

MY PRAYER IN THE NORTH SEA

When I was 17 years old, we lived on an island in southern Norway called Andabeløy. My father converted to the Church on Andabeløy, and I was baptized in the ocean there.

I was a fisherman by that time and was well experienced in handling a boat. My father put me in charge of our maritime taxi service used by area residents.

One day in 1941 we got a call from the doctor in Flekkefjord, to the north. A woman who lived about two hours away by boat needed immediate medical attention. Dr. Hoffman asked

if I could take him to see her, but my parents were worried about a storm raging in the North Sea. We decided to pray, asking Heavenly Father what to do. We received an answer that I should proceed.

When I eased *Tryg*, my 31-foot (10 m) fishing boat, into the sea, the weather was bad and the waves were big. After picking up the doctor, I set out through the fjord into the open sea. We were to travel to a community just north of Lista, located on Norway's rocky southern coastline—famous for stormy weather and shipwrecks.

I steered through the storm until we got to a rocky inlet, about 40 feet (12 m) across, which led to our destination. The waves, so high I could not control the boat through the inlet, were rushing into the inlet and crashing against the rocks.

"What should we do?" the doctor asked over the gale.

"We have to pray about it," I replied.

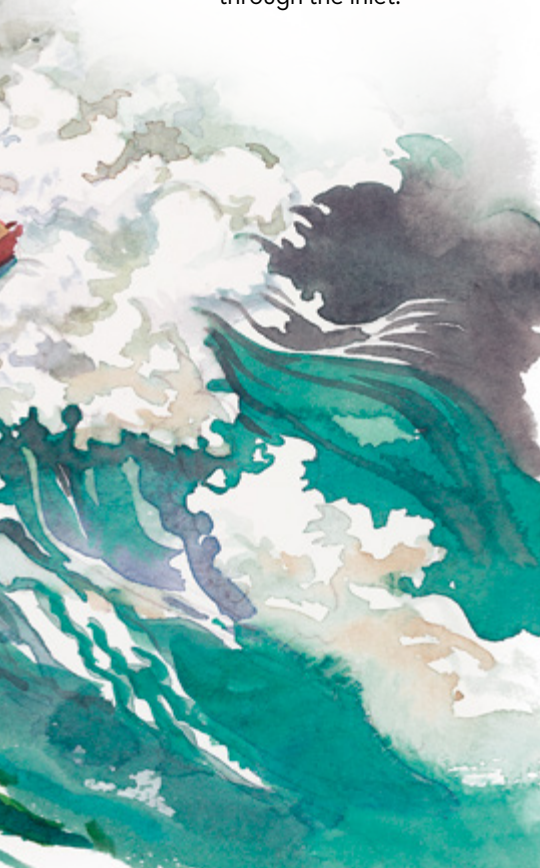
I paused and prayed, asking Heavenly Father for direction. As soon as I had said amen, an answer came to me clearly. I suddenly recalled a story an old fisherman had told me. He had



been fishing in this same area during a bad storm and couldn't get to shore. As he waited out the storm, he noticed a pattern in the incoming waves. After three great big waves washed in, a short period of calm followed—long enough for him to enter the inlet.

I had fished many times in this area but had never noticed a wave pattern. Nevertheless, I brought the boat to the front of the inlet, where we waited and watched as three big waves came in. Sure enough, a sudden calm followed. I glided the boat forward over the smooth water

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of the inner bay and brought Dr. Hoffman safely to shore. He hurried to the ill woman while I waited in the boat, thankful Heavenly Father had answered my prayer.

When the doctor returned about an hour later, he declared, "We saved her life!"

Relieved by the news and the improving weather, I piloted the boat home without incident.

I bear witness that when we need help, we should pray. I know that Heavenly Father will answer. ■

Olaf Thorlief Jensen, Utah, USA

HE LOVES YOU

I was sitting in the corner of the celestial room by the organ during the dedication of the Memphis Tennessee Temple. President James E. Faust (1920–2007), a member of the First Presidency from 1995 to 2007, had come to dedicate the temple. He and several other leaders were seated behind the microphone. A local Church choir filed in and stood behind them.

A young woman I visit taught was a member of the choir. Throughout the meeting, I prayed that she would receive what she had come for. She had confided in me that she came to the temple dedication that day to find out her standing with the Lord. She had committed serious sins in the past, and though she had repented, she still

struggled to feel good about herself. She even struggled to feel good about singing in the choir.

I stared at President Faust, feeling that he, as a representative of the Lord in the First Presidency, ought to be able to do something. But how could I tell him, and how could he do anything? After the meeting, he would file out of the room just as he had come in, and there would be no introductions, no handshakes, and no words exchanged. I understood that he was busy and had travel arrangements, but still I prayed.

President Faust, deep in thought, looked at me for a while—the muscles in his eyebrows were knit together. When the meeting ended, a happy expression flooded his countenance with light.

He looked at me again and then suddenly stood up, turned around, and stretched his arm forward as far as it would go. He pointed directly at my friend. Then he said firmly and loudly, "The Lord loves you!"

President Faust's gesture was small and simple yet so powerful that it could have come only from the Holy Ghost communicating to him what I could not. Those few words blessed my friend and continue to sustain my faith that the Lord is mindful of the details of our lives and "that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass" (Alma 37:6). ■

Alice Victoria Weston-Sherwood,
Arkansas, USA

I HEARD THE CHILDREN

Clinical depression was something I never wanted to face again. But after I had been free of it for 12 years, it returned.

I was scared and distraught. I questioned Heavenly Father and prayed for the strength to make it through my trial. I also pleaded with Him that my depression would not last five years, as it had the last time.

My husband and I have three children, two sons and a daughter, who have blessed us with 13 grandchildren. Knowing the despair I faced, my daughter organized the family for a day of fasting and prayer. All the grandchildren, ages 1 to 10, wanted to pray for Grandma, and the three who had been baptized wanted to fast. It was such a comfort to know that my husband, children, and grandchildren would fast and pray on my behalf.

The next day when I awoke from a nap, the feeling of depression didn't

seem so strong. The next day it lifted even further. By the fifth day my depression had lifted completely. That evening, while I was contemplating how this miracle had happened, a voice touched my soul and said to me, "I heard the children." Heavenly Father had heard them in their innocence and had answered their prayers of humility, faith, and love.

The Savior taught:

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

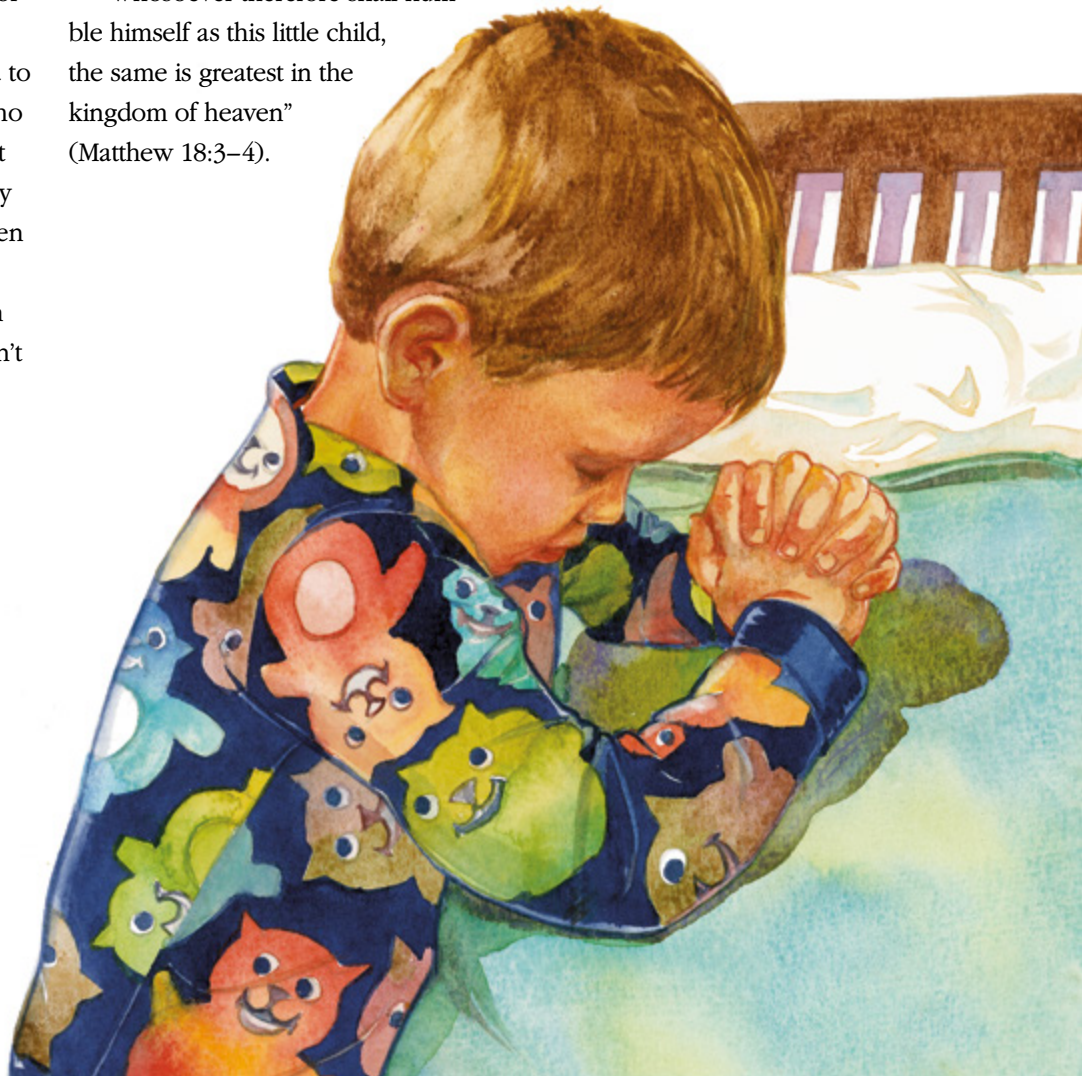
"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3-4).

I have corresponded with my grandchildren and thanked them for fasting and praying on my behalf. I told them how much I love them. I told them Heavenly Father had heard them and answered their prayers.

As my grandchildren grow in the gospel, I hope they will remember the time Heavenly Father said to their grandmother, "I heard the children." And I hope that experience will strengthen their testimony and help them stay strong in the gospel. ■

Joy Cromar, California, USA

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HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE POISON

When I stepped out the front door to get the newspaper, I saw an unpleasant sight. A reddish mound of fire ants had formed in the night, rising through the crack between the lawn and the sidewalk.

Though my husband and I hadn't lived long in Texas, USA, I knew from painful experience that the ants' stinging bite, not their color, had earned them their nickname. I headed for the garage, where we kept the pesticide. I then read the instructions on the label.

"[This pesticide] is highly attractive to fire ants," it read. "They will carry it into their mound, feed it to their queen, and the colony will die." The label instructed me to sprinkle some granules on and around the mound. The ants would do the rest.

I was skeptical. The fire ants seemed pretty clever to me, able to build tall mounds in a single night. I doubted they would fall for disguised poison, but I sprinkled it on anyway.

A short while later I found the mound bustling with activity. I kept my distance but stooped to watch the fuss. They were as ecstatic as if it had just rained manna from heaven. They

were hoisting the white granules in their tiny pincers and knocking over one another in their haste to get the poison into their mound.

I watched in horrified awe. They were willingly taking poison into their home. Apparently, the words "highly attractive" had not exaggerated. Somehow the pesticide company had been able to make something bad—lethal even—look extremely good.

I had never seen a more striking example of how bad could be made to look good. It made me think of how Satan does the same thing. I was comforted to realize that although he can sprinkle his disguised poison around my home, he can't bring it in—unless I let him. So how could I keep it out?

One of my favorite scriptures came to mind: "For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil." With that Spirit, Mormon explains, we "may know with a perfect knowledge" whether something is of God or of Satan (Moroni 7:16).

That experience of watching those doomed ants filled me with gratitude that my husband and I could judge

and know for sure whether to allow something into our home. Our job was to teach our children to follow the Spirit of Christ so that they too could know poison when they came upon it.

As I stooped there, watching those insects transport every last granule into their mound, I vowed to do all I could to keep poison out of my home. ■

Alison L. Randall, Utah, USA

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