

I had been searching for the true Church, but now smoking stood in my way of joining it.

BY MARILYN FEIK

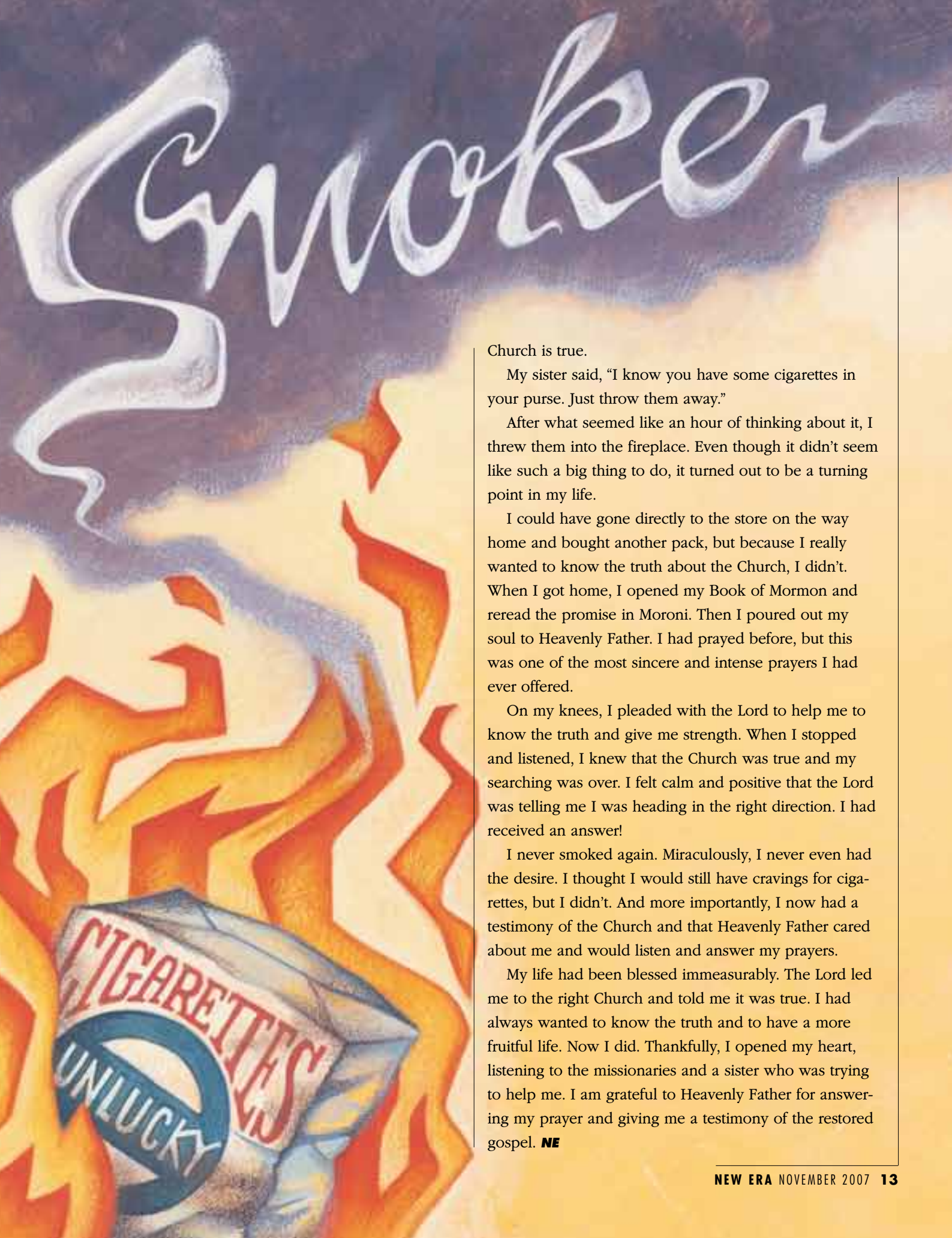
I squirmed in my chair. The missionaries were staring at me. My older sister said to me, “Sis, just throw your cigarettes into the fireplace.”

I was learning about the Church at my sister’s house. Baptized a few weeks before, she now wanted me to join. The missionaries had just taught me a lesson about the Word of Wisdom, but our grandfather smoked, our parents smoked, my sister had smoked before she joined the Church, and I smoked.

It wouldn’t be that difficult to throw the cigarettes away. My sister and I both knew I could easily get more. It wasn’t that big of a deal, or so I thought.

Even though I didn’t like my sister telling me what to do, it was nice that she cared about me and was trying to help me. And I didn’t want to disappoint the missionaries. But more than that, I wanted to know if this Church was true. It all seemed so good, a better life. There didn’t seem to be any sense to the life I was leading, and I wanted to be a better person. I had attended many other churches and prayed often to my Father in Heaven to help me to find the true Church. Now smoking stood in my way. I had tried to quit before, but I could never stop. I knew it was a terrible habit, but it seemed impossible to break. I didn’t think I was strong enough.

When I hesitated, the missionaries told me that if I prayed to Heavenly Father with faith, He could help me quit. They added that while the true Church requires much of its members, Moroni 10:4 promises if I ask with a sincere heart, God will let me know whether the



Church is true.

My sister said, "I know you have some cigarettes in your purse. Just throw them away."

After what seemed like an hour of thinking about it, I threw them into the fireplace. Even though it didn't seem like such a big thing to do, it turned out to be a turning point in my life.

I could have gone directly to the store on the way home and bought another pack, but because I really wanted to know the truth about the Church, I didn't. When I got home, I opened my Book of Mormon and reread the promise in Moroni. Then I poured out my soul to Heavenly Father. I had prayed before, but this was one of the most sincere and intense prayers I had ever offered.

On my knees, I pleaded with the Lord to help me to know the truth and give me strength. When I stopped and listened, I knew that the Church was true and my searching was over. I felt calm and positive that the Lord was telling me I was heading in the right direction. I had received an answer!

I never smoked again. Miraculously, I never even had the desire. I thought I would still have cravings for cigarettes, but I didn't. And more importantly, I now had a testimony of the Church and that Heavenly Father cared about me and would listen and answer my prayers.

My life had been blessed immeasurably. The Lord led me to the right Church and told me it was true. I had always wanted to know the truth and to have a more fruitful life. Now I did. Thankfully, I opened my heart, listening to the missionaries and a sister who was trying to help me. I am grateful to Heavenly Father for answering my prayer and giving me a testimony of the restored gospel. **NE**