

Light for Brazil



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Home sweet home

Moving one step at a time, we are getting settled into our home here in Belém. God has definitely provided for us. In the past month we have gone from living out of suitcases in a hotel room to signing the lease on our apartment!



Brian signs the lease contract

For a few weeks we talked with many realtors and renters to find an apartment in our budget. God provided us with an apartment that meets our needs and is in a good location; only a block away from a major street through the city. And it is secure, with cameras and a 24 hour guard post at the front gate. We are thankful to God for providing us a safe place to live.



At least they threw in the kitchen sink

Immediately after signing the lease, we began looking for furniture for our apartment. Housing in Brazil comes unbelievably bare. The rooms come complete with walls, doors and sometimes sinks but not cabinets and never closets. So "furnishing" our home does not mean making the house comfortable so much as it means making the house livable. We got some kitchen cabinets, a fridge, stove and a clothes washing machine. Washers are new in Brazil, and some come with a

washboard because they only soak the clothes and then do a spin cycle.

One challenge so far has been getting an internet connection, or even finding a place from which to connect to the internet. We will not be able to get internet at home for another month and internet cafes have very unreliable service that often is not functioning. However, if difficulty getting an internet connection is our biggest worry, then we have been greatly blessed!



Early home furnishing

Please join us in prayer:

Praising God!

Our Language Studies

Our new friends

Edson, Neto, Gledi, Fatima

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“Edifício San Marco”- our building

Language Studies

Now that we are somewhat settled in, we have begun our search for a Portuguese teacher. It has been an interesting search, since we don't know the best way to find one. We have begun by calling all of the language schools listed in the phone book, and we have several leads from that. We will now visit the schools and meet the teachers and find out more details about the hours and methods available. We will need a full-time teacher between the four of us, each studying at least 2 hours a day. We also want a method that will help us get to conversational level as quickly as possible, and then learn the details about verb conjugations and pronunciations.

Our first experience of meeting a teacher was pretty funny. Brian took a trial lesson of “Portuguese for foreigners” at a school called “Kumon” last week. Right off the bat the teacher wanted to give a written test to see which level of Portuguese we needed. I tried to tell him that the test he had given me was too hard, but instead I said something about the test “being more building.” The word for difficult is ‘difícil’ which sounds very similar to the word for building, ‘edifício’. The problem with this school was that their “Portuguese for foreigners” class was actually a class for Brazilian children who were falling behind in school. We were the only adults in a classroom full of Brazilian children, who of course, already spoke the language very well! The other places that we have contacted to visit assured us that their courses are for adult foreigners, and so we have high hopes to find an appropriate school one soon.

Bus 902

We have been riding busses as much as possible to get to know the city without breaking the bank by taking taxis. Something great about Belém is the excellent public transportation system. In our studies I read that a few years ago there were 1100 busses in Belém, and there are probably more now. That works out to 1 bus for every 1300 or so people. I wouldn't want to be on that bus, but since most people do ride the bus it always brings us into contact with the culture. When I asked our English speaking friend, Neto, if the busses here were “pretty good” he replied, “they are not pretty, but they are good.”

We can walk one block, climb on “Bus 902” and it takes us to the heart of downtown Belém in 30 minutes to an hour. The only bank in town that we can withdraw money from is downtown. And since we are searching for a car, we take this ride every day to withdraw the maximum amount so that we will actually have the money when we do find a car. That means that every single day we spend at least 1 ½ hours just on this task alone. However, it is very cheap at \$1 per person (Josiah rides free), as opposed to a taxi which is \$20. We usually have several errands to run downtown once we withdraw the money, so we have been walking a lot also. The little money that we save each week from using the bus we are putting towards our car fund. We look forward to the time and sweat that we will save once we are able to purchase a car!



Josiah tries to keep cool during a nap

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