

Added Focus on Ministering Strengthens Visiting Teaching

By **Melissa Merrill**

Church News and Events

While Visiting Teaching Messages have always focused on the teachings of the Savior Jesus Christ, beginning this month they will begin to teach about ministering as He would. This month's message, "Love, Watch Over, and Strengthen," (p. 7) is the first such message to teach these principles.

Visiting teaching can help all sisters follow a higher path of discipleship, said the Relief Society general presidency. They hope that visiting teachers will discuss these responsibilities with sisters they watch over or teach principles that will help sisters increase their faith, strengthen families, and give service.

Several resources have been

provided to help familiarize Relief Society leaders and sisters with the current guidelines for visiting teaching.

Church Magazines Article

The March 2012 *Liahona* and *Ensign* magazines included an article about visiting teaching as a vehicle for ministering to each other. "Through Relief Society [and visiting teaching], we practice being disciples of Christ," said Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president. "We learn what He would have us learn, we do what He would have us do, and we become what He would have us become" ("What Latter-day Saint Women Do Best: Stand Strong and Immovable," *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 109; quoted in "Visiting

Teaching—Understanding the Power of Ministering," *Ensign*, Mar. 2012, 29).

The article—which teaches about the power of ministering, the focus on ministering, and the goal of ministering as the Savior did—is followed by a chart outlining how recent changes have strengthened visiting teaching, with corresponding references from *Handbook 2: Administering the Church*.

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Daughters in My Kingdom, Chapter 7

Titled "Pure Religion": Watchcare and Ministering through Visiting Teaching," this chapter follows visiting teaching from its origins to its influence on families around the world today. It also includes helpful ideas for visiting teachers, including questions a sister might consider asking in order to give comfort, share gospel teaching, and provide meaningful service.

Handbook 2 and LDS.org

Section 9 of *Handbook 2* is all about Relief Society, with section 9.5 elaborating on the responsibilities of visiting teachers and giving instruction on organizing, adapting, and reporting visiting teaching.

IMAGE FROM LEADERSHIP TRAINING LIBRARY VIDEO



These points and others are outlined in detail on the updated **Visiting Teaching Training** page, found under “**Relief Society**” in the **Serving in the Church** section of **LDS.org**.

Leadership Training Library

This interactive online supplement to *Handbook 2* features short videos that teach core leadership principles. Viewers can find helpful content both on the right navigation (“Minister to Others,”) and the top navigation (“Relief Society”). The latter includes a content outline that directly corresponds with the content of *Handbook 2*.

Mormon Channel

Each month Mormon Channel programming expands the Visiting Teaching Message through quotes and insights from General Authorities. Even though January 2012’s Visiting Teaching Message, “Watchcare and Ministering through Visiting Teaching,” preceded the official change to the Visiting Teaching Messages, it teaches principles that are central to ministering. To listen to this episode, find **Visiting Teaching Message, Episode 14**, at **mormonchannel.org**, and watch for forthcoming episodes at the same location.

Read more of these stories—and many others—at news.lds.org. ■

New biographies of the current prophets and apostles on prophets.lds.org show the hand of the Lord in preparing them to serve.



Prophets.LDS.org Features New Biographies of Living Apostles

By Heather Whittle Wrigley

Church News and Events

New biographies of members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have been published on prophets.lds.org, under the section titled “Meet today’s prophets and apostles.”

The first biography to be featured on Prophets and Apostles Speak Today was that of President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. One biography has been added each week since, in order of the Apostles’ seniority, and will continue to be added until the full quorum is represented.

Biographies of the members of the First Presidency—President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor Henry B. Eyring, and Second Counselor Dieter F. Uchtdorf—have been available on the site since October 2011.

“Learning about their childhood, student years, family life, and careers prior to their calls to the apostleship will help us see the hand of the Lord in their lives and will serve as another witness of how He calls