

# CALLED *to* SERVE



*"I have had the strong desire to serve a mission ever since I joined the Church two years ago, and now with the announcement President Monson made on Saturday morning, that dream will come true a lot sooner than expected!"*

Buddy T., 17,  
Montana, USA



## **New Lowered Age Requirements for Missionary Service**

"I am pleased to announce that effective immediately all worthy and able young men who have graduated from high school or its equivalent, regardless of where they live, will have the option of being recommended for missionary service beginning at the age of 18, instead of age 19. I am not suggesting that all young men will—or should—serve at this earlier age. Rather, based on individual circumstances as well as upon a determination by priesthood leaders, this option is now available.

"... I am pleased to announce that able, worthy

young women who have the desire to serve may be recommended for missionary service beginning at age 19, instead of age 21.

"We affirm that missionary work is a priesthood duty—and we encourage all young men who are worthy and who are physically able and mentally capable to respond to the call to serve. Many young women also serve, but they are not under the same mandate to serve as are the young men. We assure the young sisters of the Church, however, that they make a valuable contribution as missionaries, and we welcome their service."

**President Thomas S. Monson**



### Greatest and Most Important Duty

"Missionary work is an identifying feature of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Always has it been; ever shall it be. As the Prophet Joseph Smith declared, 'After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel' (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 330)."

President Thomas S. Monson

### Prepared to Serve

"Within two short years, all of the full-time missionaries currently serving in this royal army of God will have concluded their full-time labors and will have returned to their homes and loved ones. Their replacements are found tonight in the ranks of the Aaronic Priesthood of the Church. Young men, are you ready to respond? Are you willing to work? Are you prepared to serve?"

"President John Taylor summed up the requirements: 'The kind of men we want as bearers of this gospel message are men who have faith in God; men who have faith in their religion; men who honor their priesthood; . . . men full of the Holy Ghost and the power of God[;] . . . men of honor, integrity, virtue and purity' (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* [2001], 73).

"Brethren, to each of us comes the mandate to share the gospel of Christ. When our lives comply with God's own standard, those within our sphere of influence will never speak the lament, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved' (Jeremiah 8:20)."

President Thomas S. Monson



### The Decision to Serve

"The decision to serve a mission will shape the spiritual destiny of the missionary, his or her spouse, and their posterity for generations to come. A desire to serve is a natural outcome of one's conversion, worthiness, and preparation."

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

### Powerful Ambassadors of the Lord

"Missionaries . . . are blessed with gifts—such as the power of the Holy Spirit, the love of God, and testimonies of the truth—that make them powerful ambassadors of the Lord. They share the good news of the gospel that will bring true joy and everlasting happiness to all who heed their message."

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



### A Monumental Work to Do

"To the youth of the Church rising up to missions and temples and marriage, we say: 'Love God and remain clean from the blood and sins of this generation. You have a monumental work to do, underscored by that marvelous announcement President Thomas S. Monson made. . . . Your Father in Heaven expects your loyalty and your love at every stage of your life.'"

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



### No Time to Waste

"Consider missionary work. Young men, you have no time to waste. You can't wait to get serious about preparing until you are 17 or 18. Aaronic Priesthood quorums can help their members understand the oath and covenant of the priesthood and get ready for ordination as elders, they can help them understand and prepare for the ordinances of the temple, and they can help them get ready for successful missions. . . . And in each ward and branch, these same quorums can lead out in an effective collaboration with the full-time missionaries who are serving there."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Young men from Ceará, Brazil

"At general conference I learnt that I can serve a mission when I am 19 years old. It helps me to dedicate my life more to the gospel of Jesus Christ. I also learnt to be bold and not be afraid of being a Mormon. I love the Church but was always afraid to say it. Now I am more confident to tell the world who I really am. With these two things I can now focus more on the gospel of Christ and nobly and confidently exclaim to the world who I am and the happiness I have."

Daisy S., 15,  
New Brunswick, Canada