

Prophetic Words IN AN Unexpected Place

*An abandoned magazine would
change Oscar Castro's life forever.*

By Colette Lindahl

The day Oscar's wife left him and his two small children was one of the hardest of his life. So many decisions needed to be made. He had been searching for a job, and now he would need a new place to live. It seemed to him that his life was in ruins. He thought of just giving up, and he might have if not for his two beautiful children.

In San Juan, Argentina, not many homes were available to rent in Oscar's price range. But a small home in a safe neighborhood had just been left empty by a group of young men, so Oscar rented it and prepared to begin anew with his children.

In their new home, some magazines and books had been left lying on the floor, and after working all day cleaning and putting things away, Oscar sat down and looked at one of the magazines. The cover intrigued him for some reason. Underneath the title, *Liahona*, there was a picture of an old man standing on a tower talking to the people. The man reminded him of pictures of biblical prophets.

Oscar opened the magazine and began to read, "Each of us already knows we should tell the people we love that we love them. But what we know is not always reflected

in what we do."¹ Oscar thought about the sharp words that had been said many times between him and his wife. He wanted to teach his children to be better than that. Oscar continued to read the magazine, and he began to feel hope growing within him. Before the week was out, he had read every article and wanted to know more.

A month later two missionaries were walking in Oscar's neighborhood. Oscar approached them and asked if they were Latter-day Saint missionaries and how much it would cost to get more of those Church magazines. The elders told him that it would cost him only about 20 minutes of his time.

The next day the two missionaries visited Oscar at his home. Oscar told them about moving in and finding old books, magazines, and pamphlets that let him know about the Church. He explained that the first article he read related directly to his life at the time. He already knew the importance of family and wanted to know more about family home evening and family prayer. He told the elders what else he had learned about the Church, including about Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the gospel.

He looked directly into the eyes of the elders and said the words every missionary longs to hear: "I believe that



Joseph Smith was a prophet of God.” The elders invited him to be baptized, and with tears in his eyes, Oscar accepted. A few weeks later, Oscar Castro was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church.

The Lord had prepared Oscar, and his spirit was contrite and ready to learn and grow. On that memorable, moving day, the spirit of the messages in the general conference issue of the *Liahona* touched Oscar’s heart. The previous

owners of the home did not know the effect that leaving behind a few Church magazines would have, but the gospel messages in those magazines became an important missionary tool. In leading him to the truths he was searching for, they forever changed Oscar’s life. ■

The author lived in Argentina while her husband was serving as mission president.

Oscar Castro was baptized and confirmed after finding a general conference issue of the *Liahona* in the home he moved into.

NOTE

1. David A. Bednar, “More Diligent and Concerned at Home,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 17.