

# STANDING

*Standing on Ensign Peak, overlooking the Salt Lake Temple, and waving a banner, Sister Elaine S. Dalton (center) and her counselors Mary N. Cook (left) and Ann M. Dibb (right) have encouraged Young Women throughout the world to make a commitment to virtue.*

It was a Sunday evening, November 28, 1869, 140 years ago, when President Brigham Young called his daughters together and asked them to “retrench” in the way they dressed and acted. They were asked to turn away from the ways of the world that were leading them away from the gospel. This was the beginning of the organization known today as the Young Women.

On November 28, 2008, President Thomas S. Monson and his counselors approved the addition of Virtue as the eighth value in the Young Women theme.

Sister Elaine Dalton, Young Women general president, said, “The date is not a coincidence. The Lord had His hand in this decision. It has been divinely inspired. I looked up the word *retrench* as we were thinking about a return to virtue. The dictionary says it is an additional interior fortification. That is really what virtue is going to do for the young women. It’s going to give them a fortification, a strengthening, to stand as a witness of God in an ever darkening world. It is going to help them have strength and courage.”

Sister Dalton and her counselors have encouraged Young Women throughout the world to make a commitment to virtue, to follow the examples of virtue set by their leaders, mothers, and grandmothers. As a new presidency, they hiked up Ensign Peak, a foothill in the north part of the Salt Lake Valley overlooking the Salt Lake Temple. “We

unfurled our banner calling for a return to virtue. We believe that if there is anything that keeps people away from the Savior and away from the temple it is not being worthy or pure and morally clean.”

Since then, Young Women groups throughout the world have demonstrated their commitment by waving their own gold-colored banner as a symbol of their commitment to virtue. Several of these groups have sent reports and photos to the Young Women general presidency. Here are a few examples.

## **Hannibal Missouri Branch, Nauvoo Illinois Stake**

“We have no mountains here. But we do have the tallest structure in this area of the Midwest: a cement company’s tower, nearly 36 stories high. The seven young women of the branch ‘hiked’ up the tower to plant their virtue flag. We discussed virtue and how staying virtuous in these times may be difficult, but they can do difficult things, like this trek.”

—Ricki Gibbons



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# for VIRTUE



## **Sao Paulo, Brazil Ipiranga Stake**

“Inspired by the virtue value, we planned an activity. We told our young women the story of Brigham Young when he looked out over the temple site and of the Young Women presidency’s experience raising the gold standard, looking toward the temple, and proclaiming a ‘return to virtue.’

“We asked the young women to develop three daily habits: First, to pray to Heavenly Father every morning and every night. Second, to read the Book of Mormon at least five minutes daily. And third, to smile! We created a logo of these goals and painted it on a banner.

“Each young woman stamped her hand on this banner. We are excited to prepare our young women to make covenants with the Lord in the temple and help them come unto Christ.”

—Tatiana Christina dos Reis Dintof



**Mapleton Utah North Stake**

“The Mapleton Utah North Stake decided to focus entirely on virtue at their stake youth fireside. Young men and women, including their parents, were asked to complete the four new value experiences and the value project of reading the Book of Mormon by this November.

“At the end of the young men’s discussion, each young man was given a gold tie to wear. Each young woman was presented with a beautiful gold necklace made especially for them by the stake Young Women presidency. Hopefully, these gifts will remind each young man and young woman of their renewed commitment to virtue.

“A great moment in the fireside came as the young women returned to the chapel after the separate sessions. The young men and parents had already returned from each of their sessions. The chapel was full of young men in new gold ties literally rising to the challenge by standing as a sign of respect as the young women of the stake walked in.”

—Casey Packard Allen



**Encinas Ward, Gilbert Arizona Stapley Stake**

“I was able to give a devotional one night at camp on the return to virtue. I felt the spirit so strong with these girls. Each girl stood that night and signed our banner saying that we will remain virtuous and take a stand in this world, calling for a return to virtue. Believe me when I tell you these girls will change the world for good! It has been a privilege to serve them and know that my life has been blessed because of it.”

—Sheri Kersey



**Fort St. John Ward, Grande Prairie Alberta Canada Stake**

“The young women of the Fort St. John Ward were inspired to undertake a 15K hike through the Peace River Valley. With 14 young women plus leaders, we set off. The weather cooperated, and we felt a growing feeling of camaraderie. We visually drank deeply from God’s creations and appreciated the fact that He created it all. We spoke of gospel principles, expressed our love for the Young Women program, the activities, and each other. We knelt as a group and prayed on behalf of every young woman in attendance and for those who were not with us. We then wrote our declaration of virtue with charcoal on a piece of fabric, fastened it to a stick, and raised our banners high. We shouted as loud as we could the following five declarations so that we would know and those listening would know what we stood for: I will dress modestly and be a symbol of virtue! I will not use vulgar or degrading language! I will not let pornography destroy my family and friends! I will defend the family and the importance of marriage! Calling for a return to virtue!

“We know there will be many occasions where we will be called to stand and fight for good and righteous aspects of life. We are prepared. We are ready.”

—Kara Strate