That Book Made Me Curious

I stared at the Book of Mormon and pondered the message the missionaries had taught.

By Wilfredo Valenzuela

ne day my friends and I got together to celebrate. At my friend's house, we were talking, drinking, and smoking. But one of my friends, Patrick, didn't join in. I then realized that Patrick never tried any of the stuff the rest of us did; I remembered that he was a Mormon.

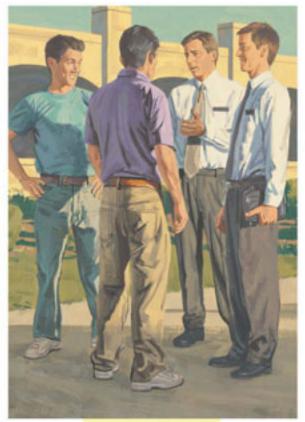
As it got late, everybody separated except Patrick and me. We left together in a jeepney. Still wondering why Patrick didn't join in, I thought back to a day four years before, when

we were 16. I remembered we were walking in the street near our school when I told him I wanted to be a priest someday.

"In our church you could already be a priest," Patrick replied. "You just need to be ordained. Then when you turn 19, you can preach the gospel as a missionary."

"That's ridiculous," I said, thinking he didn't know much about the gospel. "How can a 19-year-old preach to people? Priests take a lot of time to study so they can preach."

Patrick insisted that 19-year-olds in his church could preach. He told me that his



We met up with the missionaries, and they wanted to set up an appointment to answer my questions. church also has another book of scripture, and he gave me a copy. I browsed through it at home, and I felt something mysterious in that book. But I didn't really care about it; I just stuck it in a box, where it lay for the next four years.

Now, as we rode in the jeepney after the party, I asked Patrick where he was going. "I'm meeting some friends. They're elders—missionaries." I remembered having seen them around. I asked Patrick if he would take me to the elders so I could ask them some questions about their church.

We met up with the missionaries at a store near their subdivision, and they greeted us by shaking our hands. It was very

formal. But after they introduced themselves to me, I realized they seemed like any other guys. They wanted to set up an appointment to answer my questions.

"OK, I'll just get your number so if I'm available, I will text you," I replied. I wasn't really planning to text them.

When I got home, I got the book Patrick had given me four years before—something about it made me curious. The next morning I texted the missionaries to teach me. They started with the Restoration of the gospel. It sounded so different, and I told myself, "Why

do people want to restore things when they know that older generations are different than our generation now?" After two discussions I decided not to pursue them anymore. When asked why, I replied, "I'm just not interested anymore." One week passed. I sat staring at the Book of Mormon, pondering the message I had been taught. I started to read what the missionaries told me to in 3 Nephi 11. I read that Jesus went to another nation to show that The day before my Would you like to share how baptism, I repeated the pro-He was the Savior and Messiah. In

Tears fell down my face, and I found myself weeping in my room. I realized the love Jesus Christ has for us. He loves us so much that He gave His own life to save us from our sins. I didn't hesitate to pray, asking to know if the Book of Mormon I was holding is true. Praying in my room, all alone, I suddenly felt that somebody was there listening to me.

3 Nephi 15, I recognized one passage

that I had read before in the Bible, in

John 10:16. It was something the mis-

sionaries hadn't even taught me yet.

My heart was softened by the impressions I had received. I stood up and said, "This is the true Church. I know that this is the Church that Jesus Christ restored."

The day before my baptism, I repeated the process of praying. Again what I had heard and felt sank into my heart, and I knew the Holy Ghost had revealed the truth to me. I knew the truth that Jesus is the Christ. I felt in my heart and mind that I desired to be baptized, believing that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ I could be cleansed.

Jesus Christ atoned for our sins, and this is the very reason I was converted. I know that He was the only one who has the power and the authority to rebuild His Church in our dispensation. Now as a missionary serving in the Philippines Cagayan de Oro Mission, I am doing the best I can to help people feel the great happiness I have now. ■

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