

PREACHING TOUR OF SAO PAULO STATE, BRAZIL

PERSONAL LOG OF PASTOR LAURENCE A. JUSTICE

...Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

INTRODUCTION

For over a year Lyndy and I planned and saved and prayed for and dreamed of a trip to South America to visit our missionary friends the Calvin Gardners and the Steve Montgomerys and to preach in the Independent Sovereign Grace Baptist Churches in Sao Paulo State in the nation of Brazil. Beginning July 4, 2000 and continuing until July 20, 2000 this planning and saving and praying and dreaming came to fruition in a trip that turned out to be both the greatest adventure and the greatest blessing of our lives. So moved was I by what we saw and experienced of the Lord's work in Brazil that were I twenty eight or even thirty eight instead of fifty eight years of age and had time to learn the Portuguese language I think I would be ready to go as a missionary to that wonderful land many of whose millions have never heard the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Whole cities have no church except Catholic and their fellow traveling Spiritists. This log describes some of the details of this trip during which I preached fifteen times in ten Baptist churches during the fourteen days we were in Brazil. It is my prayer that this log and the things it describes will stir all who read it to a greater concern for the spread of the glorious gospel of the grace of God in the nation of Brazil.

JULY 4, 2000

TUESDAY

Departing Kansas City

What a strange thing to be doing on the fourth of July, the birthday of the independence of our great country! Here we were taking off in a Continental Airlines plane on a trip to a destination far away from our beloved United States. It was 4:02 PM as the plane left the ground in Kansas City, Missouri and climbed into a partly cloudy sky that was murky with humidity. I used the two-hour flight to catch up on reading some periodicals and other materials that I had fallen behind on. Arriving in Houston, Texas on time at 6 PM we changed planes and departed the terminal on time at 7:02 PM for Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Many planes were lined up to take off and after taking our place in line we waited until 7:32 to actually take off and the takeoff was just a little bit on the rough side. The projected time of our trip was eight hours and fifty minutes. This plane was a DC 10 with nine seats in each row and more overhead TV screens than other jets on which I have flown. These screens were used to give the passengers safety instructions for the flight and these instructions were given much more slowly and clearly than on most flights. We also received constant updates on our estimated time of arrival, the time at the place of our destination and the place of our departure, the temperature in both places and how many kilometers and miles to our destination and also how many miles we had traveled since takeoff. Intermittently a map of our route was shown with the position of the plane symbolized by a small airplane passing over the map.

During the flight I sat for awhile with a young businessman whose name was Franco Melchiorre who was born in Caracas, Venezuela, who was of Italian extraction and who now lives in Houston, Texas. The Lord gave me a wonderful opportunity to witness to this man who had been born a Catholic but who was at present attending various Protestant churches in search of something. He had a lot of questions and listened intently to what I told him about

Christ and the word of God. I promised to send him some tracts on salvation and on Pentecostalism, which he said he would look forward to receiving and reading.

During the night I met and spoke with some boys who were part of a group of Baptist teens who were traveling to Brazil on this same flight for a mission trip. They, some fellow teens and their pastors were members of the Berean Baptist Church of Livonia, Michigan. We agreed that it was a shame that we were all being subjected to the dirty movies they were showing on the TV screens in the plane. As we visited with these boys we found that they had been on the same flight as we two years previously as we traveled to Brazil on exactly the same date and the same time of day. We found that they were to return to the U.S. on the same flight as we come July 19th.

About 12:30 AM we began to try to get some sleep. I covered my eyes with the mask the flight attendants distributed to every passenger and placed the accompanying ear plugs in my ears but was too wide awake and too excited to go to sleep immediately. I knew that I needed to get some sleep because our first day in Brazil would be taxing enough even with a good night's sleep. I next tried lying down in the seats on our row. Lyndy and I had purposely reserved our seats at the opposite ends of a row near the back of the plane so that we could lie down and try to sleep. I may have gotten about two to two and a half hours of sleep and Lyndy got even less. Between two and two thirty AM I looked out the window of the plane and saw the lights of a large city far below, perhaps Caracas, Venezuela as suggested by one of the passengers.

JULY 5, 2000

WEDNESDAY

Arrival In Brazil

I was determined not to change my watch until we had reached Sao Paulo so I could get a realistic idea of how long our flight had taken. At 3:15 AM the interior lights of the plane came on, hot moist towels were distributed and breakfast was served. At about 4 AM the plane seemed to begin its descent toward Sao Paulo. At 4:05 AM we could see the sun coming up on the left side of the plane.

As I looked around at the people on the plane most of them seemed to be Brazilians and I was impressed by the many hues and tones of their skin colors all the way from white to yellow to brown to cold black. Some had red hair, some were blond from a bottle, some had black hair and some had black from a bottle.

Our plane landed at 6:32 AM Sao Paulo time and after claiming our baggage and passing through customs we were met by brother Steve Montgomery, an Independent Baptist Missionary who has served in Brazil for the past forty three years. He and his wife Jeannie would serve as our hosts for the next week of travels and preaching in the Brazilian State of Sao Paulo, the capital of which is the city of Sao Paulo (pronounced SOWN like a pig with an "n" on the end). We had crossed the Tropic of Cancer, the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn to get here.

Brother Montgomery drove us through Sao Paulo toward our destination of Igreja Batista (the Baptist church) in the Vila San Pedro area of Metropolitan Sao Paulo. Sao Paulo is a city of vastly varying sights, sounds and smells. Castor Bean plants grow wild everywhere like Johnson Grass in Texas and Oklahoma. Thick smog hung over the city and the stench of the grossly polluted Tiete (pronounced TEE-UH-TAY') River that runs through the heart of Sao Paulo. Traffic is always heavy and the sheer volume of the traffic makes Kansas City freeways at rush hour look like easy going. The law requires trucks to travel in the two right lanes only and police are stationed everywhere to enforce this law. This allows the automobile traffic to run at a faster pace than the trucks although faster is only relative in this case. We passed a number of shantytowns or slums or Favelas (pronounced FUH-VEL' - UHS) as Brazilians call them on our way to Vila San Pedro where we arrived at about 9 AM.

Here we met Jeannie Montgomery who has to be one of the best cooks in all of Brazil and who cooks Brazilian foods with such expertise that even the Brazilian ladies in the churches come to her for recipes and advice. Mrs. Montgomery provided for us a breakfast of two Brazilian breads or Brazilian Paozinho (pronounced POW-ZEEN' - YOH) and orange juice. Our quarters for the next few days would be on the second floor of the church building where Brother Montgomery was serving as a sort of interim pastor for the troubled Igreja Batista there. He serves this church for two weeks out of each month and then travels to the far away city of Ourinhos to pastor during the other two weeks of each month. I was greatly impressed that his constitution at age seventy three is strong enough to do this plus many other duties each month. Our room had once been an office for a Bible Institute sponsored by the church. The Montgomerys were living in another converted office next to ours.

After breakfast Lyndy and I cleaned up a little and I shaved and then reviewed my sermon to be preached this evening at Igreja Batista in Osasco (pronounced OH-ZAHS' -COH). The title of the sermon was to be "Faith Versus Sight" and the text was to be Hebrews 11:1. By this time we were both a little muddle headed from lack of sleep.

After a couple of hours of rest Brother Steve took us to see Joe LaPorte, an investment broker who was a member of the church there who exchanged our money for us giving us 465 Reais (pronounced HAY-EYEZE') in Brazilian

money for \$300 U.S. currency. When I complimented him for his excellent English he told us that he had been born in California. He lived in a nice lower middle class house by American standards.

On the way back to Vila San Pedro Brother Montgomery took us sight seeing through the San Jose (pronounced SAN JOE' -SUH) area where years before he had been instrumental in starting a Baptist Church that is now prospering. We actually saw three different Independent Baptist churches in this area. We also passed a Japanese Baptist church whose sign told us its name is Igreja Batista Nikkei.

As we drove through stop and go traffic Lyndy wanted to purchase some round white things in packages that looked like fried onion rings but were white. We stopped, rolled down the window and Brother Steve gave the young man peddling them in traffic one Real (pronounced HEY-AHL'). In return the young man gave us a sack of Biscoitos. They were all air, like cotton candy with no sugar but interesting nevertheless. They are made of mandioca; a flour made from the roots of the mandioc plant.

As we drove through a favela or slum and then past a cemetery in the area I noticed some trees which we would call Banyan trees in the Southern United States but which the Brazilians call Seta Copas meaning seven crowns or seven heads. These are trees whose branches send out tendrils towards the ground and when they touch the ground they eventually become roots giving the tree the appearance of having many trunks. Many of the roots remain above the ground. As I was asking about these trees Brother Montgomery gave us the sad news that he and Jeannie had a son buried in that cemetery. He had died at or near birth many years before.

The flora of Brazil was immediately attractive and fascinating. All over Sao Paulo City and later all over the State we saw many flowering trees in colors of reds and purples and blues and oranges and yellows. One plant looked like what we call purple Cana in the U.S. except it grew as tall as the house tops and had rounded leaves instead of pointed. This plant was present everywhere around houses and driveways. The trees with flowers on them generally had no leaves on them.

Before reaching the Igreja Batista in Vila San Pedro we stopped at a super market called the Extra Store and purchased three large ripe papayas, some guarana to drink and some esfias (pronounced EHS-FEE' -UHS), which is a Brazilian pastry. Soon after arriving back at the church building Jeannie Montgomery had supper ready for us in the dining room and kitchen, which were in one room across the hall from the two offices in which we were sleeping. The walls were all stark with no pictures or decorations.

Driving through the always-heavy Sao Paulo traffic we reached the Igreja Batista Em Jardim das Flores in the suburban city of Osasco where Brother Eduardo Cadete is pastor. We met his wife Yvonne and his children Diego, Falipe and Juliana. It was immediately apparent that brother Cadete is an outstanding person and the more we got to know him the more apparent that became. His family was a happy, clean, warm and gracious example of a Christian family. Every seat of the church auditorium was full and someone who was present counted 120 present. Brother Eduardo had a stack of copies of my booklet "Should A Baptist Church Embrace Pentecostalism?" placed in a prominent spot in the church auditorium when we arrived.

Brother Montgomery translated for me as I preached and is an expert translator. After church one of the young men in the church came up to him and gave Brother Montgomery what he considered to be the ultimate compliment as far as his translating is concerned. The young man said to Brother Steve who had translated my English into Portuguese, "How did you ever learn English like that?"

After the service we adjourned to the fellowship hall of the church where the ladies had provided all kinds of exotic Brazilian sweets and drinks including salty cheese balls and the best and most unusual hot chocolate I have ever tasted. I hope someday to persuade brother Cadete to find the recipe for me. We were treated like royalty while in this church. The ladies of the church honored Lyndy by presenting her with a dozen long stemmed yellow roses and welcoming her to Brazil and to their church. The lady presenting the roses was named Marinalda Custodio Moura Melo. This was a wonderful, outstanding time for us. What a moving and heart warming expression of Christian hospitality!

Late that night we made the one-hour drive back to Vila San Pedro through the heavy Sao Paulo traffic. At this time the ever-present stench of the Tiete River impressed itself on our olfactory nerves and never stopped until we had left the city for good. The stink of the river is caused by the fact that all the sewers of the favelas empty into it and everyone else seems to throw their trash into it. All along the river there were dredging machines suctioning trash out of the river and depositing it in huge piles along the banks to dry. It was filled with tires, papers, trees, and an occasional human body according to Brother Steve.

We got into bed at about 11:30 PM after having had no real rest since 5:30 AM on July 4th. The weather turned unseasonably cool that night and we slept under three blankets and a sheet. Such cold weather is unusual for Brazil and adding to the uncomfortable weather was the fact that houses in Brazil are not sealed against the weather. Many houses are open all the time with no windows and no screens.

JULY 6, 2000

THURSDAY

Vila San Pedro

Arising at 8 AM we had a breakfast of papayas, scrambled eggs, dry cereal and guarana. The first thing on the agenda today was to go sight seeing and shopping in Sao Paulo. It was a beautiful cool and sunny day. Our first stop was a large Walmart-like French owned store called Carrefour. After browsing through the store we walked out into the parking lot where we spotted a thatched roofed hut where coco gelado was sold. We drank some of this refrigerated coconut juice which in this case had been filtered. It certainly tasted better than any that I had ever drunk in the States after drilling a hole in a coconut.

From there we drove past the Morumbi Shopping Center which we would call a mall and went next to a large department store called Lojas Americanas where we shopped. In the mall connected to this store was a food court with a restaurant called Beef's where we had lunch with the Montgomerys. What wonderful food we had! Deep fried bananas, egg plant with a sauce like salsa, a thinly sliced piece of beef which was grilled and covered the whole plate, rice, orange squash that looked like pumpkin and another sauce which was sort of like tabouli. While we ate and visited with Steve and Jeannie Montgomery a pianist located at a large grand piano in the center of the food court took requests and we asked him to play "The Girl From Ipanema" since that was the only Brazilian song we knew. Looking around at all the bustling stores and auto traffic we thought that Brazil certainly does not look like a third world country.

When we had gone back to the church building at Vila San Pedro we had some time to rest and prepare for the evening service there. At 3 PM it was 70 degrees and I took a chair out onto an outside balcony on the second floor of the building. On this bright and clear and sunny afternoon I could see out over a large area of Sao Paulo with its red tile roofs and tall buildings and colorful trees and flowers.

While drinking a cup of guarana I read Job 33-34 concerning Elihu's insults and accusations of Job and Acts 13:24-52 concerning Paul and Barnabas and their preaching at Antioch in Pisidia. A number of interesting sounds drifted up to my balcony spot including barking dogs which was a constant thing in all the cities of Brazil and the blaring of a loudspeaker truck, something that was also prevalent in all Brazilian cities. These monotoned heralds of products and politicians shattered any semblance of tranquility the neighborhood might otherwise have known. Overhead a helicopter, perhaps from one of the city's TV stations, hovered and then passed to the East. In the distance I could hear the hammering of the construction of what seemed to be myriads of new office and high rise apartment buildings.

On virtually every power line in this and all Brazilian cities were the plastic tails of millions of crashed kites that had never been cleaned up. Everywhere I looked people were flying kites. Often it was 16, 17, 20, and 25-year-old men who were flying them and not just 7,8,9 and 10 year old boys. Palm trees grow in Sao Paulo like maple trees grow in Kansas City. They are everywhere. Just below the horizon to the South I could see white smoke rising from what must have been the fires of a city dump.

At this time I looked over the sermon I planned to preach in the evening service the name of which was "Christ's Ideal Preacher." It was a sermon on eight characteristics of John The Baptist as a preacher. The Lord's leadership in my selection of this sermon was affirmed when twelve preachers attended the service that evening and one young man acknowledged before witnesses that God was calling him to preach. The names of the preachers which I was able to remember and write down are Roberto (pronounced HO-BEHRRR'-TO), Geraldo (pronounced with a soft J - ZJUH-RAHL'-DO), Vicente, Eduardo Cadete, Carmo and Marcos. In Brazil people are known by their first names only and because of this many do not even know the last names of others in the churches.

At about 4:30 PM Lyndy and I went for a walk around the block on which the church building stood. This was an interesting neighborhood because of the flowers and the architecture of the houses. The courtyard of every house had a number of flowers including the Sangre de Cristo or Blood of Christ plant, Azaleas, Gardenias and Bouganvilleas.

As we passed through this busy neighborhood people were walking and sitting down on the sidewalks. A horse drawn cart passed the corner up the street. Every house had bars and locks and was surrounded with walls topped with broken glass set in concrete much the same as is the case with houses in Mexico.

At 6 PM Mrs. Montgomery served a supper of Pomonha (pronounced POH-MOHN'-YUH) which is fresh corn grated and boiled in corn shucks. In addition to this main dish we ate goiabada jelly and some kind of delicious Brazilian cheese and of course we drank the delicious national drink of Brazil, guarana.

The 7:30 PM service started in typical Brazilian fashion, late! The song service finally got under way at 8:05 PM after a very large crowd had gathered in the spacious church auditorium. The people present were typically

all colors and all hues of skin tones. The music was outstanding here as in every church we visited. It seemed that every person present sang at the top of his lungs for the glory of God. The choir sang an anthem which was of good culture and taste and the soloist was a black Brazilian lady whose notes in her lower range were almost monotone but the ones in her upper range were of near operatic quality. The man who is the leader of this church while they are searching for a new pastor was Brother Valdomiro Nascimento Souza. This black Brazilian brother presented me with a signed copy of the church's hymnbook "Cantor Cristao" (pronounced CAHN' -TOR CRIS-TOWN') for me to remember them by. The inscription reads: TO BROTHER IN CHRIST PASTOR LAURENCE WITH LOVE. BROTHERLY REMEMBRANCE OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN VILA SAN PEDRO SP STATE BRAZIL, VALDOMIRO NASCIMENTO SOUZA. It is among my personal treasures. My sermon lasted one hour and twenty minutes due to the fact that Brother Montgomery translated it into the native Portuguese while I preached it in English. The people listened intently and looked up all the scriptures to which I referred. The rustling of the pages of their Bibles was sweet music in my ears.

The young man who acknowledged God's call to preach during this service was Ronaldo Penha dos Santos. After the service he stated in front of several witnesses that he intends to preach the gospel and that during the service he almost wanted to get down on his face in the aisle and tell the Lord he would go and preach. Brother Montgomery told him to place himself under the tutorage of his own pastor and begin preparing himself to follow the Lord's call. Ronaldo and his pastor walked off together in serious conversation.

At the close of the service every single person present came by and shook hands with Lyndy and me. We quickly learned to greet them by saying Bom Noche (pronounced BOHN-NOYCH') and to say Obrigado. That means Thank you. The Brazilian people genuinely appreciated our efforts to use these and a few other words in conversing with them. The ladies of this church told us that Linda means beautiful in Portuguese and since Lyndy is close to Linda in its sound they said that Lyndy was just like her name, beautiful. It was at this time we first met Brother Samuel Pereira de Lima, a very promising 21 year old Brazilian whom God has called to preach. Brother Calvin Gardner has asked this young Brother whose name is pronounced SAM-WELL' to be interim pastor at his church while the Gardners go home on furlough in 2001. We had a long and very rewarding visit until about 11 O'clock when Lyndy and I retired to our bedroom on the second floor and at 11:30 we turned out the light and were immediately asleep.

JULY 7, 2000

FRIDAY

From Sao Paulo To Ourinhos

It was 6:30 AM when we rose from our sleep on this Friday morning in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Looking into the streets we could see a number of dogs running loose since there are no leash laws in this city. After another delicious breakfast with the Montgomerys we packed our bags for the four and one half-hour drive to the City of Ourinhos and the home of the Montgomerys. While Lyndy was packing I sat again on the outside second floor balcony of the church building and for my devotions read Acts 14 and Job 35-37.

A thin blanket of smog lay over the city on this otherwise bright sunny day and I could hear birds softly singing different songs than I had ever heard birds sing. A number of what looked like swallows flitted around the balcony where I sat. As I looked down on the red tile roofs below I could see that the tiles were laid on top of a sheet of corrugated iron or tin and that no mortar was used to hold them together. This seemed remarkable to me when considering how very much rain falls in Brazil. I was now anticipating many new experiences during the upcoming day.

We packed as many bags as possible into Brother Montgomery's car plus his computer, which he carries back and forth between his work in Sao Paulo and Ourinhos. There was not room for all our bags and those of the Montgomerys so one of the men in Igreja Batista Vila San Pedro took the two largest bags belonging to Lyndy and me and shipped them on the bus so we could pick them up when we reached Ourinhos. The name of this man of obvious Italian extraction was Antero Felipe Da Silva.

As we left Igreja Batista of Vila San Pedro for the last time I noticed what I later noticed in every city we visited in Brazil, that the streets are seldom straight and virtually never run North and South or East and West. Instead they curve and angle and several converge at nearly every intersection. Neighborhoods are called Bairros (pronounced BUY' -WHOS) and one special characteristic of Sao Paulo and most other cities is that the Bairros are wrapped around hills and it is almost as if the people picked out hills in order to build the neighborhoods. The red tile roofs and mostly whitewashed walls of the Bairros give Brazilian cities and villages the look of old Italy. Each house has a water basin on top, which uses gravity for water pressure and the heat of the sun for "hot" water.

Passing through the streets of Sao Paulo we saw Kombis everywhere. This is the name of the Volkswagen busses that are still the main type of vehicle seen and used in Brazil. Fruit stands are everywhere in this city and their vendors hawk papayas and star fruit and oranges and coco gelado. We saw Habib's which the Montgomerys call the "Arab McDonalds of Brazil" because they sell Arab fast food. Passing close to the very heart of downtown Sao Paulo I was just overwhelmed with people, people, people everywhere, 20 million of them by some estimates. One frequent sight in Brazil is the tree, which has dropped its leaves and has a number of pods about 6 inches by two and a half inches hanging from it. These pods break open sooner or later and the white fibrous material within which some call Kapok bursts out.

The traffic in Sao Paulo has to be the worst and most congested in all the world. I can say this having traveled in many of the world's great cities including New York, Cairo, Mexico City, Athens, Paris and Rome. So heavy and slow going is the traffic here that the city has now limited cars to driving on certain days of the week by using odd and even tag numbers. Cars with even numbers on their license tags are allowed to drive only on certain days while cars with odd numbers on their tags are allowed to drive only on the other days of the week. The main highway through the city runs parallel alongside the stinking, polluted Tiete River and the traffic in this area was stop and go with more stop than go for over an hour on this particular morning.

As we sat and waited and slowly crawled along this six-lane madhouse we observed many and varied interesting sights such as the man who actually lived under one of the bridges on a large traffic mix master. His house was built of pallets used by forklifts to carry goods in factories and he built doghouses out of pallets and sold them to try to eke out his living. When the traffic stopped which was frequently, people would get out and look and purchase. A little ways on down the highway we passed a huge maximum-security prison called Cadeia Publica.

We reached the West side of Sao Paulo and the freeway Castello Branco at 11:47 AM. We now passed through endless miles of houses and office high rises and apartment buildings the latter of which were five stories tall and painted singly in bright colors such as yellow and green and orange and blue. Favelas were everywhere in this human beehive of a city.

Finally the city suddenly stopped and the countryside began. Passing through the toll booth leading onto the Castello Branco we were greeted by an electronic sign which read Boa Viagem (pronounced BOA-VEE-AH' -ZJEM) and meaning good journey, the equivalent of the French Bon Voyage.

Now we began to see thickets of bamboo along the road. Many tall eucalyptus trees and a few umbrella pines covered the good-sized mountains around us. Our speed had now increased to 50 kilometers, about 28 miles per hour. At one filling station along the way we ran into a group of Southern Baptists from the Second Baptist Church of Warner Robins, Georgia who were on a mission trip. Brother Montgomery visited with another American in this store and found that he was from Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky. His name was A. J. Hansley.

Our next stop was at a Frango Assado, Portuguese for Fried Chicken Restaurant. Lyndy and I ate Meio Frango, a dish that was made up of one half a baked chicken with French fries, palm hearts, rice, olive oil and wine vinegar. We washed all this down with a fruit drink called Maracuja (pronounced MAH-RAH-COO-ZJAH'). The waiter cut up the chicken at our table with large scissors. Palm hearts, which in Florida are called swamp cabbage, are part of the palm tree, which is still tender. I just cannot think of anything with which to compare the taste of palm hearts but the taste is not offensive and is better bathed in olive oil or sprinkled with salt. We brought a jar of them home with us to the U.S.

After lunch we strolled through the mall of which Frango Assado was a part and visited a store specializing in knives of all types and then one called Rusticos (pronounced HUS-TEE' -COHS) which was a very interesting Brazilian antique store that had a number of replica antiques for sale. The Montgomerys purchased some things here. In the walkway of this mall were some animals made out of the Spanish moss like material used at home for growing plants indoors. These animals were covered by growing vines with small leaves. There were deer and dinosaurs among others.

Back on the highway we continued toward Ourinhos passing an area where thousands of above ground termite nests looking like tombstones in huge graveyards littered the landscape. They were made of the red clay, which characterizes virtually all of the State of Sao Paulo, and most of them in this particular area were from three to four feet tall.

Many pleasing and unusual sights greeted us along the way here. We passed the city of Boituva with its beautiful homes on large lots built on the crowns of three low hills. A little farther along we passed the city of Ipero (pronounced EE-PEH' -ROH) on the left. Traffic on the Castello Branco was heavy as we passed coco gelado stands and vast sugar cane fields. There were large bamboo hedges here between the highway and the sugar cane fields. Somewhere along here we stopped and I took a photograph of Lyndy standing next to one of the thousands of termite nests. She held her left arm out straight at the shoulder and touched the top of the conical shaped nest. This

was near the city of Tatui. We now began to see vast orange groves with palm trees growing singly about twenty yards apart in the midst of these groves. Here and there were roadside stands selling Garapa (pronounced GUH-RAH' -PUH) and in one place there was a fresh water spring beside the road where a truck driver had stopped and was drinking from it.

After a rest stop at a large and very modern combination filling station, bakery, grocery store and curio shop called Rodoserv, Lyndy and I experienced for the first time one of Brazil's greatest delights, a Doce De Liete (pronounced DOH-SEE-DEH-LEE' -CHEE) ice cream bar on a stick, the name of which was a Magnum Bar. While we were stopped here Brother Steve Montgomery took a fifteen-minute power nap and then we were again underway.

Now we began to see large timber hauling trucks loaded with reddish colored logs, all of which were the same length and circumference. As we proceeded we observed that these were eucalyptus trees which were farmed and harvested in this area for use in making paper. Brother Montgomery told us that one company in this area, Eucatex, has eighty five million trees on its farms. The trees on these farms were tall and thin like the Lodge Pole Pines in the U.S. and after being cut and before being hauled away they were stacked about ten to twelve high in rows that sometimes reached a city block long. Again we stopped near a large termite nest and this time tried to break it open but it was rock hard like red sandstone and we had no instrument fit for shattering it.

As we began to see the sun setting ahead of us in the West we passed through miles and miles of land that was populated by Brahma cattle, the breed of choice in Brazil. We passed by the city of Iaras and then the city of Aqua de Santa Barbara, the location of great natural springs that were used as the water supply for the city of Ourinhos and which most agree is the best water in Brazil. As the setting sun peeked through the clouds we could see the distant plumes of smoke from the burning of the sugar cane fields in this region. Burning the cane crops is part of the process of harvesting this ten to twelve foot tall plant. We now began to encounter trucks hauling harvested sugar cane, many of which had three connected trailers which the natives call treminhoes (pronounced TREH-MEEN' -YOHS).

As we drew nearer Santa Cruz do Rio Pardo and Ourinhos there were roadside stands with strange gourds called Strawberry Pumpkins for sale. These gourds were about 36 inches long with a slight bulbous shape on each end. Some were a light buff color, some were pumpkin color and some had green and white stripes.

At six PM the sun set and the early hour of its setting was due to the fact that July is wintertime on Southern Brazil's side of the equator. As darkness came on the fires in the sugar cane fields increased in number and smoke plumes were everywhere. The sky glowed on the Western horizon as the sun set and it glowed in other directions from the many fires the fallout from which was really a mess in the cities where the natives jokingly call it neve preto or black snow. Most of the time there was about an eighth of an inch of this black ash covering everything in the cities. In the fields we saw something that I first thought was irrigation going on but which Brother Montgomery pointed out was actually the liquid waste products from the sugar cane alcohol or alcohol distilleries which was being put back into the fields as fertilizer. We followed a piggyback tanker trailer full of this waste. Fumes were escaping from the openings on the tops of the tanks and the odor was like stinking garbage only a lot stronger.

Finally reaching Ourinhos we entered the Montgomery's home at 6:45 PM. The Montgomery residence is a nice three-bedroom house surrounded by gleaming white walls with the usual embedded nails on top. It has the standard ceramic tile floors which characterize most all Brazilian houses and garage areas and it has a wrought iron gate that is kept padlocked at all times. I had been blessed by the generous hospitality of the Montgomerys' home two years earlier when our daughter Rachel and four three men from our church, John Cecil, Jack Godwin and Don Hendricks and I had come there on a mission trip from the our church in Kansas City, Missouri.

After unloading our baggage and freshening up Steve and Jeannie took us to a local servetoria (pronounced SIR-VEH-TOHR-EE' -A) or ice cream store. In this open-air shop the ice cream is sold self serve and by weight. People dip their own ice cream, the cashier weighs it and it is sold at nine Reais per kilo. Lyndy and I picked three flavors each and this way we both got to taste six different flavors. I chose maracujah, papaya and guava while Lyndy chose green corn, lemon and banana. They all tasted heavenly and the green corn was the most exotic. We sat in the wonderfully cool night air on the City Square as we savored our ice cream.

Our baggage which had been shipped by bus from Sao Paulo was scheduled to arrive at the bus station in Ourinhos at 7:30 but had not arrived when we went to the bus station at about eight PM. We were told that it would be aboard the 9:30 PM bus so we drove around town and saw the sights and then back to the Montgomery home to wait. I had this night off from preaching and felt relaxed except for the persistent urinary tract infection I had brought with me from the States.

During this time I checked Brother Montgomery's computer for our e-mail from home and we received a message from our daughter Leah Tucker in Elon College, North Carolina. Her father-in-law had suffered a major

heart attack that day in Lake City, Florida while driving down the freeway and had received a by-pass surgery on one artery that had been 99% blocked. Leah said he was recovering well thus far.

After awhile we walked outside the Montgomery's house and into the darkness of the night to view the Brazilian night sky. Here we saw very clear and bright the constellation called the Southern Cross as well as other stars never seen in the Northern Hemisphere. This is a grouping of four stars forming the four tips of a cross. The Southern tip of this cross always points South so the Southern Cross has been used by sailors to navigate from time immemorial. The stars in this region of the universe seemed to be larger and brighter and more numerous than those in my native Oklahoma, even out in the country and far from the city lights.

JULY 8, 2000

SATURDAY

Ourinhos

We got out of bed at 5:30 this morning. I read Acts 15:1-21 and Job 38-39 for today's Bible readings. No one else in the house was stirring yet so Lyndy and I went walking through the neighborhood of the Montgomerys' house. We started in the dark and when we returned thirty minutes later it was getting light. As we strolled the streets we saw people going to work and we were slightly amused that they were wearing coats and sweaters and one man even had on a parka. The people of Brazil think 68 degrees is cold but Lyndy and I had on short sleeves. Some people were driving cars and trucks and some were riding bicycles but most were walking to work. While it was still dark we stepped inside a neighborhood bakery or padaria which had all kinds of pastries and jellies and cheeses and flavorings and drinks including the ever-present guarana for sale.

As light began to spread from the East we began to notice the many plants in the city. A tree that was particularly interesting to me was about thirty feet tall, had leaves that were three or four inches wide and about eighteen to twenty inches long. I was never able to learn the name of this tree but saw several of them, mostly in the cities around houses. There were several different kinds of palm and palm like trees. A number of people had grafted orchid plants onto the trunks of these palm like trees so that the orchids would grow out of the trunks of the palm like trees. The place of the graft was always wrapped in a Spanish Moss like material. Azaleas were common in this neighborhood.

There are no yards in front of the houses in Ourinhos or in any other city that we saw in Brazil. The blocks are filled up with houses surrounded by walls and only sidewalks between the walls and the streets. Many houses have iron gates opening onto two driveways. A lot of houses in the smaller towns have wooden or sheet metal gates. The driveways and interior floors of the houses are covered with ceramic tile, many times in attractive colors. As we returned to the Montgomery home we noted the orchids growing in pots in the driveway area of the house.

This morning I was able to shave with a fair amount of success in the cold water. The houses in Ourinhos did not have hot water except in the showers. The water is heated as it flows through an electric showerhead that can be adjusted for varying degrees of heat or cold. I was never comfortable adjusting the heat because of the thought of being electrocuted because of water, concrete and a possible electrical short.

Then just before breakfast Lyndy and I sat out in the front breezeway of the house drinking hot chocolate that is almost as popular with Brazilians as guarana. Breakfast was almost American because Jeannie Montgomery served bacon, scrambled eggs and Brazilian French bread which was a roll about six or seven inches long and about four inches thick shaped sort of like a football. Most Brazilians have this bread for breakfast as well as for other meals each day. Many of them go to the padaria first thing in the mornings to purchase the day's supply. After breakfast Jeannie read to us a major poem she had composed dealing with the subjects of evolution and creation. We spoke briefly of our plans for the day and I was informed that that night I would preach in the church of which Brother Montgomery is pastor, the Igreja Batista Boa Espiranca or Good Hope Baptist Church in Ourinhos. At 8:35 AM just as we finished breakfast our baggage was delivered to the house so now we had all our clothing and other things.

The Montgomery house was a rather typical Brazilian home. It was built inside a wall which was about eight feet tall and on top of which were nails which had been placed in the concrete wall while the concrete was still wet making them permanent attachments. Just inside the walls was a breezeway about six feet wide, which surrounded the house itself. The house had two driveways with wrought iron gates on each, one on the left front side and one on the right front side. Inside the breezeways was the house itself with three bedrooms, a large living room, a dining room, a kitchen-breakfast room combination, a laundry room and three full bathrooms. The Montgomerys have a housemaid named Brigitte Augier who is also a member of the church, which Brother Steve pastors.

This was to be a busy and very interesting morning. First we went to a local fruit and vegetable market the name of which was Disk Verde. There was an amazing variety of fruits and vegetables on display and for sale here, many of which we had never seen nor heard of. There were also mangos and papayas and avocados and artichokes and new (to us) varieties of tangerines and strange squashes and melons. The bell peppers were twice as long as those in the U.S. and the grapes were three or four times as big. This market like all other stores in Brazil was open all the way across the front of the store and had no doors that were visible anywhere.

Outside there was a vacant lot next door to another market we visited and on this vacant lot a man was growing some okra. We recognized the okra but the plant on which it grew was a tree or a large bush with several branches rather than a stalk like okra plants in Lyndy's native Arkansas. In the center islands of the streets were numbers of Acacia trees, some having white flowers, some orchid colors and some others.

Next we took the ladies back to the Montgomery house and Brother Steve and I went to a local barbearia (pronounced BAH-RE-UM-REE' -UH) or barber shop so he could get his hair cut. The name of the shop was (Babearia Zeca (pronounced ZEH'CUH). Zeca claims to be a believer but is a member of a Four Square Pentecostal Church. While I sat in a chair waiting on Brother Steve a man of Italian derivation came up on a motor cycle and squatting down began to try to talk with me even though he could speak no English. It seemed that he wanted me to give him an English lesson because he began counting to twenty in English and when he would miss a number he would look to me to pronounce the next one. Through Brother Montgomery's help I talked with him till I got tired of it and then left in search of a special item I wanted to purchase while in Brazil.

Telling Brother Steve that I would return soon I began to walk down the street in search of a Brazilian canivete (pronounced KAH-NUH-VETCH'). Trying to converse with the various shopkeepers who knew not a hint of English was chaotic but fun. No one had canivetes for sale but they all pointed me down the street to other shops. I wonder?

About noon Brother Steve and I arrived home for lunch with the two ladies and Brigitte. We had the wonderful corn mush, which is a standard meal in Brazil. Along with the mush, which was a little more solid than Jell-O and was boiled inside of some corn shucks we had some very tasty blanched green beans and a maracuja mousse with rose lemonade to drink. Lyndy and I tried with some difficulty to converse with the bashful Bridgite.

After lunch I sat out in the breezeway behind the house and reviewed my sermon for the evening, which I was to preach at Brother Steve's church. It was very pleasing to sit out in the sunny and very mild seventy-five degree afternoon weather. Here I was surrounded by the high whitewashed walls topped with protruding nails and the floor of red one-foot square ceramic tiles. Under a deep blue sky with occasional puffs of clouds I relaxed in a double wooden swing until I became drowsy and had difficulty concentrating on my sermon review. Meanwhile Lyndy ironed my white shirt for the evening while visiting with Jeannie Montgomery with whom she was fast becoming a friend. During this time I decided to review all four of the sermons I would be preaching in four cities in the next twenty-four hours. I had a very pleasant afternoon sitting in different places in the breezeway surrounding the house while I studied and reviewed my sermons.

The afternoon flew by and it was now time for supper which consisted of pimento cheese, Brazilian French bread, Japanese pears and an apple, banana, papaya milkshake called vitaminis. Darkness fell at about six o'clock and before leaving for the evening church service we went outside to view the constellation of the Southern Cross in the night sky.

Arriving at Igreja Batista in Ourinhos we saw Oswaldo, Zilda, Bruno, Andreas and his sister as well as Flavio whom I had met two years earlier when I had preached here before. It was really good to see them again and to be able to introduce them to Lyndy. The music for the evening included a men's sextet and a mixed ensemble of about a dozen people. All parts could be clearly heard in good balance and Bruno the director of the group had them well rehearsed. Their musical technique was excellent. The congregational singing here as was the case in every service we attended in Brazil, was just outstanding with virtually every person in the congregation singing at the top of his lungs. The title of my sermon was "Salvation And Baptism" and it was based on Mark 16:16. Brother Montgomery informed me after the service that three adult men who needed baptism were present for the sermon. At the close of the service a lady came to me and through an interpreter told me that "Two years ago when you preached here the title of your sermon was 'Snow White Salvation For Scarlet Red Sinners.' I happened to have on a red blouse that evening and I felt so very guilty because of my sins that I wanted to cover up that blouse. Now I have been saved and my guilt is gone."

Another lady had baked us a cake with coconut icing on it and we ate it as soon as we returned to the Montgomery house. We turned in at 10:53 PM looking forward to a big day tomorrow.

JULY 9, 2000

SUNDAY

Santa Cruz, Ubirajara And Galia

It was 5:35 AM when we arose on this holy Sabbath day. I read God's word and prayed for safety, health and that the Lord would use us on what would be a busy and difficult day. I also asked the Lord to save someone who would hear the preaching today. Breakfast consisted of Brazilian French bread with a cheese called requejao (pronounced RAY-COO-AY-ZJOW') that was creamy and was dispensed from a squeeze tube as well as the usual hot chocolate and various citrus juices.

At 8:07 AM we left the Montgomery house headed for the city of Santa Cruz do Rio Pardo which is about 25 miles or 40 kilometers from Ourinhos. On the East edge of Ourinhos we passed a government housing project of about 100 "pigeon houses," all just alike and all having two rooms with no walls around the outside. We soon entered a lush green valley of vast sugar cane fields and the air was filled with the odor of the sugar distillery byproducts being sprayed back onto the fields. The fields were being worked today just as if this were any other day of the week. The soil here was the rich deep red dirt that characterizes the whole State of Sao Paulo.

Suddenly we dropped off into a lower valley and the city of Santa Cruz appeared. At the entrance to the city where the sign made of large seven foot high concrete letters and reading Santa Cruz was located were long rows of the beautiful thorny plants with the multiple small crimson flowers called the Blood of Christ plants. Bougainvillea trees were also prevalent in this area. Brother Montgomery estimated the population of Santa Cruz at about 35,000.

Worship services this morning would be held at 8:40 at Templo Batista or the Baptist Temple where brother Natalino Marconi De Souza is pastor in training and has held this position for a longer time than is usual. For some reason the church has put off voting to call this fine man as its pastor. Out in front of the building in the middle of the sidewalk was a papaya tree with about a dozen large green papayas on it. All the doors and windows of this church building were open yet surprisingly there were few if any insects to pester the worshippers. The dominant ethnicity in this church as was the case everywhere we went was Italian.

The worship service began with prayer led by one of the men of the church. The public prayers of the Baptist men of Brazil usually begin with "Senhor Deus" or Lord God. Next came the singing of the Portuguese version of the hymn "Saved By The Blood" which was hymn number 372 in the Portuguese Baptist Hymnal and was accompanied by a lady playing an electronic keyboard. Some of the pews here were benches with no backs on them. Every bench and pew was filled with worshippers of every age and no preponderant age group. Two other hymns we sang were #304 "Channels Of Blessing" and #203 "Olha Para Cristo." The people listened intently to my preaching and brother Montgomery's translating. The service ended at noon after which Lyndy and I stood at the front door to shake hands and greet the worshippers as they exited. We said Boa tarde (pronounced BOA TARZJ WITH A SOFT J) or Good afternoon in Portuguese to each person and from looking at their eyes it was apparent that this was appreciated. It was very pleasant to stand around on the front porch of the church building and converse with these people through Brother and Mrs. Montgomery.

Now we moved to the church parsonage that was located in the rear of the church building and on the same property. To the rear of the parsonage we could see a large avocado tree about 30 feet tall and loaded with large avocados which were almost ripe. In the parsonage the pastor's wife was busily finishing her preparations of a sumptuous hot Sunday dinner for us. While we waited we listened to hymns sung in Portuguese on the pastor's audio cassette player and got to know the pastor's children; Nathaniel age 13, Priscilla age 11 and Sarah age 9. The guarana that the pastor's wife served for lunch was the best we had had yet. Instead of the Kwat brand, which was popular in the city of Sao Paulo, this lady served us the Conquista brand. It was truly good or bom (pronounced BOHN).

After lunch we took chairs out onto the porch in the bright sunshine and visited further with pastor Natalino and his wonderful family. The children had a house cat that had a naturally bobbed tail, which was an interesting conversation piece. Lyndy had the idea of giving each of the three children one American dollar but we asked Jeannie Montgomery first if she thought it would be permissible to do so. She responded positively so I handed a \$1 bill to each of the children and then asked them if they knew what I had given them. Nathaniel who was the unofficial spokesman for the three said as his eyes grew large and round, Dohler, Dohler! and then he said in English, One eighty-five! which was the current exchange rate of Brazilian Reias for an American dollar. All three were excited and very appreciative of our gift. One of them said she would take it to school and show it to the other children. As we left the Souza home and the city of Santa Cruz brother Montgomery told us of the testimony of brother Natalino and how he had been a thief who lived on the streets when he was fourteen years of age. Brother Felix whom we would meet in the next church we would visit had taken him in, raised him and led him to the Lord.

Some time later the Lord had called Natalino to preach the gospel and here he was several years later on the verge of becoming pastor of the Baptist Temple in Santa Cruz.

At 1:15 PM we left Santa Cruz for the interior town of Ubirajara (pronounced OO-BEE-RAH-ZJAH'-RUH). On the way out of town the Montgomerys drove us by the place where they had lived many years before when he had begun the Baptist work there. They told us of how, the day Robert Kennedy had been shot, the boys in the public school where their son David had attended had taken David out and beaten him, somehow blaming him for what had happened to Robert Kennedy.

Just outside of Santa Cruz we passed through some banana farms in which we saw workers beginning to harvest the bananas. We crossed the Turvo River and then began to see vast mango and coffee plantations. After awhile we came to a very small village called San Pedro do Turvo or Saint Peter on the Turvo which was located on the side of a long sloping hill with the Catholic Church sitting at the top of the hill. The streets of this quaint village were cobblestone and when we reached the edge of town we also reached the end of the black top road. From here on to Ubirajara the road was just a red sandy path which wound its way through the fazendas (pronounced FUH-ZIN'DUHZ) or large ranches which occupy the countryside.

We came to Areia Branca, a village with just ten or twelve houses and then passed on through more orange and coffee groves. Suddenly a strange bird that brother Steve identified as a Serienna or Snake Hunter ran across the road in front of us. This bird that was something like an Emu was about eighteen inches tall and had a plume of one feather about three to four inches long which stood above and behind his beak. Its overall color was gray and its plume had a little orange color to it. Most of its height was in its legs. In this area we observed the farming of the Mantioc plant in rows, the powder from whose roots is used in many foods in Brazil. Not long before arriving in Ubirajara we entered cattle country where multitudes of white Brahmas roamed and tall palm trees stood everywhere.

At 2:27 PM the blacktop appeared again and almost immediately we were in the very poor town of Ubirajara. The Igreja Batista here had a nice building with white plaster walls and a bell tower and was centrally located in the town. A unique and very appropriate feature of this building was its baptistery that was located out in front of the building in the middle of the sidewalk that ran from the building to the street. It was covered with a heavy wooden door that became a part of the sidewalk when the baptistery was not in use. The purpose of its location was evidently to make the baptisms administered there very public thus identifying each candidate before the whole community as a believer in Jesus Christ. The building had a large front door and large double doors on the side as well as a back door. It was all very open with no screens on the doors or windows and no weather stripping due to the fact that it so rarely gets cold enough in this country to require any.

This church has no pastor but is presided over by the venerable Dr. Felix (pronounced FAY'-LIZ) Racy, a man eighty years old with a long white and untrimmed beard. This brother has a long and colorful history. It ranges from being born in Lebanon to being educated as a medical doctor at the University of Sao Paulo School of Medicine. It also includes being rejected by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board as a missionary, practicing medicine in Sao Paulo, helping Brother Steve Montgomery start the church at Ubirajara and now leading the church at Ubirajara. I had a very enjoyable conversation with this brother at the close of the service after learning that he spoke English. We stood out in the front yard of the church near the baptistery and discussed eschatology, the Lordship controversy, and the use of contemporary music in the churches. He had read several books by Dr. John MacArthur, which he seemed gratified to learn that I had also read. He told me that he had in his long lifetime known the famous pioneer Southern Baptist missionary, William B. Bagby. He had known Edgar Hallock, a former Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil who had once belonged to the First Baptist Church of Norman, Oklahoma when my own father had been the assistant pastor there in the 1930's. He had also known Dr. L.M. Bratcher who had been the "translator" of the infamous "Good News For Modern Man" and editor of O Jornal Batista.

The special church service began at 3 PM with the singing of hymns accompanied by Dr. Felix's excellent playing of the violin and one of the teen-aged boys of the church on the electric keyboard. The music director used a conductor's baton to lead the congregational singing which, as always in Brazilian Baptist churches was spirited and heart felt. The hymns we sang included #506 in the Brazilian Baptist hymnal "Junto Ao Trono" and #481, "Ao Lar Celestial." Dr. Felix introduced each of the many visitors by moving up the aisle of the building, stopping at the end of each row and calling the name of each person.

I preached on "The Strait and Narrow Way" from Matthew 7:13-14. Interestingly enough this very text was written high on the wall of the auditorium over my head and when I read the text I pointed to the writing on the wall. Lyndy later told me that as I preached she became somewhat nervous at one point because a large greenish lizard came crawling down the wall just behind me. The auditorium on this warm sunshiny Sabbath afternoon was comfortably full and the crowd contained an unusually large number of young adult men who listened in rapt attention. I later learned that one of these young men was Gilberto Stefano (pronounced ZIJHL-BEHR'-TO STEH'-

FUH-NOH), the pastor of the church in Galia where I would preach a few hours later and some more miles down the road. The closing hymn was #388 "O Homem Feliz" or "The Happy Man" based on Psalm One. The service ended at 4:50 PM and we left Ubirajara at 5:35 headed for Galia and its Igreja Batista.

On the way we passed through a number of coffee groves and the cities of Alvinlandia and Lupercio. The sun set at about 6 PM as we viewed the agricultural paradise we were traveling through with its coffee orchards and rubber groves and cattle ranches. Brother Montgomery informed us that one Brazilian acre is called a Paulista and is the equivalent of six American acres.

The building of the Igreja Batista in Galia was a very old former hotel building located in the central downtown of this large town. Pastor Gilberto and his wife Valeria (pronounced VAL-ER-EE' -UH) and their two children lived in a house out in the back of the hotel/church building. These living quarters had high ceilings and tall doors with arched tops. The shutters were on the insides of the windows of this very old dwelling. The walls were unpainted and the lights consisted of one bulb hanging down on a long electric wire in each room.

Valeria and her mother had cooked a sumptuous Brazilian meal of black beans and rice with olive oil and we dined with them while various members of the church kept coming in and out to look at us and to greet us. They evidently don't see many Americanos as they call them in Galia! The skin colors of these people covered the entire spectrum of human skin tones. All of them shook hands with each of us and we tried to say something in Portuguese to each of them. This was a very happy time.

This Sunday evening service in the former hotel began at exactly 7:30 PM, something rather unusual in this laid back land where virtually nothing ever starts on time! Lyndy and I were truly shocked as a rock band made up of pre teen boys struck up a very loud rendition of "Because He Lives" and were joined by the congregation singing at the very top of their lungs. The auditorium was jammed with children as well as older adults who sang chorus after chorus as they were shown on the wall by an overhead projector. It was not hard to visualize at this point being back home in any average Southern Baptist church with all the worldly trappings of their music these days. I was touched as I observed the earnest faces of the little children as they sang.

Pastor Gilberto told brother Montgomery that he knew he had a problem because of the music he had allowed to come into his church and that he knew that he would probably lose some members no matter what action he might take in dealing with the problem. He said that he was open to instruction from us if we desired to give it which brother Steve rightly though graciously proceeded to do. Brother Montgomery told this young pastor that he needed to deal with this problem decisively and soon. Gilberto is open to influence by both Brother Steve Montgomery and Brother Calvin Gardner. Please pray for this church and its serious problem with worldly music and the Pentecostal theology, which can't be far behind.

It is my opinion that a large part of this church's problem lies in the fact that it was started by Baptist Faith Missions whose missionary organized it and set it on its own but only visited it twice in the first ten years of its existence. With a young and inexperienced pastor it has been left to fend for itself without the advantage of advice and council from either missionary or older pastor. With the Lord's blessing and Brother Steve and Brother Calvin and their interest, this situation should soon be remedied.

Leaving Galia at about 9:30 PM we headed for Ourinhos and rest at last. Driving through the Brazilian countryside on this very dark night we could see the Southern Cross and the lights of various towns and cities including Matta Grossa out our car windows. The lights of the towns were like spots of light surrounded with large areas of blackness because Brazilian towns are not spread out nearly as much as North American towns and cities. We arrived in Ourinhos at 10:45 and went straight to bed, exhausted after one of the most varied and enjoyable days of our lives.

JULY 10, 2000

MONDAY

A Day Off In Ourinhos

We slept late today not getting up until 6:50 AM because of the long day yesterday during which I preached four times in twenty four hours and we traveled over two hundred fifty miles. Thankfully we have today off to recuperate. While it was still dark I sat out in the breezeway on the front side of the Montgomery home and read my Bible and prayed.

Jeannie Montgomery served her usual delicious Brazilian breakfast of hot chocolate, papayas, guavas, squeeze cheese, Brazilian French bread and various jams and preserves. I drank Guarana for breakfast just as I did for all other meals. After breakfast Lyndy and I plan to take a walk through the neighborhood during daylight hours to see the sights in full sunlight. Before leaving the house I used Brother Steve's computer to send e-mail messages

to dad, mother, Melanie and Mary Justice back in the States. It is still amazing to me that it is that easy to stay in touch with people from virtually anywhere in the world!

Lyndy and I took a leisurely stroll through the Montgomerys' neighborhood in the bright sunshine of the morning. We admired and wondered at the great variety of strange plants and even many plants we saw that grow in Kansas City. My favorite was some kind of a very tall palm tree growing in the breezeway of one house on the corner of a street. It had two areas on it that evidently were the location where the tree produced seeds. These two areas were each about four feet long and about 16 inches wide. They were located roughly half way up the trunk of the tree and were made up of many four foot strands with seeds contained in each strand about four inches apart. We laughingly called this tree a palm tree with dread locks because these areas containing the seeds reminded us of some rock singer with a dread lock hair do. On this walk we were also able to observe up close in the light of day the beautiful ceramic tile that covers the driveways and breezeways of most all the houses. We passed what appeared to be a day school in which the children had on uniforms. The girls' uniforms were blue and the boys' were green.

About mid morning Brother Montgomery and I went to the post office in downtown Ourinhos. When we parked I learned about an interesting program the city has for its teens to keep them off the streets and train them for jobs. They serve as parking attendants. Instead of having parking meters the city hires teens to cover a certain part of each block and to charge people for parking their cars. They all wear a uniform that has a bright orange jacket. The city buys their lunches and pays their wages with the parking fees they collect. The city also helps them find better employment as part of the deal. The official name for these parking attendants is Zona Azul but I jokingly called the girls at least, Brazil's meterless maids.

The traffic in Ourinhos is made up of about one motor bike for every car. There are still a few bicycles and an occasional horse car or a horse-drawn trailer with one axle with the driver sitting on top of the trailer. Brother Steven has been in Brazil so long and speaks the language so well that he just blends right in and is seen by most of the people as a native Brazilian.

On an impulse we decided at this point to visit the local Servetoria we had visited a couple of nights previously and enjoy some more of the delicious green corn ice cream or milho verde as it is called in Portuguese. We then went into the bank, which is located on the City Square the name of which was Banco Bradesco. About two hundred people were standing in line in the lobby so we decided to come back later in the day when the lines hopefully would be shorter. Standing in line is one of the glories of any socialistic country and Brazil certainly has its share of long lines.

Crossing the street from the bank we sat down in the park in the City Square and just watched the people for awhile. Then we visited an interesting place called an ice cream supply store. This place of wholesale business sold ingredients and accessories for making ice cream and for Servetorias. Here Brother Montgomery pointed out a special Brazilian candy called Pococa Rolha (pronounced POH-SOH'-CUH ROH'-YUH). This candy is small rolls of peanut and maiaça (pronounced MAH-YAH'-CUH).

Back at the Montgomery house we had lunch and then I sat out in the breezeway while brother and Mrs. Montgomery took naps. Lyndy and I also took another walk through the neighborhood, this time in another direction. New sights awaited us there one being a giant Mexican meguey plant growing in the breezeway of some obviously prosperous person. This is the plant out of which tequila is made in Mexico. Upon completing their naps the Montgomerys took us in the car over into the nearby Brazilian State of Parana (pronounced PAH-RAH-NAH'). Crossing an ancient concrete suspension bridge over the high waters of the Parana River, we entered the back country traveling down winding roads through small canyons filled with small farms until we came to the village of Ribeirão Claro Sítio. Here on the outskirts we found three large and rare umbrella pine trees. These trees which were almost extinct until recent years are now thought to be making a comeback in Brazil. Their branches grow opposite to the way branches on others trees grow. They start at the trunk and bend upward. The greenery all joins at the top making the top of the tree look rather flat. Viewed from the side the umbrella tree looks similar to a Jewish Menorah or the seven-branched candlestick. Here Brother Montgomery got out of the car and pulled up roots and all a weed that looked like Johnson grass in Texas. He said it was Lemon Grass and that he was going to take it home and make us some Lemon Grass tea.

Passing through what I called the valley of knobs, a shallow canyon with some rather large rock formations protruding upward. After awhile we came to a good-sized city called Jacarezinho (pronounced ZJAH-CAH-RUH-ZEEN'-YOH), the location of a sort of community vocational school that is on a level slightly above high school. Several of the young members of the Igreja Batista in Ourinhos had been and still were students here. As we pulled into a large filling station here we were all busy talking and were not paying attention to the open pit in the middle of the driveway where workers stood to change the oil and lube large trucks. When suddenly Jeannie Montgomery screamed brother Steve slammed on the brakes and the car came to rest about one foot before falling into the hole. Who know what damage would have been done had we fallen in? Entering the station which had a restaurant

connected with it we purchased a delicious white chocolate bar for seven centavos. The Montgomerys also purchased some cow hoof jelly; a candy made of the same gelatinous substance from the hooves of cows from which Jell-O is made. The candy was sold in a round block about six inches across and about two inches thick. It was a light brown peanut like color and tasted sort of like coffee flavored candy.

The sun was now sinking fast as we proceeded back to Ourinhos. Now the sugar cane fields began to burn, as was the case every evening at about this time. Since darkness was falling we could see the fires for some distance and in one ideal location we stopped and took a photograph of this sight to show people back home.

Not long after we arrived at the Montgomery house at 6:15 Jundar (pronounced ZJUNH'-DAHR) the brother of Flavio came to the house to ask brother Steve the meaning of the term Lordship which I had used in a couple of messages that he had heard me preach. The reason he asked is because there is no Portuguese equivalent of this term.

Before retiring for the night we all decided to go to the Servetoria for some more green corn ice cream. Brother Steve and I remained mum about the fact that we had already had some green corn ice cream this morning when we had gone to the post office. This was a very pleasant outdoor ice cream parlor. Many teens and young adults with children moved in and out of the cafeteria style store while we were there.

When we got back to the house at about 9:15 Jeannie Montgomery brewed us some hot Lemon Grass tea. She boiled the grass which brother Steve had washed and cut up in small pieces for about ten minutes, we stirred in sugar and imbibed what turned out to have a strong lemon like smell and taste.

JULY 11, 2000

TUESDAY

On To Bauru

This morning I went walking by myself after arising at 5:50 AM. Very few people were stirring this morning. When I got back to the Montgomery house I sat in the driveway area not used for cars, read my Bible and prayed for the day's activities as well as for our church back home. While I sat there in the dark reading by flashlight the city finally began to come to life. The traffic increased, the birds began to sing and there was light in the Eastern sky by 6:40.

After breakfast we began to prepare to leave Ourinhos for the last time and head for the city of Bauru (pronounced BOW-ROO') where I planned to preach on "The Evidences Of Repentance. The sky was cloudy today. We left at 9 AM and on the way out of town we stopped at the home of a retired Regular Baptist preacher, a Brazilian national, who is now a member of Igreja Batista in Ourinhos. His house was located at the corner of Edu Rabelo and Davina streets. This very elderly man was bedfast and nearly blind. Our visit with brother Edu was a moving experience. He quoted Romans 8:28-29, Jonah 2:9 and Revelation 1:7 to us and then stated "I'm looking for a better city, the one Abraham looked for and the first One I want to see in that city is Jesus." His adopted son Luis, a black Brazilian, was there to wait on brother Edu and we visited with him and tried to witness to him when we left brother Edu's bedside and retired to the living room where we also visited with brother Edu's wife.

Traveling North out of Ourinhos the highway was new and still partially under construction. Over all the roads in Brazil, at least in Sao Paulo State, are good to excellent. Somewhere not too far out of Ourinhos we stopped at a large filling station where, at the urging of the Montgomerys, we started sampling everything Brazilian that we had not seen before. There were all kinds of new and exotic sweets for sale here. I remember feeling sort of bloated and thinking, I must stop sampling everything! One of the goodies we sampled was something called pastel (pronounced PAHS'TL) which was a pastry fried like a fried pie and containing ground beef. It reminded me of something back home called Hot Pockets but this was far better tasting.

On the road again we presently passed through the city of Espirito Santo Do Turvo or Holy Spirit on the Turvo (River). There were palm trees everywhere in the pastures in this area. At 11:17 AM we passed through a place called Piratininga (pronounced PEE'-RUH-TEE-NEEN'-GUH) and in this area the poinsettias were becoming more prevalent. In Brazil and particularly in this little village they grow as large bushes and even as trees with multiple flowers on them.

Presently we entered the outskirts of the bustling and fairly modern city of Bauru whose population is at least one million people according to Brother Steve. We passed a Japanese Assembly of God church and noted the trucks, the standard size of which in Brazil seems to be what we might call a flat bed two and a half-ton truck. The sides of the six to eight-inch thick bed of every truck was decorated with multicolored pin striping. After missing three different turnoffs from the interstate type highway we were traveling and having to turn around and go back each time we finally found a shopping mall next to a Walmart store where we could eat lunch in the food court.

Lunch here was distinctly Brazilian and thus delicious. The food was served cafeteria style and was sold by weight. We feasted on black beans and rice on which we sprinkled olive oil according to Brazilian practice. We drank guarana and had other tasty morsels the identity of which I was never told or if I was I have forgotten. The food court in which we ate had a glass wall on one side that allowed a panoramic view of part of the city and as we sat there eating I looked at the top of one of the nearby tall buildings and to my surprise and amusement I saw two buzzards roosting there.

After lunch we drove across town through the heart of the city on the way to the home of David and Isabel Montgomery, the son and daughter in law of the Steve Montgomerys. The Montgomerys had lived in this city years ago when they had started the Baptist church here. Some strange sights greeted our eyes this afternoon. One such sight was the El Shaddai Beer Hall and another was a huge Japanese Buddhist Temple located on a hill overlooking a large area of Bauru.

After about a thirty minute drive through the city we came to 7-62 Rua Ory Pinheiro Brisda, the residence of David and Isabel. At this particular time David Montgomery was away working on an off shore oil rig. They had not lived in this house long and it was still in the process of being made their own home. It is a lovely and very spacious Brazilian home with a large amount of breezeway space and special windows with no screens. It was wonderful to open these windows at night as well as in the daytime and enjoy the cool winter air. There was an outbuilding out back and across the breezeway which contained a built in Brazilian barbecue pit. Isabel kept her house spic n span. Isabel was working on supper when we arrived and continued off and on for the rest of the day stopping only to take us shopping but even then she left her maid working on the food while we were gone.

Our shopping trip was interesting and very enjoyable. First we visited a department store where we looked for some china demitasse cups for Lyndy to take home as gifts and I looked for a Brazilian pocketknife. After Lyndy purchased several such cups and saucers we walked up the street from this first store to where one street had been blocked off from automobile traffic and made into what I call a promenade for foot traffic only. Brazilians call this promenade a Calçada (pronounced CAHL-SAH-DOWN'). The word means big sidewalk. The multiple appliance stores and new automobiles everywhere made it clear that prosperity is rampant in Bauru. Teeming thousands were in the streets here. Once as I looked across the Calçada I saw the golden arches of a McDonald's restaurant. There were a lot of booths located on the outer edges of the sidewalks along the streets and they offered music CD's and herbs and electronic gadgets for sale. When I began to show an interest in some of the CD's in these booths Isabel sternly warned me that this was mostly contraband brought in from Paraguay. Entering a legitimate store that was something on the order of a Walgreen's we picked out a CD that we thought had some traditional Brazilian music on it and purchased it.

After leaving the Calçada Isabel took us down a side street to a fishing store much like a sporting goods store in the states. Here, she said, I would find the canivete I was looking for. The young men who were working here began to tell us through Jeannie Montgomery's translation some exotic tales of their fishing expeditions on some of the wild rivers of Brazil. They had photographs to back up most of their stories. They showed us a picture of a 180 lb. catfish they had caught as well as a taxidermy preservation of an infamous Piranha (pronounced PEE-RAHN'-YUH) flesh eating fish they had caught. This trophy was twelve inches long and nine inches across. Here I found the pocket knife I was looking for and I liked it so much that I decided to buy three; one for me, one for our son Eddy and one for our son in law Joel Tucker. The one I chose for myself had a brass shield on it that was large enough to have my name inscribed on it at a later date.

On our way back to the David Montgomery home Isabel drove us past a piece of property that the Igreja Batista of Bauru is considering for purchase. When we arrived at the house we enjoyed the very pleasant cool, breezy evening with all the windows of the house open to catch the breeze and NO BUGS! As soon as we arrived Isabel served us a "snack" before church stating that we would eat supper after church. The snack consisted of cheese and cold cuts and hot chocolate and chipa (pronounced CHEE'-PUH) which is a cheese bread which looks like a large donut or bagel.

The pastor of the Baptist Church here in Bauru is Brother Antonio Carlos Diaz who was saved and baptized in the church at Santa Cruz where I had preached this past Sunday morning. His wife is the sister of Pastor Natalino De Souza in Santa Cruz and of the music director in the church in Ubirajara. Tonight's service will be our last under the sponsorship of the Montgomerys. Tomorrow Brother Calvin Gardner will pick us up to take us to Catanduva, about two hours North of Bauru, where he and his wife will be our hosts for a week.

Tonight's 7:30 service began at 8:09 with prayer. It was held in the garage of a house belonging to the parents of Isabel Montgomery. Forty-five people were present. The first hymn was #1 "Abide With Me" and the second was #398, "Sou Feliz." There were four clear and strong parts and the singing was thrilling as usual in all services in Brazilian Baptist churches. The third hymn was #402 "Escrava Resgatado" or The Redeemed Slave sung

to the tune of Shall We Gather At the River? Next came hymn #207 "Mensagem Real." I preached for one hour and fifteen minutes and the message was well received. There was much conviction.

After the service the conversation with these warm and friendly people was especially enjoyable. Inside the home of which the garage was a part we visited with the brothers, sister and parents of Isabel Montgomery. The name of her sister was Raquel (pronounced HAH-KEHL') which we noted of course because of our daughter Rachel. Her brothers were Joao (pronounced ZJOWN) Carlos, Sergio and Daniel. Her parents were Morel Francisco de Souza and Lourdes Frederico de Souza. Isabel's mother served us guarana and a demitasse cup of BLACK Brazilian coffee. Raquel's husband presented me with a vacuum-sealed package of Brazilian "jerky" to take home to the States. He owns a business that packages and sells this meat.

At eleven PM we returned to David and Isabel's house where Isabel served us a "light" supper of sopa (pronounced SOH'PUH) or soup. It was filled with vegetables and beef and was served with cheese and tossados and chipas. We finally fell into bed at 12:10 AM, stuffed full and worn out.

JULY 12, 2000

WEDNESDAY

FROM BAURU TO CATANDUVA

After arising at 6:50 AM Isabel Montgomery served us a wonderful breakfast of papaya, creamy cheese from a jar, hot chocolate, chipas, crackers and tossados. Does either Isabel or her maid ever stop cooking? This very pleasant Black maid's name is Graziella (pronounced GRAH-ZEE-EH'-LA). I heard her singing most of the time while she was in the house. They pay her a salary plus meals plus her transportation to and from their house. At 9:15 when I read my Bible for the day the temperature was cooling down noticeably into the lower 60's and upper 50's but though it was cloudy again today it was still dry and pleasant.

The first item of business after making a rather slow start was for brother Steve to take me back into downtown Bauru to exchange the CD we had purchased yesterday because after playing it we were greatly disappointed that it was not really Brazilian music but more like American rock. As we drove through the city this time we saw two Spiritist supply stores. All kinds of paraphernalia related to this dark and superstitious religion are sold in these stores which are prevalent in the cities in Brazil. We also observed a number of Pentecostal church buildings as well as some Seventh Day Adventist buildings.

When we returned to Isabel's house we were greeted with the delicious smell of corn mush cooking. Lyndy and I walked through the neighborhood before lunch was served. By the time we got back to the house we had to get out our sweaters and sweat shirts because the weather was becoming steadily colder.

The people of Brazil seem to be so young! The overwhelming majority of all the people we saw in Brazil were from young adult to lower middle age. Young women in Brazil wear mostly black skirts and pants and low cut back tops. Virtually all of them are very clean and well groomed.

For lunch we had Frango Isabel, blanched broccoli, cauliflower, carrots and potatoes as well as rice and olive oil. For dessert we had grape mousse which was so different and so outstanding that Lyndy got the recipe though this was very difficult for Isabel to write down and then for Jeannie Montgomery to translate it.

At three o'clock in the afternoon brother Calvin Gardner, his 16-year-old daughter Joy and his 12-year-old son David arrived from Catanduva. The Gardner family would be our hosts and sponsors for the next week as we moved to the northern sector of Sao Paulo State. They arrived in their almost new Volkswagen bus or Kombi as they are called in Brazil. After taking photographs of the Montgomerys, the Justices and the Gardners together in front of the Kombi we said our thank you's and good-byes to Steve, Jeannie and Isabel Montgomery and started on the highway for Catanduva.

Along the way we noted the mud termite nests in a number of the trees so brother Calvin stopped alongside one of them and we got out to look at it and take a picture of it. The nest itself was about two feet long from top to bottom and about one foot wide in the middle and was shaped like a large cocoon. We noted that the termites in the nest were not eating the tree but for some reason had built their nest in it about ten to twelve feet above the ground. In the same tree we noted a parasite that had a flower that was similar to an orchid but was much smaller. In this area we began to see a bird that the Gardners said was actually a species of Condor. It had a white head, a yellow beak, white spots on the underside of its black wings and was about the size of a Turkey Buzzard back in the States.

As we drove along and the sun began to sink in the West brother Calvin and I fell into a deep discussion of some theological subject and brother Gardner became distracted enough that he missed the turn that would have taken us directly into Catanduva. We had to take a circuitous route in order to get to our intended destination and this route took us through a city called Ibirá (pronounced EE-BEE'-RUH) where there was an unusually large

Catholic Cathedral which could be seen for miles. Just past Ibirá darkness fully fell and we reached Catanduva at about seven PM.

Wednesday evening prayer meeting was held in the Gardner home almost as soon as we arrived. Ben Gardner, Calvin's and Peggy's twenty one year old son, led the music, their daughter Joy played the electric keyboard and the first hymn was #252 "A Porta Franca." Next we sang #2 "Justo Es Senhor" followed by #402 "Escrava Resgatada." All the Independent Baptist Churches in Brazil have a custom of singing the first three verses of a hymn and then before singing the last verse waiting for the instrumentalist to play through one stanza. There was a good attendance this night and all present paid close attention to the sermon, God's Love In Election, based on Jeremiah 31:3.

We met many new friends here tonight one of which was brother Alfredo Sergio Figueiredo who had come into the church through seeing Brother Gardner's weekly article in the local newspaper. The only Brazilians present that I had met on my previous trip to Catanduva in 1998 were Paulo and Adriano Pacheco and Ivanil and Meiere Seandelar.

When those who had come to prayer meeting had all gone home we had supper which included hot lemon grass tea, Nestone, bananas, papayas and cake. Lyndy and I then gave to the Gardners some gifts we had brought them from the States. It was a real joy to see their pleasure at receiving the things we gave them. After supper we were invited to join the Gardners in their family devotions for the evening which involved some good singing, reading a passage of scripture from Proverbs and some comments by brother Gardner and myself. The Gardners very graciously gave up their own bed to Lyndy and me and before falling into that bed at 11:30 PM I went out to the street in front of the Gardners' house and looked again at the Southern Cross.

JULY 13, 2000

THURSDAY

From Catanduva To Sud Mennucci

Today's Bible readings were in Acts 17:16-32 and Psalms 10-12. The portions I have been reading in Acts focus on Paul's missionary work, which is appropriate for this trip. After arising late at 6:20 this morning we had breakfast with the Gardner family which consisted of Nestone, hot lemon grass tea and raisins. The family devotion with which we finished breakfast was based on the reading of Psalms 111.

Brother Calvin and his daughter Charity took us shopping soon after breakfast and we looked for various things we wanted to purchase to take home to our loved ones and church members. We found a small jewelry store in the downtown area of Catanduva where Lyndy decided to have a charm custom made for our daughter Leah Tucker. I also had the jeweler inscribe on the brass shield on the handle of the pocket knife I purchased in Bauru the words "LAJ BRASIL 2000." He charged me \$1.50 or One Real and fifty Centavos, less than a dollar in U.S. money. This jeweler had a booming business in his little seven foot by twenty-foot open shop. At about 9 o'clock we walked across one of the city plazas where we saw a number of forty to fifty year old men sitting and standing in the cool sunlight, trading cars and selling houses.

After returning to the Gardner home and leaving Lyndy and Charity, brother Gardner and I drove to the home of eighty two year old retired Baptist pastor Jose (pronounced ZJOH'-ZEH) Alberganti. Pastor Alberganti as he is known is a member of Brother Calvin's church here along with his wife. However, he has a very large family of descendants who live near him, most of whom are members of Southern Baptist churches. He was concerned that his family members join the Igreja Batista Livra (Independent Baptist Church) because of the Pentecostalism and contemporary music and "programitis" that have riddled the Southern Baptist churches in that city. Fifteen adults and four teens from brother Alberganti's family sat in on the Bible study that Pastor Calvino and I led. Our topic was Bible baptism and the study was very well received. The family members asked if they would have to be rebaptized to become members of Brother Gardner's church. Brother Gardner promised to investigate each individual case over the next few days and weeks.

For lunch today we had barbecue chicken after which I took Benjamin, Daniel and David Gardner rock hunting to try to find some more Brazilian red agate to put into their new rock tumbler. At 2:30 Calvin, Joy, Lyndy and I left in the Gardner Kombi with one of brother Gardner's church members, Adriana, and her three daughters for the city of Sud Mennucci (pronounced SOO'-DEE-MIH-NOO'-CHEE), 220 kilometers or about 150 miles north and west of Catanduva.

We drove into the warm hazy sunshine and as I tried to avoid looking directly into the sun I noticed again the red sandy dirt with which virtually all the State of Sao Paulo is covered. This area north and West of Catanduva was a rolling plain covered with very tall sugar cane and a fair amount of sweet corn. Wherever there were bushes and vegetation besides the crops we could see what in the U.S. we call poinsettias. In nearly every church we

visited I tried to compliment the people on the natural beauty of their country but when I would mention poinsettias the translators would not know their Brazilian name. They would ask people in every church what the Brazilian name of this plant was but nobody would know. Once or twice we were given a name which would prove to be incorrect when we would check it out. One name given us at Sud Mennucci was Bico de Papagayo (BEE-COH-DEH-PAH-PAH-GAH'-YOH) which means Beak of The Parrot.

Bamboo in Brazil grows in clusters or groups or stands about fifteen or sixteen feet high and about thirty to fifty feet across. In this particular area the bamboo stands were larger and more prevalent than any we had seen to this point. There were also a large number of fields of rubber trees as well as various citrus groves in the Fazendas through which we were passing. The highway here was an excellent modern four-lane road. Crews were laying fiber optic cables in the center island which we surmised would run from Sao Paulo to Brazilia, the nation's capital.

About twenty-five minutes from Catanduva we passed through the city of Sao Jose Rio Preto (pronounced SOWN ZJOS'-EH HEE-OH-PREH'-TOH) meaning St. Joseph On The Black River. The population of this modern city of many tall buildings is about 200,000 according to Brother Calvin. Somewhere in this city we made a rest stop at an Exxon (pronounced EH'-SHAHN) filling station where I purchased a bottle of guarana. Was I now becoming an addict of this wonderful drink?

Soon after getting underway again we passed an Orange Juice factory that looked a lot like the Kerr-McGee oil refinery that I had seen so many times in my childhood near Wynnewood, Oklahoma with its stacks and pipes and tanks. As we returned to the countryside we began to see coconut palms. Some of the other trees had the mud termite nests we had seen coming from Bauru to Catanduva yesterday. The termites in the tree nests were very small and brown in color but those in the red mounds in the fields were about the size of large grubs and the natives use them for fish bait.

The next city we passed was Neves Paulista. Along the highway in this area the road construction crews were using bamboo for building scaffold because when treated right bamboo is virtually as strong as lumber or even steel. We passed an alcohol or in Portuguese alcool factory, several beautiful fazendas with their characteristic red tile roofed main buildings and the towns of Poloni (pronounced POH-LOH'-NEE) and Itaumba (pronounced EE-TAH-OOM'-BUH). This was an amazing agricultural area with rubber trees, papayas, bananas, tomatoes, coffee, sugar cane and hay all up close together. At Nhandeara a cattle auction was being held as we passed.

After this place the trees began to change. Now there were fewer eucalyptus trees and more jungle like trees. There were several colors of Ipe (pronounced EE'PAY) trees here including purple, red, yellow and white. In the town of Floreal we stopped to put alcool in the Kombi. We observed that the men in this area wore white cowboy hats very similar to those so popular in the nation of Mexico. Brother Calvin gave the attendant at the station a gospel tract that he immediately stopped and read. As time passed there were more and more canopy shaped jungle trees. In the city of Magda we could see boys flying kites and others burning brush along the highway and in the fields. Soon we came to the city of Gal Salgado or General Salgado.

Each city in this area has a "Christ of the Andes" type white fifteen feet tall concrete statue of Christ standing with outstretched arms near the entrance of the highway into the city. Now we passed through or by a number of lesser cities including Japiupa (pronounced ZJAH-PEE-OO-PUH), Auriflama and Guzolandia. Along here somewhere we passed a highway sign marking the turnoff to Aracatuba (pronounced UH-RASS-UH-TOO'-BUH) where some of the people on our flight to Brazil in 1998 had been headed.

At the place where the highway entered most cities there were hedges of the Blood of Christ plant. This was the case as we approached our destination of Sud Mennucci. The last mile or so of the highway approach to Sud Mennucci was lined with very tall eucalyptus trees the diameter of whose trunks was about that of the light poles in the U.S. There was a fairly large meat packing plant on our right just as we entered the city. We got our first sight of Sud at 5:30 PM. Our first order of business in this city was to deliver Adriana and her three daughters Cibele, Cintia and Cintiele to the house of their friend who lived here. That taken care of we arrived at the home of Waldir Ferro, the pastor of Templo Batista in Sud Mennucci. There we were met by pastor Waldir as he is called, his wife Miriam their children Lilian age 13, Elise age 11 and son Victor age 10. Waldir was obviously of Italian extraction and very interestingly Miriam was of German extraction. The official name of pastor Waldir's church is, in English, The First Independent Baptist Church of Sud Mennucci. We had a wonderful time of fellowship during the so-called snack, which was more like a full supper to me that we had just before going to the evening service.

The music for the evening service here was led by brother Arino (pronounced AH-REE'NOH). The hymns included #473 "Firme Na Fe," #323 "Castelo Forte" (A Mighty Fortress) and #324 "Refugio Verdadeiro." During the song service three men stood in front facing the congregation, evidently to encourage participation by the congregation. This service was a most enjoyable experience for me. There was an excellent attendance and, I felt,

one hundred percent whole-hearted participation by those present. On the right side of the auditorium as one faces the pulpit there was a beautiful hanging begonia plant that was about three feet long and about eighteen inches wide.

After the service we returned to Pastor Waldir's home for a ten thirty PM supper during which we had much pleasant conversation about Brazil. Pastor Waldir bravely tried to use his newly learned English in this conversation and we congratulated him for doing so and encouraged him to keep trying. The supper included some very interesting new Brazilian dishes including a potato roll called Rocambole de Batata and chicken hamburgers called Hamburger de Frango. Lyndy and I enjoyed giving each of the three Ferro children an American one-dollar bill. This really excited these children and their parents. During this pleasant time of fellowship and fun the Ferros' white house cat climbed up onto the window sill on the outside of the house and peered into the dining room. When I took a photo of this cat his eyes showed red that later produced a very unique picture.

We had the great privilege and unusual experience of sleeping in the house and in the very bed of the pastor of this small Baptist church in far away Sud Mennucci, Brazil. Lyndy and I were touched that this couple would give up their very bed for us. This enabled us to get a real first hand taste of Brazilian life. The walls of the bedroom were plain gray plaster and the floors were finished concrete. The entire bathroom connected to their bedroom was finished in black and white ceramic tile. There was no ceiling in the room and we could see the corrugated iron over which the red exterior roof tiles were laid. The shower in this bathroom as in every bathroom in Brazil was heated by an electric coil within the showerhead, through which the water passed and was instantly "heated."

The house itself had three bedrooms of medium size by our standards, two baths, a living room, a dining room and a small kitchen. It was furnished with couch, chairs, a TV, a VCR, a refrigerator, venetian blinds, and wooden furniture on the patio in the back breezeway. There were books in the home including a Portuguese language Encyclopedia Britannica and Charles Spurgeon's "Lectures To My Students." The family also had a nice mid sized automobile in the driveway. Miriam kept it all clean and neat. She was a most gracious hostess.

An unusual Antarctic cold front moved in during the night and Brazilian houses not being weather sealed due to the tropical climate, we got very cold before morning. We ended up sleeping with our socks on and under two blankets. We asked ourselves, Can it get this cold in Brazil?

JULY 14, 2000

FRIDAY

Second Day In Sud Mennucci

Today we slept till 6:54 AM. By the time we had cleaned up before breakfast it was a clear sun shiny day. I went to the front door of the Ferros' house and looked out on the sugar cane fields across the street and the cupim (pronounced KOO-PEEN') or termite nests that dotted the fields wherever the sugar cane was not growing. While waiting for breakfast I observed the house more closely and noted the wall around the house the top of which was about eye level to me. There were two gates in the front of the wall made of sheet iron, one a door for people to walk through and one a gate for the car to enter. The front porch of the house including the posts supporting the roof was all concrete.

At 9:10 AM we left pastor Waldir's house for a tour of the local sugar mill or alcool factory which had been arranged by Ademir da Silva, a member of pastor Waldir's church. The two Ferro daughters went with Calvin, Joy, Waldir, Lyndy and myself but Victor did not go because the company said he was too young to be allowed into the plant. Victor was greatly disappointed.

Near the front office of the plant was a typical public phone booth which was a sort of shell around the phone roughly in the shape of a human ear and which is called a "big ear." All morning long we toured this interesting plant in which sugar cane was processed into alcool for use as fuel in cars, granulated sugar was produced, molasses was made and even the waste was made into fertilizer to be put back onto the sugar cane fields. The plant was completely self-sufficient using steam for running all machinery and even to generate electricity the surplus of which is sold back to the local Power Company. Our walk through the plant and even over the cat walks high over the ground level seemed a little dangerous for allowing visitors to pass through. We were all required to wear hard hats and earplugs while inside and hairnets while in the area where granulated sugar is bagged. One of the most interesting aspects of the tour was the fermentation process used in making the alcool. After the fermentation was complete the substance was placed in a centrifuge where the fermentation was separated from the alcool. The resulting alcool was crystal clear.

Outside the plant in the parking lot near the company office we were delighted by the birds in the trees. We saw wild canaries and mud johns up close. The mud johns were somewhat similar in size and looks to North American Robins though without the red breasts.

We now headed back toward Sud Mennucci and the sun was warming things up to a more comfortable level. Parking on the Town Square, which surrounds the local Catholic Cathedral, we watched the people who were operating booths offering for sale all kinds of gadgets and trinkets that were most probably contraband brought in from Paraguay. Brother Calvin informed us that the population of Sud was about 12,000. Leaving the square we visited a padaria down the street where we sampled a couple of breads and purchased some bottled water and some guarana. In this neighborhood Brother Calvin pointed out the postman with his Brazilian postal uniform of blue pants, yellow shirt and yellow bike.

While waiting lunch Joy Gardner and I went walking in the field across the street from pastor Waldir's house where we decided to check out one of the many red mud cupim nests. I had borrowed an aluminum meat-tenderizing hammer from Miriam Ferro and we proceeded to try to break into a nest that was about 24 inches tall. We found that the outer layer of the nest was about one and one half inches thick and made of a red sandstone-like material both in looks and hardness. Once past the outer layer the interior was a jumbled honeycomb of twisting tunnels about 3/8th of an inch across and lined with a hard black substance. Back at the house we showered and cleaned up before lunch.

During lunch today we had an interesting discussion of tithing and the pastor's salary. I was a little disturbed that this pastor didn't believe in preaching on tithing while the church pays him a VERY low salary. I tried hard to convince him that there is a direct relation of what a pastor is paid and whether and how often he preaches on the biblical responsibility of God's people to tithe.

Every plan we make here runs late in its fulfillment. That's the Brazilian way according to Calvin Gardner as I jokingly called him sometimes. I could never submit to this aggravating and frustrating custom. I noted during all the meals we ate in Sud that the people here did not use olive oil like those in other places we had visited.

At 4:05 PM Waldir drove Calvin, Lyndy and me to nearby Pereira Barreto (pronounced PEH-REH-EE'RUH BAH-HEH'-TOH) to see the beautiful lake and visit some stores there. As we left town and passed the meat packing plant and the eucalyptus trees lining the entry to the town, the shadows were lengthening on this fine winter afternoon. The lake we visited was actually a very wide place in the river, so wide that a bridge crossing nearby was 2.3 miles in length. We stopped at a lovely and peaceful beach area just to enjoy the evening solitude. Waldir told us that this was the spot where he baptizes those whom the Lord saves under his ministry. As we stood there next to our car three young boys on bicycles rode by on the beach and passing between us and the water were silhouetted against the sunlight reflecting off the lake. The palm trees and a man in his hammock lent a very pleasing and peaceful atmosphere to this place.

At Pereira Barreto we passed the house where Brother Steve Montgomery once lived and then walked through the town's Calçada. I took a photo of the church building where I would be preaching that evening. Now we started back to Sud Mennucci and on the way had an edifying discussion of eschatology in relation to the Second Coming of Christ. Upon arriving back in Sud we had a pre-church "snack" as Miriam called it of sweet bread, corn cake and Nos Bolocha cookies. There is much for American Christians to learn from Brazilians, especially the wives, about exercising Christian hospitality. These ladies spend most of their days cooking for their visitors.

Soon after this "snack" the Justices, the Gardners and the Ferros all loaded ourselves into Brother Calvin's Kombi and set out for the evening services in Igreja Batista Livre of Pereira Barreto, Brazil. As was always the case the attendance at this service was excellent. The first hymn was #398 "Sou Feliz." Again I was very pleased and edified by the fact that Baptists in Brazil really open up and sing all out, 100 % with no reserve. The next hymn was #176 "Take Time To Be Holy." Because this church had no pastor at this time Pastor Waldir presided and led the music. He even took the time to teach the congregation the correct timing for the hymn we had just sung. The next hymn was #411 "Dia Festivo" after which I preached my sermon "How Does God Speak Today?" The Holy Spirit blessed us with His presence and the sermon was very well received. Brother Calvin who translated for me even said that he felt like he had preached the sermon too and that it was a real blessing to him. He then asked me if I would preach the same sermon when we returned to his church in Cantanduva.

As we finally drove back to Sud Mennucci I looked at the Southern Cross in the dark Brazilian night sky. It was there as always and very bright and exciting and even sentimental for me. When we got back to the Ferro home Pastor Waldir ordered delivery of five large pizzas. Brazilians have much different ideas about pizzas than we do in the States. They don't have any of the types of pizzas that Lyndy and I are used to. Some of the pizzas we had this night included a cream cheese pizza. We ate pizza and talked and drank guarana until 12:25 AM. This nightlife is going to kill me!

JULY 15, 2000

SATURDAY

Bebedouro

I was beginning to feel a bit weary by this time in our trip, even though it was 6:05 AM. I began the day by reading Acts 19:1-20 and Psalms 17 & 18. One thing that was very scarce in the Brazilian homes in which we visited was wastebaskets. They just don't have them except in the kitchen areas. Our morning walk today was in the very pleasant and mild air as the sun came up. The mists of early morning were still on the rolling plains we saw as we walked around the outside of Sud. A lot of people were stirring this morning which was surprising to us since on Friday night they had all as was their regular custom eaten so much Brazilian barbecue and had stayed up so late. As we walked three older men came by on a tractor pulling a low trailer. This was the city garbage truck and crew. At 8 AM a truck with loudspeakers on it drove through the neighborhood advertising who knows what and jarring any late sleepers out of their beds. They kept this up until we left town.

The time to leave Sud had now come but it took us at least thirty minutes to say Chow (pronounced CHOW) or Goodbye to the Ferro family. I made sure to write down Victor's name and address so I could send him the American \$1 bill I had promised to give him. I only had two of them with me when we arrived in Sud so I gave them to the two sisters since they were older than Victor and promised him I would give one to Pastor Calvino when we got back to Catanduva and he would mail it to Victor. Brother Calvin drove us to the house of Ademir and Sandra da Silva where they said a long goodbye to us and presented me with a very special zipper necktie like the one he had worn the night before and I had so admired. Then we went by and picked up Adriana and her three children before stopping at a modern and clean filling station where we purchased alcohol for our trip back to Catanduva. At the station we found a forty-four pound sack of oranges for \$2.50 Reais or roughly about \$1.35 American. Next we parked on the Town Square near the Catholic "edifice" and in front of a stand offering more Paraguayan contraband for sale. While we sat waiting and observing people riding by on their bicycles, Brother Gardner went to a nearby Big Ear to call home and let Peggy know we were leaving for Catanduva.

Finally at 9:10 AM we got under way on the highway for Catanduva. The sun was now a little hazy. We began to notice that the plant we call mother in law tongue in the States grows wild in this area. It is called the Sword of St. Anthony here and pulling it up is thought by Catholics to be an affront to St. Anthony. Stopping to refresh at a Sao Paulo Filling Station on the edge of the city of Gal Salgado, Lyndy and I purchased a baseball cap for our son Eddy which had "Sao Paulo" printed on the front above the bill. Along the road we began to notice a lot of round holes about six inches across in the sides of the cuts made for the highway. Brother Calvin informed us that owls lived in these holes.

Moving on down the road we passed the city of Magda and then the turnoff to a German settlement called New Luzitania. Each city that we visited in Brazil had a sign with the name of the city in seven-foot high letters made of concrete on each highway entrance to the city. Brother Calvin joked that the way we were now mixing English and Portuguese should be called "Portuglish." When we stopped for another break in the town of Floreal we noticed an electronic slot machine at which a Brazilian woman was completely absorbed in gambling away her change. A little later we stopped at a coconut grove which was what I would call an orchard of palm trees with coconuts growing on them. There was a roadside stand here selling coconuts but no coco gelado or cold coconut juice. Here in the sandy red dirt we observed some red ants with unusually large heads.

As we again got underway brother Gardner explained to us that Brazil has what we might call socialized housing. It works something like this. Each person in Brazil finds or builds a house and moves in. He pays a small part of his salary each month (25 Reais or about \$15) for twenty years. Then the house is his. If the husband dies before the twenty years are expired the government gives the deed to the house to the widow marked "paid." Of course the debt for these houses is never paid and periodically taxes have to be raised to try to keep up with the sky rocketing debt.

Arriving in Rio Preto we visited a craft store where Lyndy purchased some large wooden spoons. Just a few minutes down the road we reached Catanduva at 12:20 PM where we had a lunch of potato soup and sandwiches and checked for e-mail from home. At 2:30 we all decided to take a nap because we were so weary. Lyndy ironed some clothes while I tried to sleep. Because every house in Brazil has at least two dogs and they all bark at the same time which is all the time in the daylight hours and a lot of the time at night, I was unable to get any quality sleep. Most of these dogs have free run both inside and outside the houses. There are no leash laws in Brazil. Other sounds contributing to my failure to sleep were some kind of birds that all seem to say the same thing over and over, wild green parrots fussing and squawking and mototaxis or motorbikes used as taxis in the streets. I later learned that the birds that seem to say the same thing over and over are called Ben Te Vi birds. They seem to say again and again Ben Te Vi (pronounced BEHN-TAY-VEE') which in Portuguese means Good To See You.

At 4:30 PM we left Catanduva and traveled Northwest to the large city of Bebedouro where brother Lanny Woods from Texas is the missionary pastor. We passed a large orange juice plant along the road. Citrus groves were everywhere in this region. Now it began to cloud up as another cold front moved in from the South. We saw some orange colored Ipe trees and came to a tollbooth. Then we crossed the Tabarana. Now it began to rain. Presently we passed over the Rio Turvo and arrived at Bebedouro at 5 PM.

Bebedouro (pronounced BEE-BEE-DOH' -ROH) had several tall buildings and was a center of orange juice production. The headquarters of one of the largest orange juice producers in Sao Paulo State is located here. We drove to the almost luxurious new home of Lanny and Judy Woods and after showing us their home they took us to eat in a restaurant in the walkway of a mall in a large shopping center. Just as we returned to their home there was a rain shower with lightning, which knocked out the power for a few moments. Inside the house they groped until they found some flashlights so we could proceed to the church services. Lyndy and I had brought a flashlight with us in the shoulder bags we were carrying.

The very crowded service that night began with the singing of hymn #73 "Um Grande Amigo" followed by #15 "Exatacao." The large crowd was made up of people from two Independent Baptist Churches in the area who had come to the services on buses in addition to the people of the Calvary Baptist Church where the service was being held. The names of the churches represented were Central Baptist Church of Barretos and the Bible Baptist Church of Barretos as well as the Calvary Baptist Church of Bebedouro. At this point Lyndy and I were presented with some special gifts from the children in the congregation who then sang a special song in English specifically to us. We were truly touched by this thoughtful and loving action by these beautiful Brazilian children. Next a father and son duet accompanied by a guitar sang "The Old Rugged Cross." Next some of the young girls and teenaged girls sang a special. Pastor Woods' wife played the piano for all the music and even sang a solo accompanying herself on the piano. After singing hymn #579 "Olhando Para Cristo" the young people from the Central Baptist Church in Barretos sang some special music which was a little swiny and not a traditional song. Next the singing of hymn #329 "Canta As Bencaos" was followed by the testimonies of three men and one woman. The service began at 7:10 PM and I got to preach at 8 PM.

JULY 16, 2000

SUNDAY

Catanduva Sabbath

After driving back to Catanduva the night before, we rose from our sleep this fine Sabbath day at 6 AM. It had rained during the night. Breakfast was served in the Gardner home at 7:30. This promises to be a most strenuous day with three services in which I will preach.

Sunday School began at 9:10 today and was sparsely attended. This was not unusual in Brazil according to Brother Gardner because the big service in Brazilian Baptist churches is the Sunday evening preaching service. The cold weather also probably kept some people at home. Cold is a relative term because cold to these people is 65 degrees. It was just a little cool to us and we were grateful for it because back at home in Kansas City the temperatures this time of the year run into the nineties and one hundreds. One visitor was present, a middle-aged lady who told Brother Gardner that she was there because she had been reading his weekly articles in the Catanduva newspaper. Her name was Sonia Moteleone.

What Brazilian Baptists call Sunday School we would call morning worship. This Sunday School began with the singing of hymn #366 "Firmeza" (The Solid Rock), hymn #9 "Santo" (Holy, Holy, Holy) and hymn #456 "O Estandarte." I preached on "The Nature Of The Church" and took as my text Matthew 16:18. After Sunday School I asked everyone present to assemble outside the public school building where we had met so I could take pictures of them to show to our church back home. We rode home in the Gardner Kombi and took several people to their homes across town on the way.

We had wonderful fellowship around the lunch table at the Gardner home and also some serious discussion of the doctrines of grace. It was at this time that Brother Calvin proposed that Lyndy and I plan to return to Brazil for another preaching tour in 2002, this time to the Northern Coastal area around the city of Fortaleza. He volunteered to make the needed contacts for setting up such a trip and named some missionaries he knew who might like to have us visit their fields. I immediately liked the suggestion and Lyndy was not opposed to it. At 1:30 PM we lay down for some much-needed rest and at 4:30 we gathered around the Gardner table once again this time for supper and for some real fun visiting with the Gardner children.

We returned to the public school building where Brother Gardner's group meets for the evening Bible study at 6 PM. We began this service by singing hymn #293 "Desejos Espirituais" after which the children present left the room to go to a Bible study just for them. The adults remained in the main classroom and Brother Calvin

asked me to use this time to tell the people about the work that I had done as a prison chaplain several years ago at Oklahoma State Reformatory in Granite, Oklahoma. I gave my testimony of salvation and described my prison work and then took some questions from the floor. There was a lot of interest on the part of these people about this work and they asked a lot of questions. I had to carefully steer the subject back to the gospel and the Lord's work. Brother Figueiredo showed a great deal of interest in my prison work.

The seven o'clock service began at 7:20 after a large crowd had gathered. Excitement filled the room as we stood to sing hymn #398 "Sou Feliz." The singing was spirited and all four parts could be clearly heard. The special music was a duet provided by Benjamin Gardner and Brother Alfredo Sergio Figueiredo the name of which I did not get but the tune was "Swanee River" and it was #484 in the hymnbook. Next the congregation sang #281 "Fonte Divina." Here I repeated the sermon Brother Calvin had asked me in Sud Mennucci to preach again, "How Does God Speak Today?" A large part of the crowd was made up of twenty-one members of the Alberganti family in whose home we had held the Bible study earlier in the week. The entire congregation listened intently and at least two of the families present were involved in problems relating to Pentecostalism errors in their own churches. The closing song was hymn #406 "Confiar Em Cristo." We arrived at the Gardner home at 9:30 for supper and retired at 11:15 PM.

JULY 17, 2000

MONDAY

A Day Off In Catanduva

At 5:45 AM I got out of bed to go jogging with Ben Gardner but on this much cooler morning Ben decided not to get up this early so I walked alone through the streets of the neighborhood around the Gardner home. Upon returning to the house I played chess with David Gardner who finally checkmated me. While this was going on Lyndy was teaching Joy Gardner how to mail merge on the computer.

After an 8:00 breakfast we went shopping in the Mercado which was a market of stores all under one roof. From here we moved up the hill to the main part of the downtown area and shopped from store to store for nothing in particular but for fun in general. We entered a shoe store and looked for some of the special shower type sandals that were popular in Brazil at this time. We hoped to find a pair for our daughters Leah and Rachel. The owner of the store was a young man about 30 to 32 years of age. He told one of his female employees to prepare for us a special cup of Brazilian coffee. While waiting for it we visited with the young owner through Brother Calvin as our interpreter. He treated us like we were really special people. This man like most everyone we met in Brazil was very warm and friendly and hospitable toward us. Unfortunately the store did not have the size of the sandal we needed so we did not purchase anything.

After walking about a mile down the street we found the home of Ana Vano and were invited into her studio even though she was scheduled to leave in fifteen minutes to make a bus connection for Sao Paulo. I had visited Ana's studio in 1998 when we had been here before and she remembered me and asked about our daughter Rachel who was with me at that time. It was a real treat to look at all the beautiful artwork she had done in hand painting flowers and scenes on Schmidt china cups, saucers and other items. She gave us some items on which she had been working for Rachel and we purchased a number of lovely demitasse cups and saucers, a china heart for hanging on a chain around a woman's neck and other miscellaneous objects. Ana signs all of her artwork that makes us treasure it all the more. I purchased the china heart as a gift for my mother. We spent virtually the whole day shopping in the brisk air and under the clear blue sky of this sunshiny day. During this shopping experience we saw many very interesting things.

We stretched fifteen minutes into thirty and then just had to force ourselves to leave in order to cause Ana to miss her bus. Saying goodbye to her we walked back to the business district and had lunch at an Arab place called Mubarach's Restante. Our exotic meal here included cabbage leaf roll, grape leaf roll, sour yogurt spread, sesame seed paste, baked egg plant, Zucchini, tabouli, lime, fried chicken fillet, mutton, rice, corn and pita bread all served with olive oil and vinegar. We finished off with ice cream bars on a stick with the brand name of Magnum, the flavor of which was doce de leite. This was one of the most enjoyable treats of the whole trip.

Next we drove to one edge of the city of Catanduva to a pottery factory called Ceramica de Catanduva that was operated by a man from Portugal whose name was Jose' Pereira Domingues. He told us he had been in Brazil for forty-eight years after leaving Portugal at the age of twenty-one. Jose did not own the factory but he was the main potter, the man around whose skills it all revolved. We watched fascinated and amazed as this man produced vessel after vessel using only his bare hands on the clay as it rotated rapidly on an electric potter's wheel. He told us in answer to our question that he usually makes about two hundred pots a day.

Ceramica de Catanduva is one of my favorites of all the places we visited in Brazil. The actual owners of the shop collected exotic birds and kept them in cages on the premises. One of these birds, a Tisiu (pronounced TEE-ZEE'-OO), was especially intriguing in that every time he uttered a chirp he did a complete summersault in the air and landed on his feet in the exact location from which he had jumped. We watched him go through this routine again and again. Every time he would chirp he would do this complete flip again. Another interesting bird was a Red Breasted Sabia that was like a large robin with a beak that was a little larger than that of a robin. We spent a long time here observing the potter, looking at the kiln and the clay pit, and picking out items to purchase, all of which were very inexpensive. One special item we bought was a water cooler with a filter and spigot. It cost us eight Reais or about \$5.50 American. It had the exact color of the red Brazilian soil about which I have already commented.

Now we drove North 13 kilometers or 8 miles out of Catanduva to the village of Catigua. This entire little town sits on top of a low hill from which miles and miles of sugar cane fields and citrus groves can be seen by looking in any direction. Here we visited several bamboo factories. These were places where workers made baskets out of bamboo plants for use by citrus pickers in their harvesting.

We walked through the streets of the town just seeing the sights and while doing so came upon three older adults, a man and two women. They greeted us in a friendly manner so Brother Calvin struck up a conversation with them that we greatly enjoyed through his interpretation. The two women were sisters and all three were of obvious Italian extraction. They told us that one of their daughters was returning that very day from a visit to Disney World in the USA.

As we walked through town we kept seeing the plant we call hydrangea and we learned that in Brazil it is known as hortencia. A couple of blocks on down the street we entered a bamboo shop, which in Portuguese is Fabica de Balaio, which is the kind of shop and not the name of a particular shop. The owner gave us a tour and an extended explanation of the work of this shop. He had about six male employees ranging in age from a teen-age boy to a middle aged man. Some of them were using machete knives to cut the bamboo while others were weaving it into baskets and still others were checking the bamboo that was curing in a pit in the back of the shop and cleaning up the premises. From Catigua we returned to Catanduva and the Gardner home where we checked our e-mail. Then Ben Gardner drove us along with his two brothers to the edge of town where he took a photo of Lyndy and me standing near the seven-foot concrete letters of the city sign informing travelers that this was CATANDUVA. On the way back to the house we stopped at a public park and entered a building where some retired men were playing a strange game called bocha (pronounced BAH'-SHUH). This game which is an Italian import to Brazil involves the use of ceramic balls a little smaller than bowling balls which are rolled and thrown down the sand surfaced court by the players. I was invited to play but declined due to the difficulties of the language barrier but Benjamin accepted an invitation and the players were greatly delighted.

For supper the entire Gardner family took us to a Brazilian pizza place called La Bella Casa. The owner came to our table and told us through Calvino that Brazilian pizza was the best in the world and wanted us to tell him after we had eaten if this was not so. We were the only customers in the place on this particular night so we got special attention from the employees. We were all in an especially jovial mood this evening and the excellent cuisine just made us more so.

We ate four different kinds of pizza. The first was Quatro Queijo or Four Cheeses. The next was La Mestre, which was made up of shredded chicken, mashed potatoes, corn and mozzarella cheese. The third was called Closed Pizza and it was the special of the house. It contained cottage cheese, ricado cheese, smoked turkey, cream cheese and Parmesan cheese. The last was called California pizza though I am still at a loss as to why. It was made up of Canadian bacon, cream cheese, peaches, figs, pineapple and prunes,

Part of the levity of this evening included Brother Gardner's explanation of some Brazilian cultural sign language. He said that there are several gestures Brazilians use to convey certain social messages. When they pull and hold down the left eyelid from the bottom they mean they doubt what you are saying. When they think something is good they pull on one ear lobe. When something is especially good they reach behind the head and pull the opposite ear. When they pull on both earlobes they mean it is too good to be true. Another is pointing with the lower lip although I have forgotten what that means.

Finally leaving the pizza restaurant we drove through Catanduva in the darkness on our way home. We drove past the old Portuguese colonial mansion that was now virtually in ruins and then past the monument to the line of demarcation drawn by one of the Catholic popes to divide South America between the Spanish and the Portuguese. Reaching the Gardner home we had a good time joking around and then reading God's word with the family after which I went outside for one of my last views of the Southern Cross. Bedtime was 10:45 on this, one of the happiest days of our lives.

JULY 18, 2000

TUESDAY

Albergantis and Figueiredos

At 5:50 this morning it was 30 degrees outside and we had no hot water. I put on all the layers of clothing I could find and walked through the neighborhood with Benjamin Gardner. The severe dive in temperature caused me to have a lot of sinus drainage and congestion. About a mile from the house we visited a bakery where things were already hopping. For several minutes I spoke through Benjamin's translation to the baker who was a man about fifty five to sixty years old. While I visited with him the two teenaged girls who were working in the combination bakery and bread store kept staring at me and giggling as if they had never seen an American.

Back at the house I drank hot lemon grass tea while reading Psalms 25, 26 and 27. At 8 AM we ate breakfast and enjoyed real orange juice prepared by Charity in a juicer from the sack of oranges we had purchased last week in Sud Mennucci.

While Lyndy and Peggy Gardner went shopping for various Brazilian foods and candies to take back with us to the States, Brother Calvin and I held a Bible study at the home of retired pastor Alberganti. When we started there were eight family members present. Our subject was Baptism, Valid and Invalid. Each adult family member asked questions which Brother Gardner and I tried to answer from God's word. This interaction went on for about two hours after which the ladies of the family served us two kinds of cake, guarana and erva cidreira or lemon grass tea with cloves and cinnamon added. The cold weather was now making its presence known even though I had on four layers of clothes at this point. My feet were cold but what a warm and loving group of Christians this family was! How wonderful that the patriarch, Brother Alberganti, is so very concerned for their spiritual welfare.

We met the ladies and the rest of the Gardner family back at their house about noon and went for lunch to Colossus Charrascaria for Brazilian Barbecue. This place was in downtown Catanduva and was a sidewalk restaurant. We had had the great pleasure of eating here in 1998 when I had first visited Catanduva. The meal was served, one meat at a time, each of the six or seven meats being brought to the table on a spit and shaved off onto our plates with a large butcher knife by the male waiters. These waiters would not stop giving us meat until we told them to stop. This kind of barbecue meat is called in Portuguese, churrasco (pronounced CHOO-RAHS' -KOH) and the type of restaurant where it is served is called Churrascaria (pronounced CHOO-RAHS-KUH-REE' -UH).

The specific foods we were served included lamb, filet mignon, Brahma hump, pork, ham, chicken hearts (which I did not eat), grilled chicken filet, fried chicken, cheese balls cooked over fire, black beans, rice, French fries, small slabs of corn mush, a mild Brazilian salsa, French bread and guarana. The total cost of all this for the nine people in our part was \$42.00 American, an unbelievable bargain compared to what a comparable meal would have cost us in the States.

After lunch we drove to a spot on the street near the Gardner home where there was a very striking tree with purple flowers all over it and took pictures of the Gardner family; Calvin, Peggy, Benjamin, Charity, Joy, Daniel and David. Peggy told us that the name of this particular tree was floreas hoxxes (pronounced FLOHR-HEH' -US HOH'SHEHS).

About this time the Gardner family felt the need to take a nap so Lyndy and I retired to our bedroom where, instead of napping we began packing our bags because tomorrow we would begin our long journey back to the United States. I don't know how but somehow Lyndy was able to get everything we had bought packed neatly into our suitcases.

At four o'clock Brother Calvino and I drove to nearby Rio Preto so I could purchase a special clock that I had seen there the day we returned from Sud Mennucci but had hesitated to purchase at that time. I did purchase the clock, which was a Schmidt china plate with a very colorful picture of a Brazilian Tucan (pronounced TOO'CUHN) bird painted on it. I planned to hang it in my study in the church building back home. We stopped by a candy factory after this and purchased a sampler box of all the delicious and exotic Brazilian candies made in the factory. I wanted to give every member of our church at home at least a bite of this culinary delight.

Brother Gardner and I had wonderful fellowship driving back to Catanduva. Somewhere along the way he told me about a lady who attends the services of his church that is a converted Roman Catholic nun. Her name is Gilda (pronounced ZJIL' -DUH) Brandi Curtu. She had told Brother Calvin that in 1940 she had been present and had actually participated when Catholics in Catanduva led by their priest had rounded up all the Bibles they could find and burned them in two bonfires on the City Square in front of the Cathedral. She had gone to her own family members, had asked for their Bibles and had then thrown them on the fires herself. He also told me that to convert centigrade temperature to Fahrenheit one must multiply the centigrade by nine, divide the product by five and add 32.

The evening service this night was in the garage of Brother and Mrs. Figueiredo in Catanduva. About twenty-five persons were present including a number who had never repented of their sins and placed their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation from sin. One such person was a young adult woman who worked at the Wizard Language School with Benjamin Gardner. The title of my sermon was "Evidences Of Repentance" and my text was Matthew 3:8. Hymns we sang included #2 "Justo Es Senhor," #259 "A Ultima Hora" and #556 "Oracao Para A Noite" (pronounced OH-RAH-SOWN' PAH' -RAH A NOY' -TAY). On behalf of the church Brother Gardner presented me with a large Brazilian flag that was about six feet long and four feet wide. He told Lyndy and me how very much the people of the church appreciated our being there. After the closing prayer the Good-byes were very touching because we all realized that we might very well never see each other again until we meet in heaven at the Savior's feet. On the way home from that service I took what may well have been my last look at the Southern Cross. We lay down to sleep at 11:30 PM.

JULY 19

WEDNESDAY

From Catanduva To Sao Paulo

Our last day in Brazil began at 5:15 AM. At 8:15 we left for the Sao Paulo Airport. There was a haze on the sugar cane fields. The country between Catanduva and Limeira was truly an agricultural paradise with citrus and mango groves and sugar cane fields. In between and around it all were eucalyptus trees and bamboo stands. Along the way we fell into a conversation about some unusual (to us) customs of the Brazilian people. Brother Calvin pointed out that Brazilians always bathe before supper and don't consider people really clean if they don't do this. They also do not tuck the sheets when they make up their beds. This got to be rather annoying when we would get into bed at night.

By and by we passed a city named Tatu (pronounced TAH-TOO') which means Armadillo. Looking ahead on the left we saw Araraquara (pronounced AH-RAH-RUH-KWAH'RUH), a city of some 200,000 souls where the Gardners had once lived and worked. There were many tall buildings here and they were painted in light shades of white and tan.

Now we began to see more and more cattle of several breeds including Guernsey, Black Angus, Charlais and the dominant breed in Brazil, Brahma or Zibu (pronounced ZEE' -BOO) as Brazilians call them. Next we passed the town of Ibate (pronounced EE-BAH-TAY') where as in every town boys were out flying their kites. The plains began now to level off some. After awhile we came to the large city of Sao Carlos and here the Blood of Christ plants were plentiful.

Presently we stopped to refresh at Castelo, an old Portuguese ranch headquarters that has been converted into a bus station, restaurant, candy and souvenir store. We had stopped here in 1998. The large mud hornets' nest that had clung to the top of the bell tower the last time I was here was gone and only an ugly brown stain was left as evidence of its existence. Here we saw some scarlet periwinkles that Brazilians call Boa Targes or Good Afternoons. Since there are no distinct seasons here the periwinkles grow and grow until someone cuts them back and many of them are almost bushes in size and shape. In this area we saw a few more of what I call Banyan trees but which Brazilians refer to as Sete Copas or Seven Crowns.

Suddenly we were presented with a breathtaking view as we dropped off the high plains onto a downgrade. There were outcroppings of basalt rock and we could see possible volcanic cones in the distance. As soon as we could find one we stopped at an overlook to enjoy the scenery. The air was cool, the clouds had dimmed the sun and we could see horses and a ranch house far below. We hiked about a three hundred yards down to a little promontory where was a small shallow cave and just listened to the quiet and let the cool breeze pass over our faces.

As we approached the city of Rio Claro we passed through the third toll booth of the morning. Rio Claro (pronounced HEE' -YOH CLAH' -ROH) is a city that seems to be about the same size as Catanduva. Farther on we passed by the city of Santa Gertrudas in the area of which we saw Santa Gertrudas cattle as well as Guernseys and a lot of horses. Around Santa Gertrudas there were many ceramic tile factories where the tiles for the garage floors and breezeways and houses of Brazil are manufactured. The dirt in this area was a dark red but here and there we saw other hues ranging from yellow to almost a purple color. I would like to return to Santa Gertrudas someday to visit some of the ceramic tile factories and the outlet stores connected with them. A number of them had various types of pottery for sale along with the tile. The small and obviously poor village of Cordeinopolis came into view and the kites were hovering over the red tile roofs of houses packed together in a very small space.

Up ahead is the huge city of Limeira (pronounced LEE-MAY-EE'RUH) and it is time for lunch. We stopped at Graal (pronounced GRAH-AHL') of Limeira which is one of a chain of large filling stations combined with restaurants and souvenir stores seen throughout Sao Paulo State. This very interesting and tasty lunch

consisted of cheese pastel, corn mush in shucks, cheese bread, sugar cane juice called caldo de cana and pudim (pronounced POO-DEEN').

The next city was a place of real excitement for us because of its connection with our beloved Southern United States and the old Confederacy. The city itself is a large city with a number of tall buildings. Going East about five miles out of town we came to the cemetery where the Confederate soldiers and their wives who had refused to surrender after Appomattox and had come here and started a colony had been buried along with their descendants. There may be as many as five hundred graves in this cemetery which is on top of a hill that overlooks miles and miles of sugar cane fields. It is filled with tall old eucalyptus trees as well as some cedars. Many of the tombstones date from the 1860's and 1870's.

There is a small chapel at the entrance to the cemetery that seats about forty to fifty people. It had been repainted inside since we visited here in 1998 but the larger than life sized oil portrait of General Robert E. Lee in full dress uniform was missing. We found the grounds keeper and through Brother Calvin asked him about it. He said that it was stored in a shed on one side of the property so we asked him if we could see it. He gladly gave us the key to the shed and when we had opened it we found the portrait up in the rafters. We carefully took it down and returned it to the chapel and restored it to the place of honor it had occupied for many years until recently. Opposite the chapel was a courtyard made up of flag stones which form a large Confederate battle flag about seventy feet long and about forty feet wide. On a low wall on one side of this courtyard were stone representations of the flags of the eleven Southern States that had made up the Confederacy. Between the chapel and the courtyard stands a monument to the men who first colonized Americana. It was a white obelisk about twenty five feet tall with Confederate battle flags on each side down low and the names of all the original colonists just above these flags. The whole thing sits atop three steps on all four sides. These Confederate settlers organized the first Baptist church in Brazil. It was an independent Baptist church that in recent years has been absorbed into the Brazilian Baptist (Southern) Convention. We were told that blond haired, blue eyed, English speaking descendants of these men assemble twice each year in this park-like area and sing Dixie. We had fun taking photos beneath the monument, on the courtyard and near the chapel.

Now it was time to get serious about getting to Sao Paulo and the airport so that we would not miss our flight home. We started back through Americana and passed a store that sold furniture made of bamboo. I wished we had time to stop and look. Several miles down the road Brother Gardner stopped at a roadside stand and bought Lyndy a coco gelado, a cold drink of coconut juice right out of the just harvested coconut. The man who ran the roadside stand cut the end off the green coconut with a Machete, inserted a drinking straw and handed it to Lyndy. It tasted much better than the one we had the week before in Sao Paulo the juice of which had been filtered.

As we came to the final leg of the highway to Sao Paulo the roadway widened to six lanes. The population began to increase noticeably as we moved along. The weather was getting colder and colder and the traffic volume was building rapidly. Then we came to the city of Campinas with its teeming multitudes and tall buildings as far as the eye could see. We began to see the almost numberless bairros on the sides of the hills.

We were getting hungry so we decided to stop at the suspended mall of Campinas. This is purportedly the only mall in South America that is suspended over a major highway. Inside they had a Dunkin Donut shop and a lot of interesting specialty stores. One surprising shop was a large one that sold Chinese vases. As we looked out the windows at the highway and cars passing under our feet we could see a water theme park nearby called Wet N Wild. There were lots of young people in the mall and most of the workers in the stores were in their early twenties. Inside the mall we found a McDonalds and decided to have McChicken nuggets.

From here it was only about fifty miles to Sao Paulo but we knew that traffic in that city is always a nightmare and that we must keep moving so we got under way once again. Passing through a large area of vineyards we came to the city of Jundiai. We could see mountains to the West and as dusk began to fall the lights of the bairros started coming on. Now we moved into some low mountains as we continued a steady ascent toward the crest. We began to encounter tremendous large truck traffic all headed for Sao Paulo. All the trucks in Brazil have an unusual device attached to the center of each wheel with a metal tube running from each up to the cab area of the truck. We were told that these things help maintain proper air pressure in each tire.

At 6:33 PM we crossed the Tropic of Capricorn and for the next several miles the highway wound through deep cuts in the mountains. Up ahead we could see the twin radio towers on two peaks which, Brother Calvin said, signaled our approach to Sao Paulo. From this point on into the city all houses no matter how humble had television satellite dishes on top. Even shantytowns had electric lights. In the distance we could now see the lights of the megalopolis of Sao Paulo. At about this time the traffic came to a full stop and then proceeded in a slow crawl, then stop and go and then dead stop again. Thank you Lord that we don't have to hawk food along the highways to make a living! It now became very clear to me how tired and how cold I was. Lyndy and I were huddled up in the middle

of the back seat of the Kombi with blankets around our shoulders and over our legs. We later learned that this very unusual cold front actually burned some of the coffee crop.

Reaching the downtown area at last we passed by a huge favela on the river at 6:55 PM. The traffic was now stop and go and only a crawl. Four lanes on each side of the center island were not enough to handle the deluge of cars and trucks flowing in from every direction. All trucks are required by law to remain in the two right lanes of traffic in Sao Paulo. About every half mile there was at least one policeman standing above the traffic in a shed or at a station of some kind ready to report by radio any trucker who transgresses this rule. One of these policemen, on looking closely at him, turned out to be a manikin. Motor bikes sped between the cars riding on the white lines and beep beeping to try to keep cars from changing lanes and hitting them. At one point a subway train passed over head moving very fast compared to our stop and go. We passed the stadium where the infamous Brazilian Carnival floats are paraded before international television cameras each year. Then we passed a large concrete soccer stadium. A little farther on we passed a huge store whose sign said Hypermercado. I don't know if this was a Walmart Hypermart like the one we have in Kansas City or if it is an imitation name but it was amusing to see. At 7:30 PM we finally reached Guarullios Airport in Sao Paulo. After checking our bags and paying the tourist tax to get out of the country we sat with Calvin, Daniel and David Gardner in the coffee shop for one last time of visiting. At last we said Good-bye to the Gardners at the Customs desk and boarded Continental Airlines flight 94 for Houston, Texas USA. It was 9:45 PM Sao Paulo time. We were tired and ready to get home but the plane sat on the runway until 10:50 PM. To pass the time I began reading a booklet I had brought with me from home for just such a situation. The name of it was "That Blessed Hope" by Cecil Yates Biss. After taking off and circling for awhile the lights of Sao Paulo began to sink below us and we knew we were on our way.

Almost endlessly the lights of the city stretched toward the horizon below and once more we circled back over the city where somewhere below Calvin, Daniel and David were making their way back toward Catanduva, eight hours away by car. That vast expanse of city lights reminded us once again of the teeming millions of Sao Paulo and of all Brazil that have comparatively little or no witness of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. When I finally tried to go to sleep it was 12:20 AM and I realized that it was actually a new day, July 20, 2000.

JULY 20, 2000

THURSDAY

Kansas City, Here We Come!

I slept fairly well for about four and a half hours by lying down flat in the row of six seats which only Lyndy and I were occupying but Lyndy had a difficult time sleeping. After getting my nap out so to speak I traded with Lyndy who finally slept fitfully for about two hours in the same chairs. The lights were turned out about midnight and the plane was dark until five AM when suddenly all the lights came on and the flight stewards began serving breakfast. It was 5 AM Houston time but 7 AM Sao Paulo time. We now began to expect to experience jet lag during the coming afternoon.

At 5:38 Houston time the sky on the right side of the plane began to turn red and at 5:55 we touched down in Houston. The first thing after deplaning was Customs which was a breeze because the only thing that happened was that a woman Customs officer moved rapidly through the baggage claim area with a drug and/or bomb sniffing dog who went right past our bags and didn't even hesitate. We had to walk what seemed about a mile and a half to board the plane for the final leg of our flight from Houston to Kansas City. We stopped for a moment to refresh and to collect our wits. It was 6:55 AM Houston time and the sun was not up yet.

We then boarded Continental flight 604. The time was 7:15. The temperature at Bush International Airport was 88 degrees and the humidity must have been 100%. At 7:54 AM we took off into the haze and clouds and shortly began to experience some turbulence. As I looked toward the North over what must have been Oklahoma a cold front and its attendant clouds was obviously moving toward us. After awhile we flew into the clouds of this front and the visibility immediately went to zero. During the last couple of days or so in Brazil I had begun to notice a lot of sinus trouble, brought on no doubt by the red dust that was everywhere and also from the fallout from the burning and cutting of the sugar cane fields. Now the cabin pressure in the plane seemed to be helping clear my sinuses.

At 9 AM we began our descent toward Kansas City. The fields below were dark green now as we dropped below the heavy cloud ceiling. Down through the intermittent clouds we came until we touched down at Kansas City International Airport at 9:22 AM. When we had picked up our bags at the baggage claim, Sean Baker who had lived in our house for the past two weeks picked us up in our car and drove us to our house. Thank the Lord for bringing us safely home again!

CONCLUSION

This preaching mission to Brazil was one of the highlights of both of our lives exceeded only by our trips to the land of Israel. The dedication of the Montgomerys and the Gardners to their work of spreading the gospel and starting Baptist churches in this far away land, the warm and loving Christian hospitality of the Brazilian Baptist pastors and people and the unique beauty of the land of Brazil will never be forgotten.

There are also some serious and pressing needs in Brazil which we can never forget and which we hope you will earnestly pray about. The most obvious and immediate need we saw is the need for native Brazilian pastors for our Independent Sovereign Grace Baptist churches there. A number of the churches have no pastor and are led by one man or another in the congregation while they wait for the Lord to send them a pastor. The churches have buildings and good-sized congregations in most cases but no pastors. Another very pressing need among the Baptists in Brazil is for sound Christian literature, preferably in Portuguese for the pastors and others to read. They need standard works on theology and commentaries such as John Gill's "Body Of Divinity" and works by A.W. Pink. The pastors I met are avid readers of whatever they can get but they need books in Portuguese and they need Baptist books.

Finally Lyndy and I would heartily recommend that your church send its pastor and his wife to visit in Brazil and observe and participate in the work of our missionaries there. We believe this will revolutionize a pastor's and ultimately a church's concern for the missionary work of Jesus Christ and will lead to a greater support of our missionaries in prayer and financially.

We are deeply grateful to God for sending us to Brazil. We are also grateful to the Victory Baptist Church of Kansas City for allowing us to make this unusual and edifying trip.