



THE
New Era

DECEMBER

2002

**COVER STORY:
ARTISTS' VIEWS
OF CHRIST,
P. 20**

**FRIENDS CAN
MAKE YOU, P. 14**

**SING ABOUT
CHRISTMAS, P. 11**

**The New Era Magazine
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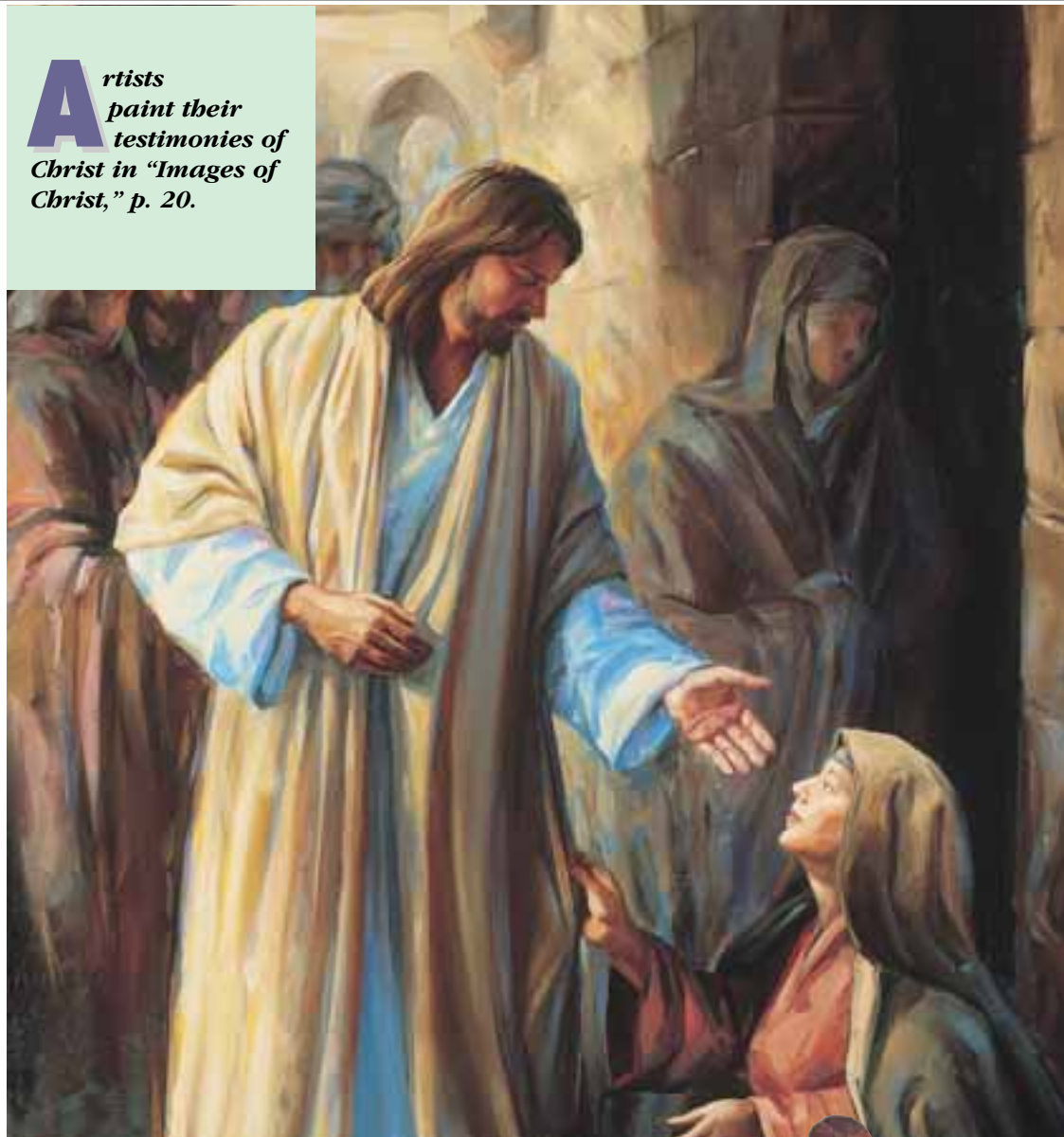
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Cover: *Simeon was
promised that he would
see the Savior in his
lifetime. The promise was
fulfilled when the Holy
Child was presented at
the temple. See "Images
of Christ" on p. 20.*

*Cover art and
photography: (front),
Greg Olson, (back),
© PhotoDisc 1995.*

Artists
paint their
testimonies of
Christ in "Images of
Christ," p. 20.



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UNSEEN



The greatest satisfaction in life comes from what we do for others.

Years ago, when our family was living in Massachusetts, we had our home in the little country town of Weston, about 13 miles west of Boston. It was a very quaint, sophisticated community with many picturesque, winding country roads lined with hand-fashioned rock walls. The small business section was completely deserted by 9:00 P.M. each evening. Yet for all its quaintness, Weston had its problems, especially with many of the high school and junior high students who used drugs and brought liquor into the town where alcohol was illegal.

However, I would like to tell you about one Weston High School student who was too busily engaged in other pursuits to become involved with drugs or alcohol. This young man spent a lot of

time on the ski slopes. Being an avid skier in New England is not unusual, but what this boy did with his talent is unusual. He was an expert skier and loved the sport. In fact, he was an instructor and spent even his spare time teaching others to ski. You could regularly see him coming down the mountainside very close to one of his pupils, who was oftentimes years older than he. They would start slowly but gather speed as they made graceful turns down the slope, all the time carrying on a conversation, laughing,



By Elder L. Tom Perry
Of the Quorum
of the Twelve

SERVICE



enjoying the invigorating air and the sparkling sunshine.

Observers would take note and follow the pair with their eyes until they reached the bottom, regarding them as just two more skiers having a great time.

What the onlookers did not realize was that one of the skiers was blind. This young Weston High School student was teaching the blind to ski. He did it free of charge. When he first had the idea, he discussed it with others and was advised by all to forget it. He was told over and

The Savior restored sight to the blind and gave hope to the hopeless. Unselfish service has been a part of His gospel from the very beginning.



over that it would simply be impossible.

But this young man had witnessed the hopelessness of some of the blind people and wanted to share with them one of the pleasures of his life. He wanted them to have a feeling of accomplishment and success. He wished to give them a new dimension to their lives. He wanted them to feel that they were real, whole individuals. He really cared. He cared enough to devote the time necessary to develop a rapport of love, encouragement, and understanding with these people to help them build faith in themselves and in their own abilities. Gradually mutual friendships blossomed.

These blind people placed their trust in this young man. He was their friend. He was the only one they would permit to put on their boots and snap them into their bindings. In their training, he said that helping them develop an attitude of trust and faith in themselves was the important thing. After that, the technique would come easily.

The last I heard, he had been successful in teaching 13 blind people to ski and was in the process of teaching more. He had even been requested to

write a manual on teaching the blind to ski. He possessed then, and I am sure he still does, the confidence which comes with success. But more importantly, he has developed lasting friendships and has learned how to love and share through worthwhile service.

It is an eternal truth that the greatest satisfaction we find in this life is not that which is done for self but that which is given for the benefit of another.

Service has been a part of gospel teachings from the very beginning. From Adam to the present, we have been encouraged to serve our fellowmen. I had the privilege of witnessing a real fulfillment of Paul's counsel to the Galatians when he instructed them, "by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13).

As this young man from Weston found fulfillment in his service to the blind, so each of us can find the rewarding satisfaction which comes when we "by love serve one another."

May God bless all of us with the desire to find the true joy of service. **NE**

Originally printed in the March 1983 New Era.




10% TITHING= 100% BLESSINGS

Somehow, obedience on the installment plan just didn't seem right.

I believed the words of the prophet Malachi when he said that the Lord pours out blessings to those who pay tithing (see Mal. 3:10). I had no problem believing that. But when it came to actually paying my tithing, I had trouble.

On payday I would set aside money for tithing. However, my payday often came in the middle of the week, and when I needed money later in the week I would “borrow” money from my tithing. I always told myself I would replace the money and give my tithing to the bishop on Sunday, but this plan didn't work. Usually I was unable to return the money, so I would plan to pay the tithing I owed from my next paycheck. I tried to do this, but then very little would be left of my paycheck! Things went on like this for almost the



whole first year I earned my own income.

Then one day I had a realization. A sales representative came to our house. He explained that I could pay for an appliance on an installment plan—receiving the item now and paying for it later. As he spoke, a question entered my mind: “Does the Lord give blessings on an installment plan?”

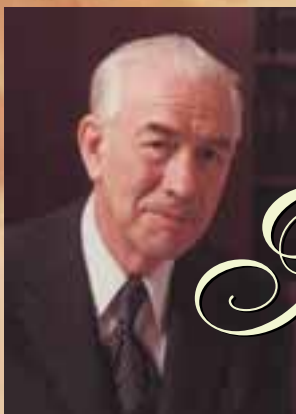
The next day in my institute class, a verse of scripture we discussed answered my question: “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise” (D&C 82:10).

Every commandment brings blessings—and always in full. But we must keep the commandment, not just plan to keep it. That night I prayed for forgiveness for paying my tithes in such a lazy manner.

Now that I am paying my tithing faithfully, my life seems better. And I have found that I am happier living on 90 percent of my money *with* the Lord's blessings than I ever was living on 100 percent of my money *without* them. **NE**

By Jennifer M. Severino

His Gift to the World



By Elder
Mark E. Petersen
(1900–84)

His name was to be Jesus, for He would save the souls of all who would accept Him.

Think of the great blessings that came from that one birth. No wonder the angels sang for joy.

More than 2,000 years ago, a young woman named Mary lived in the little village of Nazareth in Palestine. We know nothing of her immediate family except that she was engaged to marry Joseph, a descendant of King David.

Much to her surprise, she was visited one day by the angel Gabriel, who came from the presence of God. He greeted her with: “Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

“And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying,” and wondered what kind of greeting that was. The angel then told her that she had found favor with God and had been chosen to be the mother of His Only Begotten Son.

The babe would be born of her through the power of the Holy Ghost, the angel explained, and would be holy Himself. His name was to be Jesus, for He would save the souls of all who would accept Him.

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest,” Gabriel said. He would become a king and reign over the house of Israel forever. But He also would be the divine Redeemer of the world.

Mary did not understand and said, “How shall this be?” The angel explained that it would all come about miraculously by the power of the Holy Ghost (see Luke 1:26–35). The angel also visited Joseph, to whom she was engaged. He was understanding. She, therefore, would be the virgin mother of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

As the time came near for the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem, another hamlet in Palestine. They wanted to stay at the inn, where the child could be born, but there was no room for them. Others also had come to Bethlehem for the taxing of the people at the command of the government. They arrived earlier than





Christ would provide the plan for our salvation. He would give His life that we might rise from the grave and have a happy life in the eternities, forever. Who could give more?

Mary and Joseph and took up all the accommodations.

Since the birth of Jesus was near, the couple found refuge in a cave or stable, where Mary brought forth her child. There were no cribs or other conveniences. The little infant was placed in a manger to sleep.

This was the first Christmas. There were no tinsel Christmas trees, no family gatherings, no children at play. But there were carols, the greatest ever sung.

The angels of heaven joined in a great chorus rejoicing at the birth of God's Son. Now the redemption of the world could take place. Salvation could come to all mankind. Death would be overcome, for this little child, when He became a man, would bring about the Resurrection. All mankind could then live again.

Christmas gifts? There were none at that time. The Wise Men came later with their offerings.

But God now gave His gift to the world—that of His Only Begotten Son. And this divine Son by His very birth on earth gave Himself as the greatest Gift of all time.

He would provide the plan for our salvation. He would give His life that we might rise from the grave and have a happy life in the eternities, forever. Who could give more?

What a gift this was! Think what it means to us!

We can learn patience, devotion, and faithfulness such as Mary had. And like her Son we can follow the true gospel principles, being in the world but not of the world.

Mary offered her gift also—the gift of nurturing and rearing the Son of God from infancy to manhood. What hours and days and months of care, what years of devoted service!

Through this first Christmas, and the birth of Jesus the Messiah, we can adopt in our own lives the traits that made Jesus great.

We can be kind and thoughtful. We can be honest and fair to others. Mercy can be an important part of character. And then there is purity. He taught, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). Each of us can be clean and pure in all we do. Sheer cleanliness! There is nothing to compare to it.

Through Him we can enjoy the dearest of our associates forever. We can have eternal families. We may be sealed to our parents and be a part of their loving circle eternally. Isn't that a priceless gift? It, too, comes from that first Christmas.

And when, through our holy form of matrimony, we are blessed with children of our own, they too shall be ours always. What could we desire more than that? It is part of the blessing we receive through Mary's Son who was born on that first Christmas night. Is it any wonder that the angels sang for joy over this marvelous event?

These are true Christmas gifts. These are blessings that come from that first holy night.

They may be ours if we truly remember the meaning of Gabriel's greeting to Mary. They may be ours if we become a part of the saving mission of her Son—and God's—the Creator, Redeemer, and Savior of all. **NE**

Originally printed in the December 1983 New Era.

I N T U N E

ARISE & SING THIS CHRISTMAS MORN

Words by Marvin K. Gardner
Music by Vanja Y. Watkins

Joyfully ♩ = 58-66

mf

f

1. A - rise and sing this Christ - mas morn,
 (2. Come) cel - e - brate His won - d'rous birth,
 (3. Our) Coun - sel - lor, our migh - ty God,

Al - le - lu - ia! For un - to us a Child is born,
 For Christ shall gov - ern all the earth,
 Our Fa - ther, our re - deem - ing Lord,

Al - le - lu - ia! And raise your prais - es un - to heav'n,
 With heart and mind and strength pro - claim:
 Come wor - ship Christ, the Prince of Peace,

Al - le - lu - ia! For un - to us a Son is giv'n,
 For Won - der - ful shall be His name,
 May our re - joic - ing nev - er cease,

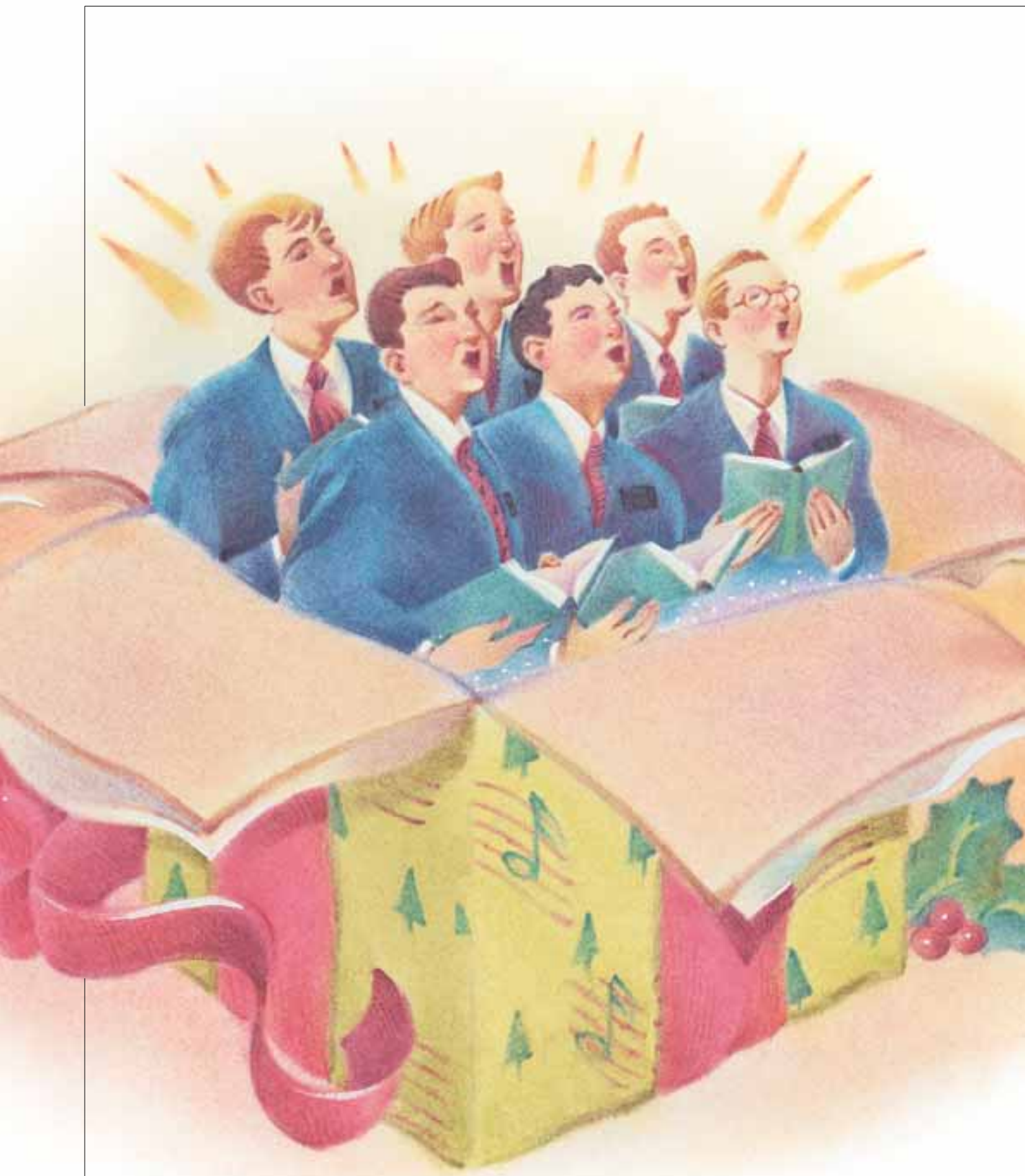
rit., last time *Interlude between verses*

Al - le - lu - ia! *mf*

2. Come
 3. Our

Based on Isaiah 9:6

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ELDERS SINGING

*We were out of
partridges and
turtledoves,
so we gave
what we had.*

It was our first Christmas away from home. Elders Heemeyer, Bright, Kehoe, Schulze, Westover, and I had gathered at one apartment to share Christmas. We had decided that spending Christmas together as a missionary district might make it easier to be away from home.

It was 5:30 on Christmas Eve, and we were all a little down. Many of our investigators wouldn't meet with us, and finding new investigators was tough.

We were running into the same response. "Visit after Christmas," they all said.

After talking for a short time, Elder Schulze suggested we go caroling to our investigators and some less-active members. We all felt it was a great idea. We made up a quick program. Two hymns and a spiritual thought. We concluded with one last hymn and a prayer. The total program was short, perhaps 20 minutes, but we were pleased with it.

Before we left, we knelt for prayer. Then we set out into the cold night on the south side of Chicago.

We had left our families behind, but we still had the Spirit with us, and that was something we could share with others.

by Joshua DeMoux

Our first stop was at the home of a member whose daughter and two grandchildren were investigating the Church. They buzzed us into their building, and we began to sing. Granted, we weren't the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, but for six elders we sounded pretty good. We shared our program with the family. Before we left, they said that our "gift" was the best they had ever received.

We soon found ourselves at a different apartment presenting the same message to another family. At every stop, our enthusiasm and joy grew. We kept hearing the same response. "This is the best gift ever. You really brought the Christmas spirit."

We learned many things that Christmas Eve. Even though our message was simple, it brought joy into the lives of those we visited, and it also lifted our spirits. That night I came to better understand the true meaning of Christmas—that sharing and serving others is what Christ's ministry is all about.

We also realized that home isn't so far away when you are in the service of others and of your Savior. **NE**

HOW I FOUND THE TRUTH

Taking seminary was one of the best things I ever did—that, and things like going to girls' camp. I began to really seek the truth instead of expecting it to be handed to me on a silver platter.

By Erin Marshall

It had been there all along. I just needed to look in the right places and have the right friends.

My testimony didn't come to me by way of a great revelation or by some overpowering, indescribable feeling. I always thought I would have to experience one of those things to know the Church was true.

I was struggling with my testimony between my eighth- and ninth-grade years. My parents had always taught me the right things, and I had been riding on their testimonies. At this time, doubts started to accumulate in my mind, and questions I couldn't answer found their way to the surface.

Hanging around friends who didn't obey the commandments made it harder for me to find the truth. As I struggled through the year, I lost the sense of who I was and what was important. I was aggravated all the time. I only wanted to be around my friends. My life was plagued with wrong decisions and their consequences. I was praying and reading my scriptures, but I didn't seem to be getting an answer when I asked if the Church was true.

I don't know exactly what happened to me, but I finally realized my lifestyle was not good. An awful sense of guilt rushed through me as I realized how many people were affected by my actions. However, I couldn't seem to get away from my friends. When I hit high school, things didn't get much better.

Taking seminary was one of the best

things I could have done. It helped me see what I was doing, and that I was getting nowhere in life. I still desperately wanted to find out if the Church was really true.

Later in the year, I became best friends with a girl in my ward. My friend played a major part in helping me find myself. Over the summer we went to Especially for Youth and girls' camp. I began really seeking the truth instead of expecting it to be handed to me on a silver platter. I was able to share my testimony with friends at EFY. Ordinarily I wasn't the strong one. I didn't even know I had it in me. It was then I knew I had known all along the truthfulness of the Church.

Friends can either make or break you, and I found that out. I merely had to find myself and start living the principles Heavenly Father had laid out for me to follow.

So it wasn't some big, shocking conviction, it was merely a look inside myself and a calm assurance that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true church. My life is so much better because I made the decision to follow the Lord.

In recent years, my testimony has only strengthened. I have come to rely on the Lord for everything. There are still trials ahead, but I know I can face them if I have faith and trust in the Lord. **NE**



Q & A

“It seems as if everyone in my ward belongs to a perfect family. My parents are divorced, and I don’t feel like I fit in. Is there anything I can do to feel better, and how can I strengthen my family?”

NEW ERA

Every month we get a stack of letters responding to the question in Q&A. Rarely do we get as many responses as we did to this question. And most of the responses started the same: “I know exactly how you feel.” Apparently you are not alone in feeling like the only one who doesn’t belong to a perfect family.

“No doubt everyone would like to be part of a perfect family and live in perfect harmony in a perfect home,” said Elder Marion D. Hanks, an emeritus member of the Seventy. “Yet no one is or does, since no one of us is yet perfect” (*New Era*, June 1991, 4).

Elder Hanks, whose father died when Elder Hanks was young, also grew up in a single-parent home. He learned how to deal with the challenges of a nontraditional home and gives good advice for anyone in a similar situation:

“Those whose families are not what we wish they were can be thankful to parents who through God’s gift have given us life, and we can do everything we can do to minimize conflict and enhance harmony in our homes. Some small miracles occur where there just doesn’t appear much probability that one young person can make

Nobody’s family is perfect, even though it may seem that way.

Don’t get discouraged about things that are out of your control. We’re only expected to do our best.

Help plan and carry out family home evening and family prayer.

Always look for ways to serve your family members.

Your strength can help your family through hard times.

READERS

You may not have a perfect earthly family, but you have a wonderful Father in Heaven who loves you very much. You also have a kind and amazing Brother, Jesus Christ, who died for you. They will always be there for you.

Jana Neuffer, 16
Bonn, Germany



I know how you feel. My family isn’t together either. It is hard going to church, and it feels like you’re the only one there who doesn’t have a “family.” Just because your parents don’t love each other doesn’t mean they don’t love you. Make it a goal to get married in the temple and to give your kids what you didn’t have.

Bryce Adams, 15
Oakley, Idaho

I used to feel like I was the only one with real, difficult problems with my family and that all my friends had perfect lives. It may seem that others are not going through trials with their family when they may be going through greater trials than you might suppose.

Bethany Watterson, 17
Kihei, Hawaii





a difference" (*New Era*, June 1991, 8).

Every family has challenges, whether you can see them or not. Many of the kids in those "perfect" families secretly compare their families unfavorably with other families. It's just not helpful to compare your family to others. Instead, look for ways to strengthen the family you are in now, and prepare for the family you will one day have.

We are only expected to do our best. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve says, "Living a pattern of life as close as possible to the ideal will provide much happiness, great satisfaction, and impressive growth while here on earth regardless of your current life circumstances" (*Ensign*, May 2001, 7). Try not to get discouraged about circumstances beyond your control.

Start strengthening your family by strengthening yourself. Set an example for your parents, brothers, and sisters by attending your church meetings and activities. Read your scriptures and pray daily. Look for ways to serve your family, and try to be a peacemaker in the home. Your strength will help your family get through hard times.

Encourage your family to participate in church and family activities together. When you are with family members, point out their strengths instead of criticizing their weaknesses.

Remember, you also have an extended family and a ward family to lean on. When you feel discouraged, turn to your Heavenly Father. He understands your situation and will help comfort you. Even if your circumstances are not peaceful, you can still find inner peace. **NE**

Answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.



Strengthening families is our sacred duty as parents, children, extended family members, leaders, teachers, and individual members of the Church" (*Ensign*, May 1999, 32).

—Elder
Robert D. Hales
Of the Quorum of
the Twelve

I felt the same way when my parents were divorced. Try to be optimistic in everything you do. Keep in mind all of the blessings Heavenly Father has given you. I promise, over time, as your testimony grows, you will feel a lot better.



David Manuele, 15
Milford, Utah

I too live in a ward where it seems as if every family is perfect, and I feel like I don't fit in because my parents are divorced. Don't forget that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love you, and in their eyes you always fit in as a son or daughter of God.



Alisha Roper, 16
Mesa, Arizona

A couple of years ago my parents divorced, and I felt the same way. Talk about your feelings to people you are close to. Strengthen your family by helping your busy single parent with your siblings, family home evenings, and chores. Members of your ward understand more than you realize.



Lisa Visker, 17
Roseville, California

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send us your answer to the question below, along with your name, age, and where you are from. Please include a snapshot of yourself that is 1 1/2 by 2 inches (4 by 5 cm) or larger.

Q&A, *New Era*
50 East North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

QUESTION

For Christmas I have always bought my brother a gift from the store. This year I want to give him something more personal and meaningful. What are some less tangible gifts I might give my brother for Christmas?

Please respond by February 1, 2003.

OUT OF
SMALL THINGS



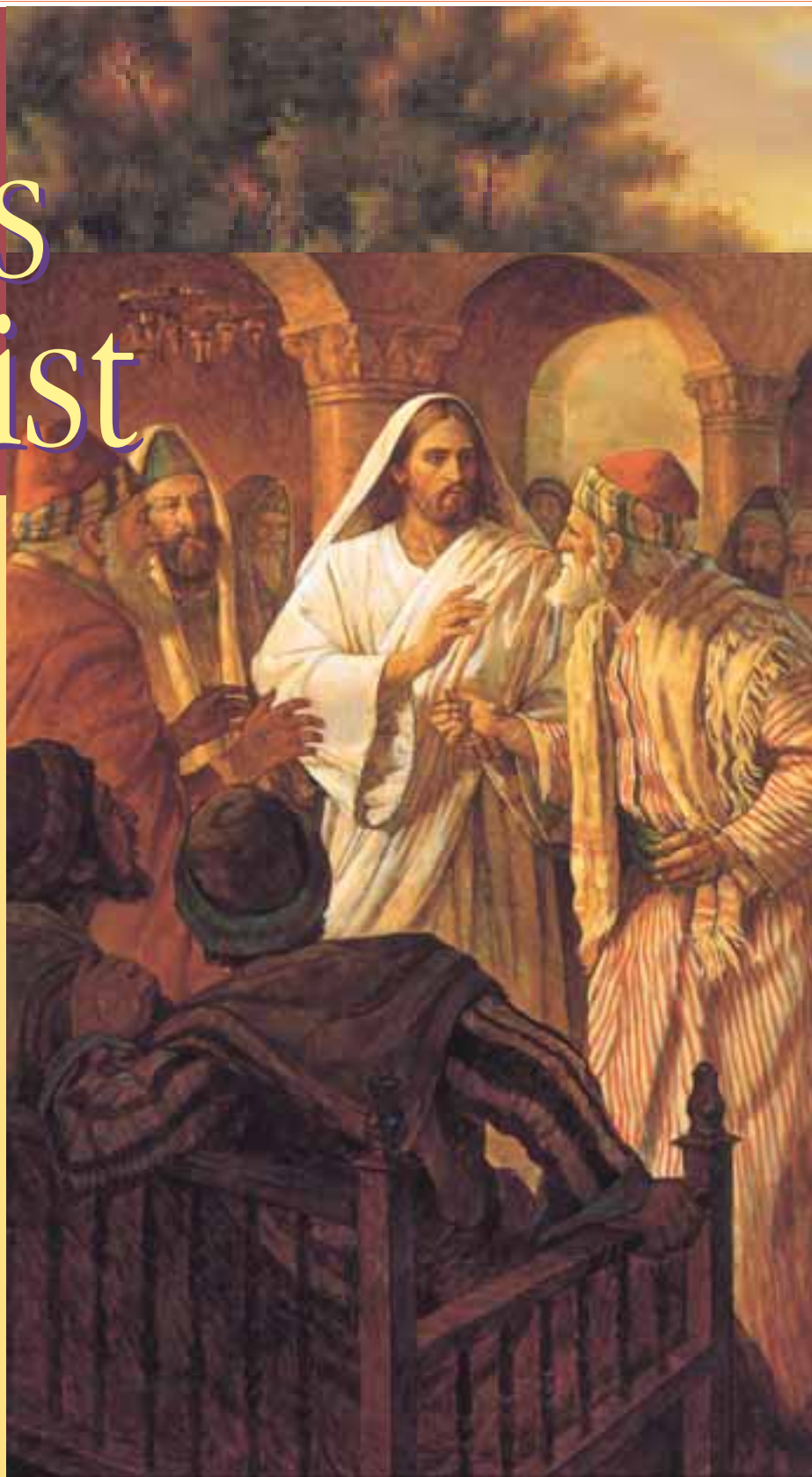
“ . . . proceedeth that which is great.”
(D&C 64:33.)

Images of Christ

We each have a mental picture of what we think the Savior looks like. But if we painted pictures of Him, they would all be different. We don't really know what He looks like, but we can come to know His perfect love for us and draw closer to Him as we celebrate His birth.

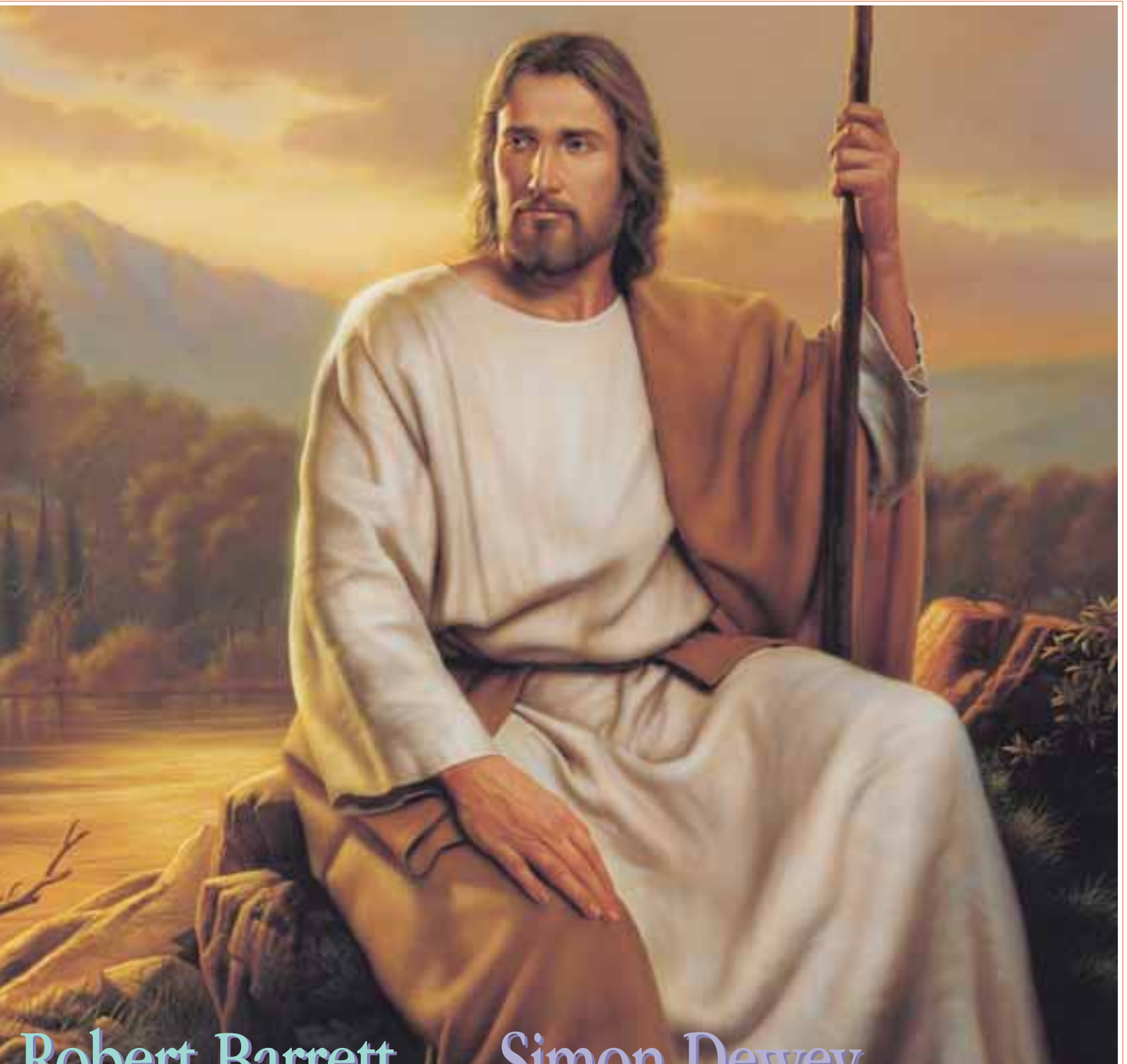
Some of the paintings of the Savior in this article will be familiar to you. Others will be new. These Latter-day Saint artists have used paintbrushes to express their testimonies and love for the Savior.

Although you might not be able to paint beautiful pictures of the Savior, you can resolve to have His image in your countenances (see Alma 5:14).



Christ Healing the Man with the Withered Hand
by Robert Barrett

“Then saith [Jesus] to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched [his hand] forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other” (Matthew 12:13).



Robert Barrett

I have always felt that the art is a reflection of what the artist believes. My testimony has been personally strengthened as I have had the opportunity to portray events in the life of the Savior and the history of the Restoration. I know that He lives and that His work is divine.

How do I embody my feelings about that? You have to find a way to get the feelings of your heart out on your canvas.

Simon Dewey

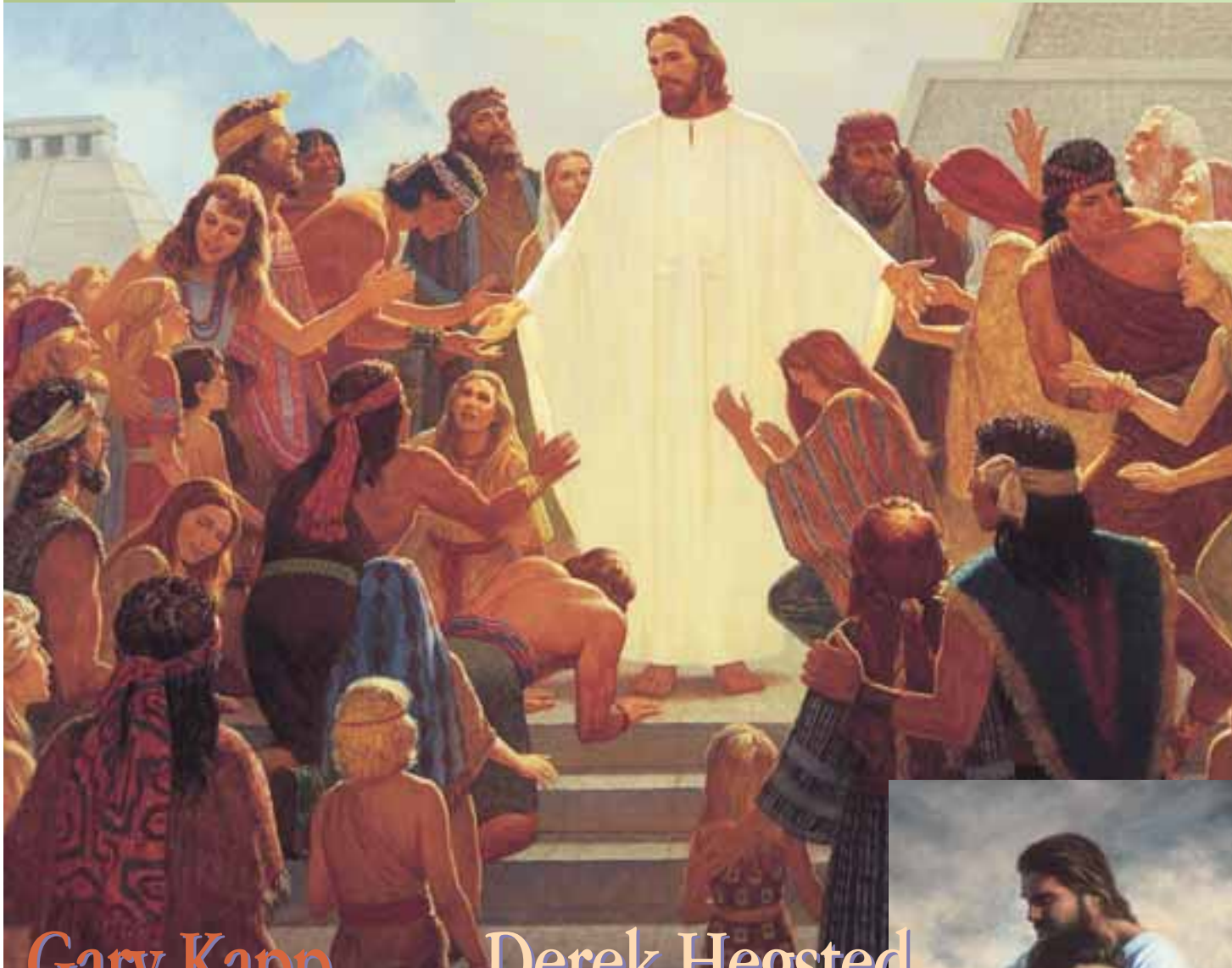
I can boldly bear my witness to the truth as the Spirit has borne witness to me. I know that Jesus lives and is my Redeemer. I know that His Father is mine also and hears me when I call upon Him, with gratitude for daily help and with a penitent heart. Some have asked whether I have had a vision or similar spiritual manifestation that forms the basis for my depiction of the Son of God. My eyes have never seen, nor my ears heard, yet in my heart I know, and it is enough.

Beside Still Waters
by Simon Dewey

“Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I am the life and the light of the world” (D&C 11:28).

That Ye May Know
by Gary Kapp

“Arise and come forth unto me, . . . that ye may know that I am the God of Israel”
(3 Nephi 11:14).



Gary Kapp

Derek Hegsted

I don't remember ever not having a testimony of Jesus Christ, but it wasn't until I arrived in the mission field that I began a serious study of His life, especially in the Book of Mormon. At that time, I truly began to feel the burning in my heart that comes from a sure knowledge that Jesus is the Savior of the world and the Son of God.

All of my life I have wanted to give as much of my time and talent as possible to sharing my testimony through art. I sincerely hope my love for the Savior is evident in my art and that it will somehow strengthen the testimonies of those who view it.

I feel no better peace than when I am bearing witness of Christ through a paintbrush. The ability to speak my feelings is not one of my strong points. But a gracious Heavenly Father has blessed me with the ability to bear a witness of my Savior. In reflecting on my testimony and the effects of the arts in my life, I hope to have shown all brothers and sisters of Christ that I know Jesus is the Christ and that He lives.



Journey's End
by Derek Hegsted

*“Come unto me in my kingdom;
and with me ye shall find rest”*
(3 Nephi 28:3).



Simeon Reverencing the Christ Child
by Greg Olsen

Simeon “blessed God, and said, . . . mine eyes have seen thy salvation” (Luke 2:28–30).

Greg Olsen

Just as a light set up on a hill serves as a beacon to weary travelers, so Jesus Christ stands as a shining example to all the world, showing us a better way to peace and happiness. His light illuminates the path of life, leading us along the straight and narrow way.

Those who press on, with their gaze fixed upon the light of Christ, have their own lights kindled within. He is real, and yes, He lives!

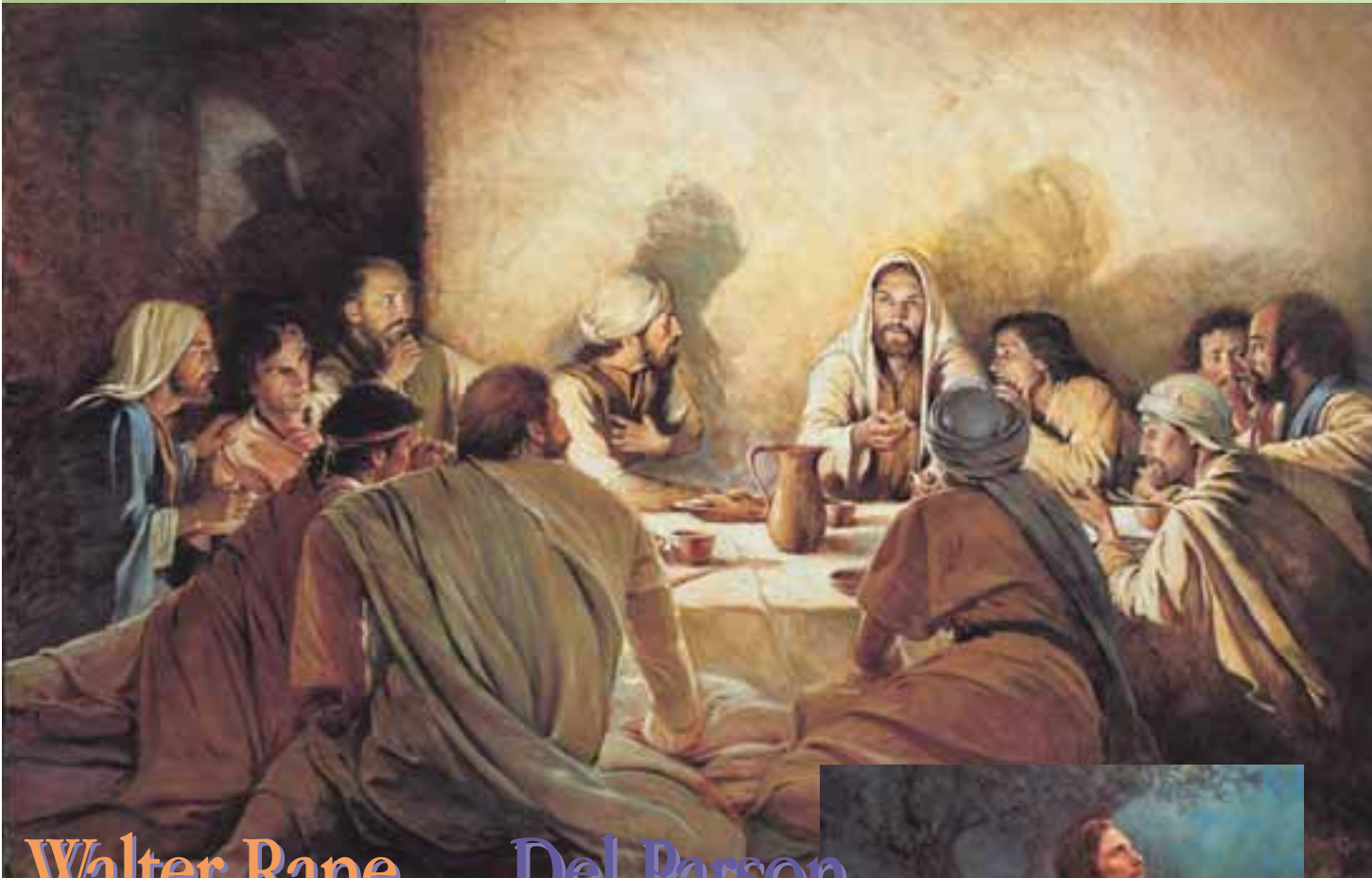
Judith Mehr

I know that Jesus Christ is my Savior and my Lord. I know He is the Son of our Heavenly Father. I think of Him as the one who gave His life and sacrificed Himself for my sins so that I might be resurrected and live with God and my family after I die. The most ever-present thing about my testimony now is that I feel His presence in my life daily. I can never deny His existence and His supreme love for me. I love Him with all of my heart.



Woman Touching the Hem of the Savior’s Garment
by Judith Mehr

“Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace” (Mark 5:34).



Walter Rane

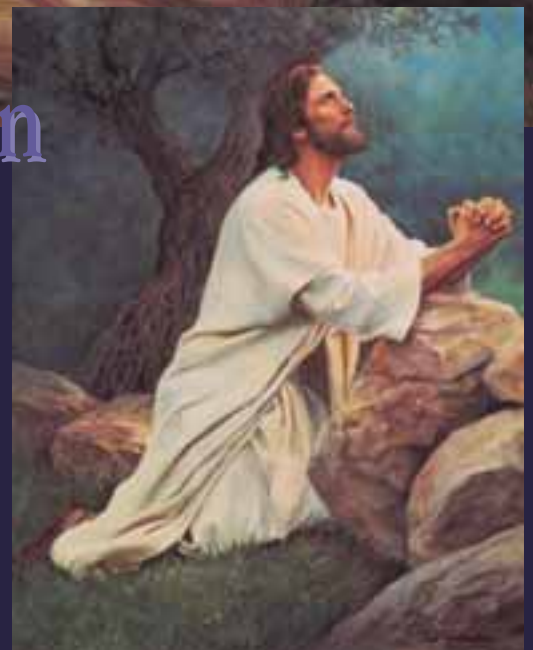
I do not know what He looks like, of course, so I do not attempt to make Him look the same each time I paint Him. Every painting portrays a different event in Christ's life and is an attempt to express a different aspect of the Savior's personality.

I know my efforts are very inadequate, but it is nevertheless an honor to try and capture, in some small way, some of the greatness of our Savior, and to express, perhaps, a glimmer of His personality and express a feeling that may touch someone.

Del Parson

Christ is my hero. I love to read about Him and His life. It is humbling to try to portray Him in art.

My art has been greatly influenced by the guidance given in my patriarchal blessing. It gave direction for my work. Early in my career, my wife and young daughter were in a car accident. At that time I felt as if the Holy Ghost showered me with comfort and God's love. This love is what I try to express in my paintings of the Savior.



Prayer at Gethsemane by Del Parson

“For, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him” (D&C 18:11).

Christ Laments over Jerusalem
by Gary Smith

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Luke 13:34-35).



Gary Smith

My mother instilled within me a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at an early age. When I heard the gospel and joined the Church at age 25, it was like finding the missing piece of a puzzle. Today, I still carry with me that faith I had as a boy. But now with wisdom, maturity, and experience that faith takes on a deeper and more profound understanding of our Savior's life and mission.

Minerva Teichert

(1888-1976)

I have a testimony of the gospel. Goodness, it's the first thing in my life" (Interview by Robert Conrad and Frederick Teichert, Feb. 6, 1974).

The Lord does open doors when we knock. Sometimes the door we had been seeking isn't the one that's opened, but the right door is usually the one that swings wide before us, even tho' we may not recognize it until afterward (Letter to her daughter Laurie Teichert Eastwood).

Rescue of the Lost Lamb,
by Minerva Teichert



"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

Christmas

We were still adjusting to a new country and culture. So imagine our surprise when we got a phone call from an elf.

By Maja Lorenz

After a long and hard divorce, my mother decided to move our family from Germany to the United States—the home she'd left many years ago when she married my father. Even though my brothers and I were excited, it was a difficult time for us. We had to adjust to a new home and to a different country and culture.

Soon we found a house, and my brothers and I started school. We had moved to Massachusetts, where we attended a small ward. The members welcomed us warmly, and we quickly made many good friends.

Things weren't going too badly, but my mother hadn't been able to find a job as quickly as we had hoped. My older brother was serving a mission, and Christmas was coming closer, so money was tight. My younger brothers and I knew we wouldn't be getting many presents that year. I often saw my mother sitting in her room, thinking of how to pay the bills and still have enough to buy presents and make this a wonderful Christmas. My brothers and I tried to convince her that we didn't need any presents. But she knew we were just trying to make things easier and that we would be disappointed if we didn't get anything at all.

Christmas Eve came, and we each had a couple of presents under the tree. Mother was completing the final preparations when the phone rang. She answered it. All she heard was, "An elf from the North Pole has left something for you at the front door." Then the line was dead.

I stepped out of my room and saw my

mother standing beside the phone. When I asked who had called, she slowly repeated the message she had heard. I quickly grabbed her, and we opened the front door. Outside were five big bags filled with presents. Each was carefully wrapped and had a tag.

I hurriedly woke my brothers, and with great excitement we opened the bags and placed the gifts under the tree. Long after going to bed, each of us wondered who might have called and left the bags on our doorstep. My mother didn't go to bed for a long time. She just sat in the living room and looked at the Christmas tree with all its lights and the presents lying beneath it.

Christmas day came. We got up and opened our presents, which were all carefully selected to match our interests and needs. It was the nicest Christmas I've ever had.

We still don't know who gave us the wonderful gifts, and we decided to stop trying to figure it out. But I will never forget that Christmas, not only because of the presents, but because of the lesson I learned. We are all saved because of Jesus Christ's great love for us. He was born and died for each of us, and too often we forget the true meaning of Christmas. That year I was reminded of the love the Savior has for each of us and that he wants us to love and serve one another. I am so grateful for the Christlike example of our secret friend. **NE**

MYSTERY





TRACK SUIT



Can a guy in bright orange outrun what he's wearing? Paul decided to try.

Elder Paul Christianson came from snowy Chicago to our home in Slidell, Louisiana. He grinned a lot as he taught my husband gospel discussions, but one day he revealed that he missed his mom. She'd been dead for two years, he said. He'd gone on a mission because of her.

Paul's dad had died when he and his little sister were young. His mom went to work at a small factory across town, working the evening shift. Despite her meager salary, she managed to set aside a few dollars every week for Paul's mission.

Paul's coach told all the runners they needed to wear a track suit to the tryout. No suit, no tryout.

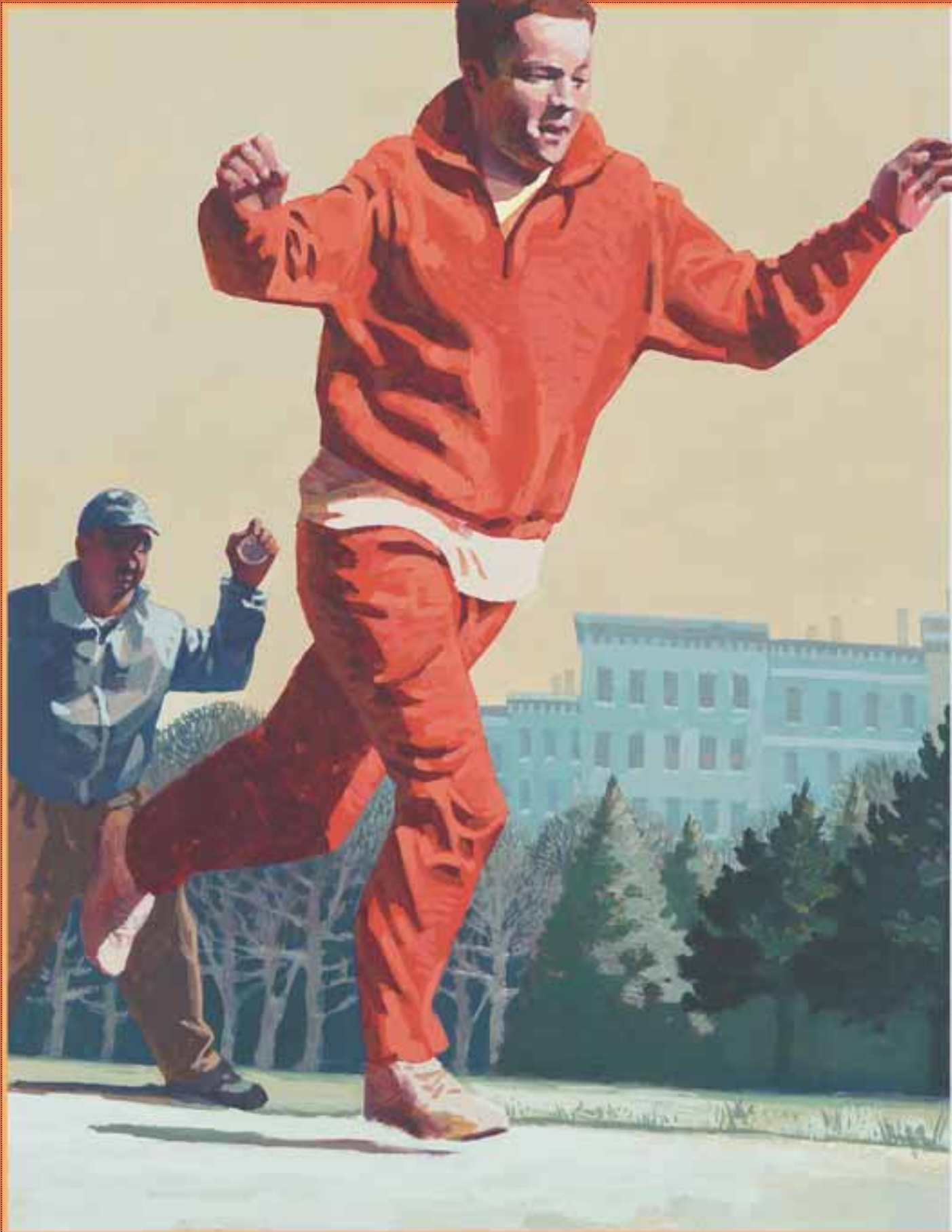


By Venita Helton

Paul said he didn't worry much about being poor. Sure, he and his sister wore hand-me-downs, and they didn't often have the money to go to movies, but his mom always made sure they had enough to eat. "The Lord will provide," she always said, and Paul believed her.

Everything was fine until seventh grade, when Paul decided to try out for the track team. At the meeting, the coach announced that everyone had to wear a track suit to the tryouts, which would be held in two weeks. No suit, no tryout. Paul's heart sank. He didn't have a track suit, and he knew his mom didn't have the money to buy one. Hesitantly, he asked her if they could borrow from his mission fund.

She smiled and shook her head. "Son, we've put that money away for a special purpose. If we remember the Lord first, He'll take care of everything we really need." Paul wondered if the Lord took care of track suits.





Since she was so insistent that he exercise faith, he ran track in a pair of cutoff jeans every day after school. He worried about what he'd wear when the big day arrived.

His mom worried, too. She mentioned the problem to her supervisor at work, who managed to scrounge up some fabric from home. Every night as Paul's mom rode the bus across the long miles to their apartment, she hand-sewed a track suit to surprise her son.

The tryouts approached, and Paul ran and ran. His mom sewed and sewed. On the night before the tryouts she sat in the bus, putting the last few stitches into the track suit. It began to snow, and the bus grew cold. The tired woman fell asleep with the track suit cradled in her lap.

She woke up when the bus pulled into the terminal. It was one o'clock in the morning. The bus driver hadn't noticed her in the back of the bus. He said he was sorry she'd missed her stop because no more buses would run that night. She got off and began to walk home through the snow.

She walked all night, and finally arrived at the apartment at 7:00 A.M. Her children were getting ready for school. With a weary smile, she drew Paul into her arms and kissed him.

"Tryouts are today, aren't they, son?" she asked.

He nodded and looked at his feet. "I decided not to try out," he said.

"Not try out? After all the running you've done?"

He told us he didn't have the heart to remind her that he couldn't try out without a track suit. She'd feel bad that she hadn't been able to afford one. Maybe she'd feel bad that the Lord hadn't provided, after all.

"Shut your eyes and hold out your hands," she said.

His heart leaped in sudden hope. Had she been able to get him a suit after all? Holding his breath, he squeezed his eyes shut and held out his hands. He felt her place something soft and flimsy in them. He opened his eyes.

There in his hands was a polyester track suit. A bright-orange polyester track suit. The orangest, brightest, most electrifying

track suit he'd ever seen in his life. The school colors were red and silver. No way would anyone believe this suit was red.

He gulped. His mom looked at him out of shining, worried eyes. "Do you like it, son?" she whispered.

"I . . . like it more than anything," he said, and then he hugged her tight. He kissed her cold cheek and then went to try on his orange track suit.

Paul told us everyone laughed at him when he walked onto the track that afternoon. He almost fled back to the locker room, but then he remembered his mother's small, cold hands and the anxious look in her eyes. He pictured her walking across town through the snow, clutching the suit she'd made on the bus.

His cheeks bright red, he put his head down, toed the chalk line, and when the starting pistol cracked he ran like the wind. He didn't pay attention to the other runners—all he could think of was getting off that track as fast as he could.

Someone in the crowd yelled, "It's a bird, it's a plane, it's a jet-powered jack-o-lantern!" Everyone laughed again. Paul said he felt as if he'd been shot.

He leaned into the final turn, knees pumping, elbows like pistons. He heard someone coming up behind him. In a final burst of speed he lunged over the finish line and kept running straight to the locker room.

Later he learned that he'd set the fastest time in the 440 in school history. He'd not only made the track team; he would soon become one of its star runners. The coach provided him a red and silver track suit emblazoned with the school name. He wore it with pride for three years.

But folded into the bottom of the battered old suitcase he carried on his mission was a bright orange track suit. Every time he touched it, he felt his mom's small, cold hands again and knew she'd given him a gift much greater than a track suit. She'd given him the gift of faith in the Lord's ability to provide what he really needed. She'd given him the faith to eventually serve a mission.

And maybe, just maybe, she'd given him a little extra speed. **NE**

Every time he touched it, he knew his mom had given him a gift much greater than a track suit.



A MOTHER'S Testimony



During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally . . . describe the ancient inhabitants of [the American] continent . . . as if he had spent his whole life among them.

By Lucy Mack Smith
(1775–1856)

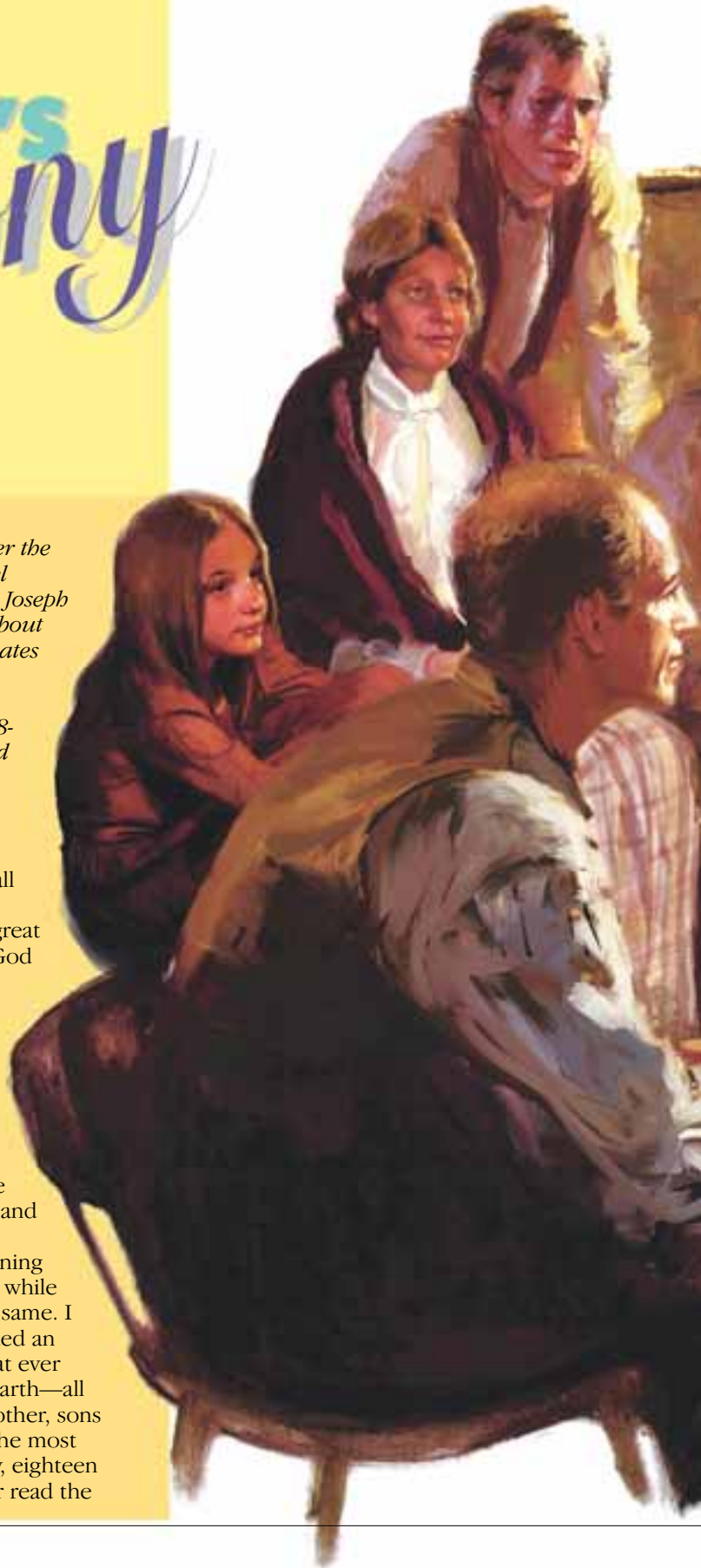
Learning from Joseph

About four years after the First Vision, the angel Moroni appeared to young Joseph several times, telling him about the book written on gold plates and preparing him for the work that lay ahead. Lucy Mack Smith tells how her 18-year-old prophet-son shared the wondrous news of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration with the Smith family.

By sunset . . . , we were all seated, and Joseph commenced telling us the great and glorious things which God had manifested to him. . . .

He proceeded to relate . . . particulars concerning the work which he was appointed to do, and we received them joyfully. . . .

From this time forth, Joseph continued to receive instructions from the Lord, and we continued to get the children together every evening for the purpose of listening while he gave us a relation of the same. I presume our family presented an aspect as singular as any that ever lived upon the face of the earth—all seated in a circle, father, mother, sons and daughters, and giving the most profound attention to a boy, eighteen years of age, who had never read the







As I looked upon their peaceful, smiling countenances, I seemed almost to hear them say, “Mother; weep not for us, we have overcome the world by love; we carried them the gospel, that their souls might be saved; . . . ours is an eternal triumph.”

Bible through in his life: he seemed much less inclined to the perusal of books than any of the rest of our children, but far more given to meditation and deep study.

We were now confirmed in the opinion that God was about to bring to light something upon which we could stay our minds, or that would give us a more perfect knowledge of the plan of salvation and the redemption of the human family. This caused us greatly to rejoice, the sweetest union and happiness pervaded our house, and tranquility reigned in our midst.

During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could

be imagined. He would describe the ancient inhabitants of [the American] continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them.

A mother’s witness

Writing of the traumatic experience of seeing her murdered sons, Joseph and Hyrum, Lucy Mack Smith bore fervent and powerful witness of Joseph’s prophetic mission.

After the [bodies of Joseph and Hyrum] were washed and dressed in their burial clothes, we were allowed to see them. I had for a long time braced every nerve, roused every energy of my soul and called upon God to strengthen me, but when I entered the room . . . , it was too much; I sank back, crying to the Lord in the agony of my soul, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken this family!” A voice replied, “I have taken them to myself, that they might have rest.”

As I looked upon their peaceful, smiling countenances, I seemed almost to hear them say, “Mother, weep not for us, we have overcome the world by love; we carried to them the gospel, that their souls might be saved; they slew us for our testimony, and thus placed us beyond their power; their ascendancy is for a moment, ours is an eternal triumph.”

This much I will say, that the testimony which I have given is true, and will stand forever; and the same will be my testimony in the day of God Almighty, when I shall meet them, concerning whom I have testified, before angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, before archangels and seraphims, cherubims and gods; where the brief authority of the unjust man will shrink to nothingness before him who is the Lord of lords, and God of gods; and where the righteousness of the just shall exalt them in the scale, wherein God weigheth the hearts of men. **NE**

From Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith, 82–83, 324–28.

PRICELESS GIFTS

Gifts from the heart are far more valuable than anything you could ever buy. They often take more energy, thought, and sacrifice, so they mean more to both the giver and the receiver. Here are some ideas for priceless gifts you can give this Christmas.

- * Give the gift of yourself to your family and loved ones. Spend the day doing kind things for your parents and siblings. You could make breakfast, help wrap and deliver presents, or clean up after dinner.
- * Gather or decorate 24 ornaments for your Christmas tree and place them in a basket under the tree. Every day you give service to someone in the 24 days before Christmas, put an ornament on the tree.
- * Give your parents a break. Spend some time looking after your younger brothers and sisters during the Christmas holiday.
- * Volunteer at a local food bank or shelter, or help with some other worthy cause.
- * Visit someone who is sick or elderly. Ask him or her to tell you about a past Christmas.
- * Express your love and gratitude for the Savior in your prayers.
- * Christmas is a time for peace. Try to resolve differences with someone you don't get along with very well.
- * You can also encourage peace by not quarreling with your siblings. Try to treat your family as well as you possibly can.
- * Write a letter to your parents thanking them for the things they have done for you.
- * Write letters to full-time missionaries from your ward to encourage them and to let them know you remember them in your prayers.
- * Make your brother's or sister's bed. Leave a note that says an "elf" did it.
- * Baby-sit for free for a

family in your ward so the parents can enjoy an outing to a Christmas concert, go to the temple, or spend time together.

- * Read the Christmas story to a younger brother or sister, and teach them about the Savior (see Luke 2).
- * If you've saved some money by giving free gifts this Christmas, you can pay a generous fast offering next month. **NE**



A MONUMENTAL DAY

On December 23, 1905, 100 years after the Prophet Joseph Smith’s birth, the Church dedicated a memorial at his birthplace in Sharon, Vermont. In 1884, all that was left of the Smith family’s small home was a hearthstone and a decaying foundation. The Church rebuilt a memorial home around the hearthstone. A large monument was also built.

The monument, a shaft of Vermont granite, was the tallest polished granite shaft in America at that time. It still stands today, 38-and-a-half feet high—one foot for each year of the Prophet’s life.

At the dedicatory service for the monument, President Joseph F. Smith, Joseph Smith’s nephew, left a blessing: “Peace be with you, and unto this place, unto this monument, and unto all who come to visit it . . .” (*Proceedings*, 26).

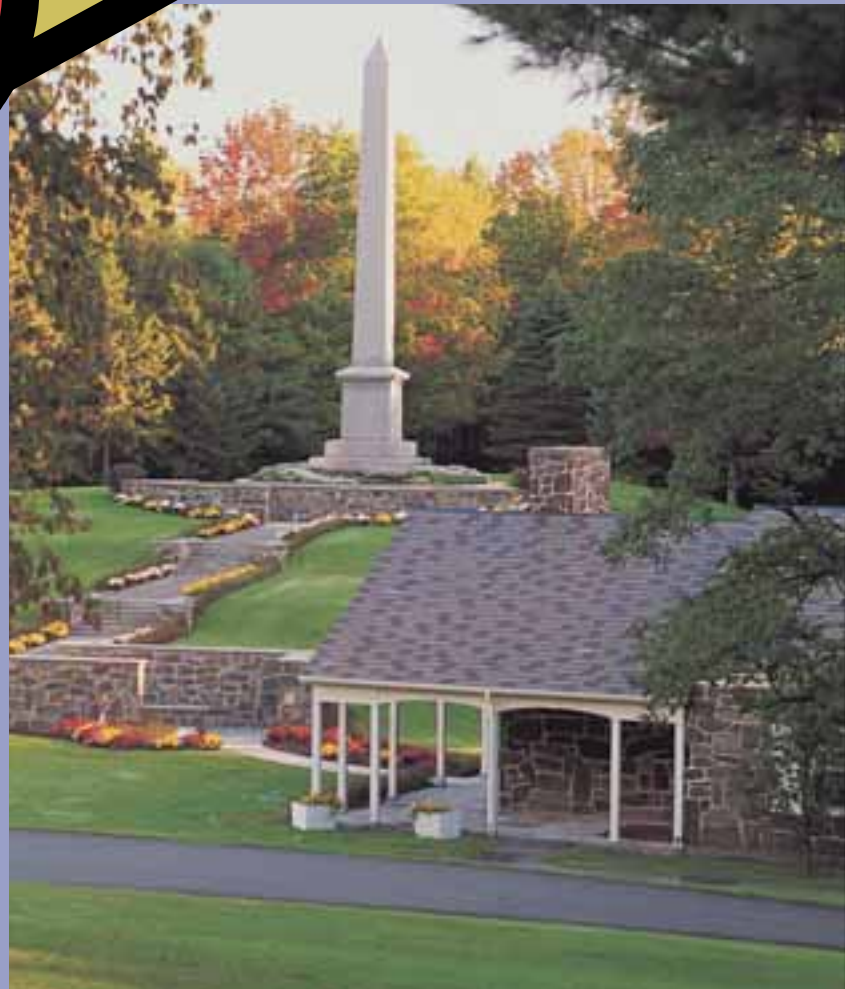
FELIZ NAVIDAD

The seminary students of the Juárez Academy in northern Mexico made a plan to help the missionaries in their area to spread the gospel during Christmas. Three hundred fifty students each contributed a brightly wrapped Book of Mormon, that included their testimonies, for the missionaries to give to their investigators in the Colonia Juárez and Colonia Dublán stakes.



LEADERSHIP TIP

Bearing your testimony to your quorum or class members is a good way to bless their lives and strengthen their testimonies, as well as your own. Being a leader means more than organizing and delegating. It means being an example of faithfulness and obedience, as well.





CHRISTMAS ACTIVITY IDEAS

- * Gather a group of family members and friends to go Christmas caroling.
- * If there are small children in your home or neighborhood, help them retell the story of Jesus' birth with each child playing a part. Invite friends and neighbors.
- * Learn how to say "Merry Christmas" in a few languages.
- * Check out videos from your meetinghouse library about the life of the Savior.
- * Read the accounts of the birth of the Savior in the New Testament and Book of Mormon with your family.
- * Make and send Christmas cards to loved ones and those who might be lonely at this time of year, like missionaries or widows in your ward.

OUR COVENANTS

Every member has made a covenant to do works of kindness as the Savior would do. So any call to bear witness and to care for others is not a request for extra service; it is a blessing designed by a loving Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ. They have provided such calls as well as other settings, sometimes without a formal call, all for the same purpose. Each is a chance to prove what blessings flow from being a covenant people, and each is an opportunity for which you agreed to be accountable" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 31).

— Elder Henry B. Eyring
Of the Quorum of the Twelve



"Each of us is an innkeeper who decides if there is room for Jesus!"

(*Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 66)

—Elder Neal
A. Maxwell
Of the
Quorum
of the
Twelve

Are You STILL HERE?

For two hours I waited patiently outside the Tabernacle. But could I get in?

Nearly 30 years ago I desired to attend a general conference of the Church and drove 14 hours to be in Salt Lake City for the conference. I entered Temple Square at 8:00 A.M., where the line outside door number 10 was all the way across Temple Square and halfway down the south side of the Assembly Hall. I was nearly 300 feet from my goal. The usher called out that the Tabernacle was full. People dropped out of line, and I inched forward.

At five minutes before 10:00 I was the only person standing in front of my chosen door. The door opened, and the usher said, “Are you still here?” He closed the door, and my heart sank. As the choir began to sing the opening hymn at 10:00 sharp, the door opened one more time, and the usher beckoned me inside. He placed me on half a seat and behind a post, but a welcome seat it was! I was able to sustain the Lord’s chosen leaders and hear their counsel that special day.

The Prophet Joseph

In the latter days, God has continued His pattern for revealing truth. He chose a young man named Joseph Smith to learn about the eternal plan of salvation.



**By Elder
Gary J. Coleman**
Of the Seventy

Joseph was confused about the different religions in his community, but the scriptures led him to ask God what he should do (see JS-H 1:5–16). In answer to his prayer, God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him. Through this and other experiences, Joseph Smith was called as a prophet, like unto Moses and other biblical prophets. Because Joseph saw and talked with the Savior, his work was to restore the truth about the great plan of God and the divine mission of our Lord. I know that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God.

The Prophet Joseph received authority to teach the gospel and bring forth additional scripture. He was commanded to translate writings of ancient prophets from The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. The Book of Mormon prophets also knew about the plan of salvation and the sacred mission of Jesus Christ. The appearance of the resurrected Christ to the ancient people of the Americas is recorded in this sacred book. He taught them His gospel and established His Church among them. I know the Book of Mormon is another testament of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

God has promised that the Holy Ghost will testify to each of us that sacred truths have been restored and that Joseph Smith was called by God to be a special witness of Christ and His gospel. We may come to know the truth of all things God has revealed through the power of the Holy Ghost (see Moro. 10:5).



The Holy Ghost will guide us to others who seek the true gospel. The Lord has said, "I will be with you; and in whatsoever place ye shall proclaim my name an effectual door shall be opened unto you, that they may receive my word" (D&C 112:19).

Millions of converts to this Church initially accepted the truths proclaimed by our missionaries in the first discussion. They then opened their hearts to all the discussions taught by the missionaries. They were invited to be baptized, confirmed, become "fellowcitizens with the saints," (see Eph. 2:19–20) and continue on the gospel path to additional sacred covenants made in the temple.

All my friends are on missions!

A young adult was seen near an institute of religion building, and he was asked if he had LDS friends. He responded, "Yes, and they are all on missions for the Mormon Church!" He was invited to be taught the gospel. He joined the Church. And one year later he was serving his own mission for the Lord.

A nonmember father whose son was serving a mission was asked, "Will you be baptized on Father's Day?" He was baptized, with four former bishops of his family in attendance.

Promptings from the Holy Ghost will also guide us to others who seek the true gospel. The Lord has said, "I will be with you; and in whatsoever place ye shall proclaim my name an effectual door shall be opened unto you, that they may receive my word" (D&C 112:19).

The Lord will provide a way

A few years ago I drove to Temple Square in Salt Lake City to meet an acquaintance of the missionaries. Their guest did not keep the appointment. My response to the missionaries was, "The Lord will provide someone for us to teach." In less than two to three minutes, two adult men walked through the front door of the North Visitors' Center and directly up to us. They spoke Spanish, and we did not! We assured them the best we could that someone would be able to help them. In moments, the only Spanish-speaking sister missionaries in the entire mission arrived at the visitors' center because they felt impressed to come there that morning!

Over a period of several weeks the missionary discussions were taught to those men, and they asked to be baptized. The Lord was true to His word. "An effectual door" was opened in the very moment it was needed for this



beautiful experience.

Before I was a member of this Church, I asked God, the Eternal Father, in fervent prayer, about the truths of the Restoration. I know today, even as I knew that day, that hour, that moment 39 years ago, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that the principles and doctrines of the Restoration of the gospel are true. God lives. Jesus is the Christ. Joseph Smith was the prophet of the Restoration of the true gospel. The Book of Mormon is a record of holy prophets and another testament of the living Christ, who stands at the head of this Church. President Gordon B. Hinckley is the Lord's prophet for our day. He and 14 other Apostles are special witnesses of Christ in the only true Church on the earth. I pray that all of us will be able to answer the question "Are you still here?" and enter through the proper door to all the blessings of the gospel, now and forever.

Adapted from an April 2000 general conference address.

T H E E X T R A S M I L E

"And of course you're going to get up on time for seminary tomorrow, right? Or do you need me to help you?"

"I think Sister Roberts and your cat have really bonded."

"But I don't have a cat."

"Sure it's nice to get a gift. But it's from my ex-girlfriend. It's an I-don't-care package."

Ryan Stoker

Ryan Stoker



Val Chadwick Bagley



Sweet SOLUTIONS

Sweet or tart? Which is the best way to deal with a bad situation?

thought anything other than simply ignoring her was worth a try. How could I make the best of this sticky situation?

By Sarah Eastley

In the morning of the last day of school before the Christmas holidays, I had the strangest thought pop into my head. I was tying bows around bunches of gourmet candy canes to give to my friends when my mind said, "You should give one of these to Megan*."

What a crazy idea! Megan, a very popular girl in my English class, was terribly mean. In addition to the rude things she said to me, she and her friends were always giggling and pointing in my direction. She made me feel horrible. Why should I give Christmas candy to someone like that?

Today was always the best day of the whole year at Valley Middle School. Like the last day of school in June, schoolwork would be pushed aside in favor of movies

**Name has been changed.*

and games. But what made it even better than that was the candy we exchanged with our friends. As we went from class to class, our stacks of goodies grew and we found out who liked us enough to put us on their gift list. You could tell who the really popular kids were by their enormous piles of candy. Someone like Megan would have to bring an extra bag to carry everything. She certainly didn't need anything from me.

I was confident I would have a respectable pile of sweets myself. I was nowhere near being part of the popular crowd, but it was a big school, and I had a large group of friends. However, because I was one of the few Latter-day Saints in the school, I really stood out. Anyone who stands out too much in middle school becomes a target for teasing, so, unfortunately, I had as many tormentors as I had friends.

It is sometimes really tough to know how to deal with people who pick on you. I had long ago decided that the best way was just to ignore them. But sometimes this just didn't seem to work. Earlier that school year, two girls in my science class had



hurt me so much with their cruel words that I finally burst and fired similar cruel words right back at them. This landed me in detention, and I spent a miserable afternoon picking up trash. Worse than the actual punishment was how horrible I felt inside. I knew my actions weren't Christlike, and that hurt me more than anyone's awful words ever could. After that, I stuck like glue to my old policy of keeping silent and expressionless, hoping people would get bored with me. But Megan still hadn't given up trying to have fun at my expense, and I had been wondering recently if there were something more I could do besides just turning the other cheek.

Looking down at the candy canes in my backpack, I realized that the Spirit had just given me a solution to my dilemma. I thought of Matthew 5:44, in the Sermon on the Mount, where Christ says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you."

"Well," I thought, "it's worth a try." Even though the thought of doing such an unusual thing scared me, I told myself it couldn't make the situation any worse.

I almost chickened out. It was the very end of the class period before I had the guts to

needed to get rid of the sour taste whenever we met in class or in the halls. I felt the Lord gave me a sweet answer to my prayers.



approach Megan. When I called her name, she turned and looked very surprised that I was speaking to her.

"Here, this is for you." I held out the candy.

She looked at me very suspiciously. I could tell she was trying to figure out what the trick was. I knew she thought I was trying to do something mean because she knew she'd never done anything nice to me. So I smiled and said, "Merry Christmas," hoping she would trust me just a little bit.

She took the candy. When I turned to walk away, and it was clear that there were no strings attached, she said, "Thank you."

I wish I could say Megan and I became friends after that. We didn't. But she left me alone the rest of the school year, and her eyes lost that hard, malicious glint when she looked at me.

I like to hope I gave her more than just candy that Christmas. I hope that's what happened, but maybe it didn't.

Maybe she never thought about it again. But I was changed for life after that simple exchange. I was filled with the joy of having done what Jesus would have done. The gift I gave her paled in comparison to the gift I received—a taste of charity, the pure love of Christ, a feeling sweeter than all the Christmas candy in the school. **NE**

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Key to Abbreviations:
 (p) poetry
 (s) song



Better understanding

In my grade, there are many pranks and mean things that people do to other students. I always get kind of mad when these things happened to my friends or me. Then I found out that some of these people who were doing the mean things have lost loved ones or their parents are divorced. Thank you for putting the story “Prayer for a Thief” (April 2002) in the *New Era*. That story helped me realize some things about others. I think it’s great you put in articles and stories that help people.

*Emily Jackson
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

Condoning?

I was deeply upset by “Prayer for a Thief” (April 2002). I felt like the article condoned the thief’s evil act of putting lives in danger and taking what wasn’t his. There are so many ways to get help, and the man chose to steal at the point of threatening lives. What brought him to commit these acts were his decisions. Yes, the girl was right in forgiving him for what he did and moving on with her life. But she was not right in making the thief seem like he was a victim. Our society keeps making excuses for the predators who commit heinous acts upon innocent people, and it made me angry that you would put an article in the Church’s magazine for teenagers making evil seem like a matter of circumstance.

*Holly Anderson
Pbelan, California*

Hope and inspiration

This magazine always has topics that I need for that month. It’s like you know what I’m going through. Every time I get the magazine it has a story that is identical to something that happened in my life. Each issue helps me know that I’m not the only one going through that particular problem. The stories give me hope and inspiration. It’s great to know about people my age and be able to read about them.

*Monica De Haan
Otbello, Washington (via e-mail)*

“Each issue helps me know that I’m not the only one going through that particular problem”



New outlook

This year I entered 10th grade in high school. My greatest fear had been that I wouldn’t fit in or make any friends. I have been praying every night for our Heavenly Father to send some comfort or guidance. When I read “Angel Unaware” in the August 2002 *New Era*, my prayers were answered. I entered high school with a new attitude. Instead of worrying about how many people will like me and be my friend, I will be excited to befriend as many people as I can—especially those who might need a friend. Who knows, maybe I will end up being someone’s angel.

*Heidi Leigh Wilcken
Mesa, Arizona (via e-mail)*

Familiar faces

Thank you very much for the article you had on the ward in High Wycombe, England (Aug. 2002). I was flipping through the *New Era* at a friend’s house, and I happened to open to that article. It was great to see familiar faces. My father is in the military, and I move around a lot. I previously went to the ward in High Wycombe. It was great to see everyone again, even if it was through a magazine.

*Rachel Bennion
Vicenza, Italy (via e-mail)*

Correction

The picture we ran in Of All Things in the August 2002 issue is of George Albert Smith, eighth president of the Church. We should have run a photo of George A. Smith (1817–1875) of Zion’s Camp. We apologize for the mistake and any confusion it may have caused.

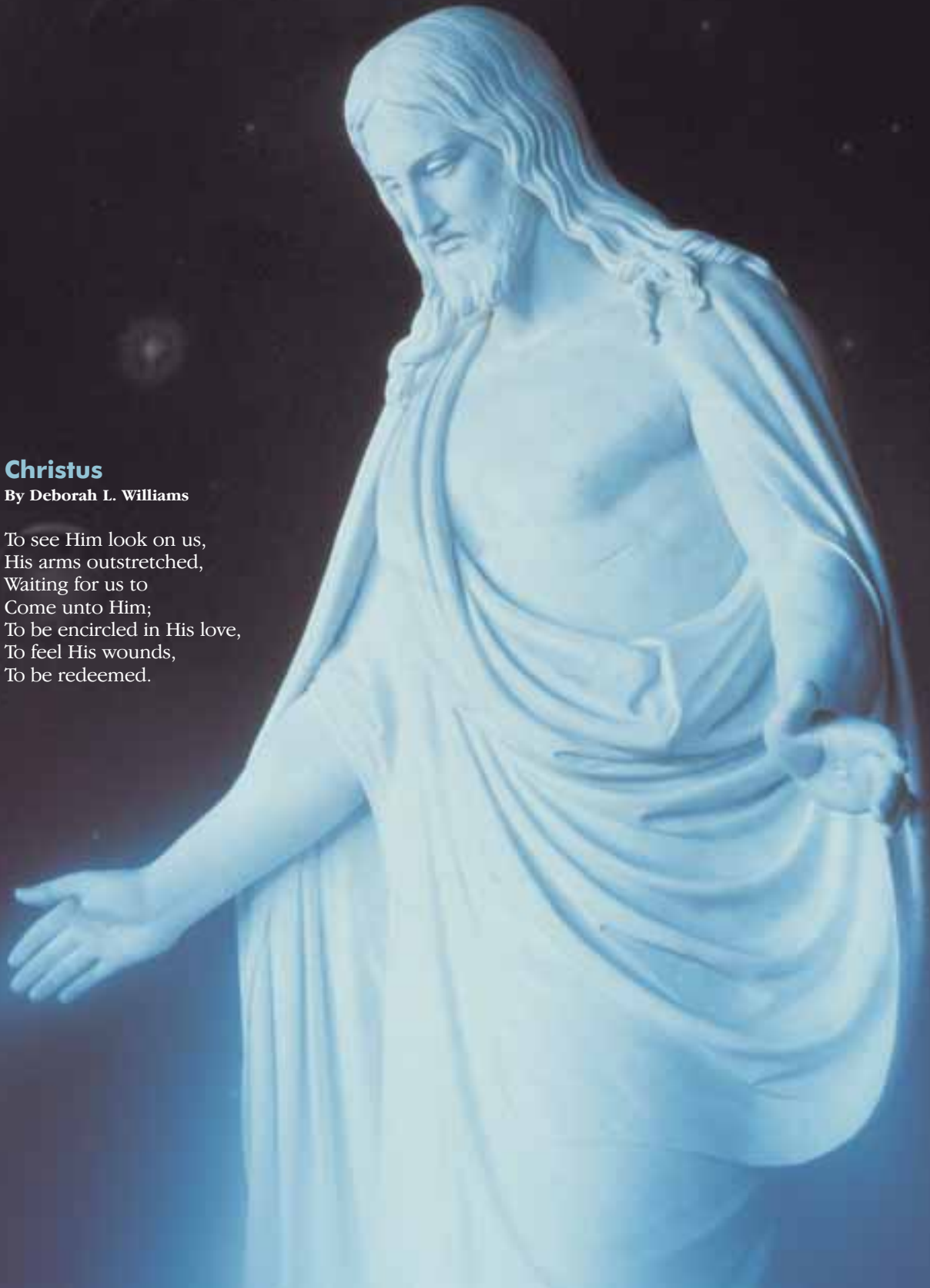
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and clarity.*

Christus

By Deborah L. Williams

To see Him look on us,
His arms outstretched,
Waiting for us to
Come unto Him;
To be encircled in His love,
To feel His wounds,
To be redeemed.





“Some of the paintings of the Savior in this article will be familiar to you. Others will be new. These Latter-day Saint artists have used paintbrushes to express their testimonies and love for the Savior.”

See “Images of Christ,” p. 20.