

New Format Helps Sisters Improve as Visiting Teachers

In July 2010 Relief Society sisters and subscribers to the *Liabona* and *Ensign* magazines will find a change to the traditional Visiting Teaching Message format.

“We want every visiting teacher to understand that visiting teaching is a call from the Lord and accept her assignment to love, serve, teach, and minister to another sister with that in mind,” said Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

The new message format will help sisters understand the purpose of Relief Society, teach principles to help sisters live the purpose, provide a historical perspective, and offer suggestions on how women can more effectively watch over and strengthen other sisters.

“The Visiting Teaching Message is a tool in the hands of a visiting teacher. As she studies the messages with her sisters in mind, she will know what to share with them and what to do for them,” Sister Beck said.

On the follow page is a sample of the new Visiting Teaching Message, with explanations of its new features. ■

Ministering Question

The purpose of this question is to help visiting teachers act on inspiration to better serve the sisters they teach.

Instructions

Instructions help visiting teachers know how to teach and apply the message.

Relief Society Purposes

The Relief Society purposes were added to remind sisters of the responsibilities of Relief Society: to increase faith and personal righteousness, strengthen families and homes, and seek out and help those in need.

Application Question

This question is meant to prompt action on the part of each individual Relief Society sister and help her apply the message to her own life.

VISITING TEACHING MESSAGE

Our Responsibility to Be Worthy of Temple Worship

The covenants we make with the associated ordinances we receive in the temple become our credentials for admission into God's presence. These covenants elevate us beyond the limits of our own power and perspective. We make covenants to show our devotion to build up the kingdom. We become covenant people as we are placed under covenant to God. All the promised blessings are ours through our faithfulness to these covenants. . . .


"What can the women of the Church do to claim the blessings of the temple?"

"Through His prophets, the Lord invites those who have not yet received the blessings of the temple to do whatever may be necessary to qualify to receive them. He invites those who have already received these blessings to return as often as possible to enjoy again the experience, to increase their vision and understanding of His eternal plan.

"Let us be worthy to have a current temple recommend. Let us go to the temple to seal our families eternally. Let us return to the temple as often as our circumstances will permit. Let us give our kindred dead the opportunity to receive the ordinances of exaltation. Let us enjoy the spiritual strength and the revelation we receive as we attend the temple regularly. Let us be faithful and make and keep temple covenants to receive the full blessings of the Atonement."¹

Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.

From the Scriptures
Isaiah 2:2-3; D&C 109:22-23; 108-10



Faith • Family • Relief

Study this material, and as appropriate discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

What Can I Do?

1. What support can I offer to help my sisters prepare for and attend the temple?
2. How can I exemplify the heritage of the early sisters who sacrificed to receive temple blessings?
3. How can I claim the blessings of the temple?

For more information, go to www.reliefsocietylds.org

From Our History

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught that Relief Society grew out of sisters' desire to worship in temples:

"During the construction of the Kirtland Temple the women were called upon to grind their china into small particles to be mixed with the plaster used on the walls of the temple, which would catch the light of the sun and the moon and reflect that light to beautify the appearance of the building.

"In those times, when there was very little of money but an abundance of faith, the workmen gave of their strength and resources to the construction of the Lord's house. The women supplied them with food, the best they could prepare. Edward W. Tullidge reported that while the women were sewing the temple veils, Joseph Smith, observing them, said, 'Well, sisters, you are always on hand. The sisters are always first and foremost in all good works. Mary was first at the resurrection; and the sisters now are the first to work on the inside of the temple.' . . .

"Again in Nauvoo, when the temple was under construction, a few women joined together to make shirts for the workmen. It was out of these circumstances that twenty of them gathered on Thursday, 17 March 1842, in the upper room of the Prophet's store."²

NOTES
1 Silvia H. Allred, "Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants," *Ensign* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 113, 114.
2 Gordon B. Hinckley, "Ambitious to Do Good," *Ensign*, Mar. 1992, 2.

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Message

The central message will now offer specific and timely counsel directly from the Relief Society general presidency.

From Our History

By reading of the noble legacy of Relief Society, sisters can draw connections between the organization that existed in the early Church and the current Relief Society program. "We are inspired by their sacrifices and desire to take our part in building the Lord's kingdom in our season of service," Sister Beck said.

From the Scriptures

These scriptural references will help enhance the study, teaching, and personal application of the message.

More Information

Pertinent links to other resources can be found at the Relief Society Web page, reliefsociety.lds.org.