

Good morning my dear friends! I hope you are all well and are having a fantastic week.

Mom, I'm sorry for not taking many photos, even after you specifically asked me to take more. But here's some of the ones I did take: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/4P9d4ozmNzrznkWr7>

This week was super short. I feel like it just flew by, but here we are again on Monday. Today, I hit 9 months on the Mission! Crazy... can't believe I'm still out here right now.

Quick little shout-out to my friends in the California Anaheim Mission. Please enjoy the Yorba Linda Temple for me, I miss y'all!

And also shout-out to everyone who had a birthday this past week (there's like 9 of you which is insanity).

But here we can go on to the...

Stories from the Week:

— On Wednesday, we had Zone Conference. It was President and Sister Rollins' last Zone Conference as our Mission Leaders, so it was a very spirit-filled and tender event. They gave a whole training that was 7 tips to be happy in life (if you want the tips, feel free to shoot me an email). We sang "Deus Vos Guarde" (God Be with You Till We Meet Again) to say goodbye and there was not a dry eye in that chapel. I will luckily get to see him in about two weeks for our interview, but it still hurts. I'm very thankful for them and their service.

— On Thursday, our absolute GOAT irmã Marília (who gives more member references than I have seen), had us over for lunch. About an hour before lunch, she asked us if she could have a noite familiar that night with us as well. She said she's inviting Kimberli (the mom of our recent-converts, Emilly and Melky), and it would be fantastic to have some fun. A few weeks ago, my mom also sent me a tub of Jif Peanut Butter, so I thought I would bring that to share. We used about half of the thing and treated the crap out of these Brazilians. We also shared a message about Eternal Families which was lowkey fire.

— Friday, irmã Marília texted us again and asked to come with us to visit Juan (our 13 year old buddy) and Duda, his sister. She asked us because we found out that Marília is Duda's teacher. Unfortunately, Duda was sick, and Juan wasn't home, so it didn't work out. BUT, Marília said, "Oh shoot, hold on. Let's go talk with some people I know in the neighborhood, I can introduce you, and y'all can mark a time to come back". We talked to like 7 people that she knew in less than an hour. So, Marília is just the best. Hands down, no complaints.

— Friday night, before Marília, we went to our friend Andressa's house. She has had a really tough week. But we shared with her the blessings that come from the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and she almost cried. Saturday, we passed by with Lucas, a member of the Bishopric, and we talked with her about Baptism. She has the desire, but wants to be more prepared to get baptized. But on Sunday, the devil worked overtime, cause she slept in and couldn't make it to church. BUT all is well, I still have total faith in her.

— Sunday was Sacrament Meeting, and it was one for the books y'all. The testimonies in this ward are always so strong but this topped the charts. Two highlights were: Miguel Richard, this 7 year old boy with Autism (who is also the funniest and sweetest kid to ever live), bore his testimony with the greatest smile, and then out of nowhere, he started quoting King Benjamin in the Book of Mormon. He got nearly all of Mosiah 2:41 by memory. I cried. The second highlight was Emily bearing her testimony with tears in her eyes the entire time, saying that she knows this Church is true and is so thankful for the Church. I cried even harder.

Pensamento Espiritual:

President and Sister Rollins, in their training at Zone Conference, gave us 7 tips to be happy in life. I wanted to share numbers #1 and #7

1. *Estar perto do Salvador* (Be close to the Savior)
7. *Ser grato e escolher ser feliz* (Be grateful and choose to be happy)

Far too often, I am here on the mission worrying if I am good enough, picking apart every single performance, every single lesson, every contact, everything, trying to find error in order to improve, and be a better missionary.

And I far too often forget what this mission is about: Jesus Christ. And to a lesser extent, becoming more like Him through my service.

Jesus Christ wouldn't pick us apart for every single performance. He wouldn't look at me every night and say, "Well today was alright, aside from this word you mispronounced, that time you didn't follow the Spirit's prompting, that person you passed on the street without saying anything, oh and also don't forget about all the times where you weren't attentive and diligent. Fix those errors, amongst the countless others, and maybe we can have a good day tomorrow"

Rather, Christ wants to celebrate us for our successes. He always tells we are good enough. He tells us that there is always room to improve, but that we should not stress ourselves about improving. When we do our best, honestly and faithfully, He promises to accept our offering to Him.

When so many things in the world tell us that we do not have enough, that we are not doing enough, that we ourselves are not enough, Christ tells us that we are divine. He tells us that we can take these mistakes, these faults, and everything that makes us feel bad, and give them to Him. He will carry those burdens so we do not have to. As we do our best everyday, Christ promises to do the rest.

These two tips are interconnected; Choosing to be close to Christ *is* choosing to be grateful and happy. As we improve our relationship with Him, choosing to be grateful and happy become much more easier.

Reading Recommendation of the Week:

The Message, the Meaning, and the Multitude by Jeffrey R. Holland

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2019/10/11holland?lang=eng>

I love you all! And more importantly, Christ loves you all. I hope you have a fantastic week, and a week full of laughter and joy. Remember to choose laughter and joy if you cannot find it. I promise you that it will come. Shoot me an email if you can! I'd love to read it (and then forget to respond to it)

Com amor, gratidão, e muita pasta de amendoim americana

- Elder John Randall Gee 🇧🇷

Pics this week include:

- Me and Elder Roberts at Zone Conference
- Uma rua bem bonita na nossa área
- Great view from the top of a viela
- Me accepting an Oscar









