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RUNNING INTO THE CHURCH

One day, while looking for a place to run, I decided to try the parking lot of a church in my neighborhood. I liked it because it was lighted and paved. I found that running 10 to 15 times around the building would complete my three-mile (4.8 km) workout.

My runs in the parking lot continued, off and on, for three years. From time to time, I would see people in the parking lot because I would sometimes run during Church services and other activities.

Several times, I had the impression that I needed to talk with someone about the Church, but I had no idea how to do it. On my way home from work one evening, I decided to stop by and see if I could find someone there. When I walked into the church building, I found the missionaries as

they were finishing interviews with their mission president. I introduced myself and we sat down in the foyer. That was where they taught me my first gospel lesson.

Over the next couple of weeks, I continued meeting with the missionaries. When I attended sacrament meeting, the members of the ward showed me love, acceptance, fellowship, and encouragement. As I thought about what I was learning, I realized that my curiosity about the Church had developed into the need for me to decide to be baptized. I felt I was being prompted by the Spirit to do what my Heavenly Father wanted me to do, but I continued to wrestle with the decision. Finally, I was baptized in November 2001, at the age of 36.

My decision to run in the church parking lot seemed unremarkable at the time. But it led to my greatest blessings: my membership in the Church; meeting my wonderful wife, Jennefer; and being sealed to her for time and eternity in the San Diego California Temple.

So, if you happen to see someone exercising in the parking lot of your meetinghouse, introduce yourself! You never know—he or she may soon become the newest member of your ward! ■

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