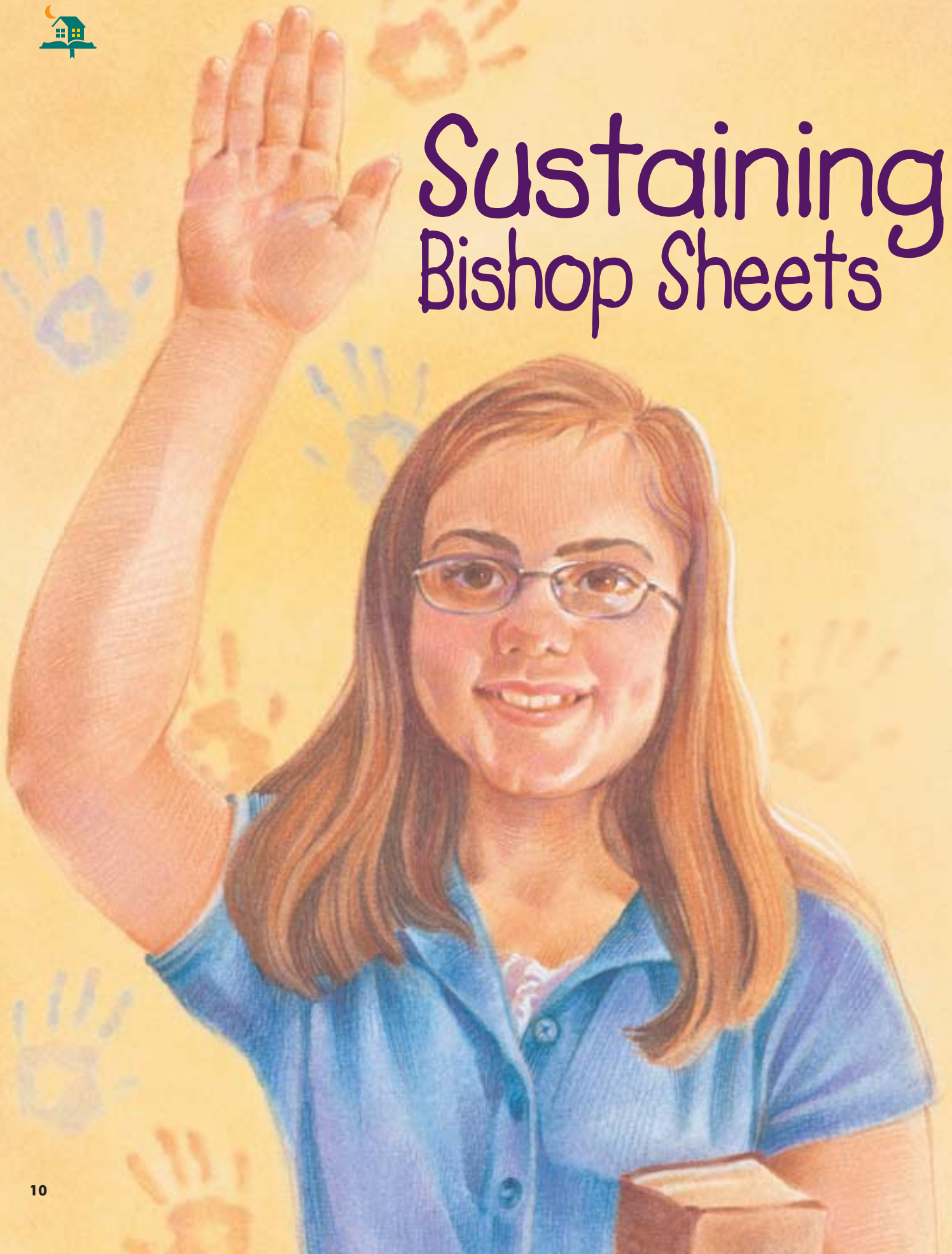




Sustaining Bishop Sheets





BY SHEILA KINDRED

(Based on a true story)

A man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority (Articles of Faith 1:5).

All those who can sustain Brother Rulon T. Sheets as our new bishop, please show it by raising your right hand.”

My hand shot into the air. I was excited to have Brother Sheets as our new bishop. His daughter, Peggy, was a friend of mine. Even though she was a few years older, she often invited me to activities at her house. Brother Sheets would pop in and out of these activities, showing us a certain dance step with Peggy or taking his turn at a guessing game. Sometimes he would make popcorn and sit down and talk with us for a while.

I was happy to sustain Brother Sheets as our new bishop. But as I held my hand up in church and looked around at the chapel full of upraised hands, I wondered what kind of support my small, 11-year-old hands could offer to such a great man.

One of the first things I did was use my hands to make cookies for our new

bishop. My mother told me that bishops spend a lot of time at the church and sometimes miss meals at home, so we whipped up a batch of our best oatmeal cookies. I stirred the batter until it was just right. Then, when the cookies were ready, I carried them carefully to his house. He was thrilled, but I wanted to help more.

A few weeks later, I was at an activity at Peggy’s house. She put me in charge of the music. I used my hands to turn the dial on the radio, listening for a station with appropriate music. Then I turned down the sound so it wasn’t too loud. This was the bishop’s house, and I wanted to help make it a peaceful place.

When school started, the bishop’s family invited a foster girl named Carla to live with them. The first time I met her I extended my hand and welcomed her. I knew it



would help the bishop if Carla was able to make some new friends.

As the months passed, the bishop became ill and had to use a cane to help him walk. My mother said he was sick and he needed our prayers and support more than ever.

When my 12th birthday approached, I had an interview with Bishop Sheets. My mom and I walked to the church and arrived just as the bishop got out of his car. He gave me a cheery wave and shuffled over to the sidewalk. I noticed that, even though it was Saturday, he had dressed in a suit and tie just for my interview. I felt honored.

When the bishop got to the curb, he paused and looked worried. I realized that he was too weak to step up. I ran over to him.

“Take my hand,” I said. “I can help you.”

Gratefully, he grasped my hand and pulled himself up. Then I ran ahead of him and pulled open the heavy church doors.

“I should be doing that for you,” he said softly. “Thank you.”

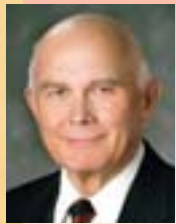
In his office he eased himself into his chair with a sigh. He then asked me to offer a

prayer. I folded my arms reverently, and even though I didn’t mention the bishop in my prayer, in my heart I asked Heavenly Father to bless and strengthen him.

When the prayer was over, the bishop looked more like his old self again. He sat up straight in his chair, and there was a

light in his eyes. At the end of the interview he gave me a firm handshake, which I happily returned.

As my mom and I walked home from my interview, I thought about how much I loved Bishop Sheets, and I knew he was called of God. I was grateful that, even though my hands were small, I could still find ways to support and sustain my beloved bishop. ●



“The offices of bishop and branch president and counselors are sacred in this Church. The men who hold those offices are respected by the Lord. . . . We honor and love them, and we show this by our consideration for them.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “‘Bishop, Help!’” *Ensign*, May 1997, 24.

