

LA IGLESIA DE
JESUCRISTO
DE LOS SANTOS
DE LOS ULTIMOS
DIAS

CENTRO DE ENTRENAMIENTO MISIONAL

Pocuro, 1980
Santiago, Chile

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The News Never Ending

There's always something! Things keep happening!

Rude ranch. The dudes where Charlotte went to camp this summer run a rude ranch. She barely escaped serious injury and Bishop Grover miraculously traded death for a little of what Charlotte survived. Greenhorns riding horses have to discover the equine equivalents of steering wheel, gear shift, clutch, brakes, etc. Where they have their shock absorbers I still don't know. Whinny, if it's funny. The clutch... I remember once on Darrell Dinsdale's shetland pony out in Marriott, I let it out too fast and the bleeding little steed went right out from under me. That unnerved me so that, the next time, I put on the brakes, just barely touched them, and almost went over the little bleeder's head, just managing to cling to his neck with my arms and legs and all my might and fright. The uninformed think that horses are stupid, but their presumed lack of intelligence is pure pretense. The next time one bites out a mouthful of your hair, look for the gleam in his eye as he almost says out loud, "Yeah, I'm stupid. I thought that ugly insipid stuff was hay." As soon as she gets over her saddle sores, Charlotte wants to ride that wild bronco again. Just talk to him, Charlotte. "Easy, boy... Easy now... Nice horsey...."

Soar spot. To reassure the missionaries with respect to the many recent terrorist attacks, in both Bolivia and Chile, I said something like this: "Pues, como la gaviota asciende a alturas nunca soñadas contra la fuerte oposición de vientos contrarios, así la Iglesia y ustedes, queridos, maravillosos misioneros, van a tener más éxito que nunca. Y esta sagrada obra seguirá siempre adelante, preparando la vía para la gloriosa segunda venida de nuestro Salvador." [As the seagull soars to undreamed-of heights against the strong opposition of contrary winds, so the Church and you--dear, marvelous missionaries--are going to have greater success than ever, and this sacred work will continue to go forward, preparing the way for the glorious second coming of our Savior.] We are certainly on the spot here, but soaring. Our souls can become great and noble only by soaring higher and higher in times of sore trials and opposition.

Two wings. Possibly due in part to extremist insanity, some of our missionaries have been feeling a strong longing for home. Last night I suggested that at some point everyone has to leave the nest, and what better way than on the way to a mission, taking flight from the CEM. A little bird needs two strong well-developed wings to avoid crashing to the earth and fly safely, euphorically away. One good wing isn't enough. It takes two. The young missionary needs a sturdy wing of faith. Through faith, the attributes and skills required for success on a mission and in life can be gained and forever retained. The other wing is abnegation, self-negation for our own and others' salvation. Only by losing ourselves in the service of God and our neighbors can we truly find ourselves... and like what we find. Then, as we are borne aloft by our two wings and God's love, we will sing a new song of gratitude and joy. How thrilling it is. How thrilling it can be. And if our wings become weak and weary, worn or torn, they are self-mending and self-regenerating if authentically constructed of abnegation and faith.

Say that again, elder. The district leader told me that Elder Astoriano was feeling discouraged and homesick. "Focus a spotlight," I find, is a good solution. This elder comes from a part of Bolivia where the pure Castillian **ll** has been retained. I asked him to read from the Missionary Guide and when he pronounced "estas sencillas enseñanzas" I went into an unfeigned paroxysm of delight. How beautiful! I repeated the word "sencillas" a couple of times, acknowledging my inability to even approximate his noble enunciation. Now, everytime he pronounces an "ll" he's a center of attention, helping him to forget his homesickness. Elder Cabrera Rubilar--that's my favorite one. Rrrruby-larrrr. That runs off the tongue so wonderfully I just love it. When I expressed my admiration for his maternal surname's lovely sound and went around rolling it lovingly over my tongue at every opportunity, the others started doing the same and I guess from now on, to his group, he'll always be Elder Cabrera Rrrrubilarrr. Makes a missionary forget even his girl friend. As for the sisters, how about Yolanda Maribel, Tereza Amalia, Ilda María del Rosario.... though I usually draw attention to how lovely their countenances are, as well as their names. A favorite feminine name of mine, in English, is Amarantha. Have you read the story so entitled? One of the best ever written. Roll it over your tongues, Jeannie and Sarah: Amarantha Brooks... Amarantha Hall... Amarandrew (Amarandy), maybe?

The most beautiful French I've ever heard comes from Anna's lips.

What have they done to my song? For sounds, French possibly has the loveliest. Even with my limited repertoire and more limited voice, I quiver and shiver as its liquid syllables shimmer and glimmer. [Synesthesia: Literary images confusing the senses.] But now... Ohhh, my song! I just discovered that it exists in English translation: "When It's Apple Blossom Time in Normandy." Apple blossoms are nice, but who made them cloy up my song, removing rebirth and hope? This morning I was singing "Ma Normandie" in the bathroom when the English words intruded and ruined it. Ban the English title from your minds while I telepathically (telepathetically) sing to you. Close your eyes to catch every wondrous nuance of sound.

Quand tout renaît a l'esperance
et que l'hiver fuit loin de nous,
j'aime a revoir ma Normandie
quand le soleil devient plus doux.

Quand la nature est reverdie,
quand l'hirondelle est de retour,
j'aime a revoir ma Normandie,
c'est le pays qui m'a donné le jour.

I've been on a French binge since before July 14th, the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution. Having noted from their missionary recommendations that quite a few members of the group had studied French, I started out the first class on the 14th speaking in French about the anniversary of the revolution and invited everyone to join me in singing the French National Anthem: "Allons enfants de la patrie, le jour de gloire est arrivé...." I was amazed at how many knew the words by heart, and we had a rousing good time celebrating this momentous event.

Tough nuts If these are hazel nuts, then I am Philbert. Well actually I'm Merrill's; i.e. Herbert (Wendell Herbert Hall). On the package it says "Avellanas chilenas" [Chilean hazel nuts]. They are so cheap, I got a large bag. [Reminds me of Carolyn after Canterbury, going around imitating the saleslady in the store: "Would you care for a smawl bawg?"] They're not like hazelnuts at all, except for their size--somewhat smaller. But how to taste them? They come in an impregnable package. After a certain amount of experimentation, I struck one with a hammer with all my might. Not a dent. Then, with two pairs of pliers, I tried to tear one apart. Forget it! They're like little coconuts, but they won't crack open. I was about to give up and place the bag at the entrance to our Providencia Ward chapel next door to see whether an extremist bomb would bust them when Merrill found the solution, roasting them for a few minutes in the oven. After that it was just possible to squeeze, twist, and tear them with pliers to get at the nut. The nut usually breaks cleanly into two halves. Doesn't taste too bad, sort of sweetish--not in the same league with filberts and hazels. To outdo Merrill, I put some in the microwave and in about two minutes they were converted to carbon black. Tracy could have made some beautiful white diamonds out of them.

Three

Speaking of bombs (Now July 26). ~~Two~~ terrorists involved in the assassination of at least two policemen, other violent acts of assault and armed robbery, plus the burning of an L.D.S. chapel, have been apprehended. They were paid up to 40,000 pesos for each job (approx. US\$150.). What a lucrative profession! After setting fire to the chapel and running away, they had to remove their hoods, of course, and this allowed neighbors to see their faces and provide accurate composite drawings which enabled the carabineros to track them down. Let's hope this will lead to the arrest of others, putting a stop to, or at least diminishing acts of terrorism here. Chile is so upset with the U.S. for its hypocrisy! We'll bomb a terrorist like Khadaffy and kidnap others, but when the Chilean terrorist Sergio Buschman, who supplies bombs and other weapons to Chilean extremists, was seized in Anchorage, Alaska, U.S. authorities promptly released him on a technicality, allowing him to flee to a safe haven in Sweden, that most hypocritical nation which in the name of freedom protects murderous, insane "liberators."

All choked up. I never close my office door and just now Elder Nieto-Navarro, La Paz, came in, saw the news clippings about extremists, asked what I was writing, and said: "I left home very worried about the terrorists and for the the safety of my family. Here I find the same situation. But now I feel more at home in the CEM than at home, because of your and Sister Hall's love for us." At that I had to stand up and give him a big hug, in the Bolivian way, and fight back the tears. [A mistake. Let them flow.] As for the "Bolivian way," I sometimes get mixed up. The Bolivian "abrazo" is left cheek to left cheek, etc. while for Chileans it's right cheek/right cheek and for me, absent-minded professor, it's often wrong cheek/right cheek.

Ever-loving Mom & Dad / Merrill & Wendell

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