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SURIYACO, La Catedral,
San Blas de los Sauces,
Pcia. La Rioja
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Dear Daddy, La Rioja
Argentina

Thank you very much for your letter before Christmas. Thanks also to Kathleen for the card she sent from Home for Xmas. I imagine it all passed by very well with lots of good programmes on T.V.

You mentioned the big problem there is in Ireland & England over the petroleum. Here fortunately Argentina has its own reserves & oil wells so there has been no problem until the moment. The only danger is that they will increase the price as in comparison with other countries it is very cheap. England & Ireland will have to change its political line on the Arabs if they want to get petrol. In any case in England it must be causing a real serious problem - in the middle of Winter at that. As you can see I am writing this letter from La Rioja another part of Argentina where I come to spend a few quiet months doing a type of retreat - it is something like Daramon as it is quite distant from the rush of every-day life. I think I mentioned this change in one of my latest letters but in any case the ~~same~~ address is above. At the end of the letter I will include another address which is more safer as here at times letters get lost. ~~However~~ In that case anything important or urgent you can send it to that address.

How is everyone at home? It is a pity the factory is working so slowly with the beet. Where I am now is a really beautiful area - it is like Switzerland, lots of mountains etc only that it differs from Switzerland in that it is a desert area - Last year I was here before and I think I described it in a lot of detail. At the moment they are 20 or so of us here doing a course in Scripture for a few days. Here we will remain five to six or 3 months of retreat, meetings, a type of noviciate. One is Italian, another Mexican, another from the Dominican Republic, another Argentina and myself so it is like the United Nations. I am looking forward to this time as

last year in Olmos, we had a very hectic year as I'm sure you gathered from my letters. After this time I will probably return to Fatin Olmos. Here there are no mosquitoes and it is a very pleasant climate, with a lot of water for irrigation near at hand so we can swim every day when we like. The products that the people have here are the grape, and nuts - ("Brazilian Nuts" I think we used called them in Ireland - they are a dark brown and very difficult to break). They are some animals goats, sheep and cows but I've never seen cows so miserable as there is very little pasture. At first I am finding it strange here as one misses all the movement we have in the house in Olmos. There at about 6.30 the lads arrived who work weeding the algodón and until 11.0 o'clock at night it was go-go all day! I enjoyed it very much but it was very tiring.

I'm sorry I've been writing much less often than I should. I hope to write quite a lot while I am here in Surigao as I will have time and will be in a quiet atmosphere to write. Here in this part if there are 10 or 15 families living within 3 or 4 mls it is much so we are practically in a monastery. As a lot of people have emigrated from this area there remains a lot of houses deserted so we live in them. The area has a lot of fruit for instance at the moment on the cactus plants which abound there is a fruit, very sweet and very nice to eat. We eat an awful lot of it. The only problem is picking and peeling it as it has a lot of small thorns like the dust in barley but much worse so that you can't touch it until you eat it.

How is Kathleen keeping? I will be expecting the good news one of these days. Hope Tommy Lee has come back and will be able to get work on land. How is Mammy & all the lads keeping. I hope there is not too much flu around. Has Fr. Mansfield gone back yet? Give him lots of greetings. How is Donald Daly keeping, it is ages since I've heard of him. Give my best wishes to all. Will write again soon.
God Bless all
Love Pat.