

GENERATIONS

Whether you're a new member or your family has been in the Church for decades, Latter-day Saint youth in Guadeloupe can tell you that living the gospel builds strength over time.

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY
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Coralie “Coco” Gamiette, 12, has a lot of favorite places to visit, and one of them is a waterfall. It's called *la Cascade aux Écrevisses*. It's the place where many of the early members of the Church on the West Indies island of Guadeloupe were baptized.

Coco says the waterfall reminds her of a place in the Book of Mormon, the Waters of Mormon, described as “a fountain of pure water” with “a thicket of small trees” nearby. That's where 450 of those who believed Alma's teachings were baptized. (See Mosiah 18.)

Of course, in Guadeloupe today, as in most places in the Church, baptisms are performed in a font at the chapel. But for Coco, *la Cascade* is still a pleasant place for picnicking, wading in the creek, and sitting in the cool shade to think about the heritage of the Church in her own family.

From France, with Love

That heritage lies in a somewhat complex story that stretches back about 20 years, to the city of Angoulême, France. There, full-time missionaries were guided to a man named Michel Menardin, who had come from Guadeloupe, an overseas department of France, to perform his military service. Michel accepted the gospel and was baptized and confirmed.

That same year in the same town, missionaries left a pamphlet in a mailbox. It triggered interest from a single mother, Claudine, who was raising a 19-year-old daughter,



Delphine. They both gained testimonies and were also baptized and confirmed.

Michel and Claudine met at church, decided they were meant for each other, and married. (They are Coco's grandparents.) When Michel's mother, Marthé, came for the wedding, she stayed in Angoulême, became acquainted with the Church, and joined.

Later, Delphine was called on a mission to Seattle, Washington. While she was serving, her parents and grandmother moved back to Guadeloupe. After her mission, Delphine came to visit them, and while in Guadeloupe she met Claude Gamiette, who had recently returned from the Florida Jacksonville Mission. He was serving as a counselor to Delphine's stepfather in the branch presidency. The two returned missionaries dated and were married a short time later. Claude and Delphine



A SACRED PLACE

The Waters of Mormon were a sacred place for those who were taught and baptized there by Alma. "The place of Mormon, the waters of Mormon, the forest of Mormon, how beautiful are they to the eyes of them who there came to the knowledge of their Redeemer; yea, and how blessed are they, for they shall sing to his praise forever" (Mosiah 18:30).

Do you have a favorite place that reminds you of a place in the scriptures? Tell us about it at newera@ldschurch.org.





Above, from top: Seminary students Luidgia, Travis, Eole, and Leslie (opposite page) enjoy learning the gospel together. Coco (previous page) knows the gospel strengthens her family.

are Coco's parents. Now, 14 years and five children later, Claude, whose own family goes back years in the Church, is president of the Basse-Terre Guadeloupe District.

So with all of that, Coco is a fourth-generation Latter-day Saint. "I've grown up in the Church," she says. "I've heard about it my whole life, gone to Primary and now to Young Women, and heard my parents and their parents and their parents bear their testimonies. I've always known the gospel is true. When I read in Mosiah about the promises the believers made when Alma baptized them, that's what I've seen and felt my whole life."

Coco remembers her great-grandmother saying that a family extends beyond a mother and father and their children. "She says family stretches across generations, from eternity to eternity," Coco says. "That's what I see in my family."

Little by Little, Day by Day

On another part of the island, in the capital city of Basse-Terre, the Church is becoming a two-generation heritage for Luidgia Duflo, 13, and her sister Stella, 17, who joined the Church two years ago at the same time as their older sister, their younger brother, and their parents. They

say the gospel has taught them to honor their mother and their father. They especially enjoy family home evening, which they hold in their family's apartment, located above their father's small store. He sells household products, sugar, spices, candy, and animal food. One of their favorite places to talk with him is in his office at the back of the store, where the wall is covered with photos of various Latter-day Saint temples.

"It gives him an opportunity to do a little missionary work when people come in on business and want to know what all those buildings are," Stella explains. "But I think it also reminds him every day of his eternal promises and goals; it certainly does that for us. We should prepare to go to the temple, and he is constantly reminding us of that."

The Duflo family sees a bright future ahead. "The Church will keep growing in Guadeloupe, and it will flourish," Stella says. "We just have to do our part, little by little, day by day, trusting the Lord in all things and sharing the gospel whenever we can."

Seminary and Goliath

Eole Montredon, 15, comes to seminary every school morning, even though she isn't yet a member of the Church. "In many ways," she says, "it's like I've been a member my whole life because I've grown up around the Church, and I'm familiar with the gospel."

She says she loves to come to seminary because "it's good for us as young people to study the scriptures together, even if we have to get up before the sun to be there." Seminary starts at 6:00 a.m., so she gets up at 5:00. "Some of my friends think I'm crazy, but then when I explain what we're doing, they think it sounds all right. Besides, I feel the Holy Ghost when I'm there. It's a good feeling that I remember all day long."

One of her favorite Bible stories is David and Goliath. She says it gives her courage to know that the Lord will help small people conquer big problems, because she faces a challenge that sometimes seems as large as Goliath to her. Her parents are separated, and although her mother is an active member who would love to see her become



a Latter-day Saint, Eole's father insists that she wait. And so, to honor her father, she is waiting, patiently living the gospel, and praying that someday his heart will change.

"If I could give a message to the youth of the Church," Eole says, "it would be to come to seminary every week-day and to church every Sunday, because the more you do, the more you will see how good it is and how it makes you strong." Even though Eole can't enjoy the heritage of multiple generations in the Church—not yet—she knows she *can* work today to build that heritage for generations to come. "I know I need to start now," she says, "and if I remain faithful, good things will happen."

Early-Morning Regeneration

At an early-morning seminary class in Abymes, the same desire to build strength over time is evident. Class members race each other to find scripture references. They eagerly come to the blackboard to draw pictures. Each time the teacher asks a question, hands shoot up to volunteer an answer.

"Seminary helps us to know God better," says Travis Devarre, 14. "It also helps us prepare so that we can do missionary work now and be ready for a full-time mission later. You learn by studying the word of God, and you arrive at school wide awake, with your head full of good thoughts. It regenerates you."

One of the meanings of *regenerate* is "to be spiritually reborn or converted." It can also mean "restored to a better, higher, or more worthy state." Travis says priesthood service also regenerates him. "It blesses me and my family, because it allows me to help those around me, including my family. That fills my heart with happiness."

"If we have confidence in Heavenly Father, we can be blessed," says Leslie Amoussouga, 15. "We know that He always prepares a path for us. If we don't doubt, if we have faith and keep the commandments, He will bring sunshine to our souls." In other words, He will help us regenerate ourselves, from generation to generation. **NE**

WHY LESLIE GOES TO SEMINARY



I think it's nice to get up early in the morning, before the sun itself gets up, and to be with my friends," says Leslie Amoussouga, 15, a member of the Abymes Branch.

But it's not just about being with friends. "In seminary we study the scriptures more deeply than I do when I'm at home by myself," she says. "You learn many good things

when you study together and when you have an instructor who is genuinely interested in helping you learn, who can explain things you may not completely understand on your own.

"And seminary helps me in school too because I get myself up early to go to seminary. By the time I get to school, I'm already alert and active while some of the other students are still sleepy. Seminary helps you form good habits and teaches you self-discipline, both in studying and in simple things like getting up and getting going."

