



# MEETING IRV & CARMEN

**I'd never even seen the Walkers, so I was a little nervous about being their new home teacher.**

**By Matthew Garrett**

**I**'d never met Irv and Carmen Walker before, and I was nervous about being their new home teacher. But I liked them the instant I met them. Carmen, who was almost blind, had a straightforward and humorous personality that made me feel completely at ease. I was amazed at the things she could do despite her loss of sight. She attended a pottery class and sculpted beautiful bowls and figurines, was part of a women's social organization, and volunteered on a service committee for the blind. Carmen also took care of her husband, Irv.

Irv had experienced numerous strokes and suffered from decreased brain function. He rarely spoke, and when he did it was slow and quiet. He was always smiling though. He loved to pull little pranks—especially on his wife—and he enjoyed making others laugh.

Irv and Carmen hadn't been to church in over 20 years, and because of their physical limitations they had no way of getting there on their own.

As my companion and I began to meet with Carmen and Irv, two things became apparent. First, they'd



## MINISTERING THROUGH HOME TEACHING

**P**art of your calling to minister in the Aaronic Priesthood as a teacher and a priest is to home teach others in your ward. As President Thomas S. Monson taught, “If we are conscientious in our calling [to home teach], we will have many opportunities to bless lives” (“True Shepherds,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 67).

Check out these articles for youth stories about home teaching and for ideas on how to minister to the families you teach.

- John L. Haueter, “Junior Companion,” *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 36; [lds.org/go/123Companion](http://lds.org/go/123Companion).
- Caleb I., “From a Teacher: Partnered with the Spirit,” *New Era*, June 2012, 8; [lds.org/go/123Teacher](http://lds.org/go/123Teacher).
- “Ministering That Matters,” [lds.org/go/123Minister](http://lds.org/go/123Minister).
- Thomas S. Monson, “True Shepherds,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 61; [lds.org/go/123Shepherd](http://lds.org/go/123Shepherd).

forgotten most of the Church’s teachings. Second, they were fantastic people who loved helping others. As we continued to home teach them and discuss the gospel together, we eventually invited them back to church. They accepted, and we began to pick them up on Sunday mornings. They both befriended many ward members and were a great blessing to the ward.

Not long after they started to come to church again, Irv experienced a major illness and was hospitalized. He passed away shortly after. I’ll always be grateful that he was reminded of

Heavenly Father’s love and teachings before he died.

After Irv’s death, Carmen remained a great friend and continued to amaze me with her talents. Over the years many ornaments on my family Christmas tree were crafted by her skilled hands. Eventually, however, her eyesight worsened to the point that she was completely blind and experiencing pain and discomfort. Carmen eventually moved away to be closer to her eye specialist and her children.

I’m grateful for home teaching

because it has allowed me to meet wonderful people like Carmen and Irv. Home teaching has taught me that some of the most amazing people may be less active and living within my own ward boundaries. The key is to befriend them and remind them that they haven’t been forgotten and that they can receive great joy and blessings in the Church. Even though home teaching assignments may change and people may move away, I’ll always remember the friendships I’ve formed through home teaching. **NE**

*Matthew Garrett lives in Washington, USA.*