

She wasn't that bright, but the sun was!

15 Sept 2025

Hello my friends!

This is the first of hopefully many weekly emails while I serve a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in the Brazil São Paulo Interlagos mission. I am officially done with the first week of my mission, so only 103 left!

Today is my preparation day (often shortened to P-day) so I am allowed to communicate with y'all!

For those who want to know, here is a short timeline for my mission:



Home MTC (training at Home) - 1st week

Training at the Provo MTC (Missionary Training Center) - 2nd-6th week

In Brazil - 7th week-The last week of my mission (September 2027)

If you do not want to be on this email list, please respond to this email and let me



know

Additionally, if you know someone who wants to be on this email list,



please respond to this email and let me know!

This first week has been incredible! This week I had my training at home, which is just me sitting on zoom all day. Sure, my phone screen time has gone down immensely, but it has

been counteracted by 9-10 hours on Zoom every day. It has been a blessing though, and I love it dearly.

I met my MTC district! These are the people I will spend the most time learning and worshipping with over these next few weeks. They are fantastic and so incredibly friendly. Of the 16 Elders and Sisters in my district, 5 of us are from Texas which is pretty sweet. They are so so cool and I know the Lord has blessed me with them

Some highlights of the week:

- Meeting my MTC companion, Elder Kaylor! Elder Kaylor is from Idaho and he is a STUD.

- It was President Russell M. Nelson's (The current President of the Church and Prophet of the Church) 101st birthday on Tuesday! Here's a link to an article he shared in TIME magazine: <https://time.com/7315003/russell-nelson-dignity-respect/>

- I'm learning Português! It is so very mind-boggling after studying Spanish for 4 years in high school, but I am handling it alright so far! Take that High School Spanish teachers who actually believed in me a ton! Yeah, take that!

- Went to Walmart and saw an Inflatable Skibidi Toilet Halloween Costume. That was pretty fantastic. (pic included at the bottom of email, if I don't forget)

- I accidentally derailed a teaching practice with an Elder in my district (Shoutout Elder Johns) by improvising a dumb joke that completely broke us. Granted, it was like 9pm and we were both very tired, but still a dumb joke nonetheless. We were just talking about The First Vision and Elder mentioned how the light that Joseph Smith saw was brighter than the sun and I said that must've been really bright, and that got us joking about my **fictional** aunt losing her eyesight from staring at the sun too long (hence the subject title of this email). As I said, just a really dumb joke.

- Spending one last week with my parents was an absolute blessing

- I finished my Journal for Church Notes™ yesterday after writing in it weekly since late June 2024. I'm going to go through it sometime this week and I'm excited to see how much I've grown in the last 14-15 months. Turning the page and discovering there were no more pages to fill was a harrowing moment and the Lord knows I was not ready for it.

On the Horizon:

Tomorrow, I go to the Airport and fly out to Utah for the rest of my training. I'll be spending tomorrow seeing family and then checking in to the Provo MTC on Wednesday.

Wednesday night, I'll meet my district in-person (woohoo!) as well as reuniting with some friends of mine from USU. So expect to hear more about that next week!

Spiritual Thought:

This Sunday (yesterday), I had my last Sacrament Meeting in Texas for the next two years! It was the Primary Program this week, which is where every kid from 4-11 in the congregation sings songs and talks about Jesus and it is always so incredible. I definitely cried some VERY manly tears as they sang. Here were some lyrics of the songs they sang that stood out to me:

(From the song *He Sent His Son*)

What does the Father ask of us? What do the scriptures say?
Have faith, have hope, live like His son, help others on their way.
What does He ask? Live like his son

(From the song *Gethsemane*)

The hardest thing that ever was done,
The greatest pain that ever was known,
The biggest battle that ever was won-
This was done by Jesus!
The fight was won by Jesus!

(From the song *Beautiful Savior*, of which I sang a fire arrangement back in college)

Beautiful Savior!
Lord of the nations!
Son of God and Son of man!
Thee will I honor, praise, and give glory,
Give praise and glory evermore!

I love the way that music brings the spirit of God to our hearts and our lives. You'll definitely hear more spiritual thoughts on how much I love music and the songs and hymns that the church has.

Sorry this was kind of a long and chaotic email. I promise they will find a structure as I



progress on my mission.

I also want to hear from you! Send me questions, your thoughts, anything you want (your day-to-days, your struggles, or something you thought was funny!) and I will read! I can only respond on P-days but I can read them whenever so I PROMISE you that I will read every single email you send me!

If you want to join the Google Photos folder to see photos I take, you can join with this link: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/4P9d4ozmNzrznkWr7>

I love each and every one of you!

- Elder John Gee