intelligent and he will get things done. He is also very humble (scared to death would probably be more accurate). His warmth and gentle humor made me love him right away. We are so blessed to have him for a pres.

I LOVE YOU!--Gotta run. Love, Elder Daniel H. Bartholomew