

Glimpse into a Council Meeting

It's Sunday morning, and 45 sisters of the Bugambillas Ward in Guadalajara, Mexico, sit in council. After the opening hymn, Relief Society president Yara Ramirez invites some of them to share experiences from their lesson the week before.

After the sisters share their experiences for a few minutes, Sister Ramirez writes a single word on the board before taking her seat back in the circle.

"Unity," it says.

Under Sister Ramirez's direction, they turn to Mosiah 18:21 and read, ". . . having their hearts knit together in unity and in love one towards another."

"What can we as a Relief Society do to put this scripture into practice?" she asks.

The sisters think for a few moments. "Well, the youth can't go to the temple," one sister shares. "There aren't enough adult sisters to go with them."

"I had no idea," says another, looking surprised. "If you don't know there's a need," she asks, "how can you help?"

"That is why we're here," answers Sister Ramirez. "There are needs like this that I learn about during ward council that we can all help with."

"Why don't we make a calendar?" someone suggests. The group now becomes more interested. "I think the youth have a scheduled time at the temple one Thursday a month."

"I'm having trouble going to the temple myself," admits a young mother in the group. "I haven't been there in a long time, and I've been feeling a bit self-absorbed. I would love to go and serve," she says.

Several others nod in agreement. They too find it difficult to attend as often as they want.

Another young mother suggests that they trade babysitting with each other and take turns going to the temple.

Then the sisters start asking each other where they live and who lives by which youth. They discuss how they could take turns helping the youth get to their activities.

"Well, we'll need to get to know one another too," someone says. "We should have activities!"

Sisters continue to comment, offering suggestions and asking questions.

At the end of the council, Sister Ramirez asks her secretary to summarize the minutes. "How did you all feel during the council?" she asks.

They respond that they felt more aware of everyone's needs, that their

service was needed, and that they were among friends.

"Based on what we've experienced today, what specific actions do we want to focus on this month as a Relief Society?" she asks.

As a group, they decide to have a potluck meal that Sunday after church, start playing volleyball on Thursday nights, make a calendar for attending the temple, and plan how to help youth get to activities.

"We've experienced unity today," Sister Ramirez concludes, inviting each sister to think of ways she could serve during the week. "The Holy Ghost will continue to give us promptings as we act individually and as a Relief Society. I invite you to be ready to share your experiences next Sunday." ■

SUGGESTIONS FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Be patient and allow the Lord to teach you what it means to counsel together.
- There are principles we can keep in mind: Follow the Spirit, share your thoughts, and act on impressions.
- Keep your heart and mind open to new ideas, views, and solutions.
- Before each meeting ends, think about what the Spirit has taught you; then decide how you will act on His promptings.



Relief Society sisters in Guadalajara, Mexico, sit in council.