

Saturday, November 3, 1990

Dear ones,

Howdy, y'all. It was good to talk to you all on the phone the other night. It's been a while since I've written, so quite a few things have happened that I haven't mentioned yet in letters. I got to say most of them on the phone, 'though I'm not sure that everybody heard everything. As things occur to me, I'll mention them again.

Elder Johanson has started training someone to replace him at the end of the month -- Elder Salmon, who was in Delmas 19 during my last month there. Elder Frost trained Elder Harris last month, so that makes three former Delmas 19ers in the office now. It will be my turn to train next, in a month or two. It doesn't seem like I've been in the office for that long. It doesn't seem like I've been in *Haiti* that long. I'm scheduled to go home on Halloween next year (although release dates are often shifted around).

I mentioned Elder Morrison's visit here. He came for the North District's conference. (Districts are to stakes as branches are to wards.) He was only here for a day, but the office staff got an opportunity to talk to him for a while, and ask questions, etc. He was in the area presidency for the area that includes Africa, and had some interesting insights into the similarities and differences between Haitians and Africans, who have the same ancestry but different histories. He said that although people in Africa are generally as poor as they are here, they are more reluctant to beg. Haiti has in many ways been coddled by the United States and other countries. It's pretty much a beggar nation -- most of the clothes they wear and a good portion of the food they eat come from elsewhere.

He also talked to us about how the missionary work was going in different areas of the world. There's a branch in Leningrad right now, but progress is difficult because the church has to be registered and recognized individually in every section of the town -- let alone the nation. He said that we shouldn't take for granted the tremendous growth we're beginning to see in Eastern Europe. He also mentioned efforts to start spreading the Gospel in the Moslem areas of the world, and what a great difficulty it is to reach people with such an entirely different way of thinking. He said it was interesting to note that of all the General Authorities at this time, and especially of the Twelve, President Hunter is by far the most studied in Arab/Moslem culture.

Do you remember Rosa, the woman Elder McClellan and I baptized in Pétionville, who was expecting a baby? Well, it was a boy. Some of the Elders drove her to the hospital, and they were afraid she was going to deliver right there in the car. Elder Johanson and I drove her back home to their cement box in the woods. One more Haitian all-member family! I hope they're able to be sealed together some time. It's not easy here.

The first day Elder Johanson and I went wandering around trying to get to know our new proselyting area in Upper Delmas, we came across somebody whom Elder Nebeker and I had once taught. At the time, she hadn't been very interested in or serious about investigating, but she's since gotten married, moved, and had a baby, and now she and her husband seem like they might be pretty good investigators. We started teaching them this week.

A few weeks ago, I got to go to: the Dominican Republic. We are here in Haiti on tourist visas, which are automatically issued to us as we get off the airplane, but are only good for three months. After that, they can be renewed for up to a year, but usually we don't bother, and just pay a fee to be allowed to leave the country at the end of the two years -- believe it or not, it's quite a bit cheaper that way. But we like to be more sure for people who are driving, in case they get pulled over and there's some sort of trouble. The problem is, after your year is up, the only way to get another tourist visa is to leave the country and come back again. So we filled out a few necessary formalities, crossed the Dominican border, looked around a bit, and came straight back home. We didn't get nearly to Santo Domingo, the most modern city on the island, or Santiago, which is probably the second. If we had been able to, we probably would have gotten to visit one of the

a little bit of confusion, we were able to change a few gourdes for a few pesos at the proper rate, and we went in search of a bite to eat.

Mom asked me if I had ever seen a tortilla here. Well, I have, kind of. They sell American-made taco shells in HyperXtra, and a couple of times in Delmas 19 we made our own flour pseudo-tortillas to make burritos (good, too). But other than that, never. We asked the waitress if they had burritos, or tacos, etc., and nobody even knew what the words were. We asked them what they did have. "We have rice with goat meat," they said. "Do you want that?" Actually, it was pretty good. With everyone speaking so unintelligibly, it seemed like we were in a completely different part of the world -- but the food was just like the stuff we were used to.

(continued Nov 10th)

I forgot to mention that about a month ago, I lost or had stolen from me about the equivalent of \$140 US. It was the oddest thing. I was pretty sure of where I had left it, but it had been a while since I had checked on it. But it was upstairs in my room inside the house, and no other valuables were missing from anywhere. It's possible that I misplaced it, or left it out in a vulnerable place, or maybe even spent it on something for the office and forgot to get reimbursed. What it boils down to is that I didn't keep good track of it. But fortunately, I had already almost a month ahead on most of my expenses, so I'll be able to get by without cashing an extra check.

I did get the package you sent by way of the Egans, and loved it. Especially the photographs. You chose pretty well what to include. It was a good thing you didn't send peanut butter and jelly -- we can get that here. We also have powdered milk, so I was able to make the pudding. You asked what kinds of things we can't get here: Well, the only black dress socks I've been able to find here are pretty flimsy.

The weather lately has been really nice. Lots of rain, which makes it a little cooler, and also means that the hydroelectric plant can put out plenty of power. It reminds me somewhat of summer in Washington. The temperature went as low as 66 degrees one morning. (We were all chilly.)

We visited the Piquions again last night. They're very busy people, and it's hard to get them all together, but we were able to show Nadia *What is Real?* and *Labor of Love* and talk to her for a while. (Have you seen either of those? I really love them both. We in the office got to see a tape of the recent fireside broadcast of *The Prodigal Son* last week, and I was also impressed by that. I think Church Media is coming of age.) They are devoted Catholics, and wonderful people. I hope we're able to begin teaching them.

Happy belated birthdays to Dad and Lili. Also to Jenny. Just think -- by the time I get back, you'll all be a whole two years older/wiser/taller/more mature, and I'll still be the same old age I always have been.

Here's another idea if your running out of things to send me: a videotape. If you manage to get it to me with in a couple of months or so, I should still be here in the office, and I could easily watch it. Include lots of people shots.

Cloven issues,

(Elder) Tracy Hall

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