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San Ming Times

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Greeting from the Unique City of San Ming, China,

What happens when you have an American stomach in a Chinese atmosphere? Last week I found out some of the ill effects of such a situation. For several days I had a fever, upset stomach and a very severe intestinal problem. One day I visited the squat pot 15 times. My diarrhea lasted one week with me averaging visiting the "pearly whitey" once every hour. Once my predicament was over it wasn't my stomach or my intestines that hurt the most but my knees. Thanks for those that encouraged and prayed for me during this time, your prayers where heard. O, and if anyone needs advice on how to use a squat pot, I am now a professional squat pot user. Another thing to remember if you eat at a little corner shop you do not have to eat everything they sit in front of you, especially if it is duck blood.

These last several weeks the turbulence in my digestive system matched and in some ways was belittled by the turbulence in my family of 8 high school boys. While I was sick several of my boys knowing that I was sick and in bed refused to do their daily chores. When I saw what was happening I sat down and had a meeting with every one of my boys. I laid some guidelines and encouraged my boys to do their chores and to do it as a team. I also said that if these guidelines are not met then we will assume responsibility of an extra week of chores. Several days after our little meeting every one of my boys walked away from the chores without following our set guidelines. For one day I agonized and struggled with myself about how I was going to tell my boys. I wanted to look the other way or just pretend they did a good job, but I knew I couldn't. I now know the struggle a father has for his sons. While it has been a struggle I do believe that now after several fights, some counseling sessions, and much much praying

the turbulence has subsided. Thanks for the prayers!

Along with all the other turbulences of the last couple weeks, I feel an inward turbulence. I not being able to celebrate Christmas at home with my family and friends, but even more then that I cannot verbally tell my children all I want to about the real meaning of Christmas. We are intending to celebrate Christmas here at the children's village. A group of people are coming from America to help join us in the celebration (pictures in next e-mail). For those who can and are willing to celebrate Christmas please do it with Christ at the center.

Thanks so much for the support every one has been to and my children and the other staff here at the San Ming Children's Village and on behalf of all of us have a

"Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year"

Thanks, Stephen Burkholder

PS: Without Christ there is no reason for the season, and the holidays become just a boring X-mas.