

*Hallananach*

No date on letter. Received Jan. 3, 1991 (Daniel's birthday!)

Dear Mom and Dad,

Here's a big LOVE HUG from Guatemala. HAPPY BIRTHDAY DAD! I meant to write you that in my last letter. I'm sorry. They keep me so busy here.

I love you both more every day. Don't get eaten by wild animals before I get home. I can't wait to see you guys in 15 months and give you real hugs.

I AM NOT BAGGY (HOMESICK). I do feel a twinge once in a while. This morning, I heard a song from the states in a store I was in and it brought back so many White Plains High School memories. I don't know if we celebrate Christmas or not. President Frishknecht has called off the mission Christmas Party which I actually feel is a good thing. We're old enough now that we shouldn't have to take a day off for every holiday that comes along. I think that's the reason that the Jews aren't the "chosen" people any more. They have too many holidays! (Draws smiley face). Just kidding. Anyone who accepts the gospel is chosen.

I think I'm a lousy branch president. I'm still learning things that are so basic. I have never talked "with" the Lord as much as talked "at" Him, and I feel like throwing my hands up in the air and saying, "NOBODY TRAINED ME TO DO THIS." (Draws a big round mouth with tonsils between the teeth, only a nose showing above the gaping mouth, arms outstretched on both sides, and a big AAAAAAAAAAGH! screaming out.)

Anyway, I do the best I can, and I am learning it's very difficult to retain members and to get them to take responsibilities. When I get home, if the Bishop wants me to do something, I'm going to say,

"YES. Is there anything else you'd like me to do?"

It would be so nice to hear something like that. I used to think an active member was someone who went to church every Sunday. I was wrong.

Anyway. I love you guys and the fight goes on. Today's world gets worse and worse, but do I complain?

NO. BECAUSE I'M SMILEY MAN. (Draws double smiley face.)

Love, Elder Daniel H. Bartholomew

P.S. It will be so nice to sit on the back row some day. (Draws smiley face with tongue hanging out and "Pththth" being said.) The envelope was a hoot! He wrote "Forget it" with arrows to Wyoming, UT, Montana, Japan, or Australia, and said he was willing to return home to NJ, NY, or the tricospopolitan area and said "I'm willing to compromise for Wash. D.C., "Just Kiddingly, I humbly accept any change, am I meek or what?!".