



Part One:

# The Flame of Faith

By Megan Withers Roxas

(Based on the life of Sarah Ann Nelson Peterson)

*This story begins in 1842, in a Norwegian settlement near Fox River, Illinois.*

Sarah Ann handed a bowl of soup to their guest. “Thank you,” Mr. James said. “I can never repay you and your mother for letting me stay here to wait out this storm.”

Sarah Ann smiled. Many travelers had enjoyed the warmth of their home. Mother could never ignore a person in need, and Sarah Ann loved her for it.

“We’re glad you could stay with us tonight. This is the coldest night I can remember in Illinois,” Sarah Ann said, taking a seat at the table across from Mr. James. “Our family moved here from New York after Father died. He and Mother left Norway to escape those who wanted to punish them for being Quakers. When they arrived in America, Father worked hard to build a house.”

As Sarah Ann told the story, she could almost smell the fresh-cut maple wood again.

“One day, our home caught fire, and everything was destroyed. When Father returned from work and saw us standing in the street, he asked Mother if we were safe. She answered yes, and Father knelt down right there in the middle of the street and thanked God for protecting us.”

“Your father must have had a lot of faith in God,” Mr. James said.

Sarah Ann nodded, wishing her father were still with them.

Soon their visitor said good night and went to bed.



Mother reached for his worn socks, which had been drying by the fire, so she could mend the many holes. This was a scene Sarah Ann had witnessed a hundred times. She kissed Mother on the cheek and went to bed.

When Sarah Ann awoke the next morning, Mr. James was gone. But the house was not quiet. There was a large crowd gathered in the road outside, and Sarah Ann leaned out the window to hear what was happening.

Two men were standing in the middle of the crowd. Sarah Ann recognized them as the Mormon

missionaries who had arrived in the village last week. It was obvious that whatever they were talking about was important to them.

One of the men held up a book and said, “We testify that the Book of Mormon is true. We also testify that there is a living prophet once again on the earth.”

Sarah Ann suddenly felt a warm feeling fill her heart. It surprised her. She knew in that moment that what the missionaries were teaching was true.

What was the book that man was holding up, and how would it change Sarah Ann's life?

Sarah Ann rushed to tell Mother about the experience and her desire to be baptized. Some of Mother's friends were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and even though they were good people, Sarah Ann could tell that Mother didn't want her to be baptized.

"Sarah Ann, this is a big decision. If you still feel the same way when you are older, then you may be baptized," Mother said.

Sarah Ann agreed. Over the next three years, she learned all she could about the Church. As she did, her faith in Jesus Christ and His restored gospel grew. No amount of time could take away what Sarah Ann felt about the gospel.

Finally, Sarah Ann was baptized. On her baptism day, Sarah Ann made a promise in her heart that she would always do whatever Heavenly Father asked her to do. She was about to find out what that would be. ♦

*(To be continued.)*



**"I will follow Heavenly Father's plan for me."**

My Gospel Standards