

I KNOW FAMILIES CAN BE FOREVER

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I still remember that day. It could have been the most terrible day of my life if I hadn't had the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was July 12, 2001, when my mother died of an illness that had struck on Sunday night and took her life the following Thursday morning. I was 16 years old. I had to miss exams in school to be with my family and attend my mother's funeral services.

I went home from the funeral feeling completely undone. I had a great hole in my heart, a hole so huge I

thought it would never heal. I lay down on the bed, broke into sobs, and asked myself, "Why did she have to go so soon? Why did she have to leave me?"

My 10-year-old brother and I decided to listen to some quiet Church hymns. I had that lonely, sad, comfortless feeling, and then a warm sensation came over me. I felt great peace and tranquillity. My sad expression vanished, as did the empty feeling in my chest.

I was still feeling this comforting spirit when I went with my family to the church where my relatives were mourning. All of my relatives were

very sad, with some breaking into heartrending sobs. Deep pain was reflected in their faces. They looked at my family strangely, as if they wondered why we didn't seem to feel as bad as they did. But my heart was beating calmly, and my whole body was filled with peace. I knew that the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, was calming our pain. He was also testifying that Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father live and that this is the true Church, with eternal covenants.

Afterward, I wrote in my journal: "Our mother didn't want us to cry very much. I do feel sad, but still I have a great peace inside. I just have to be strong and live a good life so I can see her again. My faith and testimony have grown, and so have my desires to serve my God and my fellow man on a full-time mission. She will always be there, helping me stay on the right path. I know that families can be forever. On a day like today 15 years ago, my family and I were sealed as an eternal family in the Lima Peru Temple, and this is what comforts me."

My family and I continue to experience many difficulties. But each time my testimony falters, I remember the time when the Holy Ghost comforted me and testified to me of the eternal truths of the gospel. ■

