

My Mission among My Family

By Andrea Gómez Lagunes

When I opened my mission call, I was surprised to see that I had been assigned to the Mexico Veracruz Mission. My family had lived in Veracruz when I was born, and most of my extended family lives there. We are the only members of the Church in our family, so I was excited at the thought of having the opportunity to share the gospel with my relatives.

However, once there, I never served in an area near my relatives. I gave their addresses to my companions so they could visit them.

Fifteen months into my mission, I began having knee problems. My knee hurt a lot and at times the pain was unbearable. When I went to the doctor, his diagnosis was that surgery was the only solution. That meant that I would be returning home early. I couldn't believe that this was happening; I had only three months left on my mission.

I decided to turn to the Lord to ask for comfort and, if possible, a miracle. In answer to my prayer, I felt deep relief in my heart. My mission president's wife encouraged me with sincere motherly love to return home to recover, and I wrote my family to notify them that I would be coming home in two weeks.

After that, I had an interview with my mission president. He told me that my mother had contacted him and given him an option: She could come to Veracruz to care for me in the home of an aunt and uncle of mine during my recovery, since I would have to cease missionary activities for a while. My president told me that it might be a feasible option but that he would have to ask for permission.

When I found out later that permission had been granted, I felt my heart leap with excitement—I could stay and finish my mission! I said a prayer of thanksgiving.

On the day of the surgery, my

My mission president's question stayed with me—why had the Lord allowed me to stay and finish my mission?

mission president told me, "Sister Gómez, you need to find out why the Lord allowed you to stay in Veracruz." From that moment on, I was set on finding out the reason.

That same day, my mother, who had arrived in Veracruz, told me, "Your Mamá Lita (my paternal grandmother) is coming to the hospital to see you. This would be a good opportunity to ask her about your ancestors."



“What a great idea!” I thought. I couldn’t wait to ask my relatives about my ancestors. Mamá Lita asked me about what it meant to be a missionary. I taught her about the Restoration and then talked to her about the plan of salvation, since my grandfather—her husband—had died a few years back. Then came a question I’d been hoping she would ask: “Will I be able to see my sweetheart again?”

Her question filled me with joy, and I answered, “Of course you will!” Her eyes glistened. It was wonderful to share that eternal truth with her. More questions came, all of them focused on the plan of salvation. In turn, I asked her the questions I had about my family so I could fill out my family tree. I felt how the Spirit enabled her to gain an understanding of the plan of salvation.

Later, as I visited the rest of my relatives, I talked with my maternal grandmother, who helped me find more family names. I was also able to share the gospel with all those we visited.

I realized why God had allowed me to first go to Veracruz on my mission and then to stay there after my surgery. I returned to my mission with a deep love for family history. Thanks to my mother’s tender care, I was able to finish my mission.

My paternal grandmother died a year later, which made me very sad. On the other hand, I felt grateful and excited to be able to do her temple work one year later. When I was baptized for her, I couldn’t hold back my tears of joy. She would finally be able to be with her sweetheart, to whom she had been married for more than 60 years.

I have no doubt that the Lord knows our hearts. He allowed me to stay in Veracruz to teach my family and proclaim the good tidings brought by our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. I know that one day I will be able to see my grandparents again. It is our responsibility to do our ancestors’ work so that someday God will tell us, “Come unto me, ye blessed, there is a place prepared for you in the mansions of my Father” (Enos 1:27). ■

The author lives in Chihuahua, Mexico.