

# FULFILLING MY DUTY TO GOD

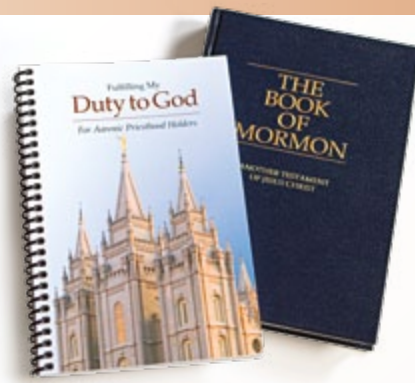
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At every age, in every Aaronic Priesthood office, Duty to God helps a young man chart his growth by setting goals in specific areas. This section gives you some

examples and principles to follow as you set and carry out your own goals for becoming the kind of priesthood holder the Lord expects you to be.



# PRAY AND STUDY THE SCRIPTURES



## TESTIFYING OF TRUTH

By Armando Razanakotonirina

**M**y name is Armando. I am from the Antananarivo Madagascar Stake. I want to testify to you that reading the scriptures and doing Duty to God really brings blessings to us and to those around us.

I remember one Monday in our family home evening I felt that it was an occasion for me to bear my testimony about the Book of Mormon. I had chosen previously that this would be the action I would take to follow the pattern in the booklet. I testified especially to my father, who had been inactive for months, to let him know

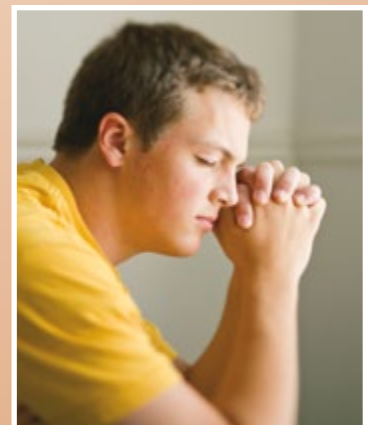
what I know about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Soon after it seemed my father started to gain more faith again, and the next Sunday he started coming to church again. He met with the bishop and began to focus more on doing his duty. I realized that following the *Fulfilling My Duty to God* booklet had brought blessings to my family. I know that it prepares us to become effective missionaries, worthy bearers of the priesthood, diligent leaders, and good fathers to take our families to the temple. I know we will be successful in our lives if we do our duty to our Heavenly Father. **NE**



## DO IT DAILY

**D**eveloping a habit of regular prayer and scripture study will keep you close to the Lord and nourish your testimony. As you make your plan to develop this habit, consider these ideas:

- Keep a scripture study journal, and write down something you learn from the scriptures each day. Share what you've written with your family.
- Make your personal prayers more meaningful by spending a few moments before and after your prayer listening for promptings from the Spirit.



# LIVE WORTHILY

## HOLD UP YOUR LIGHT

By Fred Caruso

Our Scout troop traveled to Cape Hatteras on North Carolina's Outer Banks for a surf fishing adventure. Arriving at mid-afternoon, we set up camp and then drove to the beach to fish.

We found a nice stretch of beach at the end of a driveway that wound through high sand dunes. Confident from my years of driving a trailer, I proceeded down the winding pavement and parked. We retrieved our fishing gear, rigged surf rods, cut bait, and eagerly hiked to the beach, hoping to catch the large bluefish and channel bass that roam the surf.

The excitement and labor of surf fishing made us lose track of time. I began to think about the van, trailer, and long, winding driveway. With no room to turn

around, I knew we would have to back out. This is easy in daylight, but daylight was quickly fading.

As I backed out, I could not see if my wheels were



## LIVE THE STANDARDS

Your example can help guide others to safety by worthily living the Lord's standards. In the "Live Worthily" section of the *Fulfilling My Duty to God* booklet, you're invited to study the standards from *For the Strength of Youth* and make plans to apply them. Here are some ideas:

- Language: Whenever someone says something negative about another person, respond by saying something positive about that person.
- Sabbath Day Observance: Make a list of activities that are appropriate for Sunday.



on safe, firmly packed gravel or the loose, sinking sand that would easily swallow an axle. Facing the possibility of a stranded vehicle 10 miles from camp in the dark, I knew it was time to pray for guidance. After we prayed, I tried to maneuver. Then one of the young men said, "Let's all take out our flashlights and stand along the safe ground. Just follow our lights, and we'll get you out."

There soon was a string of lights shining in the darkness. It was easy to back up. As I progressed down the pitch-black driveway, the lights moved on, marking the safe path. Soon I was nearly at the highway entrance and feared that the trailer might back onto the dark highway instead of the safe shoulder. Again, the young men reminded me, "Just follow our light." They guided me safely onto the shoulder, and then they all boarded the van. About an hour later we were eating hot soup around the campfire.

Two days later, at fast and testimony meeting, I was reflecting on the actions of our young men. There could have been hundreds of them trying to guide me, but only those holding up the light could actually help. I thought of Jesus saying: "Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do" (3 Nephi 18:24).

I bore testimony of our valiant and wise young men and the lesson they had taught me. I reminded them to keep the light of Christ burning brightly so they can guide those stranded on the sand dunes of life looking for that light that leads to safety. **NE**



# UNDERSTAND DOCTRINE

## FINDING THE ANSWERS

By Sam Magnusson

I have two big things in my life: church and sports. I found out that I had to combine the two when I tried out for my high school basketball team.

I started going to practice during the summer right before my freshman year. As I got to know the older players and their personalities, they started to notice I didn't do a lot of things they did—I didn't cuss, smoke, do drugs, look at pornography, or even go on dates yet. They started to make fun of me slightly. In a high school of about 1,500 students, only 4 of us are members of the Church. So you can guess we got teased a bit. But it didn't bother me much, and I was happy to stand up for what I knew was true.

As the season drew on, my teammates started to ask me more about the Church. There weren't big, important questions, just things like "Why don't you date?" Then one day during study hall, some of the players started talking about their families, and that conversation turned to religion. So they asked deeper questions about the Church like "What is repentance?" and "Do you believe in a heaven and a hell?"

I always carry a copy of *For the Strength of Youth* in my backpack, so I pulled it out to help answer their questions. We talked about the Church for over an hour. When it was

over, there were two questions I could not answer. I promised to look up the answers and get back to them. That night I looked up the answers, and my mom suggested I bring extra copies of *For the Strength of the Youth* and also the book *True to the Faith*.

The next day while we studied together, when the boys asked questions, I pulled out the books and passed them around. We had another long and deep discussion about the Church. I asked if anyone wanted to keep the books, and some people did. Later that week we had another talk about other churches, not just mine, and my coach, who is very religious, talked about his and other beliefs.

I don't know if anything good will come out of this, but I know that my team members now know more about the true gospel and why I am different from them. My testimony had been strengthened, and I have gained the courage to talk about and stand up for what I know is right and true. **NE**



## IDEAS FOR GAINING UNDERSTANDING

**T**he better you understand the doctrines of the gospel, the more prepared you are to invite all to come unto Christ. Consider these ideas as you make your plans to understand doctrine:

- Do any of your friends or family members have questions about the gospel? Choose to study a doctrinal topic that could help you answer their questions, and then share with them what you learn.
- Choose topics that correspond with your study in seminary, Sunday School, family home evening, or quorum meetings. Look for opportunities to share in these settings what you learn from your study.

# ADMINISTER PRIESTHOOD ORDINANCES



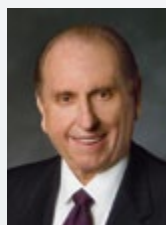
## DO YOUR DUTY REVERENTLY

**Y**our reverence toward ordinances can have a great influence on those you serve. Here are some ideas to consider as you make plans to administer priesthood ordinances reverently:

- Offer to show a new quorum member how to administer the sacrament.
- Try to arrive at church 30 minutes early so the sacrament can be ready before ward members start arriving.



## A PRAYER TO REMEMBER



I remember as a deacon watching the priests as they would officiate at the sacrament table. One priest had a lovely

voice and would read the sacrament prayers with clear diction—as though he were competing in a speech contest. The older members of the ward would compliment him on his “golden voice.” I think he became a bit proud. Another priest in the ward had a hearing impediment which caused his speech to be unnatural in its sound. We deacons would [snicker] at times when Jack would bless the emblems. How we dared do so is beyond me: Jack had hands like a bear and could have crushed any of us. On one occasion Barry with the beautiful voice and Jack with

the awkward delivery were assigned together at the sacrament table. The hymn was sung; the two priests broke the bread. Barry knelt to pray, and we closed our eyes. But nothing happened. Soon we deacons opened our eyes to see what was causing the delay. I shall ever remember Barry frantically searching the table for the little white card on which were printed the sacrament prayers. It was nowhere to be found. What to do? Barry’s face turned pink, then crimson, as the congregation began to look in his direction. Then Jack, with that bear-like hand, reached up and gently tugged Barry back to the bench. He, himself, then knelt on the little stool and began to pray: “Oh God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to

the souls of all those who partake of it . . .” He continued the prayer, and the bread was then passed. Jack also blessed the water, and it was passed. What respect we deacons gained that day for Jack who, though handicapped in speech, had memorized the sacred prayers. Barry, too, had a new appreciation for Jack. A lasting bond of friendship had been established.

President Thomas S. Monson, “The Aaronic Priesthood Pathway,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 42.





# SERVE OTHERS

## CALLING MY QUORUM

By Mark Tensmeyer

One Saturday afternoon I received a phone call from the father of a family I home taught. “I was wondering if you could watch our kids while Cindy and I go visit her grandma,” Brother Stevens asked (names have been changed). “She hasn’t been doing well, and we think this might be our last chance to see her.”

I assured Brother Stevens I would be glad to help. “That’s great!” he said. “And if you could, it would be nice if you could straighten up around the house, since today is our anniversary.”

When I arrived, Brother and Sister Stevens left me with some microwavable noodles and a list of chores to do around the house. Then they drove off. I had a strong impression that I should do more than just watch their children. This was a difficult day for them, and I wanted to make it a bit better. I decided to do all the chores on the list and more, including washing the dishes and mowing and edging the lawn.

Obviously, I couldn’t do all of that and take care of their three kids in just three hours, so I thought I should call some members of my priests quorum. There was just one problem: I wasn’t exactly friends with the guys in my quorum. We got along all right, but aside from the Church,

we didn’t have a lot in common. We went to different schools, and I rarely saw them outside of Church functions. I felt awkward calling them for something like this.

I called the Young Men president and asked if he could get some of the guys together to help. He kindly replied that he was simply an adviser and explained that I should call Peter, the first assistant to the bishop, who had the calling to help me in my priesthood responsibility. That was exactly what I was afraid he would say.

Nervous and with a little hesitation, I called Peter and asked if he could come over. “Sure,” he said. “I’ve got Scott and Kevin here, and I’ll bring them over too.”

Together, we mowed and edged the lawn, did the dishes, and straightened up the house. Brother and Sister Stevens came home just as we were finishing.

That experience taught me that priesthood quorums are united by faith in Jesus Christ *and* in service, regardless of differences in interests, personalities, or backgrounds. **NE**



### IDEAS FOR SERVICE

To hold the priesthood means to serve others. There are countless opportunities to serve all around you. Here are two simple examples:

- Take the lead in your quorum to pick up litter whenever you see it in your meetinghouse or on the grounds outside.
- Try to anticipate chores your parents might ask you to do, and get them done before they ask.





# INVITE ALL TO COME UNTO CHRIST

## YOU NEVER KNOW

By Jeffrey Olson

**A** while ago my bishop and priests quorum adviser challenged our quorum to give away two copies of the Book of Mormon within a year. I took the challenge to heart and always had a Book of Mormon on me (in the car, in my backpack, etc.). Several people accepted copies, but nobody really showed any further interest.

Then one day in June, I was filling up my car with gasoline after work and saw a coworker buying cigarettes. Because of his smoking and his rough personality, I never thought about sharing the gospel with him. He came over to talk to me, and we talked about music and movies. When I explained that I don't watch movies with vulgarity, violence, or immorality, the topic changed to religion. I grabbed the Book of Mormon from the backseat of my car, wrote my testimony inside the cover, and gave it to him.

The next time I worked with him, I asked if he had read any of it. He said, "Jeff, I read the introduction, and I know it's true. I want to know more and be baptized."

That really shocked me. I gave the missionaries his address so that they could teach him, and I took him to church with me. He loved it. He set a date for his baptism.

Before his baptism, he told me that he had been offered a really good job, but he had to act immediately. It was in Alaska, and he was leaving in two days. So we found the address of the meetinghouse in town, and then he left.

Over the next few months we kept in touch, but he made no progress toward baptism. Then one day he called and told me he had contacted the missionaries and was going to be baptized that Saturday.

Now he holds the Aaronic Priesthood and has blessed the sacrament several times.

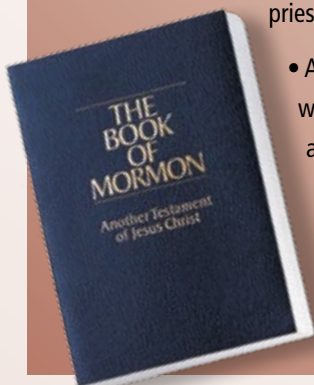
This goes to show that you never know who will accept the gospel, so share it with everyone, and God will provide a way. **NE**



## REACH OUT TO SOMEONE

**O**ne of the greatest services you can do as a priesthood holder is to help someone come unto Christ. Consider these ideas as you make your plans to fulfill this priesthood duty:

- As a quorum, plan an activity that will interest a friend of another faith, and invite him to this activity.
- Write your testimony inside a copy of the Book of Mormon, and give it to someone as a birthday or Christmas present.





# HOW TO SET GOALS

As you do the activities suggested in the *Fulfilling My Duty to God* booklet, you will be more successful if you make specific plans and goals. Here are some tips for effective goal setting and planning.



- **Remember your purpose.** The activities you are planning should “help you develop spiritual attributes and become the kind of priesthood holder Heavenly Father wants you to be” (*Duty to God*, 8).



- **Follow the Spirit.** Pray before you plan, and pay attention to promptings while you plan.



- **Plan to plan.** Regularly set aside a specific time to make your plans and goals.



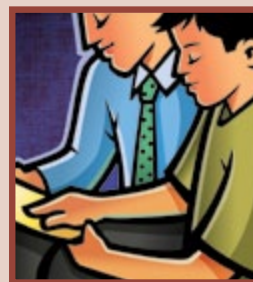
- **Stretch yourself.** Set goals that will challenge you and make you grow. You can do great things if you plan to do them.



- **Write it down.** “Learn to write your goals down. I would even put them in a prominent place—on your mirror or on the refrigerator door” (M. Russell Ballard, “Go for It,” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 4).



- **Be specific.** Goals should have specific time periods, requirements, definitions of success, and so on. You can think big while planning small.



- **Get good advice.** Share your plans and goals with your parents and leaders. They can support and help you.



- **Measure your progress.** Set daily and weekly goals that you can measure so that you can track your progress toward your main goal. As appropriate, share your progress with your quorum, parents, and leaders.



When you plan and set goals related to Duty to God, you are showing your faith and the seriousness of your desire to succeed. President Thomas S. Monson has said, “It is necessary to prepare, to plan, so that we don’t fritter away our lives. Without a goal, there can be no real success. . . . Wishing will not replace thorough preparation to meet the trials of life. Preparation is hard work but absolutely essential for our progress” (“Three Gates Only You Can Open,” *New Era*, Aug. 2008, 2, 4).