



By President Thomas S. Monson

As We Meet Together Again

Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much.

My beloved brothers and sisters, we welcome you to general conference, which is being heard and seen by various means throughout the world. We express thanks to all who have to do with the complicated logistics of this great undertaking.

Since April when we last met, the work of the Church has moved forward unhindered. It has been my privilege to dedicate four new temples. Accompanied by my counselors and other General Authorities, I have traveled to Gila Valley, Arizona; to Vancouver, British Columbia; to Cebu

Stockholm, Sweden



City in the Philippines; and to Kyiv, Ukraine. The temple in each of these locations is magnificently beautiful. Each one is blessing the lives of our members and is an influence for good upon those not of our faith.

The evening prior to each temple dedication, we were privileged to view a cultural celebration, participated in by our young people and some of our not-so-young people. These events were generally held in large stadiums, although in Kyiv we met in a beautiful



palace. The dancing, singing, musical performances, and displays were excellent. I express my commendation and love to all who were involved.

Each temple dedication was a spiritual feast. We felt the Spirit of the Lord at all of them.

Next month we will rededicate the Laie Hawaii Temple, one of our oldest temples, which has undergone extensive renovations during many months. We look forward to that sacred occasion.

We continue to build temples. This morning I am pleased to announce five additional temples for which sites are being acquired and which, in coming months and years, will be built in the following locations: Lisbon, Portugal; Indianapolis, Indiana; Urdaneta, Philippines; Hartford, Connecticut; and Tijuana, Mexico.

The ordinances performed in our temples are vital to our salvation and to the salvation of our deceased loved ones. May we continue faithful

in attending the temples, which are being built closer and closer to our members.

Now, before we hear from our speakers this morning, may I mention a matter close to my heart and which deserves our serious attention. I speak of missionary work.

First, to young men of the Aaronic Priesthood and to you young men who are becoming elders: I repeat what prophets have long taught—that every worthy, able young man

should prepare to serve a mission. Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much. Young men, I admonish you to prepare for service as a missionary. Keep yourselves clean and pure and worthy to represent the Lord. Maintain your health and strength. Study the scriptures. Where such is available, participate in seminary or institute. Familiarize yourself with the missionary handbook *Preach My Gospel*.

A word to you young sisters: while you do not have the same priesthood responsibility as do the young men to serve as full-time missionaries, you also make a valuable contribution as missionaries, and we welcome your service.

And now to you mature brothers and sisters: we need many, many more senior couples. To the faithful couples now serving or who have served in the past, we thank you for your faith and devotion to the gospel of Jesus Christ. You serve willingly and well and accomplish great good.

To those of you who are not yet to the season of life when you might serve a couples mission, I urge you to prepare now for the day when you and your spouse might do so. As your circumstances allow, as you are eligible for retirement, and as your health permits, make yourselves available to leave home and give full-time missionary service. There are few times in your lives when you will enjoy the sweet spirit and satisfaction that come from giving full-time service together in the work of the Master.

Now, my brothers and sisters, may you be attuned to the Spirit of the Lord as we hear from His servants during the next two days. That this may be the blessing of each, I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■



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

Because of Your Faith

My thanks to all you wonderful members of the Church . . . for proving every day of your life that the pure love of Christ “never faileth.”

President Monson, the entire worldwide membership of this church joins in that great anthem with this wonderful choir, and we say, “We thank thee, O God, for a prophet.” Thank you for your life, for your example, and for that welcoming message to another general conference of the Church. We love you, we admire you, and we sustain you. Indeed, in this afternoon’s session we will have a more formal opportunity to raise our hands in a sustaining vote, not only for President Monson but also for all the other general officers of the Church as well. Because my name will be included on that list, may I be so bold as to speak for all in thanking you in advance for those uplifted hands. Not one of us could serve without your prayers and without your support. Your loyalty and your love mean more to us than we can ever possibly say.

In that spirit my message today is to say that *we* sustain *you*, that we return to *you* those same heartfelt prayers and that same expression of love. We all know there are special keys, covenants, and responsibilities given to the presiding officers of the Church, but we also know that the Church draws incomparable strength, a truly unique vitality, from the faith and devotion of

every member of this church, whoever you may be. In whatever country you live, however young or inadequate you feel, or however aged or limited you see yourself as being, I testify you are individually loved of God, you are central to the meaning of His work, and you are cherished and prayed for by the presiding officers of His Church. The personal value, the sacred splendor of every *one* of you, is the very reason there is a plan for salvation and exaltation. Contrary to the parlance of the day, this *is* about *you*. No, don’t turn and look at your neighbor. I am talking to you!

I have struggled to find an adequate way to tell you how loved of God you are and how grateful we on this stand are for you. I am trying to be voice for the very angels of heaven in thanking you for every good thing you have ever done, for every kind word you have ever said, for every sacrifice you have ever made in extending to someone—to anyone—the beauty and blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I am grateful for Young Women leaders who go to girls camp and, without shampoo, showers, or mascara, turn smoky, campfire testimony meetings into some of the most