

T Blending Cultures in Toronto

By Katherine Nelson

Located in the heart of Toronto, Canada, Kensington Market offers a slice of the world's diversity. The narrow streets are lined with stands, shops, and restaurants featuring food from any number of cultures: Salvadoran, Mexican, Peruvian, and French, for starters. On any corner, you can find baskets of brightly colored fruits and vegetables, tables of warm, flaky pastries, and the vibrant patterns of various cultures' traditional clothing.

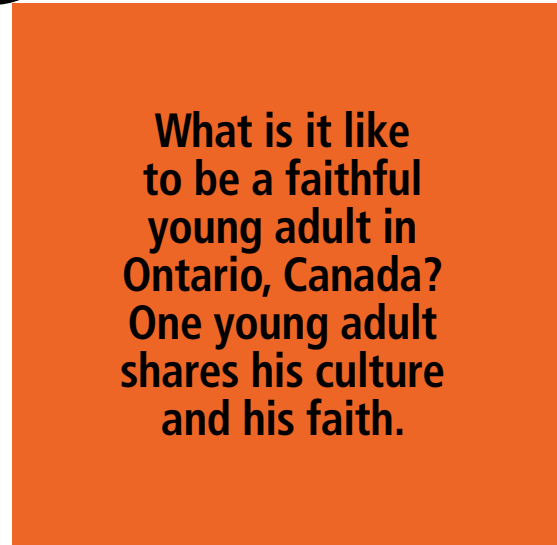
Toronto's patchwork of cultures is made of immigrants, natives, refugees, and students. Jonathan Porter, a 25-year-old young adult living in Toronto, says, "Serving beside members from so many different backgrounds in my ward helps me see the difference between the cultures around me—including my own Canadian culture—and the gospel culture. It's cool to see that each culture espouses virtues that the gospel teaches are righteous. That provides

communication based on the Holy Ghost, which helps people understand one another and transcend their own culture."

Jonathan has seen the gospel's influence in leadership roles too: "Even though leaders often have different leadership styles based on their culture, it doesn't matter. They're all called of God by revelation through priesthood authority, and they are blessed."

For Jonathan, institute offers something he treasures: "Growing up in Toronto, I didn't have many peers who were members of the Church, so I feel safe and welcome at institute. We are unified by our love of the gospel. Other people notice the way we live, see our standards, and recognize that we are unique."

Jonathan's experiences have taught him the importance of charity, "the pure love of Christ" (Moroni 7:47). "The young adults at institute are so different, it doesn't always come



What is it like to be a faithful young adult in Ontario, Canada? One young adult shares his culture and his faith.

naturally to love one another," he says. "I've learned charity means serving others, even in small ways, and loving them regardless of where they're from."

This love and diversity blesses the missionary work. "So many people here are first- or second-generation converts. Sometimes people join the Church here and return to their countries and share the gospel with their families and bring strength to their cultures. To me, that's the legacy of the Church in Toronto." ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



What is unique about food in Toronto?

It's easy to find lots of curries, African food, and Mexican food. There's a large Jamaican community, so some of my favorite foods to eat are roti, rice and peas, and curried goat.

What do you do for fun?

I love learning languages, and I'm able to practice them with my friends. I speak five languages comfortably: English, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Tswana.

What is dating like in Toronto?

Because a lot of young people in Toronto are second-generation immigrants, when I pick up my date, I get to meet her parents, who are often still immersed in their culture and share their traditional foods with me. It's fun.

THE CHURCH IN CANADA

190,265 Latter-day Saints

327 wards

150 branches

7 missions

8 temples

CANADA BY THE NUMBERS

34,568,211 people

44 national parks and reserves

50 percent of the world's polar bears live in Canada

FACTS ABOUT CANADA

Capital: Ottawa

Languages: English and French

