

Liahona



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Hope of Zion, by Miroslava Menssen-Bezakova

Many Latter-day Saints traveled west to the Salt Lake Valley in the mid-19th century. Years before, on August 1, 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith spoke to the Saints in Missouri, giving them hope for their future in Missouri and for their eventual trek west.

In a revelation to the Prophet, the Lord said:

“For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the

day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand.

“Remember this, which I tell you before, that you may lay it to heart, and receive that which is to follow” (D&C 58:4–5).

Here we see some of those who remained faithful, and they represent all who moved forward in faith to build Zion.

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FOR ADULTS



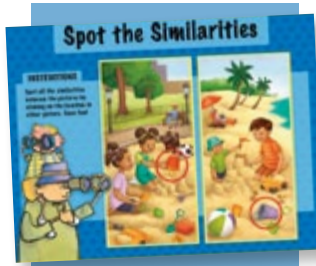
The Coila family lives on a floating island on Lake Titicaca. The island is made of reeds; maintaining it is a lesson in diligence (see page 32). See more photos at www.liahona.lds.org.

FOR YOUTH



Twelve-year-old Monica Saili is one of the top young swimmers in New Zealand. When her father passed away unexpectedly, she learned that "hard things can make us stronger. You just have to keep swimming" (see page 58). See more photos at www.liahona.lds.org.

FOR CHILDREN



You can find children's activities at www.liahona.lds.org.

IN YOUR LANGUAGE

The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at www.languages.lds.org.

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**By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf**
Second Counselor in the
First Presidency



BROTHER, I'm Committed

Two young brothers stood atop a small cliff that overlooked the pristine waters of a blue lake. This was a popular diving spot, and the brothers had often talked about making the jump—something they had seen others do.

Although they both wanted to make the jump, neither one wanted to be first. The height of the cliff wasn't that great, but to the two young boys, it seemed the distance increased whenever they started to lean forward—and their courage was fading fast.

Finally, one brother put one foot at the edge of the cliff and moved decisively forward. At that moment his brother whispered, "Maybe we should wait until next summer."

The first brother's momentum, however, was already pulling him forward. "Brother," he responded, "I'm committed!"

He splashed into the water and surfaced quickly with a victorious shout. The second brother followed instantly. Afterward, they both laughed about the first boy's final words before plunging into the water: "Brother, I'm committed."

Commitment is a little like diving into the water. Either you are committed or you are not. Either you are moving forward or you are standing still. There's no halfway. We all face moments of decision that change the rest of our lives. As members of the Church, we must ask ourselves, "Will I dive in or just stand at the edge? Will I step forward or merely test the temperature of the water with my toes?"

Some sins are committed because we do wrong; other sins are committed because we do nothing. Being only sort

of committed to the gospel can lead to frustration, unhappiness, and guilt. This should not apply to us because we are a covenant people. We make covenants with the Lord when we are baptized and when we enter the house of the Lord. Men make covenants with the Lord when they are ordained to the priesthood. Nothing can be more important than keeping a commitment we have made with the Lord. Let us remember the reply of Rachel and Leah to Jacob in the Old Testament. It was simple and straightforward and showed their commitment: "Whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do" (Genesis 31:16).

Those who are only sort of committed may expect to only sort of receive the blessings of testimony, joy, and peace. The windows of heaven might only be sort of open to them. Wouldn't it be foolish to think, "I'll commit myself 50 percent now, but when Christ appears at the Second Coming, I'll commit myself 100 percent"?

Commitment to our covenants with the Lord is a fruit of our conversion. Commitment to our Savior and His Church builds our character and strengthens our spirit so that when we meet Christ, He will embrace us and say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

There is a difference between intention and action. Those who only intend to commit may find excuses at every turn. Those who truly commit face their challenges squarely and say to themselves, "Yes, that would be a very good reason to delay, but I made covenants, and so I will do what I have committed to do." They search the scriptures and earnestly seek the guidance of their Father in Heaven. They accept and magnify their Church callings.



They attend their meetings. They do their home or visiting teaching.

A German proverb says, “Promises are like the full moon. If they are not kept at once, they diminish day by day.” As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have committed to walk in the path of discipleship. We have committed to follow the example of our Savior. Imagine how the world will be blessed and transformed for good when all members of the Lord’s Church live up to their true potential—converted in the depth of their souls and committed to building the kingdom of God.

In some way, each of us stands at a decision point overlooking the water. It is my prayer that we will have faith, move forward, face our fears and doubts with courage, and say to ourselves, “I’m committed!” ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

One way to help learners understand gospel principles is to have them draw pictures. Drawing allows them to explore and express their understanding and feelings of gospel stories and principles” (*Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 166). Consider reading the article, discussing the principle of commitment to the gospel, and then asking those who wish to do so to draw a picture of a gospel activity that demonstrates commitment. Younger children may need suggestions about what to draw.

YOUTH

All I Can Give

By Alyssa Hansen

I was stressing about how I was going to pay for the things I wanted to do over the summer: classes, workshops, summer camps, and so on. I thought I was going to cry. Then I remembered all the things I'd been taught about having trust and faith in the Lord. I decided to put the situation in the Lord's hands and trust that if it was His will, He would provide a way.

Not too long after that, my mom

found an uncashed check from a job I had had earlier that year, and the very next day I got a small cash prize in the mail for taking second place in a competition. This was a great testimony to me that God does live, that He loves and cares about me and will provide.

I was so filled with gratitude and love for my Heavenly Father and Savior. I felt as if I might burst! I longed to show how thankful I was,

to praise God the best that I could, and to share that feeling. Others have done this by composing a song, writing a poem, or painting a picture, but I felt inadequate to do any of those things. I realized the only thing I could give that would be adequate praise would be my life—to be "an example of the believers" (1 Timothy 4:12), to give my life to Christ. That's all He asks, and that's all I can give.

CHILDREN

Are You Committed?

When we have promised to follow Jesus Christ, we do what is right without making excuses.

These four children are joining their Primary class to clean up a local playground. Which of the children does not look committed? Why not? How are the others showing their commitment?

Circle five items that would help this child participate in the service activity with the others. Can you find a rake, paintbrush, ladder, bucket, and shovel?





Faith • Family • Relief

Come to the Temple and Claim Your Blessings

Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

Sisters, we are most blessed. The Savior stands at the head of this Church. We are led by living prophets. We have the holy scriptures. And we have many holy temples throughout the world where we can obtain the ordinances necessary to help us return to our Heavenly Father.

We go first to the temple for ourselves. “The primary purpose of the temple,” explained Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “is to provide the ordinances necessary for our exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Temple ordinances guide us to our Savior and give us the blessings that come to us through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Temples are the greatest university of learning known to man, giving us knowledge and wisdom about the Creation of the world.

Endowment instructions give guidance as to how we should conduct our lives here in mortality. . . . The ordinance consists of a series of instructions on how we should live and covenants we make to live righteously by following our Savior.”¹

But our temple service does not end there. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught: “Acting as proxy for someone who has gone beyond the veil, you will have reviewed before you the covenants that you have made. You will have reinforced in your mind the great spiritual blessings that are associated with the house of the Lord. . . . In the covenants and ordinances center the blessings that you may claim in the holy temple.”²

Come to the temple and then come again. Making and keeping temple covenants will keep us on course to the greatest of all blessings—eternal life.

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.

From the Scriptures

Isaiah 2:3; 1 Corinthians 11:11; Revelation 7:13–15; Doctrine and Covenants 109

What Can I Do?

1. What experience will I share to strengthen those I visit in their determination to “come to the temple”?
2. How can I personally claim the blessings of the temple?

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

From Our History

The Prophet Joseph often spoke to Relief Society sisters at their meetings. With the Nauvoo Temple under construction, the Prophet instructed the sisters in doctrine, preparing them to receive more knowledge through temple ordinances. In 1842 he said to Mercy Fielding Thompson that the endowment “will bring you out of darkness into marvelous light.”³

An estimated 6,000 Latter-day Saints received temple ordinances before the exodus from Nauvoo. President Brigham Young (1801–77) said, “Such has been the anxiety manifested by the saints to receive the ordinances [of the temple], and such the anxiety on our part to administer to them, that I have given myself up entirely to the work of the Lord in the Temple night and day, not taking more than four hours sleep, upon an average, per day, and going home but once a week.”⁴ The strength and power of temple covenants fortified the Saints as they left their city and temple for a journey into the unknown.

NOTES

1. Robert D. Hales, “Blessings of the Temple,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2009, 14; *Ensign*, Oct. 2009, 48.
2. Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple* (1980), 170, 171.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 414.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 299.



Small & Simple Things

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).

TEMPLE SPOTLIGHT

Vancouver British Columbia Temple

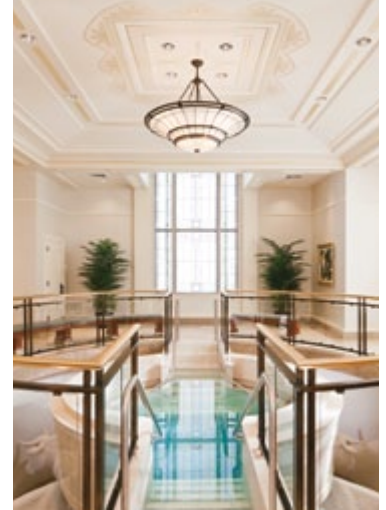
On May 2, 2010, the Vancouver British Columbia Temple became the 131st temple to be dedicated in this dispensation. The temple covers 28,165 square feet (2,617 m²) and contains a baptistry, a celestial room, two endowment rooms, and two sealing rooms. Inside, the color scheme features green, light blue, and gold, honoring the majesty of the forests, sea, and sky of the Pacific Northwest. The Pacific dogwood, the provincial flower of British Columbia, is portrayed in paintings and fabrics throughout the building.

The night before the dedication, more than 1,200 youth participated in a cultural celebration. Titled “A Beacon to the World,” the show portrayed the history and people



of Canada. At the beginning of the celebration, President Monson changed the opening hymn to the national anthem of Canada, saying, “We are here to enjoy Canada with you.”

In the dedicatory prayer, President Monson said: “May all who enter have clean hands and pure hearts. May their faith increase as they labor here for those who have gone before. May they depart with a feeling of peace, praising Thy holy name.”¹



From top: A look at the baptistry, decorative details, and celestial room of the Vancouver British Columbia Temple.

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Dedicatory Prayer,” ldschurchtemples.com/vancouver/prayer.

Fasting Journal

Fasting used to be difficult for me—until I began keeping a fasting journal. Now, before I begin each fast, I write down a specific purpose for my fast. For example, I might write, “Because I am so nervous about my new calling as Beehive adviser, I am fasting and praying that the Lord will bless me to be calm, confident, and composed tomorrow when I teach my first lesson.”

Throughout my fast, I jot down relevant things that transpire; thoughts, feelings, and impressions that come into my mind and heart; and scriptural references that especially pertain to the purpose of my fast.

As I share my desires with Heavenly Father, He often blesses me in ways I had not imagined. What might otherwise seem to be random events in my life are clearly linked when I write them down and see how they all contribute to my growth and development. Since 1996, when I first began keeping a fasting journal, I have seen how Heavenly Father has blessed my life. I testify of the incredible spiritual power of fasting and praying and consider fasting an opportunity for “rejoicing and prayer” (D&C 59:14).

Renee Harding, North Carolina, USA

Mary Fielding Smith

Mary Fielding Smith, a faithful Latter-day Saint woman, was left with several young children while her husband was in Liberty Jail during the winter of 1838–39. Mobs raided her home, and her son was nearly killed as a result of the attack. As the wife of Hyrum Smith, Mary was left a widow when her husband was assassinated at Carthage Jail on June 27, 1844. She and Emma Smith endured many trials along with their husbands, Hyrum and Joseph Smith. Today, Mary is admired as one of the most stalwart pioneers of the early Church.

Mary married Hyrum Smith on December 24, 1837. Hyrum’s first wife, Jerusha, had died in childbirth, and Mary cared for Hyrum’s small children as her own. Hyrum and Mary also had two children together, including Joseph F. Smith, who later became the sixth President of the Church.

When the Saints left Nauvoo for the Salt Lake Valley after Joseph and Hyrum were martyred, Mary resolved to make the journey. She and her family were assigned to a traveling group, and the captain told her that she would be a burden to others and shouldn’t attempt the difficult journey. Mary responded, “I will beat you to the valley and will ask no help from you either.”¹ The trek proved difficult, but she arrived with her family in Salt Lake on September 23, 1848, a day ahead of the captain who had doubted her.

Mary Fielding Smith remained faithful to the end of her life. She paid tithing, even in her poverty. When someone inappropriately suggested she not contribute a



Top: Mary Fielding Smith crossing the plains.

Above: Joseph F. Smith with family members at Mary Fielding Smith’s Salt Lake City home, about 1910.

tenth of the potatoes she had grown that year, she responded, “You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Would you deny me a blessing? . . . I pay my tithing, not only because it is a law of God, but because I expect a blessing by doing it.”² She established a farm in the Salt Lake Valley and taught her children the gospel. President Joseph F. Smith later said, “She taught me honor, and virtue, and truth, and integrity to the kingdom of God, and she taught me not only by precept but by example.”³

NOTES

1. See Don Cecil Corbett, *Mary Fielding Smith: Daughter of Britain* (1966), 228.
2. Mary Fielding Smith, quoted by Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, Apr. 1900, 48.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 36.

DRINK DEEPLY OF THE Living Water



HE IS THE LIVING WATER

“Do you wish to partake of this living water [spoken of in John 4:14] and experience that divine well springing up within you to everlasting life?

“Then be not afraid. Believe with all your hearts. Develop an unshakable faith in the Son of God. Let your hearts reach out in earnest prayer. Fill your minds with knowledge of Him. Forsake your weaknesses. Walk in holiness and harmony with the commandments.

“Drink deeply of the living waters of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Abundant Life,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2006, 100.

“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst” (John 4:14).

By Matthew Heaps

Welfare Services

My employment takes me to communities all over the world where people do not have access to clean water. Our group works with local governments and residents to provide maintainable sources of pure, life-sustaining water such as wells and spring or rain captures.

These water projects offer a significant improvement in the quality of life. Health drastically improves because clean water stops the contraction of typhoid, cholera, and other water-borne diseases. The economy also improves because parents and children who previously spent their time carrying water can now pursue employment and education. Even in communities with numerous and wide-ranging problems, people always say that clean water is what they would like most.

The Savior spent His earthly ministry in a time and place where people relied on wells for water. As He taught the woman at the well by saying that “whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall

give him shall never thirst” (John 4:14), was He also teaching us that His gospel quenches—permanently—our most basic needs? I believe so.

I will always be grateful to a woman in Kenya, Africa, who taught me about willingness to work to obtain water. I met her at a celebration following the installation of a well in her community. With gratitude she told me that the new well would cut her daily nine-mile (14 km) trip to get water to a one-mile (1.6 km) trip. She was overjoyed at the opportunities that would now be hers.

I couldn’t help but think how I would feel if I had to walk a mile to get water. I was impressed that she put everything—from housework to gardening—aside while she made her journey to fetch water. She knew she couldn’t complete the other tasks without that water. I thought about how heavy her burden was. Carrying water takes strength and endurance. Yet, for the sake of her family, she was willing to walk nine miles every day to get it.



The Savior taught, “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

I wonder if we who get clean water from taps in our homes sometimes expect to come unto Christ with the same ease as turning a knob to get a glass of water. Or are we willing to put aside other tasks, even important ones, to seek to know Jesus Christ and His Father?

I know that the well of living water the Savior offers us never runs dry and is pure and life sustaining. When we come to Him with an empty cup, He will fill it, often beyond our capacity to receive. He is truly living water, a manifestation of the love of God. ■

WHAT IS THE LIVING WATER?

- The living water is the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- “The fountain of living waters . . . [is] a representation of the love of God” (1 Nephi 11:25).
- Living water can bring us “everlasting life” (John 4:14; D&C 63:23).

For more information on this topic, see 1 Nephi 8; 11; and Richard G. Scott, “The Transforming Power of Faith and Character,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 43.

HOW DOES THE LIVING WATER BLESS US?

Kathleen H. Hughes, former first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, helped answer this question in her general conference talk “Blessed by Living Water” (*Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 13).

1. The living water heals us through the power of the Holy Ghost.
2. The living water nourishes and sustains us (see Matthew 11:28).
3. The living water brings peace and joy (see John 14:27; D&C 101:16).

Consider reading 1 Nephi 11:25 with your family or a friend. Discuss the relationship between the fountain of living waters and the tree of life.

WORK IS AN ETERNAL PRINCIPLE

Our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ worked to create the heavens and the earth. They created the sun, the moon, and the stars. They gathered the seas and caused the dry land to appear and the plants to grow. Then They created every living thing in the sea and on the land. (See Genesis 1; Moses 2.) Their example shows us that work is important in heaven and on earth. (See also John 5:17; 9:4.)

When God created man and woman in His own image, He placed them in the Garden of Eden (see Genesis 1:26–27; 2:8). Later, when they were cast out of the garden, the Lord said to Adam, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” (Genesis 3:19). From that time on, Adam and Eve worked to provide for their own needs and the needs of their children (see Moses 5:1).

Since the time of Adam and Eve, work has been a way of life for all of us on earth. We work to provide for the physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being of ourselves and our families. Parents strive to establish homes where principles of work are taught. Giving children work assignments that fit their abilities and praising their successes help them have positive work experiences. As a result, they

can develop a strong work ethic, a good attitude, and basic skills.

We should also seek to find the proper balance between work and rest. Six days a week, blessings can come to us as we remember to mix work with activities that refresh us. On Sundays, however, the Lord promises us special blessings as we obey His commandment to refrain from our temporal work and keep the Sabbath day holy (see Exodus 20:9–11; D&C 59:9–19).

Work is a part of our Heavenly Father’s plan for us in heaven and on earth. If we are righteous, we will return to live with Him. There we will continue to have opportunities to work as we help build the kingdom of God (see Moses 1:39). ■

As we help one another and share the burden of our work, even the heaviest load becomes lighter.



We are responsible to care for ourselves and our families.



1. Parents have a sacred duty to care for their children (see D&C 83).



2. Children will be blessed as they care for their aging parents (see 1 Timothy 5:3–4, 8).



3. We should help members of our extended family when possible.



1. We strengthen our character and develop work skills.



2. We feel the joy of God's plan for us on earth.

Blessings come to us as a result of work.



3. We become more prepared and self-reliant as we build a three-month supply of food, water, and other necessities.

“Let [man] labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth” (Ephesians 4:28).

For more information, see *Gospel Principles* (2009), 155–60; and “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.

CALLED OF GOD

By Ramona Dutton

I learned firsthand what it means to be “called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority” (Articles of Faith 1:5).



My husband and I had just moved to a new town and were excited to attend our new ward. It turned out that the ward boundaries were being changed, and the ward was divided.

After church our second Sunday, the ward clerk set an appointment for us to meet with the new bishop on Tuesday evening. After a short visit, the bishop asked my husband’s permission to call me as the Primary president of the new ward. Then he issued the call to me. I was shocked, but I had been taught never to turn down a calling, so I agreed to do my best.

The bishop gave me a list of names and asked me to meet with him in two days with names picked out for counselors and a secretary. I felt overwhelmed. When we arrived home, I locked myself in the bathroom and cried. Then I poured out my heart to Heavenly Father, expressing my concerns over my new calling. I didn’t know anyone in the new ward, and I needed His help. When I finished praying, peace filled my heart.

The next morning I prayed and then dove into my usual housework.

The list of names the bishop had given me sat on the kitchen table, and I briefly glanced at it each time I passed. After I had looked at the list several times, two names seemed to stand out to me. I picked up the list and read the names. As I pronounced the names, a warm feeling engulfed me. I had never felt the Holy Ghost so strongly.

I immediately approached Heavenly Father in prayer, tears streaming down my cheeks as I said the names again. I didn’t know anything about either of these women, but I knew in my heart they were to be my counselors.

Later that evening I went over the list of names in my head. One name came into my mind every time I pictured the list. She became my secretary.

I met with the bishop the next day and gave him the names for my counselors and secretary. To my surprise they were the same women the bishop thought would work well in the Primary. When I got to church on Sunday, the first counselor in the bishopric stood outside the chapel with me, pointing out my counselors

SEEKING THE GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT

“A person must be called of God to serve in the Church (see Articles of Faith 1:5). Leaders seek the guidance of the Spirit in determining whom to call. They consider the worthiness that may be required for the calling. They also consider the member’s personal or family circumstances. Each calling should benefit the people who are served, the member, and the member’s family.”

Handbook 2: Administering the Church (2010), 19.1.1.

and secretary as they arrived. As I watched these sisters, I felt that I already knew them. The Spirit again confirmed to me that these women were called of God.

I knew we could work harmoniously together serving the Lord—and we did. Although these sisters were strangers to me, they were perfect for their callings. The Lord knew whom He wanted to call. What a growing experience it was to me to learn firsthand what it means to be called of God by prophecy. ■

A LOVING MOTHER'S LIFE MISSION

By Peiholani Kauvaka



Above: The author's father, Moses, mother, Lavinia, and niece on the Los Angeles California Temple grounds in 1999.

When I was growing up in Tonga, my mother occasionally helped teach seminary. From the time I was 5 until I was 10, she would often wake me up before seminary and lead me to the house where the class met. Although it was less than a quarter of a mile (0.4 km) walk on the trail through the guava bushes, she would ask me, "Are you afraid?" I would bravely answer, "No."

Then she would say, "Someday you must be brave and serve your Heavenly Father. He has provided all things for us, even a plan that we can return to live with Him. Someday you will go on a mission and serve Him with all your heart, might, mind, and strength. You must start preparing now to be a good missionary."

Eventually my parents moved our family to Ontario, California, USA. My mother found herself in an unfamiliar country, unable to speak the language and in culture shock. Like a hen that gathers her chicks under her wings, she would gather all of us children and fall to her knees, pleading to Heavenly Father that none of the children He had given her would fall away from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My parents used family prayer, daily scripture reading, regular family fasts, weekly family home evening, and Church meetings to seek Heavenly Father's help in fortifying our family.

My parents encouraged us to behave like missionaries early in life. We always wore white shirts to church and had missionary haircuts. As a priest I would bless the sacrament, and my younger brothers would prepare and pass the sacrament as teachers and deacons. I could see my mother and father watching us, making sure we completed our duties faithfully.

Before I left on my mission, my mother said, "Do your part, and I will do mine. I will fast and pray for you to find people to teach." She continued fasting and praying for all four of her sons during their missions. We all served faithfully and returned home with honor.

During my last visit with her before her death, my mother said, "Peiholani, I have taught you all that I know to be most important in this life and the life to come. That is, the gospel of Jesus Christ is true. The atoning blood of Jesus Christ is salvation to your soul. Honor the covenants you have made with the Lord in the temple. Do this, and our family will be together again. This I know without a doubt because Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ live."

My testimony was built on the gospel, by every word my mother and father said. I know that our family will be together again someday because my parents fulfilled their mission to teach us the gospel and lead us to the Savior. ■

MI VIDA, MI HISTORIA

Stories of faith and inspiration from Latin American Latter-day Saints.

The Latter-day Saints on these pages shared their stories of conviction and belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ in a recent Church History Museum exhibit. Collectively they represent millions of Latin American Saints.

Twenty-four stories were on display in the Church History Museum in Salt Lake City, Utah, through June 2011. The multimedia exhibit can still be viewed online at lds.org/churchhistory/museum/exhibits/mividamihistoria.

Carmen Echeverría Wood

Carmen was born into a religious family in Guatemala City, Guatemala. When she was nine years old, Latter-day Saint sister missionaries taught her family the gospel. She enjoyed attending Primary and spoke of a new feeling of happiness in her family. A year later the family was baptized. She says, “This was a wonderful, wonderful time.” She recalls President David O. McKay (1873–1970) visiting Guatemala in 1954 and teaching the children the principle of tithing. At age 17 she was called to serve in the Central American Mission and was grateful to share “the hope of a better life and being together forever.”





Miriam Puerta Amato

Miriam is a native of Brazil. When she wanted to serve a mission, she filled out the papers. Seven weeks later, with her family gathered at home, she read the letter calling her to the Utah Salt Lake City Temple Square Mission. She says, “When I read the letter, it was interesting that my family shouted the same way they do when the national football team of Brazil scores a goal. I was happy as well, and I knew that the Lord was sending me.”



Nelson Mousqués

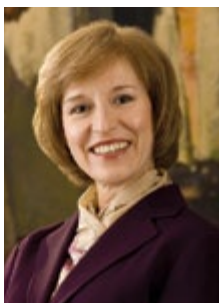
Not long after Nelson was born in Asunción, Paraguay, his parents met the missionaries. “One day my dad was on the porch at home and saw Elder Higbee and Elder Johnson but did not know they were missionaries,” Brother Mousqués recalls. “He told my sister to bring out two chairs because, he said, ‘Those young men will change our lives.’ When the elders clapped at the door, he opened it and said, ‘Come in. We have been waiting for you.’ My father and the entire family joined the Church.”

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK J. DAVIS, CRAIG DIMOND, KENT WILES, AND CRAIG J. LAW



Robin Mendoza

Robin was raised in Ecuador in poverty, but he wanted to better himself. Once, while working at a plantation 12 hours a day, he prayed for guidance, and lightning flashed during his prayer. Robin saw this as God's message that life held promise. "I knew that my feelings came from God," Robin recalls. He came to know that through faith, he could change his life. At age 16 he left for work in Guayaquil, where he was baptized. Continuing inspiration led him to Brigham Young University, where he fulfilled his ambition of obtaining an education.



Ursula Binder Brock

Sister Brock remembers pondering the meaning of life when she was only five. When she was a teenager in Venezuela, the missionaries taught her and her family the gospel, and they were baptized. Filled with faith, she was called to be branch Primary president at age 16. Now, after a lifetime of service, she has come to realize that for her, "faith is a choice." She explains, "I choose to make room for the Savior in my life. I have come to know that the Atonement is the most wonderful, selfless act of love for all humanity. My Savior and Redeemer, the Giver of peace, has become my very best friend—a constant for me."





Lincoln Peters

Lincoln lived with his family in Santiago, Chile, until his mother died when he was 10. Afterward, he lived with his aunt and uncle. When Lincoln was 18, Elder Barton and Elder Bentley came to his aunt and uncle's home. Lincoln's aunt and grandmother immediately accepted the gospel, but Lincoln avoided the missionaries. One Sunday morning, his normally gentle grandmother came to his room, ripped the quilt off his bed, and told him he was going to church with them. Shocked by his grandmother's unusual behavior and out of respect for her, he got up and went to church. That day he felt something new and powerful within his soul that changed his life. He soon became one of the Church's first converts in Chile.

Luis and Karla Hernández

Luis and Karla met as teenagers in Honduras. They began dating and soon married. Luis, not a member of the Church, admired Karla's parents, who "treated each other with respect and love, and this made me want to learn about their values." Soon Luis was baptized, and Karla and Luis were sealed in the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple. In their early 30s, their relationship came under stress, and Karla left home, questioning whether their teenage marriage was a mistake. Luis fasted and prayed and asked God to "bring Karla back home, and He did it. He did it." Today their marriage is stronger than ever.





Noemí Guzman de Abrea

Noemí was born in Argentina, where her family joined the Church. They immigrated to the United

States when she was a teenager. While she loves being an American, she is most happy when she can experience the culture of Argentina. “In Latin America, people are very, very warm. They immediately bring you in; they befriend you; they fellowship you. They love to be with family and friends, to eat good food. That is wonderful, and experiencing that part of the culture is something I wouldn’t change for anything.”



Omar Canals

In Uruguay on a rainy spring day in 1948, Omar’s mother offered her umbrella to two Latter-day Saint sister missionar-

ies waiting for the bus. As a result, the missionaries started visiting the Canals family, and Omar’s older sister was later baptized. Born in 1948, Omar was the first baby blessed in the Uruguay Mission, which had opened in 1947. Omar and his parents were baptized when he was nine. A few years after Omar married his sweetheart, they immigrated to the United States. Already a broadcaster, Omar was hired by the Church in 1973 and became a Spanish interpreter for general conference. ■

Faith to Answer THE CALL

We all must have a conviction burning in our hearts that this is the work of God and that it requires the best we can give to building up “waste place[s] in Zion.”

In 1849, just two years after the Saints had entered the Salt Lake Valley, Elder Parley P. Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles led an expedition to the south. The farther south the expedition went, the more difficult the terrain became. After the men had dropped 3,000 feet (914 m) from the rim of the Great Basin to the convergence of the Virgin and the Santa Clara Rivers (south of modern-day St. George, Utah), the terrain became dry and sandy, volcanic and rugged. The scouts were not impressed. A journal says:

“Passed . . . over a rugged, stony, sandy almost indescribable country, thrown together in dreadful confusion. . . .

“A wide expanse of chaotic matter presented itself, consisting of huge hills, [red] deserts, cheerless, grassless plains, perpendicular rocks, loose barren clay, . . . sandstone . . . lying in inconceivable confusion—in short, a country in ruins, . . . turned inside out, upside down, by terrible convulsions in some former age.”¹

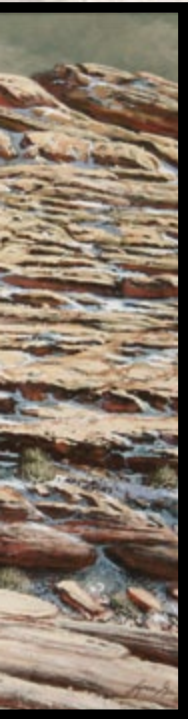
But however rugged the land looked going south, the wind-whipped, erosion-gutted cliffs and canyon wilderness of San Juan country to the east looked a lot tougher. Church leaders knew that taming that rough, uncharted corner of the territory would be difficult, but they nevertheless wanted to establish communities for the Church there. At the quarterly conference of the Parowan Stake in 1879, 250 people accepted the call by President John Taylor to establish the San Juan Mission. With 80 wagons and nearly 1,000 head of cattle and horses, they began to cut their way toward and through imposing, unexplored



THE LAST WAGON, BY LYNN GRIFFIN

**By Elder
Jeffrey R. Holland**

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



territory of snow-capped mountains and towering stone pinnacles.

Seeking the shortest route to San Juan, those first explorers overcame one obstacle after another but soon faced the largest and most intimidating barrier of all: the impassable gulf of the Colorado River gorge. Miraculously their weary scouts found a narrow slit in the canyon—a crevice running 2,000 feet (610 m) down the red cliffs to the Colorado River below. This lone, near-lethal “hole in the rock” seemed to offer the only possible passage to the eastern side.

For the most part, the slice in the sandstone was too narrow for horses and in some places too narrow even for a man or woman to pass through. Sheer drops of as much as 75 feet (23 m) would seem to have made it impossible for a mountain sheep, let alone loaded wagons. But the hardy Saints were not going to turn back, so with blasting powder and tools, working most of December 1879 and January 1880, they cut a precarious, primitive road into the face of the canyon precipice.

With this roadbed finished, such as it was, the task was now to get the first 40 wagons down the “hole.” The other wagons, waiting five miles (8 km) back at Fifty-Mile Spring, would follow later.

They organized themselves in such a way “that a dozen or more men could hang on behind the wagon” with long ropes to slow its descent. Then the wheels were brake-locked with chains, allowing



What are we seeing in these examples of faithful pioneers? We are seeing what we saw when the Saints fled New York and Pennsylvania and Ohio and Missouri and then fled their beloved Nauvoo across an ice-bound river with the temple soon burning in the distance.

them to slide but avoiding the catastrophe of the wheels actually rolling.

In one of the great moments of pioneer history, one by one the company took the wagons down the treacherous precipice. When they reached the canyon floor, they eagerly started to ferry across the river with a flatbed boat they had fashioned for that purpose. As it turned out, the Joseph Stanford Smith family was in the last wagon to descend that day.

Stanford Smith had systematically helped the preceding wagons down, but somehow the company apparently forgot that Brother Smith's family would still need help as the tailenders. Deeply disturbed that he and his family seemed abandoned, Stanford moved his team, wagon, and family to the edge of the precipice. The team was placed in front and a third horse was hitched *behind* the wagon to the rear axle. The Smiths stood for a moment and looked down the treacherous hole. Stanford turned to his wife, Arabella, and said, "I am afraid we can't make it."

She replied, "But we've got to make it."

He said, "If we only had a few men to hold the wagon back, we *might* make it."

Replied his wife, "*I'll* do the holding back."

She laid a quilt on the ground, and there she placed her infant son in the care of her three-year-old, Roy, and five-year-old, Ada. "Hold little brother 'til papa comes for you," she said. Then positioning herself behind the wagon, Belle Smith grasped the reins of the horse hitched to the back of the rig. Stanford started the team down the hole. The wagon lurched downward. With the first jolt the rear horse fell. Sister Smith raced after him and the wagon, pulling on the lines with all her strength and courage. She soon fell too, and as she was

dragged along with the horse, a jagged rock cut a cruel gash in her leg from heel to hip. That gallant woman, with clothes torn and a grievous wound, hung on to those lines with all her might and faith the full length of the

called out, "Forget it, fellows. We managed fine. Belle here is all the help a fellow needs [to make this journey]."²

When the Call Comes

The Hole-in-the-Rock expedition is only one of many examples of the dramatic determination and devotion of the early Saints to answer the call of their prophet when it came. Another example is the creation of and call to the Muddy Mission in present-day Nevada. As with so many early pioneer settlements, the Muddy promised a very hard life, and much soul-searching was done when the calls came to settle there.

Some of those called in the 1860s certainly must have asked, "Of all places on the earth, why the Muddy?" Well, there actually were reasons. First of all, the American Civil War had given rise to the possibility of shipping commodities via the Colorado River. Second, when the war interrupted traditional sources for textiles, the Cotton Mission had been established in the cities of St. George and Washington not too many miles away. It was assumed that cotton for that mission could be grown in the Muddy region. Third, the Latter-day Saints felt strongly their obligation to work with the Native American tribes in the region, helping to feed them and hoping to educate them.

But the region was nevertheless a lonely, barren wasteland. It seemed to have almost nothing to offer but heat and hard work. It was isolated and for



incline all the way to the river's edge.

On reaching the bottom and almost in disbelief at their accomplishment, Stanford immediately raced the 2,000 feet (607 m) back up to the top of the cliff, fearful for the welfare of the children. When he climbed over the rim, there he saw them literally unmoved from their position. Carrying the baby, with the other two children clinging to him and to each other, he led them down the rocky crack to their anxious mother below. In the distance they saw five men moving toward them carrying chains and ropes. Realizing the plight the Smiths were in, these men were coming to help. Stanford

When her father was called to move his family to the difficult Muddy Mission in present-day Nevada, USA, Elizabeth Claridge (above) wept but declared, "I should not own him as a father if he would not go when he is called."

the most part desolate, and the river that gave the mission its identity was aptly named.

As to how and with what faith and determination the Muddy was settled, I will let one of the settlers have her say. She represents the grit and spunk and moral conviction that both young and old had—in this case especially the young. Wrote Elizabeth Claridge McCune of her father's call to settle the Muddy:

“No place on earth seemed so precious to me at fifteen years of age as [the town of] dear old Nephi [in Utah's Juab County]. How eagerly we looked forward to the periodical visits of President Brigham Young and his company! . . .

“. . . Bro. Brigham, Bros. Kimball and Wells with [their] entire company got out of their carriages, and walked over the flowery road . . . to our homes, [where] dinner was prepared and served. . . .

“We all attended the [Sunday] afternoon meeting, the girls in white having reserved seats in front. The sermons were grand, and we were happy until President Young announced that he had a few names to read of men who were to be called and voted in as missionaries to go and settle . . . the ‘Muddy.’ This almost stilled the beating of the hearts of all present. Many of our people had been called to go to settle the Dixie country—but the Muddy, so many miles farther south! and so much worse! oh! oh! I did not hear another name

except ‘Samuel Claridge.’ Then how I sobbed and cried, regardless of the fact that the tears were spoiling [my] new white dress. The father of the girl who sat next to me was also called. Said my companion, ‘Why, what are



you crying about? It doesn't make me cry. I know my father won't go.' 'Well, there is the difference,' said I. 'I know that my father *will* go and that nothing could prevent him, and I should not own him as a father if he would not go when he is called.' Then I broke down sobbing again. . . .

“As we had just moved into a new house and were fixed [so] comfortably, many of our friends tried to persuade father to keep his home and farm; to go south awhile and then come back. But father knew that this was not the kind of mission upon which he had been called. ‘I shall sell everything I own,’ said he, ‘and take my means to help build up another waste place in Zion.’”³

It is the heart of our conviction that the work not only should go forth but that it also can and will and must go forth. I don't know how else mothers and fathers could leave those babies in those makeshift graves on the plains and then, with one last look, weep their way forward toward Zion.

Faith in the Work

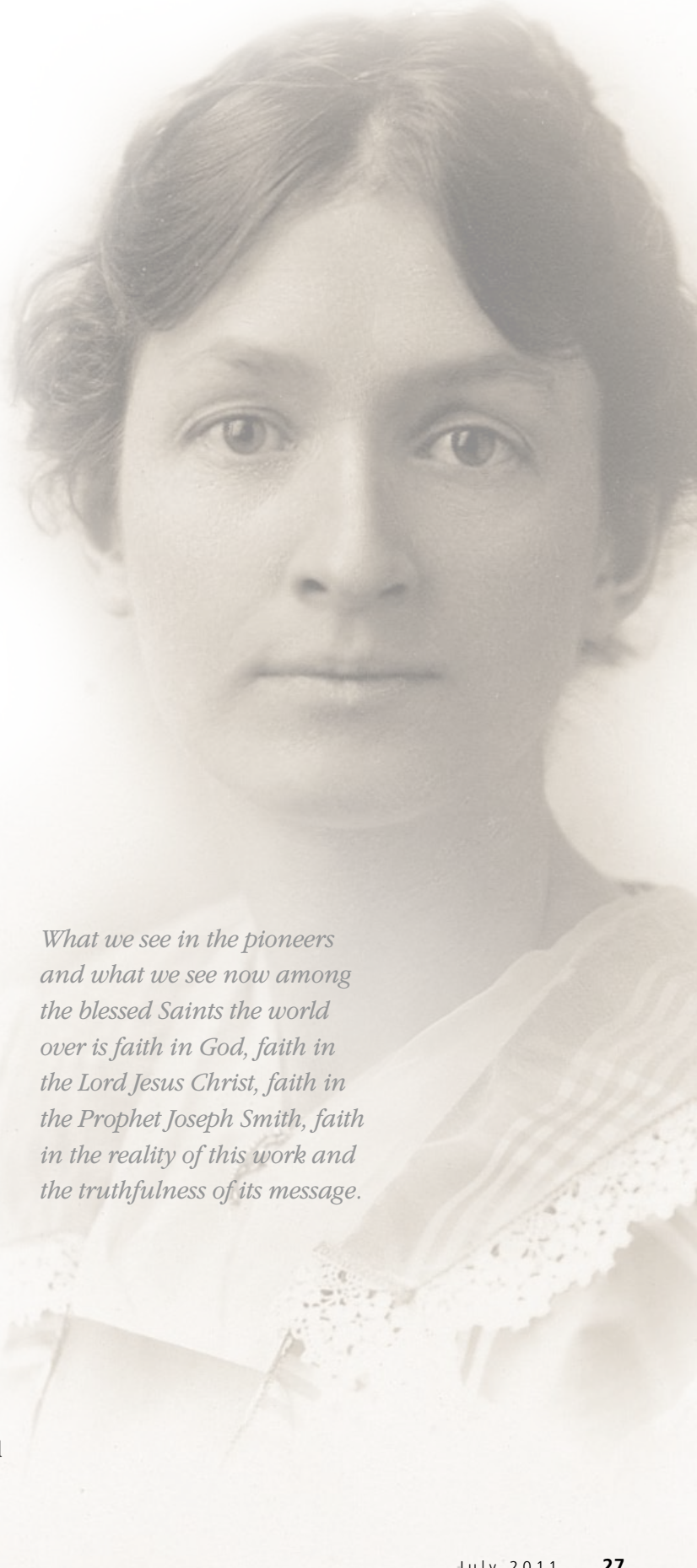
What is it that bred then and breeds now the loyalty and devotion found in this 15-year-old girl and the family into which she was born? What is it that made her turn on her slightly less stalwart friend and declare, "I know that my father *will* go and that nothing could prevent him"? Where does that kind of spunk come from that would allow her to go on to say, "And I should not own him as a father if he would not go when he is called"?

And what of those three little children who watched their parents disappear in a wagon over the edge of the Colorado River gorge but trusted in the instruction they had been given by their mother? They sat there stalwartly, determined not to move or weep despite what must have been their tremendous fear.

What are we seeing in these examples of faithful pioneers? It is what we have seen down through the dispensations of time and certainly down through this dispensation. We are seeing what we saw when the Saints fled New York and Pennsylvania and Ohio and Missouri and then fled their beloved Nauvoo across an ice-bound river with the temple soon burning in the distance. It is what we saw when those same people buried their dead in large numbers at Winter Quarters, followed by leaving isolated graves, sometimes as tiny as a bread box, in Wyoming near Chimney Rock or at one of the many crossings of the Sweetwater River or in a snowbank at Martin's Cove.

What we saw then and what we see now among the blessed Saints the world over is faith in God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, faith in the Prophet Joseph Smith, faith in the reality of this work and the truthfulness of its message. It was faith that took a boy into a grove of trees to pray, and it was faith that enabled him to get up off his knees, place himself in God's hands for the Restoration of the gospel, and ultimately march toward his own martyrdom scarcely two dozen short years later.

Little wonder that faith always has been and always will be the first and abiding principle of the gospel and of our work. It is the heart of our conviction that the work not



What we see in the pioneers and what we see now among the blessed Saints the world over is faith in God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, faith in the Prophet Joseph Smith, faith in the reality of this work and the truthfulness of its message.

only should go forth but that it also can and will and must go forth.

I don't know how else mothers and fathers could leave those babies in those makeshift graves on the plains and then, with one last look, weep their way forward toward Zion. I don't know how else a woman like Belle Smith could set her children at the edge of a cliff and muscle her wagon down the perilous incline. I don't know how else Samuel Claridge could sell all he owned and head off to build Zion in the desolate Muddy Mission. The fundamental driving force in these stories is faith—rock-ribbed, furnace-refined, event-filled, spiritually girded faith that this is the very Church and kingdom of God and that when you are called, you go.

A Call for Conviction

There are still “waste place[s] in Zion” to be built up, and some of those are much closer than the Muddy or San Juan Missions. Some of them are in our own hearts and in our own homes.

And so I issue a call for the conviction we all must have burning in our hearts that this is the work of God and that it requires the best we can give to the effort. My appeal is that you nurture your own physical and spiritual strength so that you have a deep reservoir of faith to call upon when tasks or challenges or demands of one kind or another come. Pray a little more, study a little more, shut out the noise and shut down the clamor, enjoy nature, call

down personal revelation, search your soul, and search the heavens for the testimony that led our pioneer parents. Then, when you need to reach down inside a little deeper and a little farther to face life and do your work, you will be sure there is something down there to call upon.

When you have your own faith, you are prepared to bless your family. The single strongest indicator of activity and service, of devotion and loyalty in this Church continues to be the presence of strong family ties. I say that, knowing full well that part of the majesty of this Church is in the *individual* member. Sometimes that member is a new convert; sometimes that member is the only Latter-day Saint in the family. Some individual somewhere had to plant the flag of faith and start a new generation in the gospel. But the fact is that faith is better nurtured and more protected and longer lasting when there is an entire family to reinforce it. So after standing alone if you have to, work diligently to see that others in your family *don't* stand alone. Build your family and see that faith is strong there.

With that accomplished, we can serve the Church near at hand or at some distant outpost if called. Then we can search out that lost sheep—member or nonmember, living or dead. This can be done wisely and well only when the other 99 lambs, including our own little flock, are safely folded while we search. If we have loved and taught those at home,

they will understand exactly as little Elizabeth Claridge did: when the call comes, you can be certain that your father and mother, your brothers and sisters are going to go.

There is work to be done. We cannot say that every one of our neighbors has deep faith, that every one has a strong family, that every one near and far has heard the gospel message and has become a believing, teaching, temple-going Latter-day Saint. The world is getting more wicked, and the times ahead will try the best of us. But the forces of righteousness will always prevail when people like Stanford and Arabella Smith, people like Samuel Claridge and his spunky daughter Elizabeth make it prevail.

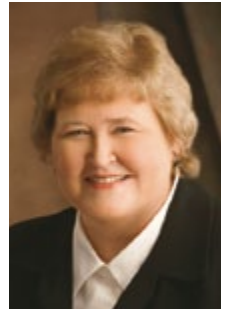
We must have faith in this work—faith in what all believers are called to do, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in our Father in Heaven. We need to conform our will to Theirs and then make that will rock-ribbed and pioneer strong indeed. If we do that, I know we will be safe and secure in the inexorable onward movement of the Church and kingdom of God on earth. ■

From a regional stake conference broadcast address delivered on September 12, 2010, at Brigham Young University.

NOTES

1. In Milton R. Hunter, *Brigham Young the Colonizer* (1973), 47.
2. See David E. Miller, *Hole-in-the-Rock: An Epic in the Colonization of the Great American West* (1959), 101–18; emphasis added and punctuation standardized.
3. Elizabeth Claridge McCune, in Susa Young Gates, “Biographical Sketches,” *Young Woman's Journal*, July 1898, 292, 293; punctuation standardized.

By Barbara Thompson
Second Counselor in the
Relief Society General Presidency



“As I Have Loved You”

*Love and service are
what distinguish us
as disciples of Christ.*

I once had a roommate who was a lovely person, but almost everything I did seemed to annoy her. I thought, “How could I possibly annoy her? I am so easy to live with. Right?”

Because she wasn’t very fond of me, I used that as an excuse not to love her either. Fortunately, I recalled the advice a bishop had given during a sacrament meeting while I was in college. I vividly remember his counsel: “If you don’t love someone very much, you probably haven’t served that person enough. If you serve a person, you will love that person.”

After thinking about the advice of my bishop, I decided that I needed to serve this roommate and put the bishop’s counsel to the test. I began looking for little ways to help my roommate, show kindness to her,

and be more responsive to what she needed and wanted.

Then almost immediately a miracle happened! I learned that I really did love her. She was a wonderful, talented person. It was a blessing for me to share an apartment with her. I was amazed how my view of her changed in such a short time.

Loving and Serving Others

As we examine John 13, we learn some of the most significant lessons the Savior taught during His earthly ministry, including:

1. Serve one another.
2. Love one another.

As the Savior and His Apostles met to observe the Passover meal, the spirit in the room was likely subdued.

Jesus wanted the Twelve—and He wants each of us—to learn that humility and service are worthy characteristics we should seek to obtain. He taught that no one is too important to serve others.



The Savior knew that He was about to be offered up and crucified. I am sure that even if the Apostles didn't then understand the significance of the events that night, they would soon learn and more fully comprehend the Savior's mission.

After supper Jesus took a towel, poured water into a basin, and washed the feet of each man present. The cleansing of the feet was done in

reverence and humility as the Savior undoubtedly dealt with feelings of sorrow for events that would soon transpire, including His impending betrayal.

Peter, knowing that Jesus was the Messiah and promised Savior, wanted to serve the Lord rather than have the Lord serve Him. "If I wash thee not," the Savior said, "thou hast no part with me"

(John 13:8). Then Peter readily consented to the Savior's loving service.

Afterward Jesus explained:

"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:13–15).

Jesus wanted the Twelve—and He wants each of us—to learn that humility and service are worthy characteristics we should seek to obtain. He taught that no one is too important to serve others. In fact, one of the things that make us great is our willingness to serve and give of ourselves. As the Savior said, "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matthew 23:11; see also Luke 22:26).

Following the Savior's Example

This brings to mind the service performed after some of the natural disasters that have taken place during the past months and years. We have witnessed storms, earthquakes, famines, and pestilence. There are many accounts of people, though suffering themselves, who cared for others who were injured, sick, or otherwise in need.

After an earthquake in Peru destroyed the homes of thousands, a bishop left the crumbled ruins of his own house and rushed to account for the members of his ward and to

bless and comfort his little flock.

As a mother in Haiti mourned the loss of her own family members following an earthquake, she still reached out to help calm the fears and soothe the broken hearts of others, strengthening survivors and helping them find food and shelter.

Young adults in Chile hurried to assist in distributing food and supplies to those who had been affected most by an earthquake there. As these members served, their happy faces and willing hands belied the fact that their own personal circumstances were also precarious.

All of these people and many others followed the Savior's plea to "do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). Later in John chapter 13 we read:

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (verses 34–35).

Have you noticed how often Church leaders—from President Thomas S. Monson to the Twelve Apostles to local presidencies, bishops, and teachers—express their love for those they serve? This love comes from following the example of the Savior.

Serving others is the way we show love for them. Perhaps love and service are one and the same. Truly, they are what distinguish us as disciples of Christ. ■



EXTENDING CHRISTLIKE LOVE

"Let us love at all times. And let us especially be there for our brothers and sisters during times of adversity. . . .

"As we extend our hands and hearts toward others in Christlike love, something wonderful happens to us. Our own spirits become healed, more refined, and stronger. We become happier, more peaceful, and more receptive to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "You Are My Hands," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 70, 75.





Nelson Coila (left) adds a fresh layer of totora reeds to Utama, the floating island he and his family (above) inhabit on Lake Titicaca.

ISLANDS OF FAITH: A STORY OF DILIGENCE

*Only by regularly adding to their island can
the Coila family keep from sinking.*

By Adam C. Olson Church Magazines

Nelson and Dora Coila live on an island—not a typical island made of solid rock jutting up from an ocean or lake—but a tiny island they made themselves of nothing more than floating reeds on Lake Titicaca in Peru.

Building an island and making it your home takes faith. Only about four feet (1.2 m) of layered reeds suspends their family and the dozen or so huts on their island above the

50-degree (10 °C) water, and the elements continually threaten to literally disintegrate their island home.

But for Nelson and Dora, their island represents physically what they are trying to build spiritually for their family: an island of faith that will hold together against the world.

What they have learned in the process is that the faith to build must always be followed by the diligence to maintain.

THE FLOATING ISLANDS OF THE UROS

Utama is one of about 50 in a community of floating islands that are home to several hundred descendants of the Uros, a pre-Incan people who have lived on such islands for hundreds of years.

Typically, multiple families, often related to each other, live on a single island and share in its upkeep. Another family shares half of Utama with the Coilas. The largest islands support as many as 10 families.

The islands are loosely tethered in place by a long rope anchored to the lake bed, though in 2010, the anchors were strengthened after an unusual gale tore more than 40 of the islands from their locations and blew them several miles away.



The Reason for Consistency

For the Uros people, who have built and lived on these islands for generations, the totora reed is an essential part of daily living. The reed, which grows in the shallows of Lake Titicaca, can be used as fuel for cooking fires. Its root can be eaten. Its husk can be used for medicinal purposes. And, of course, almost everything is made with the reed: their dwellings, their traditional boats, their watchtowers, the islands themselves, even their trash baskets.

The Uros build the islands by laying down layer upon layer of reeds. But as building materials go, totora reeds don't last long. The sun

dries them out during the dry season. Moisture during the rainy season hastens their decay. And the submerged bottom layers gradually decompose. The continual erosion of the Coilas' island means that Nelson has to put down a new layer of reeds every 10 to 15 days.

"Building the island was just the start," he says. "If I stop adding reeds, the island will slowly fall apart. But the more layers I put on, the stronger the island gets over time."

The Danger of Procrastination

Adding a layer of reeds is not complex or difficult, but it is work. Delaying it would be easy.

Procrastination, however, increases the risk of a family member putting a foot through a weak spot and ending

up in cold water. That can be little more than a nuisance for adults, but it's potentially deadly for little children such as the Coilas' two-year-old son, Emerson.

So Nelson adds a layer of reeds today, knowing that the safety of each family member depends on it tomorrow.

It's a lesson about diligence that has made a difference in the Coilas' lives.

The Effects of Diligence

Diligence is persisting in doing something in spite of opposition.¹

Dora first learned how important—and how difficult—diligence can be after she was baptized in 1998.

When Dora was 17, she and her younger sister Alicia were baptized—helping lead to the growth of the

For the Coila family—Nelson, Dora, and Emerson—and the Uros people living on Lake Titicaca, the totora reed is important to sustaining life. But like gospel principles, it must be applied regularly.





STRENGTHEN FAITH CONTINUALLY

“However much faith to obey God we now have, we

will need to strengthen it continually and keep it refreshed constantly. . . . Learning to start early and to be steady are the keys to spiritual preparation. Procrastination and inconsistency are its mortal enemies.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Spiritual Preparedness: Start Early and Be Steady,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 38.



FAITHFUL FAMILIES

“I was deeply humbled that, there on the floating islands of Lake Titicaca,

these faithful Latter-day Saint families would ask me to pray for the little island of Apu Inti and ask the Lord to bless [their] homes and families.”

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Presidency of the Seventy, “Special Experiences,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 12.

To learn more about Elder Rasband’s visit to the islands of the Uros, go to conference.lds.org and navigate to his talk in the April 2008 general conference.

To view more photos from this story, visit liahona.lds.org.

Church in the islands of the Uros. About a month later, however, their father forbade them from having anything to do with the Church.

But something odd happened to the girls. They were suddenly less pleasant to be around and more likely to argue. Their father realized that during the time they were participating in Church activities, they had changed for the better.

“It changed his mind,” Dora says. “He began waking us up early to make sure we got to church on time.”

Dora attributes the change the gospel made in their lives to small things she and Alicia did regularly, like paying tithing, praying, studying the scriptures, keeping the Sabbath day holy, and renewing their covenants weekly by taking the sacrament.

Later, having seen for himself the changes that come from faith and diligence,² Dora’s father joined the Church along with the rest of the family.

The Rewards of Diligence

Persisting in doing what is right—in spite of opposition—is required of the Lord’s covenant people. However, the Lord promises great blessings to those who are diligent in prayer,³ in keeping the commandments,⁴ in heeding

revelation,⁵ in searching the scriptures,⁶ and in laboring in His work.⁷

Through the Coilas’ experiences in maintaining their island of faith both literally and figuratively, they have found the rewards of diligence to be real. “Sometimes we get suffocated by the daily routine of working, cooking, and so forth,” says Nelson. “When we forget God, things get complicated. There are more problems, and things begin to fall apart.”



Nelson pauses to gesture toward a new layer of reeds he put down that morning. “If we are constant,” he says, “if we pray, study, fast, and hold family home evening regularly, we are going to become stronger.” ■

NOTES

1. See *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2003), “diligence”; see also “persevere.”
2. See Alma 32:41–43.
3. See 1 Nephi 2:18–19; 10:17–19; Enos 1:12.
4. See 1 Nephi 15:8–11; 16:28–29; Enos 1:10; Mosiah 1:11; 4:6.
5. See Mosiah 1:16; Alma 12:9–11.
6. See Mosiah 1:6–7; Alma 17:2.
7. See Jacob 1:19; 5:75; Moroni 9:6.



CHILDREN

Not Worried about Water

Joseph of Apu Inti Island, Lake Titicaca, Peru

By Adam C. Olson Church Magazines

Seven-year-old Joseph has grown up around water. Or rather he has grown up with water all around *him*—surrounded by the cold waters of Lake Titicaca in Peru. That’s what happens when you live on a small island made of floating reeds.

Joseph and his family are part of the Uros people, who have built and lived on floating islands on Lake Titicaca for hundreds of years. They fish in the lake. They bathe in the lake. They row across the lake to get from island to island.

You might think that Joseph, being so used to the water, wouldn’t be nervous about standing in a baptismal font in a few months to be baptized. But he feels the same way many other children feel.

“I’m excited,” he says. “But I’m worried about going under the water.”

With water all around them, Uros children are taught to be careful with water. So after Joseph told his parents about his worries, the family talked about baptism during family home evening, and Joseph and his father practiced what to do.

“My father will baptize me,” Joseph says. “He helped me to not be so afraid.”

Now Joseph is diligently preparing for his baptism. He is trying especially hard to pay attention during Primary and to learn the Articles of Faith. He knows that will help him now and in the future.

“I’m going on a mission,” he says. “Like Nephi said, I will go and do the things the Lord commands” (see 1 Nephi 3:7). ■



SOME OF JOSEPH’S FAVORITES

- The story of Nephi getting the brass plates (see 1 Nephi 3–4).
- The tenth article of faith.
- Playing with his sister, his niece (above), and his nephew.
- Eating fried trout and potatoes.
- Taking care of his lamb.



DEFENDING MY THESIS—AND THE BOOK OF MORMON

When I was a university student, the honors program in which I was enrolled required students to write a thesis. Each student's thesis had to be supervised and approved by two professors.

For my thesis I chose to research and analyze warfare in the Book of

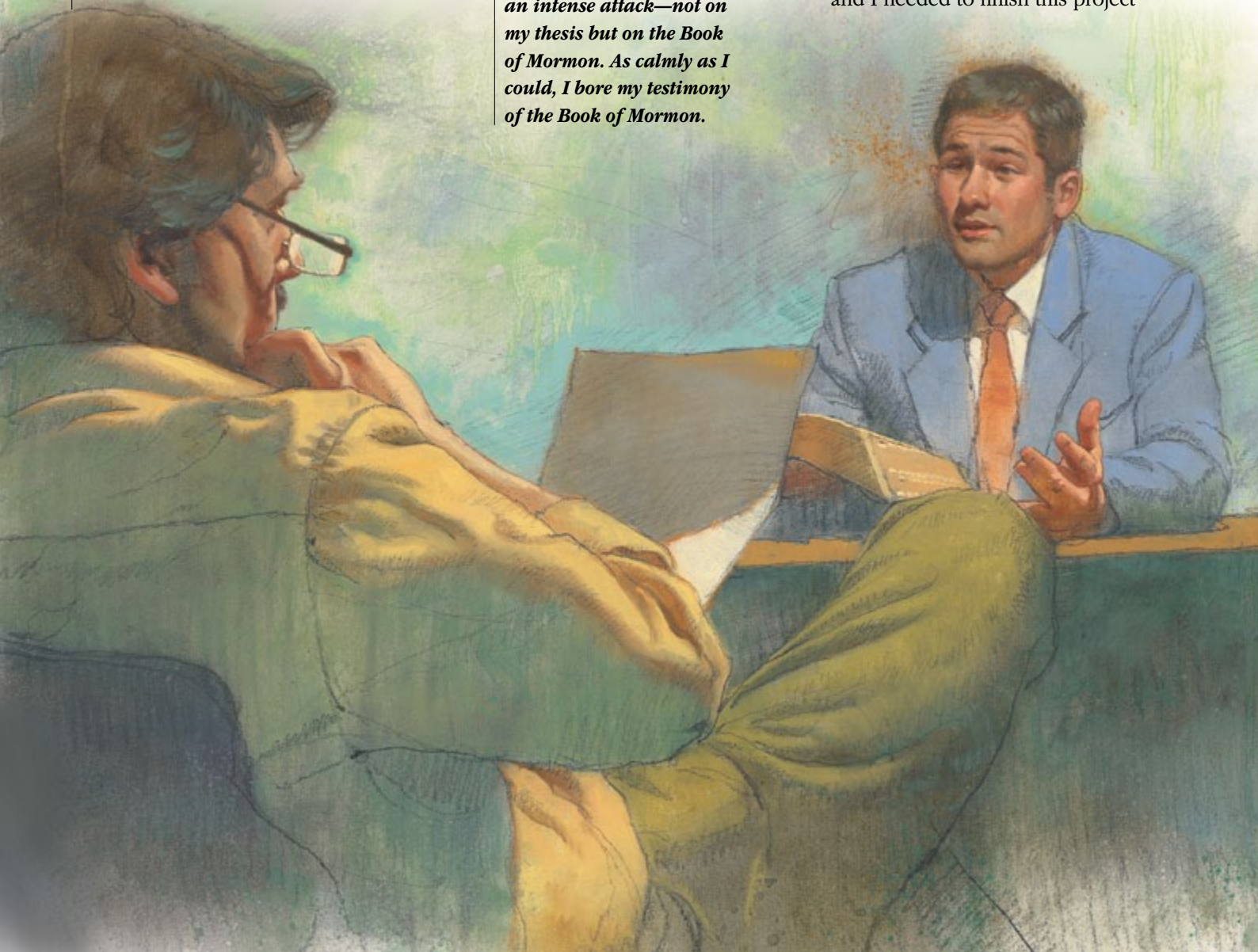
Mormon. I consulted with one professor about my idea, and he agreed to be one of my supervisors. He also suggested another professor as a potential second supervisor.

I met with the second professor

Almost immediately, the professor launched into an intense attack—not on my thesis but on the Book of Mormon. As calmly as I could, I bore my testimony of the Book of Mormon.

to explain my thesis topic to him. As soon as I mentioned the Book of Mormon, his demeanor changed and he began to criticize the Church. I listened quietly until he had finished and then briefly explained that I felt he misunderstood our beliefs. He didn't seem convinced, but to my surprise he agreed to supervise my thesis.

After almost a year of research and writing, I submitted my thesis for faculty approval. During that year I had been accepted to law school, and I needed to finish this project



to graduate and move forward.

Within a week I received an e-mail from the professor who had criticized the Church. He asked me to meet him at his office.

When I arrived, he asked me to close the door and sit down. Almost immediately, he launched into an attack—not on my thesis but on the Book of Mormon. As calmly as I could, I bore my testimony of the Book of Mormon.

I hesitantly asked the professor if he would still approve my thesis. He said he would not.

I went home feeling depressed and unsure what to do. Without this man's approval, I could lose my chances to graduate from the honors program and to begin law school. I prayed that everything would work out somehow.

When I explained my situation to the other professor who was supervising my thesis, he advised me to visit the professor the next day and give him one more chance to approve my thesis.

The next morning I found myself waiting outside the professor's office. I was nervous, unsure of how he would react to seeing me again. When he arrived, he silently opened his office door, gesturing for me to come in. Without saying a word he took out a pen and signed my thesis, officially giving me his approval. He offered no explanation of what had caused him to change his mind but smiled at me as I said good-bye.

I am grateful that I had the

opportunity to bear my testimony to this man. I know that as we stand for what we believe, Heavenly Father will strengthen and bless us. ■

Scott Macdonald, California, USA

WHEN I MEET MY BROTHER AGAIN

When I was a young girl, I desperately wanted my brother, Juan Fernando, to run and play like other children. When I asked my mom why he couldn't, she said he had suffered a severe brain injury at birth from lack of oxygen and would never be able to do those things.

My brother spent his entire life in bed. Because I was raised in the Church, I understood and accepted his condition and knew the greatness of his spirit. Nevertheless, my young heart longed for him to be like others, even though I couldn't imagine what it would be like to watch him walk or run or speak.

I was worried about who would take care of him if the rest of the family died before he did. In heartfelt prayers I pleaded with Heavenly Father not to take us before He took Juan Fernando. I knew He would answer me.

My brother was 16 when he died on a cold winter afternoon, leaving a tremendous void in our family. We

felt sadness but also hope. A few days after he died, I fell asleep while thinking about him and had a beautiful dream.

I was walking, but my vision was dimmed by clouds. I could see something in the distance, so I continued walking slowly toward it. As I drew closer, I saw that it was a wagon full of beautiful flowers. While staring at them, I noticed a handsome young man, dressed in white, standing by the wagon. I paused a moment, trying to recognize him, and then I realized it was my brother. I was so happy to see him. He spoke to me, and I wanted to hug and kiss him. Then I woke up.

I was so grateful that I heard his voice and saw him looking whole. I can only imagine the moment when we will meet again. I'm sure there will be hugs and kisses and loving words—all thanks to the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Because of the Savior we will all rise from the grave and can be reunited as families, never to be separated again.

I remember the words of Amulek: "The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame" (Alma 11:43).

I'm thankful for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, which brings peace to my soul. I know I will see my brother again someday. ■

María Isabel Parra de Uribe, Mexico

MY PIONEER DAYS IN CALGARY

I was born in a small town in northern England in 1947. When I was 15 years old, I was introduced to the missionaries through friends, and I joined the Church. My family, however, did not join.

As I learned about the early pioneers of the Church, I felt that I had been shortchanged by not having a heritage of ancestors who had crossed the plains. But as I progressed in the gospel, my feelings changed.

I came to understand that the early pioneers forged the way for people like me to join the Church. The two missionaries who introduced me to the gospel were descendants of those pioneers, so I owe much to the pioneers. I came to feel linked to them in a special way.

I also realized that I *do* have a heritage of generous, hardworking people who sacrificed, labored, and even fought wars to make it possible for me to have things they never had and to give me the freedoms I enjoy today. My parents didn't join the Church, but they raised me with good values and principles that prepared me to accept the gospel.

Finally, I learned that there are many kinds of pioneers. I am a first-generation member of the Church. My family was not happy with my decision to be baptized, which made

it difficult for me to attend my meetings. Our small branch struggled because of a lack of members, especially priesthood holders. Eventually it became evident that the mission was going to close it.

As a result, I decided to move to Canada, which was one of the hardest decisions I have ever made. I was an only child and loved my parents very much, as they loved me, but my testimony would have been at risk had I stayed in an area where I couldn't attend church. I can still remember the night I left—my father running alongside the train blowing kisses to me while my mother looked on. My heart was breaking, but I knew I had to leave.

I arrived in Calgary, Alberta, on Mother's Day in May 1967. I attended church with the members I was staying with and cried through the whole meeting. I remember writing letters home to my parents with tears streaming down my face, telling them I loved Canada but missed England and my family so much.

I struggled to adjust to my new life, suffering homesickness, loneliness, and disappointments, but I stayed true to the gospel. I attended all of my meetings and accepted callings. These were my pioneer days.



I can still remember the night I left—my father running alongside the train blowing kisses to me while my mother looked on. My heart was breaking, but I knew I had to leave.

Eventually I met my husband. We were sealed in the Cardston Alberta Temple and raised three children in the Church.

Each time I return to England, I am flooded with memories of my conversion and can't help but be grateful for my blessings. Where might I be today had I not had the courage to make such a difficult choice and follow the Spirit?

I will be eternally grateful to the early pioneers both in and out of the Church who paved the way so that I and others like me could hear the gospel. Those who came before gave me the opportunity and the courage to be a modern-day pioneer. ■

Lorraine Gilmour, Ontario, Canada

TWO CITIES AND A TENDER MERCY

Like Nauvoo, Illinois, the city of Natchez, Mississippi, USA, sits high on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. Early Latter-day Saints coming from England often passed through Natchez on their way upriver from New Orleans to Nauvoo. In fact, in 1844 a group of ruffians set fire to a boat docked at Natchez that was carrying a number of Latter-day Saints.

When I arrived in Natchez to accept a job with the U.S. National Park Service, I entertained doubts and fears. I had left all that was comfortable and familiar to me in Utah, and as I took up residence in this new and seemingly foreign city, I felt lost and alone.

On my first day of training, the supervising ranger began by taking me through the park's Civil War-era mansion and demonstrating the type of guided tour I would soon be expected to conduct. By the time we had finished exploring the first floor, I was already having a hard time remembering all of the details. From the French rococo revival furniture to the English porcelain china, the ornate home embodied Southern

prosperity—and thoroughly overwhelmed me. Realizing that we had yet to see the second level of the home, I was overcome with a feeling of frustration and a longing for home.

As we climbed the grand staircase, an oil painting of a townscape caught my attention. I had never seen it before, yet there was something familiar about it. My eyes were drawn to the depiction of a large building atop the town's bluff, and I recognized the sweeping curve that the river made around the city. Could it really be what I thought it was?

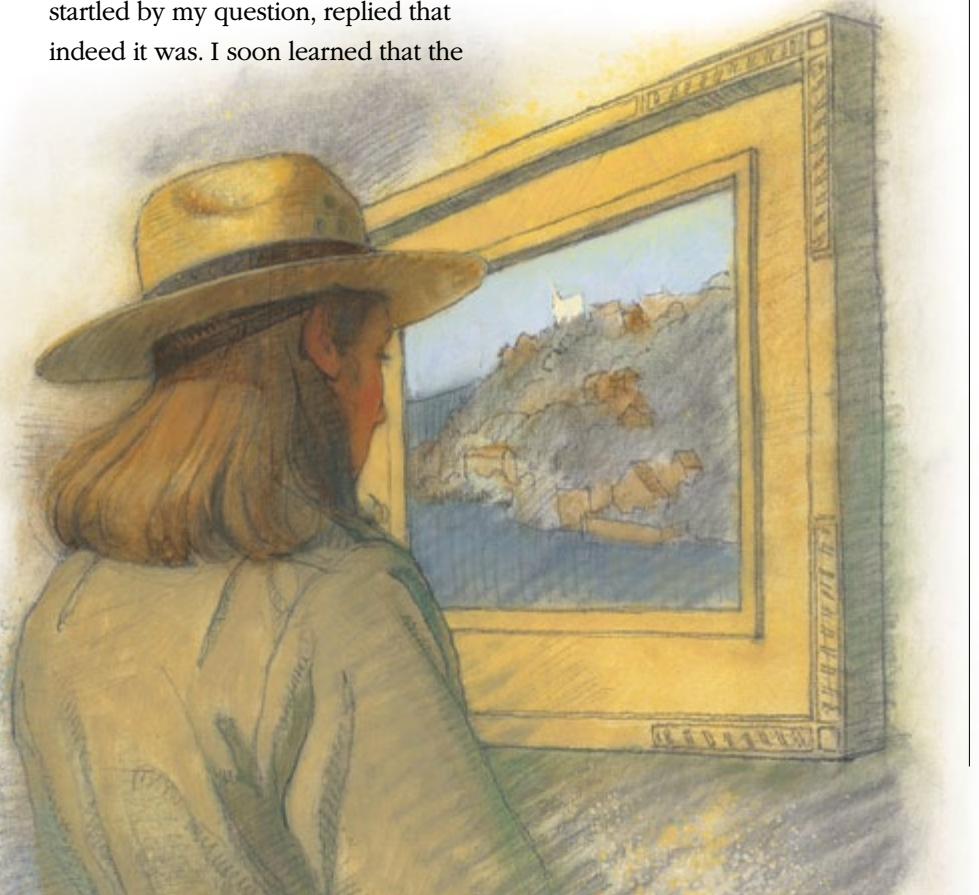
I asked if the painting was a depiction of Nauvoo. My supervisor, startled by my question, replied that indeed it was. I soon learned that the

painting had been purchased by one of the home's later owners because presumably it had been painted during the mid-19th century and the river scene coincided nicely with the Natchez landscape.

The Saints who passed through Natchez amid persecution must have felt a great sense of relief and gratitude when they finally arrived at Nauvoo. Similarly, I felt comforted when I saw the painting of Nauvoo in the mansion in Natchez. Seeing the painting helped me know that Heavenly Father was aware of my situation and would bless me with the strength to overcome my homesickness, fear, and doubts. I knew that the painting of Nauvoo was a tender mercy of the Lord. ■

Tiffany Taylor Bowles, Illinois, USA

As we climbed the grand staircase, an oil painting of a townscape caught my attention. Could the scene really be what I thought it was?



START Moving

By Elder Von G. Keetch

Area Seventy, Utah Salt Lake City Area

A story is told of a group of smoke jumpers. These brave men and women fight forest fires by parachuting onto the ground above a fire and fighting it from the top down, while others fight it from below.

During one particularly large forest fire, an elite team of smoke jumpers assembled for a briefing before taking off in their airplane. The dispatcher—a wise and experienced firefighter—told the smoke jumpers that things were very volatile and that he could not give them precise instructions. Rather, the dispatcher instructed, the smoke jumpers should contact him by radio once they had parachuted onto the ridge above the fire. Then he would give them instructions as to the course they should take to begin to fight.

Quickly the smoke jumpers took off in their plane, parachuted onto the ridge above the raging fire, and assembled themselves for action. As they viewed the fire from above, they could see half a dozen possible paths they could take to begin their work.

In keeping with their agreement with the dispatcher, the leader of the team took out a handheld radio, found

Relaxing on the ridge may seem a safe way to avoid making mistakes, but it's also a way to avoid making progress.

the proper frequency, and called the dispatcher to request instructions as to which path to take. But only static came back from the radio; they could not hear the dispatcher at all.

Presuming that the dispatcher was busy with other tasks, the smoke jumpers decided to wait 10 minutes and try again. But when they tried the dispatcher the second time, they received the same result—dead air and static and no instructions.

The smoke jumpers conferred with each other. They could still see several paths down the mountain that would put them in a good position to fight the fire. But they were concerned that they didn't have any direction from the dispatcher. They worried that if they started moving down the path that looked best to them, they might actually be moving counter to the course the dispatcher wanted them to take and they would be forced to retrace their steps.

So they decided to wait on top of the ridge. Fifteen minutes later they tried the dispatcher again. Nothing. They took off their backpacks and found a place to sit down. Thirty minutes became an hour; an hour became two hours. They regularly tried to contact the dispatcher. But as before, they received only static in return.

The smoke jumpers decided to eat lunch. After that, when they still couldn't contact the dispatcher, they reclined on their backpacks and took a nap. They were frustrated. If the dispatcher would just pay some attention to them and tell them which way to go, they would happily follow that course and begin their firefighting efforts. But the dispatcher seemed to be ignoring them, probably preoccupied with others. And they had decided that they weren't going to move without the dispatcher's directions. After all, those directions had been promised to them before they parachuted onto the ridge.



PHOTOGRAPH © LANDOV

Seven hours after the smoke jumpers arrived at the top of the ridge, a weary crew chief from the group fighting the fire farther down the mountain came up the trail and found the smoke jumpers. He was flabbergasted. Approaching their leader, he asked, “What are you doing lounging around on the ridge? We really needed your help. The fire almost got away from us because we didn’t have help to contain it. And all this time you’ve just been relaxing up here on the ridge?”

The lead smoke jumper explained their predicament to the crew chief. They had been promised instructions from the dispatcher. They had been vigilant in trying to obtain those instructions. But the dispatcher had ignored them, never responding to their calls. True, they could see several paths down to the fire. But they were afraid they would take the wrong one. So they decided to wait until they had the promised instructions from the dispatcher.

The crew chief held out his hand and took the small radio the smoke jumpers had been using. He then walked about 50 yards (45 m) down one of the paths that led toward the fire. He stopped and tried the radio. The dispatcher’s voice came through loud and clear. The crew chief then walked back to the top of the ridge and traveled about 50 yards farther down another path. He stopped and called the dispatcher. Again the dispatcher’s voice came back immediately.

The best and clearest direction comes in our lives not when we are just waiting for our Heavenly Father to send help and guidance but when we are anxiously engaged with our back bent to the task.



The crew chief hiked back to the smoke jumpers and tossed the radio to the leader, saying, “You are in a dead spot. All you had to do was start moving down one of the trails, and the dispatcher could have easily given you course corrections and brought you right into the spot where we needed you. Instead you lounged up here, and you were totally worthless to us.”

Often in our need for spiritual guidance and direction, we can be tempted to do exactly what the smoke jumpers did. We find ourselves in unfamiliar territory. We see several paths available to us, and we’re not sure which one to take. We have been promised inspiration and help from our Heavenly Father. But it doesn’t always come immediately. We grow frustrated and decide we are simply going to sit down and wait until the

promised guidance comes. We wait and we wait and we wait, wondering why the divine Dispatcher doesn’t help us with our course.

In so doing, we ignore an important principle of revelation. Our Father in Heaven expects us to use our own intelligence, ability, and experience to chart our initial course. As we press forward along the path we have chosen, we are in a much better position to receive the course corrections He may have for us. But if we simply plop down on the ridge and recline on our backpacks until He gives us instruction, we risk finding ourselves in a spiritual dead spot.

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has taught us:

“We are expected to use the light and knowledge we already possess

to work out our lives. We should not need a revelation to instruct us to be up and about our duty, for we have been told to do that already in the scriptures; nor should we expect revelation to replace the spiritual or temporal intelligence which we have already received—only to extend it. We must go about our life in an ordinary, workaday way, following the routines and rules and regulations that govern life.

“Rules and regulations and commandments are valuable protection. If we need revealed instruction to alter our course, it will be waiting along the way as we arrive at the point of need.”¹

I testify that the best and clearest direction comes in our lives not when we are just waiting for our Heavenly Father to send help and guidance but when we are anxiously engaged with our back bent to the task. To those of you who are waiting upon the Lord for guidance in your lives—who need help with a major decision or question—I give you this challenge: Prayerfully and carefully use your own intelligence and your own resources to choose a path that seems right to you. Then become anxiously engaged in walking that path (see D&C 58:26–28). When the time for course correction comes, He will be there to help you and to guide you. ■

NOTE

1. Boyd K. Packer, “The Quest for Spiritual Knowledge,” *Liahona*, Jan. 2007, 16; *New Era*, Jan. 2007, 4.

BY SMALL MEANS

By Laurel Teuscher

I thought I was doing fine. I had served a mission, graduated from college, secured a full-time job, and finally moved into an apartment by myself. I attended church every Sunday and sometimes went to activities. I had plenty of friends, single and married, and I suddenly had more time for reading, my favorite thing to do as a child. Yet even with all of these activities, I still felt lost.

In Alma chapter 37, we read of Alma’s advice to his son Helaman. In verses 41–42, Alma talks about Lehi’s family and the Liahona. He explains that the Liahona would not work when “they were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence” and that “they did not progress in their journey; therefore, they tarried in the wilderness, or did not travel a direct course.” Reading these verses helped me realize that I was not progressing. I was not exercising my faith or being diligent in anything in my life. I had stopped working toward a goal. I was simply waiting for something to happen.

There wasn’t one specific moment when I made a list and wrote down everything I needed to change.

Rather, those changes came little by little. First, I started to get up early and go for a run or do some other form of exercise. Next, I began to look into school programs that might help me progress in my job or allow me to get a different one. I found a program and then spent time preparing to take the necessary tests to apply. Scripture study and prayer became more important to me, and I tried to spend time every day feasting on the words of Christ and seeking to feel the Spirit. I made a special effort to be more involved in my ward—even if it meant sacrificing some personal time.

Since I started making these small changes, I have felt happier. I feel that I’m progressing and Heavenly Father is giving me new challenges. I can face those challenges with hope rather than fear or discouragement. I’ve learned that when we cease to work or exercise our faith and move in a direction, Heavenly Father cannot help us progress and we will not reach our destination. I am so grateful for the small changes in my life that have helped me to see a way ahead. ■

To the **Point**

Why do we
have to be
completely
under the
water when
we are **baptized?**

You may have attended a baptism where the person being baptized had to have the ordinance performed twice because he or she was not completely immersed in the water the first time. Because baptism is a

saving ordinance, it is essential that it be performed exactly and correctly.

Baptism is a symbolic act. It “symbolizes death, burial, and resurrection, and can only be done by immersion” (Bible Dictionary, “Baptism”). Going under the water represents the death and burial of Jesus Christ, but it also represents the death of our natural selves (see Romans 6:3–6). Being brought up again from the water is symbolic of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and represents being reborn as His covenant disciples. The two witnesses who stand beside the baptismal font watch to ensure that the person being baptized is completely immersed, symbolic of being completely born again.

When we are baptized, we follow the pattern set by the Savior, who was baptized by immersion in the river Jordan (see Matthew 3:13–17). Heavenly Father desires for each of His children to be cleansed of their sins so that they may live with Him again. To be baptized by immersion, as Christ was, is an essential part of His divine plan. ■





The Holy Ghost is supposed to be our constant companion,

but I don't know that I feel the Spirit constantly. Is something wrong with me?

If you are worthy but do not feel the Spirit at all times, it may mean that you are still learning to recognize and act on the Comforter's guidance. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, "Even as we strive to be faithful and obedient, there simply are times when the direction, assurance, and peace of the Spirit are not readily recognizable in our lives" ("That We May Always Have His Spirit to Be with Us," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 29).

If you do not know if the Holy Ghost is with you, take a moment to be still and listen. You may feel the Spirit's influence as a quiet, peaceful reassurance. Try recognizing the still, small voice when you are doing things that invite the Spirit, such as praying, studying the scriptures, or attending sacrament meeting. As you act on promptings and practice listening to the Spirit, your ability to discern those quiet, subtle feelings will improve.

You must live worthily for the Spirit to be with you (see Mosiah 2:36). If you do not feel the influence of the Spirit in your life, this may be a warning sign that you need to repent and reevaluate your priorities. You can invite the Spirit into your life with sincere repentance, prayer, scripture study, and other uplifting activities. ■

Is the Church against all video games or just violent ones?

There are many video games that are clean, challenging, and fun, and some multiplayer games can be an enjoyable social activity. The Church is not against video games, but youth are urged to

be smart in their selection of games and the amount of time they spend with them. We have been commanded to use our time wisely (see D&C 60:13). Just because something is clean and fun does not mean it is worth doing.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: "One of the ways Satan . . . weakens your spiritual strength is by encouraging you to spend large blocks of your time doing things that matter very little. I speak of such things as sitting for hours on end watching television or videos, playing video games night in and night out, [or] surfing the Internet" ("Be Strong in the Lord," *Ensign*, July 2004, 13).

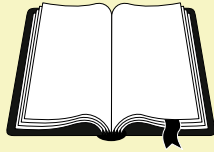
It is all right to spend some of your time playing video games that adhere to the media standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*. But be willing to set down the controllers or turn off the computer and move on to something else. Don't let video games keep you from worthwhile activities like exercising, studying the gospel, doing schoolwork, or spending time with your family. ■

GOSSIP

DON'T PASS IT ON.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JED A. CLARK





MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

2 Nephi 2:11

This verse has always been my guide and inspiration whenever I'm in doubt, despair, or a difficult situation. It has been my favorite passage since I have questioned why there needs to be opposition. Why should there be contradictions? Why can't life just be positive, happy, easy, and good? Why should the bad exist?

This verse helped me understand life and its complexities. It helped me appreciate more the meaning of life. It made me realize the purpose of opposition and that I should be thankful for it. For without it, we would not know the real essence and beauty of life. Without opposition, we would not know how to love, how to be happy, or how to succeed. I've learned to love life and accept it as it is and to trust in the Lord because His wisdom is unquestionable.

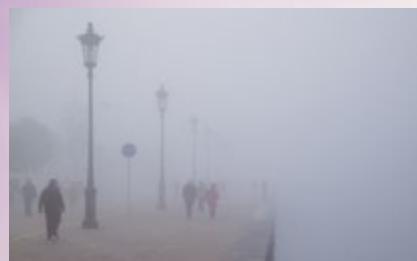
Sheena P., Philippines

SEND your story, photo, or feedback to liahona@ldschurch.org. Include your full name, ward or branch, stake or district, and parent's permission (e-mail is acceptable). Submissions may be edited for length or clarity.

HOW TO HAVE CLEAN THOUGHTS

Even though bad thoughts come knocking at the door, we ought not invite them to come in and have a seat. The best time to defend ourselves against temptation is when the thought begins to take shape; destroy the seed, and the plant will never grow. When I find myself in this situation, I sing my favorite hymn and try to have the image of Jesus in my heart until I can resist. If we persistently resist bad thoughts, they will depart.

Jorge G., Venezuela



I took this picture in Thessaloniki, Greece. It reminds me of the mist of darkness in Lehi's dream (see 1 Nephi 8:22–24).

Kevin K., Germany

My counsel for all of us is to look to the lighthouse of the Lord. There is no fog so dense, no night so dark, no gale so strong, no mariner so lost but what its beacon light can rescue. It beckons through the storms of life. The lighthouse of the Lord sends forth signals readily recognized and never failing."

President Thomas S. Monson, "A Word at Closing," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2010, 113.



THE ANSWER IN VERSE EIGHT

*Joseph Smith found his answer in James 1:5.
I found mine a few verses later.*

By Angelica Nelson

It was 11:00 at night, and I was in my bedroom after being out with a few high school friends. I knew I hadn't made the best decisions that night. "But," I reasoned, "I hadn't made the worst ones either."

Frustrated, I picked up a homework assignment. I was so tired that I just wanted to get it over with and go to bed. "I still need to read my scriptures. But I'll just skip them tonight," I thought.

I began thinking of everything I was expected to do. Read my scriptures, attend early-morning seminary, attend church and Mutual, get good grades, be involved in extracurricular activities, have a part-time job . . . The list went on.

I felt so much pressure in every area of my life, especially as the only female Latter-day Saint in my high school. I reminded myself again and again that I might be the only female Latter-day Saint my peers ever met, so I had to be a good example. Yet I knew I was starting to slip.

"I wish I could be carefree like my friends," I thought. I also wished I didn't

feel so awful when I went to a party or said a bad word, but the truth was I did. It made me feel physically sick when I made choices I knew weren't the right ones. For some reason, though, I continued to make them.

It was almost midnight when I finished my homework assignment. In five hours my alarm clock would be beeping. I would wake up, drag myself to seminary, and try to get through another day of high school.

Then it dawned on me. I didn't have to obey all the rules. I could stop attending church, seminary, and Mutual if I wanted to. Just because my family went, it didn't mean I had to.

It was such a liberating thought. I crawled into bed and was almost asleep when I had a strong impression to read the scriptures. "No," I thought. "I'm done."

Again I felt it. This time I thought, "Maybe just one last time."

In seminary that year, we had been studying the New Testament. I turned to where my marker was in James chapter 1. This was the chapter Joseph

Smith had read that inspired him to go to the Sacred Grove and pour out his heart to Heavenly Father. "How ironic," I thought. I started reading.

Verse 5 was familiar to me: "If any of you lack wisdom . . ." But it was verse 8 that opened my eyes that night. It said, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." I froze. Then I reread it.

I was being double-minded. I claimed to be a Latter-day Saint, but my actions were beginning to say otherwise. And if I continued, no matter what path I chose, I would be unstable and unsure and thus very unhappy.

I needed to know if the gospel was true. I needed to know if getting up every morning at 5:00 a.m. to study the gospel was worth it. I needed to know that I was trying to live my life to the best of my ability, despite at times being ridiculed, because it truly would bring me the most happiness and joy.

It was almost 1:00 in the morning then, but I knelt beside my bed and poured out my heart to my Father in Heaven. I asked Him to help me know what was right, to know which path to



take, to lead me by the hand and take away the confusion I was feeling.

Simply, clearly, and peacefully, the thought came to my mind, "You already know." And I did.

I got off my knees, shut off my light, and went to sleep. Four hours later my alarm went off. Sleepily, I shut it off. A minute later I was up getting ready for another day, early-morning seminary included.

It has been years since that wonderful midnight experience. My testimony still continues to grow. Sometimes it is stronger than at other times. The difference is I know and I have never once looked back. ■



By President
Thomas S. Monson

OUR HONORED PIONEER HERITAGE

We each can learn much from our early pioneer ancestors, whose struggles and heartaches were met with resolute courage and an abiding faith in a living God.

The Suffering of the Pioneers

“That first trek of 1847, organized and led by Brigham Young, is described by historians as one of the great epics of United States history. Mormon pioneers by the hundreds suffered and died from disease, exposure, or starvation. There were some who, lacking wagons and teams, literally walked the 1,300 miles [2,092 km] across the plains and through the mountains, pushing and pulling handcarts.”¹

Inspiring Faith

“We each can learn much from our early pioneer ancestors, whose struggles and heartaches were met with resolute courage and an abiding faith in a living God. . . . Youth and children were among the thousands who pulled and pushed handcarts or walked along that pioneer trail, just as they are among the Saints today who are pioneering in their own areas throughout the world. I think that there is not a member of this Church today who has not been touched by

the accounts of the early pioneers. Those who did so much for the good of all surely had as their objective to inspire faith. They met the goal in a magnificent manner.”²

Facing Hardships

“Time-marked pages of a dusty pioneer journal speak movingly: ‘We bowed ourselves down in humble prayer to Almighty God with hearts full of thanksgiving to Him, and dedicated this land unto Him for the dwelling place of His people.’

“The crude homes were described in these terms by one who was there as a small boy: ‘There was no window of any kind whatever in our house. Neither was there a door. My mother hung up an old quilt, which served as a door for the first winter. This was our bedroom, our parlor, our sitting room, our kitchen, our sleeping room, everything in this room of about 12 by 16 feet [3.6 by 4.9 m]. How in the world we all got along in it I do not know. I recollect that my dear old mother stated that

no queen who ever entered her palace was ever more happy or proud of shelter and the blessings of the Lord than was she when she entered that completed dugout.’

“Such were the trials, the hardships, struggles, and heartaches of a former day. They were met with resolute courage and an abiding faith in a living God.”³

Pioneers Today

“We honor those who endured incredible hardships. We praise their names and reflect on their sacrifices.

“What about our time? Are there pioneering experiences for us? Will future generations reflect with gratitude on our efforts, our examples? You young [people] can indeed be pioneers in courage, in faith, in charity, in determination.

“You can strengthen one another; you have the capacity to notice the unnoticed. When you have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to feel, you can reach out and rescue others of your age.”⁴

FROM TOP: PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY MATTHEW REIER, JOHN LUKE, AND COURTESY OF THE SANDY UTAH WILLOW CREEK STAKE; COVERED WAGONS, BY MINVERVA TEICHERI, COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM



The Ultimate Pioneer

“Turning the pages of scriptural history from beginning to end, we learn of the ultimate pioneer—even Jesus Christ. His birth was foretold by the prophets of old; His entry upon the stage of life was announced by an angel. His life and His ministry have transformed the world. . . .

“One sentence from the book of Acts speaks volumes: Jesus ‘went about doing good . . . for God was with him’ (Acts 10:38). . . .

“His mission, His ministry among men, His teachings of truth, His acts of mercy, His unwavering love for us prompts our gratitude and warms our hearts. Jesus Christ, Savior of the world—even the Son of God—was and is the ultimate pioneer, for He has gone before, showing all others the way to follow. May we ever follow Him.”⁵ ■

NOTES

1. “Come Follow Me,” *Ensign*, July 1988, 2; see also *Tambuli*, Nov. 1988, 2.
2. “Teaching Our Children,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Oct. 2004, 4.
3. *Ensign*, July 1988, 4; see also *Tambuli*, Nov. 1988, 3.
4. “Pioneers All,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 93.
5. “Led by Spiritual Pioneers,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Aug. 2006, 8.

Helping Each Other in

INDIA

By Elder Charles and Sister Carol Kewish

Senior Missionaries, Asia Area

When severe storms and typhoons devastated southern India in October 2009, young men and young adults from the Hyderabad and Bangalore India Districts sprang into action to help relieve the suffering of those affected by the floods.

According to President Prasada Gudey of the Hyderabad India District, “Our young men did a wonderful work in delivering food and water to those in need. The goods had been donated and had arrived in the province, but the government was not able to deliver them to the thousands of victims in more than 200 refugee camps. Our members stood out with their Mormon Helping Hands vests as they carried out their efficient work in getting the food and water to everyone.”

Some of the young men and young adults who served commented on how enjoyable and fulfilling service can be. ■

Right: “I felt very happy that I had an opportunity to serve my fellow beings. I had a wonderful experience, and I learned so many things by doing it, and at the same time we enjoyed being together with friends packing the food and supplies that were needed. I felt my Savior’s love and peace as I served others.”
—Venus Armstrong

“I was so happy to be able to help with this project. It brought me much joy to know that I was helping serve people who were in so much need. I prayed that the people would be blessed.” —Vishal Nakka

Below: Sixty members of the Church traveled to refugee camps in northern Karnataka State. They delivered blankets, tarps, and hygiene kits assembled by members of the Church. One young man exclaimed, “It was totally amazing to help with this flood relief project. I have always had a desire to help and serve others. I was so grateful to be able to serve. I had tears in my eyes as I was able to see those people who had lost everything in the flood. It was a great blessing to be able to help the people in my country.”





DID YOU KNOW?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that a true Latter-day Saint “is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to provide for the widow, to dry up the tear of the orphan, to comfort the afflicted, whether in this church, or in any other, or in no church at all, wherever he finds them” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 426). Because of our desire to serve others, the Church sponsors humanitarian relief and development projects around the world. For example, in 2009:

- There were 763,737 days of donated labor at Church welfare facilities.
- Over 8,000 missionaries served in Welfare Services.

Between 1985 and 2010, the Church has given humanitarian assistance to 178 countries. Some specific projects include the following:

- Providing disaster relief after earthquakes in Haiti, Indonesia, and Chile; after a tsunami in Samoa; and after a typhoon in the Philippines.
- Funding a measles vaccination campaign in Africa.
- Sending out 10.3 million hygiene, newborn, and school kits.
- Distributing over 61,000 tons of food; over 13,000 tons of medical supplies; and over 89,000 tons of clothing.

For more information about the Church welfare program, see www.providentliving.org.



Above: “When I told my friends at college about the service project, they were so happy for me. I explained what we were doing and shared Church principles with them. I felt wonderful when I was helping the people on the project. Thumbs up to the Church organization for giving us this opportunity to serve.”
—Deepak Sharma

Right: “It felt very good to serve on the flood relief project. I helped paint and pass out the bundles of food. It was a great blessing to be there with the other priesthood brethren and to be able to help and serve the people who were in great need.” —Avinash Thomas





ONE MAN'S TRASH IS ANOTHER MAN'S TREASURE

A book with gold letters on the cover became a treasure to one searching for the truth.

By Andrej Bozhenov

It was a hot summer day on my mission. My companion and I had been walking all over the streets of St. Petersburg, Russia, hoping to find new investigators. That evening we met an elderly man near our home and began talking with him. Although he did not express any interest in the gospel, we both felt impressed to give him a copy of the Book of Mormon. Inside the book we wrote our good wishes for him, our testimonies, and our contact information.

Later that same evening, unbeknownst to us, a young man by the name of Ilya was out with his brother. While walking along a dimly lit underground street, Ilya spotted a glimmer of gold on the cover of a book on the ground. Stooping down to get a closer look, he read the gold letters embossed on the book—The

Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. He picked it up and carried it home.

The next day my companion and I were pondering how we could find new investigators. Thoughts flew through my mind: “We are trying our hardest searching for new opportunities. Where are the results? Maybe we need to change something we’re doing.”

A moment later the telephone rang. I picked up the receiver. The voice on the other end asked, “Is this an elder? I found your lost book in the subway crossing. I want to return it.”

I immediately glanced at the shelf where my scriptures lay. “I don’t think I lost my scriptures in the metro,” I answered. “No, I did not lose my copy of the Book of Mormon, but you can have it and read it.”

The young man said his name was Ilya and explained that he was

originally from Orsk, Russia, and had come to St. Petersburg to work.


“I would like to learn more about this book and your church,” he said. “May I meet with you?”

I jumped with excitement. It wasn’t every day that potential investigators called asking to set up a meeting to learn more about the Church.

“Of course we can meet, Ilya!” I responded joyfully.

When we met with Ilya, he listened attentively and asked questions. We were glad that he was so receptive to the gospel.

At one point during the lesson, I opened Ilya’s copy of the Book of Mormon. As I turned to the opening pages, I glimpsed some familiar handwriting—my own! I realized this was the same book we had given to the elderly man the day before. Apparently the man had discarded the book, which was soon discovered



by Ilya. I was filled with gratitude that my companion and I had chosen to leave the book with the elderly man, even though at the time we didn't understand why.

It wasn't long before Ilya chose to join the Church. He began to enthusiastically share the message of the gospel with his relatives and friends as well.

I have learned that Heavenly Father knows when a person is ready to receive His word. He requires us, as missionaries and members of His Church, only to fulfill His commandments and submit to His will as we seek to share the gospel. In this case God knew that although the original recipient of our Book of Mormon would overlook its value, Ilya would not (see 1 Nephi 19:7). ■

Just Keep Swimming

Twelve-year-old Monica Saili loves swimming. She is one of the top young swimmers in New Zealand. She may be part fish.

Well, the fish part probably isn't true. But the only other explanation for why she's so good is because she trains so hard.

She's at the pool for two hours every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning at 5:00 a.m. On Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday she runs track or cross-country after school.

Her least favorite swimming drill is having to do the butterfly stroke with just one arm, keeping her chin up, and alternating arms every 100 meters. "Your shoulders really burn," she says.

But she's learned that when the going gets hard, giving up doesn't make life easier. Doing the hard work is what makes her stronger.

Hard Work and Hard Times

All that hard work has helped. She started winning medals at age 10. At 11 she was in the country's

top 10 for her age group in the butterfly stroke. At 12 she was selected for a development swimming camp with the national team and was picked to swim in the Oceania Games in Samoa against swimmers from other countries.

She says, "My dad always said, 'Success comes with hard work. It doesn't just land in your lap.'"

Monica learned that is true for swimming, and she found out it's also true in life when her father died unexpectedly a few months after her 11th birthday.

"I was very close to my dad," Monica says. "He started me in swimming. He took me to all my practices and competitions. When he died, I felt like I had no one to talk to."

Don't Give Up

Losing her father was hard. But Monica doesn't give up during difficult practices, so when her dad died, she wasn't going to give up on her faith in Heavenly Father either.





Monica Saili has learned that giving up when things get hard doesn't make life easier.





DON'T GIVE UP!

"There are occasionally hard days for each of us. Do not

despair. Do not give up. Look for the sunlight through the clouds."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "The Continuing Search for Truth," *Tambuli*, Feb. 1986, 9; "The Continuing Pursuit of Truth," *Ensign*, Apr. 1986, 2.

With her mother's help, Monica has made it through some hard times. Along the way she learned that hard things can't keep her from being happy.



"My dad was my example," she says. "He taught me how to live the gospel."

Since his death Monica has started studying the scriptures before bed, "trying to make it a habit," she says. She stands up for her beliefs at school. "I get a lot of questions about the Church," she says. And she serves as the ward music director.

"I am blessed for being a member," Monica says. "I am comforted when I get too stressed."

Stronger in the End

Monica still misses her father. But with the support of her mother and family, she keeps going.

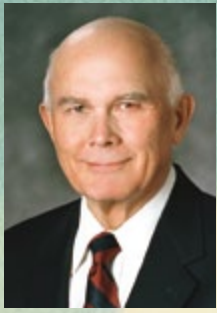
Her life is full of piano and violin lessons, student

council meetings, swimming, Personal Progress, and leading the music during sacrament meeting.

She doesn't know yet how far her swimming will take her or how long she'll stick with it. But as far as the gospel is concerned, she is determined to stick with that to the end.

"Sometimes life is hard," Monica says. "But doing hard things can make us stronger. You just have to keep swimming." ■

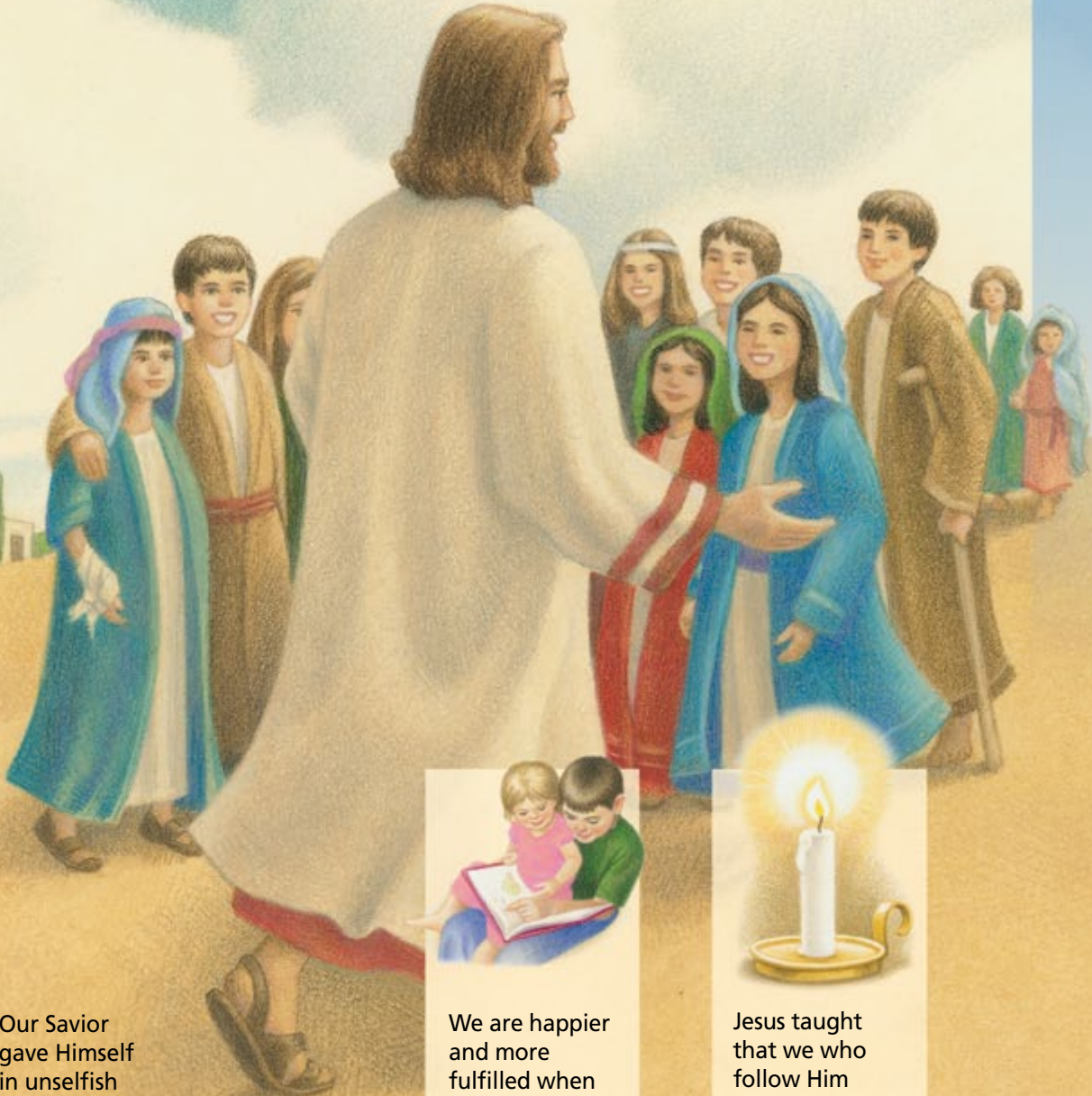
To view more photos from this story, visit liahona.lds.org.



Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares some thoughts on this subject.

Why is it important to serve others?

From "Unselfish Service," Liahona and Ensign, May 2009, 93–96.



In partaking of the sacrament each week, we witness our commitment to serve the Lord and our fellowmen.

Our Savior gave Himself in unselfish service. He taught that each of us should follow Him by denying ourselves of selfish interests in order to serve others.



We are happier and more fulfilled when we act and serve for what we give, not for what we get.



Jesus taught that we who follow Him should be precious and unique, to shine forth to all men.



By President Henry B. Eyring
First Counselor in the First Presidency

Guiding You Home

Our loving Heavenly Father wants each of His spirit children to return home to Him again. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to make safe passage possible. He has also placed guides and rescuers to help His children along the way. Parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts, and uncles are powerful guides and rescuers.

Primary workers also help guide children. One woman, as a younger person, was on the Primary general board that helped create the CTR motto. She taught in the Primary of her ward until she was almost 90 years old. Little children could feel her love for them. Above all, because



of her example they learned to feel and recognize the Holy Ghost.

One afternoon my wife had taken our oldest son to the home of a woman who was teaching him to read. I was to pick him up on my way home from work.

His lesson ended earlier than we had expected. He felt confident that he knew the way home. So he started to walk. After he had gone about half a mile (0.8 km), it started to grow dark. He was still very far from home.

The lights of the cars as they streamed past him were blurred by his tears. He realized that he needed help. So he left the road and found a place to kneel down.

Through the bushes he could



CTR GUIDE

President Eyring told about a Primary teacher who helped create the CTR motto: Choose the Right. This motto has helped guide children in making good choices for many years. The CTR rings shown here are in German, Finnish, English, French, and Italian.

WHO ARE YOUR GUIDES?

President Eyring said that Heavenly Father has placed guides and rescuers on earth to help children return to him. You could draw a picture of some of the people Heavenly Father has given to guide you. Or you could write a note to thank one of these people for something he or she has done to help you.

A CHURCH LEADER
OR OTHER CHURCH
MEMBER

A PARENT OR
FAMILY MEMBER



A TEACHER



A PARENT OR
FAMILY MEMBER



hear voices coming toward him. Two young people had heard him crying. They said, “Can we help you?” He told them he was lost and that he wanted to go home. They asked if he knew his home phone number or address. He didn’t. They led him to the nearby place where they lived. They found our family name in a phone book.

When I got the phone call, I rushed to the rescue, grateful that kind people had been placed along his way home. And I have been ever grateful he was taught to pray with faith that help would come when he was lost.

I testify that the Lord loves you and every child of God. As you follow inspired direction in this, the true Church of Jesus Christ, you can be delivered safely to our home with Heavenly Father and the Savior. ■

From an April 2010 general conference address.

You can use this lesson and activity to learn more about this month's Primary theme.

The Temple Is a House of God

“Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World”).

By JoAnn Child and Cristina Franco

How do you feel when you see the beauty of the temple? Do these words come to your mind: “I love to see the temple. I’m going there someday”?

Sometimes when children sing the song “I Love to See the Temple,”¹ they desire to go to the temple someday, but they do not understand why there are temples, what happens in the temple, or what they must do to be able to go inside. Let’s find out more about the temple.

Why are there temples?

The Lord said, “Build a house to my name, for the Most High to dwell therein” (D&C 124:27). The Lord’s Spirit dwells in His temples. The temple is a house of God. It is a place where we make covenants (or promises)

with Heavenly Father. If we keep our covenants, we will be able to live with Him again.

What happens in the temple?

Everyone must be baptized to return to Heavenly Father. Many of Heavenly Father’s children died without being baptized. After you turn 12, you can be baptized in the temple for those people so they can have the same blessings.

In the temple we also receive an endowment, or gift. This gift is the promise that if we keep the commandments, we can have eternal life.

In the temple a husband and wife can be sealed as a family for time and eternity. That means if they stay worthy, they will be married forever and be with their children as an eternal family.

Everything done in the temple is done by the priesthood, or authority, of God.

How do I prepare to go inside someday?

To go inside the temple, you must be at least 12 years old. You must be baptized and confirmed. You must believe in Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. You must believe in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. You must live Heavenly Father’s commandments. Your bishop or branch president will interview you to make sure you are worthy to enter the temple, and you will receive a temple recommend to show at the temple. Having a recommend means that you are living the way you should to go inside.

When you stay on the path that takes you to the temple, you will be prepared to go there “to feel the Holy Spirit, to listen and to pray. For the temple is a house of God, a place of love and beauty.”² ■

NOTES

1. “I Love to See the Temple,” *Children’s Songbook*, 95.
2. “I Love to See the Temple,” 95.



ACTIVITY

Look at both pictures. Which family is ready to go to a temple open house?

(1) In the first picture, circle the things that are helping the family prepare to visit the temple. (2) In the other picture, circle things the family needs to change to get ready to go. (3) Think of two things you can do to prepare to go to the temple when you are older. Write those things beneath the pictures.



One thing I'm going to do to prepare to go to the temple is _____.

One thing I'm going to do to prepare to go to the temple is _____.

Pioneer Day in Tahiti

By Maria T. Moody

Children of the Papeete Tahiti Stake love pioneers! They gathered with their parents for a stake Pioneer Day activity honoring the pioneers who journeyed to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847.

Each ward built a pioneer wagon—some made with bicycle wheels and one with cardboard horses. The children marched in a parade, played pioneer games, and enjoyed delicious food.

Pioneer Day is also a special day to remember people in every country who accept the gospel and help teach it to others. All of these people are pioneers too! ■



This family had matching bonnets, aprons, and suspenders.

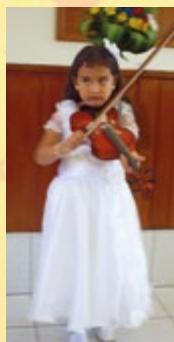
These boys pulled their ward's covered wagon in the parade.



Some of the girls wore skirts and pioneer bonnets. Some of the boys wore hats and bandannas.



Our Page



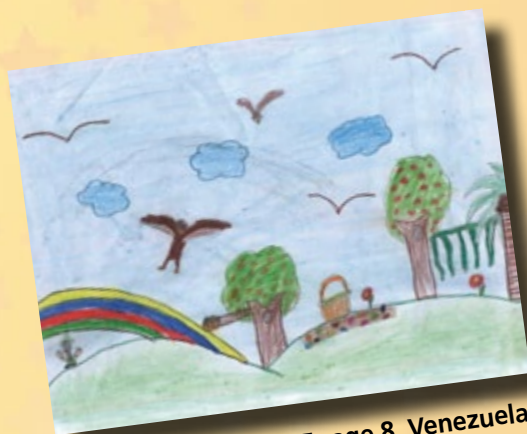
Marcia V., age 5, from Peru, is the pride and joy of her parents, Patricia and Raul. She is in the CTR class in Primary, and she has a CTR ring. She likes to color the pictures in the Liahona, and her favorite hymn is "I Am a Child of God."

She likes to help by taking care of smaller children, and she helps her teacher erase the board. She plays the violin. Marcia likes family home evening and enjoys going to church. She loves Heavenly Father and knows that He loves her too.

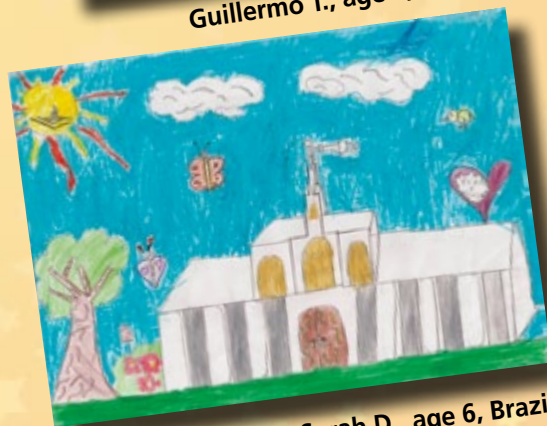


Jair O., age 10, Peru

E-mail your drawing, photo, experience, testimony, or letter to liahona@ldschurch.org, with "Our Page" in the subject line. Each submission must include the child's full name, gender, and age, plus the parent's name, ward or branch, stake or district, and the parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to use the child's photo and submission. Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.



Guillermo T., age 8, Venezuela



Sarah D., age 6, Brazil

A FOREVER FAMILY

On August 23, 2008, my family was sealed in the Salt Lake Temple in Utah. It was a dream come true for us. We traveled across the world—it was a long, tiring trip, but it was worth it. When we got to Utah, it was night, and the first thing we did was go to see the temple. It was so beautiful in the night with all the lights shining on it. Two days later we were sealed. The sisters who take care of the children in the temple helped my sister and me dress in white clothing. Then we went to be with our parents. I felt like I was going to meet Jesus. We were so happy to be sealed! Now I know that I can live with my family forever.

Dean F., age 5, Sri Lanka



The Calling

By Corine Pugh

Based on a true story of pioneer John Carling

“Build a house to my name, even in this place, that you may prove yourselves unto me that ye are faithful in all things whatsoever I command you” (D&C 124:55).

Isaac, Isaac.” It was his mother’s voice. “Your father needs you at the corral.” Isaac raised his head and looked out the window. Sure enough, the sun was coming up, and that meant it was time for chores. Isaac stumbled out of bed and reached for his shirt. He could hear the oxen mooing.

As he went out the kitchen door, he saw Papa leading old Taurus through the gate.

“Where are you going so early, Papa?” Isaac asked.

“Just over to the fence. I need you to hold the grain bucket so Taurus will stand still.”

The ox bellowed, as if asking, “What is going on this morning?” But as Isaac held the bucket under his nose, Taurus calmed down and began licking up the grain with his long tongue. While the ox ate, Papa tied the halter rope securely to the fence.

When Mama stepped out the front door, Papa asked her, “I have a special project, Emeline. Will you please bring me the wide carpenter pencil from the desk?”

When Mama came back with the pencil, Papa laid some boards on the ground. Then, after looking carefully at Taurus, he began drawing on the smooth yellow wood.

“What are you doing, Papa?” Isaac asked.

“Brother Fordham and I have been given an important assignment for the temple,” Papa explained. “We are going to help make the 12 oxen statues to hold up the font in the baptistry. I am drawing the pattern, and Taurus is my model.”

Hearing his name, Taurus raised his head, then went back to his breakfast.

Isaac watched his father sketching long, wide lines. “That is beginning to look just like Taurus,” Isaac said. “But why did you choose him?”

“Because he is strong and the best ox I have ever seen. See how he stands? He seems to be aware of his importance. Taurus is obedient too.”

“This project is a very special calling, Papa. Isn’t it?”

“Yes, Son, it is. I am thankful I have been asked to help.”

Isaac stroked Taurus’s neck. He could feel the ox’s strong muscles. “What an honor for you, old boy,” he whispered.

Isaac finished his chores quickly. He even made his usual two dozen wooden clothespins faster than usual. He knew when he finished he would have time to do as he wished.

Today Isaac wanted to draw. His parents had given him permission to draw on the fireplace hearth, using pieces of charcoal from the burned logs. The charcoal washed off easily, and he could use it to make wide or narrow lines.

As Isaac drew Taurus, he thought about his father and the beautiful temple being built in Nauvoo. If Isaac was strong and obedient like Taurus, maybe the Lord would choose him to work on the temple, just like his father. ■





Share your talents, for that which we willingly share, we keep."

President Thomas S. Monson, "The Spirit of Relief Society," *Ensign*, May 1992, 101.

ILLUSTRATION BY JIM MADSEN



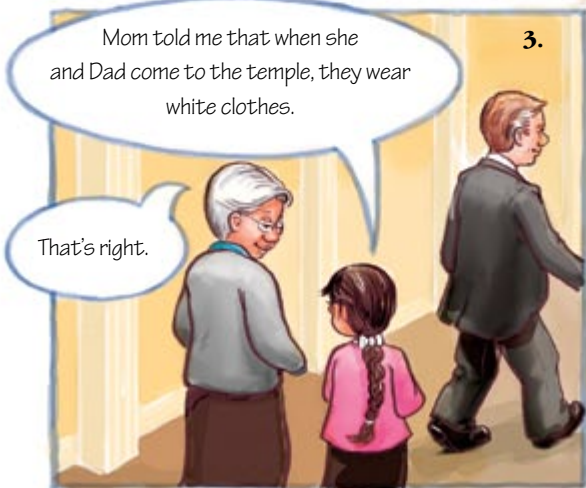
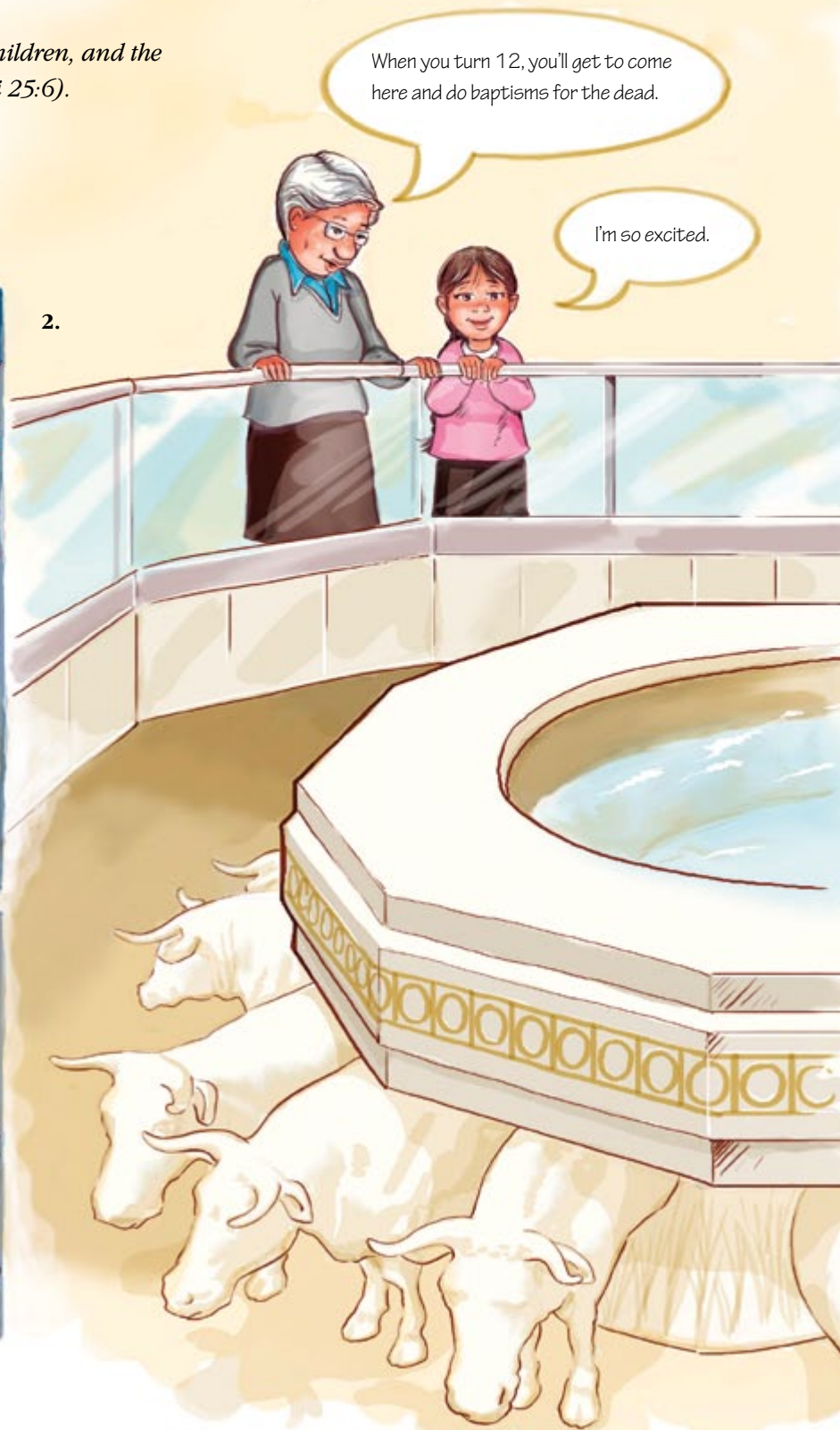
Together Forever

By Rebecca Cornish Talley

Based on a true story

“He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (3 Nephi 25:6).

1. Before the temple near their home was dedicated, Olivia invited her grandma to come with her to the temple open house.



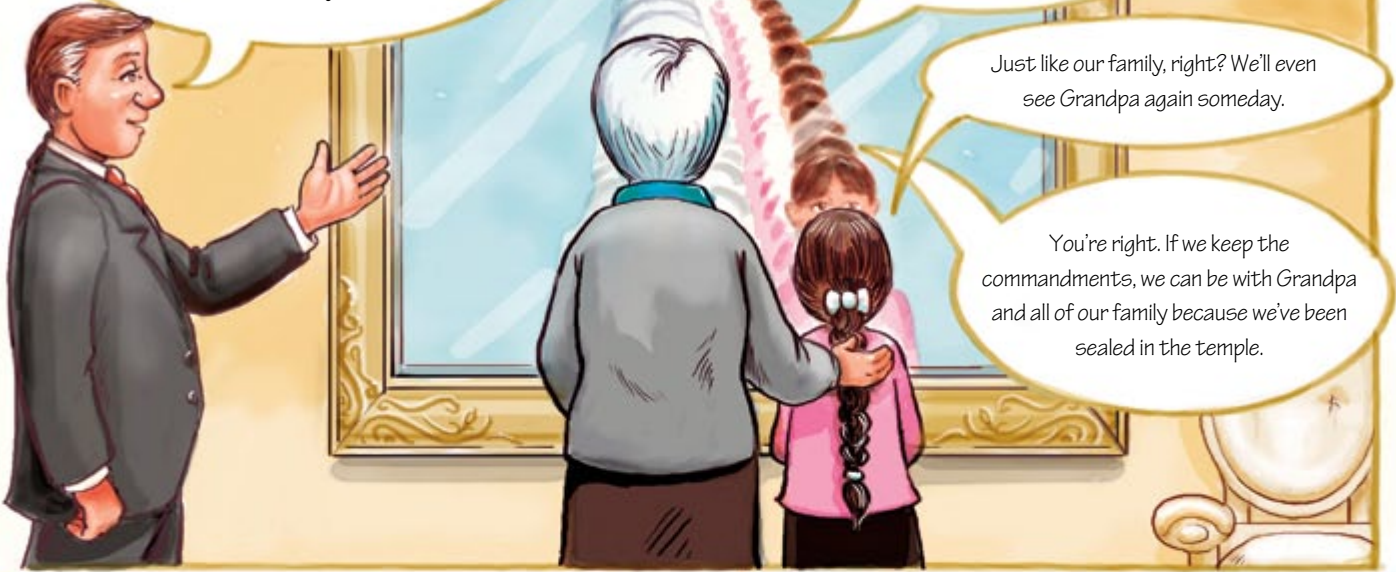
4.

Sealings will be performed in this room. Stand in front of this mirror and look at the mirror across the room. What do you see?

It's as if we go on and on forever.

Just like our family, right? We'll even see Grandpa again someday.

You're right. If we keep the commandments, we can be with Grandpa and all of our family because we've been sealed in the temple.



5. Olivia and Grandma followed the tour guide into the temple's celestial room.

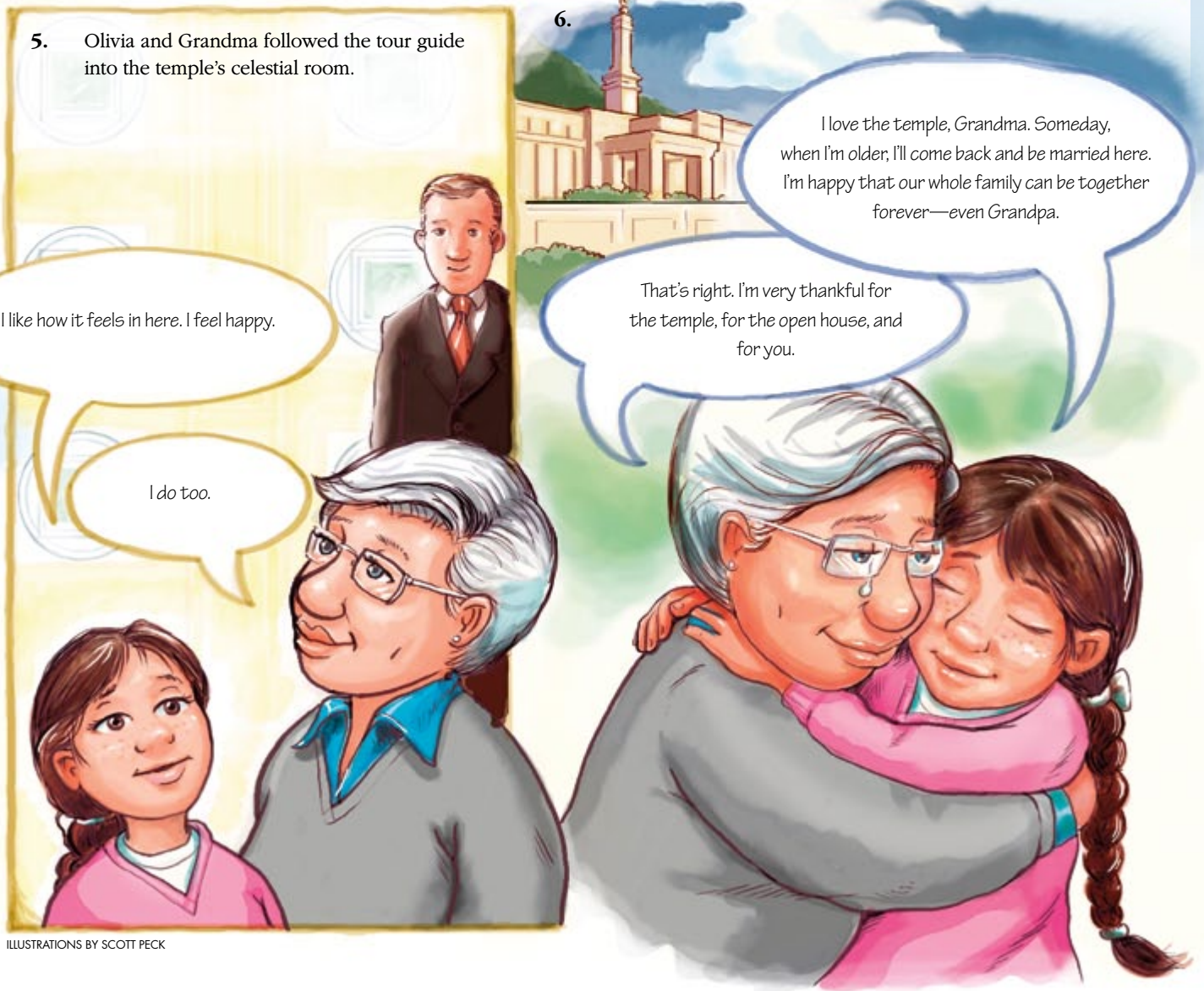
I like how it feels in here. I feel happy.

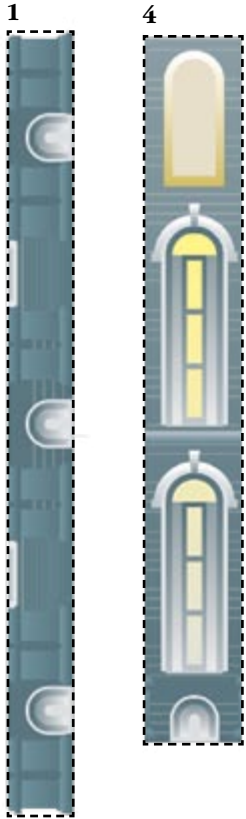
I do too.

6.

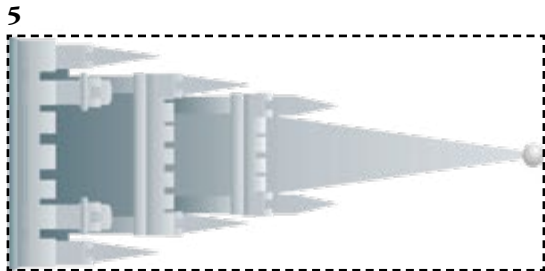
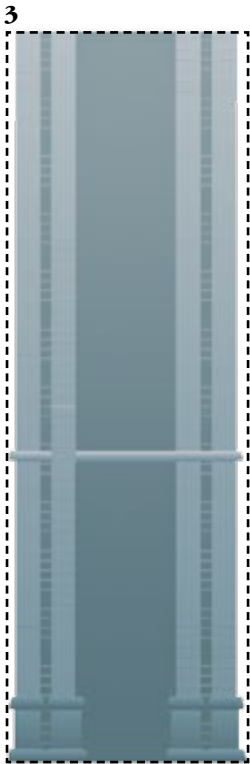
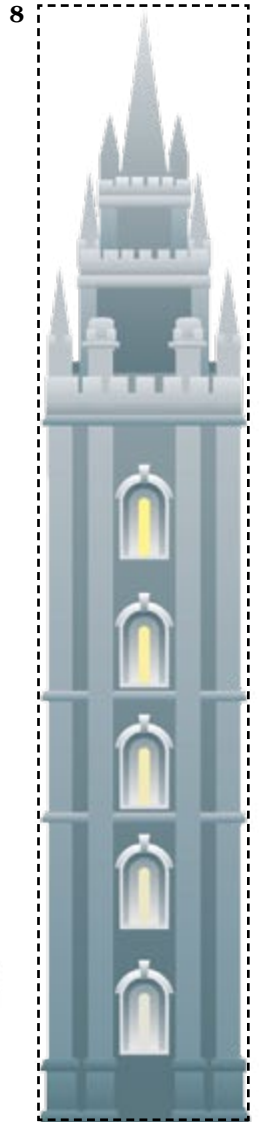
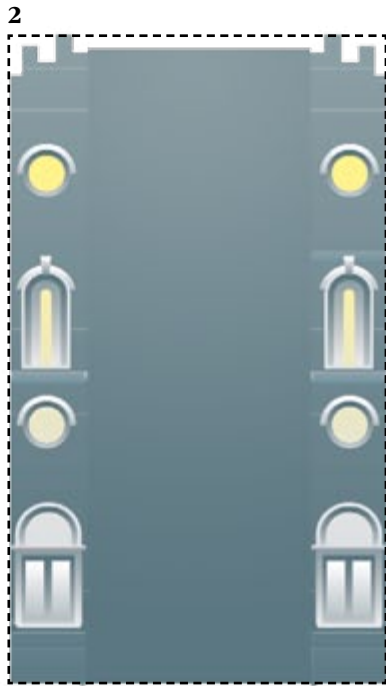
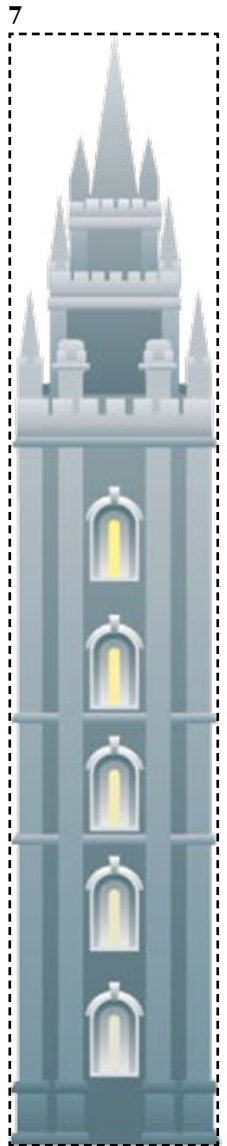
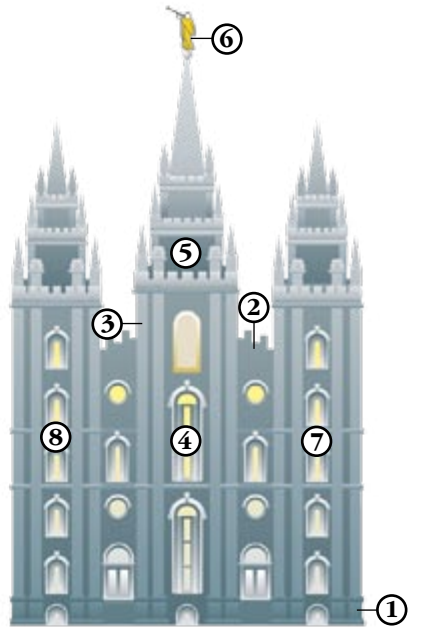
I love the temple, Grandma. Someday, when I'm older, I'll come back and be married here. I'm happy that our whole family can be together forever—even Grandpa.

That's right. I'm very thankful for the temple, for the open house, and for you.



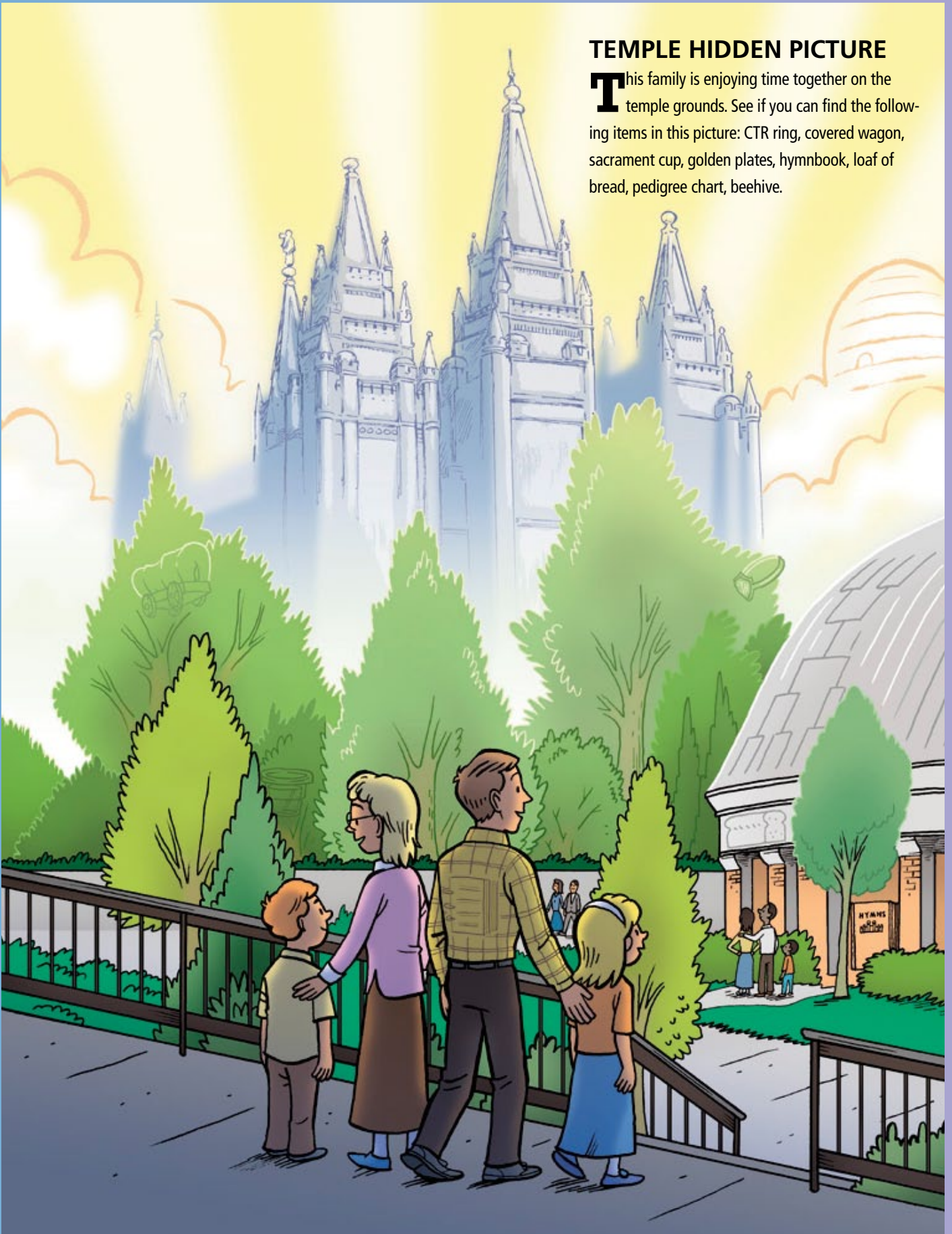


BUILDING A TEMPLE
It took the early settlers of the Salt Lake Valley 40 years to build the Salt Lake Temple. With an adult's help, cut out these parts to the temple and put the pieces together to build a model.



TEMPLE HIDDEN PICTURE

This family is enjoying time together on the temple grounds. See if you can find the following items in this picture: CTR ring, covered wagon, sacrament cup, golden plates, hymnbook, loaf of bread, pedigree chart, beehive.



Conference Spotlight Cards

You can cut out these cards and use them to remind you of what you learned in general conference.



"My young friends . . . , always have the temple in your sights. Do nothing which will keep you from entering its doors and partaking of the sacred and eternal blessings there."

President Thomas S. Monson



"It is a glorious thing to be a Christian and to live as a true disciple of Christ."

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"From what might appear to you to be small choices, the Lord will lead you to the happiness you want. Through your choices He will be able to bless countless others."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency



"Through our heartfelt kindness and service, we can make friends with those whom we serve. From these friendships come better understanding of our devotion to the gospel and a desire to learn more about us."

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



"Don't let a day go by without doing something to act on the promptings of the Spirit."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency



"We cannot see our Heavenly Father, but we can listen for His voice to give us the strength we need to endure the challenges of life."

Jean A. Stevens, First Counselor in the Primary General Presidency



"You have come to earth at this time, . . . and the Lord has set His hand to prepare the world for His glorious return. These are days of great opportunity and important responsibilities. These are your days."

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"You are not alone! . . . As you keep the covenants you have made, the Holy Ghost will guide and guard you. You will be surrounded by heavenly hosts of angels."

Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women General President

Church Seeks Histories of Modern-Day Pioneers

By Hikari Loftus

Church Magazines

When members of the Church think of pioneers, they generally imagine those who traveled to the western United States by boat or on foot in the 19th century.

Many might not realize that they are pioneers on the frontiers of today.

The Church History Department is currently seeking histories of modern-day pioneers. While the department welcomes all personal history submissions, it is particularly interested in the histories of converts, people living in an area where a new temple is being or has been built, missionaries serving in a new mission, and those who are applying the gospel in their lives while not living with the company of many other Latter-day Saints.

“The personal histories of others can help those who may have gone through the same

experiences or lived in the same place or same era,” said Brad Westwood, manager of acquisitions in the Church History Department.

Personal histories can be full life histories or bits and pieces, such as memories from a mission, personal experiences as a parent, or other specific stories surrounding a pivotal event, Brother Westwood said.

“We believe that all of God’s children are equal in His sight,” Brother Westwood said. “We all have an important story to tell—we all have a probationary experience in this world, and we know that history helps build testimony.”

One hundred years from now, Brother Westwood said, someone who might not have a family history record of his or her own might read yours and say, “So this is what it’s like to be a convert.”



SCREEN CAPTURE FROM JOSEPH MILLETT VIDEO

A short film on the life of Joseph Millett, available in English at news.lds.org, tells a faith-promoting story available today because it was preserved through personal histories.

As people learn about their relatives or other pioneers—including the struggles they encountered, the lessons they learned, and the wisdom they gained—they can find counsel and help for their own lives.

When a history is submitted to the library, it is cataloged and available for visitors to view and read. The manuscripts or books are housed in the Church History Library's climate-controlled environment, which prolongs preservation.

Brother Westwood offered this advice to those considering sending their personal histories to the Church History Library:

Write for public consumption. Although diaries and journals are wonderful historical sources, they are often about daily events and personal thoughts that are not always suitable for the public. Sometimes these can jeopardize someone's privacy. If histories include information that can harm someone's good name, they will be accepted but will not be available for public display.

Write stories in segments and installments. Often, trying to begin with your earliest memories as a child and covering everything until the present day can be daunting. Begin with one story at a time. For example, start by writing only about your mission. Once it is complete, move on to a different segment of your life.

Use primary sources. If you have a letter, transcribe it or put it in a book. If you have a photo, include it. If you used information from a specific book, make a note of it. Scrapbooks can play a part in personal history. However, those who make scrapbooks typically do not give context or write about events portrayed in pictures, Brother Westwood said. He suggests taking a few minutes to write about what is going on in pictures placed in a scrapbook.

Consult and interview others. "We typically think of our personal history as our own view, but

the more perspectives you get in it, the weightier it will be," Brother Westwood said. Interviewing other people brings a new perspective and may help you improve your history.

Write about spiritual experiences, pivotal moments, and key factors, people, and events. "People love a story well told," Brother Westwood said. Write about experiences with a beginning, middle, and end. "Don't spend 60 pages on your life before you were two. You probably won't write it, and people aren't going to read it."

Write about what you are passionate about. Brother Westwood suggested that instead of writing chronologically, you might write thematically or on a topic that interests you.

Most important, members should not submit a personal or family history to the Church without distribut-

ing it first among family members, as it should strengthen the family from which it came.

Brother Westwood believes that those who take the time to record a personal history, writing honestly about the hard times and the good times, will be able to see the hand of the Lord in their lives and will leave a legacy and memories that will strengthen their families and other members of the Church.

If you are a modern-day pioneer and would like to share your experiences, submit your history to the Church History Department. You can deliver or mail your history to: Church History Library, 15 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-1600, USA, Attention: Acquisitions.

Hand deliveries can be made from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

You can also e-mail your history to ChurchHistoryAcquisitions@ldschurch.org or call the Church History Acquisition call center at 1-801-240-5696. ■



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Personal histories can help others strengthen their faith.

Young Adults Must Become the Greatest Generation, Elder Perry Says

“I have seen the fervent spiritual power of young adults in this Church,” Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said in a Church Educational System fireside broadcast for young adults on March 6, 2011. “I know your capacity.”

He taught four things that will help young adults fulfill their potential and help others regain their faith in Christ: daily prayer, daily scripture study, temple worthiness, and daily acts of service.

“You are the generation the Lord has saved for this day. . . . I challenge you to become ‘the greatest generation,’” Elder Perry said.

Read, listen to, or watch the address in multiple languages at institute.lds.org. Click on **CES Firesides**, then choose a language.

Gospel Provides Joy, Elder Cook Tells Asian Saints

From February 12 to 20, 2011, Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles visited the Saints in Korea and Japan.

He taught Church members in Seoul, Korea, that we should be grateful for what we have rather than focusing on what we don’t have. He reminded them that the gospel provides the joy, happiness, and peace we all seek.

Elder Cook also met with journalists from several newspapers for a question-and-answer session.

Elder Cook spent time teaching, advising, and answering questions from missionaries in the Korea Daejeon Mission and participated in a priesthood leadership conference for the Korea Daejeon Mission area.



PHOTOGRAPH BY GEON WOO JUN

During his trip to South Korea, Elder Quentin L. Cook reminded Latter-day Saints that the gospel provides the joy and peace we seek. Additional photos available at news.lds.org.

The visit ended with Elder Cook’s participation in a stake conference held by the Cheongju Korea Stake, the stake’s first visit from an Apostle.

Elder Cook also participated in a priesthood leadership conference in Kobe, Japan, and the Okayama Japan Stake conference; visited with representatives from Meiji Shrine in Tokyo, Japan; and made a brief visit to Vietnam.

Law Allows Us to Reach Our Potential, Says Elder Christofferson

“God delegates to us, His children, the opportunity and responsibility to establish laws and legal systems to govern human relations and conduct,” Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said in an address to members of the J. Reuben Clark Law Society on February 4. He spoke on the role that law plays in allowing individuals to reach their full potential in this life and the next.

Elder Christofferson reminded the audience that “we cannot achieve ultimate justice apart from Jesus Christ,” and that “the greatest good

AROUND THE CHURCH

we can do in helping others become what they can become will be to lead them to the Savior.” He bore testimony of the Savior’s power to right wrongs and to “compensate for our inadequacy and justify us before that law which enables us to become joint heirs of eternal life with Him.” He ended with his witness that Christ lives.

Also during the fireside, Elder Christofferson was awarded the J. Reuben Clark Law Society Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to the field of law.

Sister Beck Emphasizes Relief Society’s Role in God’s Plan

Relief Society general president Julie B. Beck met with nearly 10,000 Relief Society sisters and leaders on the BYU-Idaho campus on February 26, 2011, to strengthen their faith and to encourage them in their roles in Relief Society and in the plan of salvation.

In a general session and a leadership training session, Sister Beck fielded questions from women and priesthood leaders from more than 40 southeastern Idaho, USA, stakes.

Sister Beck testified that as those involved in the work of Relief Society keep the Lord’s purposes in their heads and in their hearts and fulfill His purposes here on earth, they will be blessed, strengthened, cleansed, and healed.

“We have an organization established by the Lord to bless His daughters,” she said. “The Lord knows who you are because it is His work. He will strengthen and magnify you.”

Read more on what Sister Beck taught and watch an accompanying feature video at news.lds.org. (Both video and text are available only in English.) ■

Sewing Machines Grow Self-Reliance

With the Church’s donation of 50 sewing machines to Fiji’s Ministry of Social Welfare in 2010 and an upcoming donation of another 50, self-reliance and employment opportunities are growing for women living in Fiji’s rural areas.

Church members’ donations to the humanitarian fund allow the Church to meet needs throughout the world with projects such as the sewing machine donations. Church representatives work closely with village and government leaders to understand local circumstances and respect community members’ wishes.

“We do this and projects like it because we are followers of Jesus Christ,” Elder Taniela B. Wakolo, Area Seventy, said in an interview with the *Fiji Times*. “Our faith leads us to . . . do good in the world.”

Japanese Member Receives Award

On November 9, 2010, four months before the devastating earthquake in Japan, Yoji Sugiyama, a member of the Fujisawa Japan Stake, received an intermediate class of the

Order of the Sacred Treasure for his meritorious service to his country.

As a member of the Foreign Ministry for years, Brother Sugiyama was heavily involved in negotiating treaties and serving as an envoy for Japan.

Brother Sugiyama recognizes that the Lord provides all of us with opportunities to do good in our own spheres. He said, “The Lord sometimes gives us difficulties so we can find our needs. Without those necessities and the opportunity to find good solutions, men make no progress and bring no happiness into this world.”

Latter-day Saint Charities Provides Clean Water

Nearly a billion people on the earth lack access to clean water, often resulting in waterborne diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, and typhoid. But since 2002, the Church has helped seven million people in more than 5,000 communities obtain access to clean water sources. The video *Water Is Happiness*, available in English on news.lds.org, shows the story of LDS Charities bringing clean water to a village in Sierra Leone. ■



WORLD BRIEFS

Teachings of the Living Prophets Update Released

The Church Educational System has released a new full-color manual, *Teachings of the Living Prophets*. The new manual emphasizes the importance of modern prophets, describes the role of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and explains succession in the First Presidency.

The manual can be purchased at store.lds.org or at distribution centers throughout the United States. The manual is currently available in English and Spanish and is being translated into other languages.

Church Hosts Interfaith Tribute

An interfaith musical tribute featuring song, dance, scripture, and



The Interfaith Music Tribute originated during the 2002 Olympic Games and takes place each February.

prayers from a variety of religious traditions took place on Sunday, February 20, 2011, at the Tabernacle on Temple Square.

A number of events at local synagogues, chapels, Hindu temples, and other locations preceded Sunday's concert and showcased the traditions of Utah's religious community. ■

COMMENT

A Home and Marriage Founded on the Savior

My husband and I use the *Liahona* for family home evening. It has been an edifying experience. In the messages from the First Presidency, we seek words of inspiration to help us with our daily challenges. Thus we strengthen the foundations of a home and a marriage founded on the Savior Jesus Christ.

Patricia Oliveira de Souza Balena Leal, Brazil

Happiness in the Midst of Sadness

The messages in the *Liahona* have really strengthened me, especially since my mother passed away. Even in the midst of my sadness, I am happy to be part of this great work and to have all the blessings of the gospel in my life. I know that if I endure to the end I can be with my mother again. ■

Dinabel Zelaya, Honduras

Please send your feedback or suggestions to liahona@ldschurch.org. Submissions may be edited for length or clarity.

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are a few examples.

"Start Moving," page 42: As part of the lesson, consider playing the game Simon Says to illustrate waiting for someone to tell you to move. (To play the game, one person says, "Simon says . . ." and then tells the others to do a certain action, like raising a hand. This person continues a few times in this manner and then tries to get the others to do an action when he or she did not first say, "Simon says." For example: "Simon says raise your hand. Simon says clap your hands. Stomp your foot.") Bear your testimony of a time you have been guided as you moved forward.



"The Answer in Verse Eight," page 50: Read the article together and then read James 1:8. Discuss what it means to be double minded. You might also wish to read Matthew 6:24 and Joshua 24:15. What does this article teach us about the relationship between our choices and our desires? What does it teach us about our Heavenly Father? What did Angelica do to find the answers to her questions? Consider testifying of the importance of scripture study and prayer.

"The Calling," page 68: Tell this story. Consider discussing how your family members' talents can benefit others through service and Church callings. Make a commitment to learn or improve upon a talent or skill. ■

THIS YEAR IT'S A WEED— PULL IT

By Mont Poulsen

When I was growing up in Lehi, Utah, USA, my family had a garden large enough that we rotated the corn and potatoes every year. One day my father told me to weed the corn while he weeded the potatoes. As I worked my way down a row of six-inch-high (15 cm) corn, I found a solitary potato plant growing larger and more beautiful than any of the potato plants on Dad's side of the garden. I called to him and asked, "What should I do with this?"

Dad barely looked up. "Pull it."

Believing he hadn't realized I was pointing to a potato plant, I objected, "But Dad, it isn't a weed. It's a potato." Again, without looking up, he said, "Not this year. This year it's a weed. Pull it." So I did.

Since then I have often pondered the wisdom of my father's words. I have come to realize that obedience is not just making a right choice but making a right choice *in the right season*. When I consider all the things Heavenly Father would have me do in this life, doing them at the right time seems as critical



When I consider all the things Heavenly Father would have me do in this life, doing them at the right time seems as critical as doing them at all.

as doing them at all. For instance, serving a mission, dating, getting married, having children, gaining an education, and beginning full-time employment

are right choices. Yet when people do these good things in the wrong order, the consequences are often disastrous.

King Benjamin taught that we should "see that all . . . things are done in wisdom and order" (Mosiah 4:27). Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, "Faith also includes trust in God's timing, for He has said, 'All things must come to pass in their time' (D&C 64:32)."¹

I believe Satan deceives us by convincing us to do the right things in the wrong order: sexual intimacy before marriage, dating before age 16, becoming a parent and then getting married, and so forth. The greatest commandments of God, when compromised or polluted, become plants grown out of season—weeds. When I have been tempted to justify doing the right thing in the wrong season, I have been grateful for my father's important lesson: "Not this year. This year it's a weed. Pull it." ■

NOTE

1. Neal A. Maxwell, "Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds," *Ensign*, May 1991, 90.



Women of All Nations Nurturing Peace, by Emma Allebes

"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in

me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).



Victor Vasquez (above) and Ruth Lopez Anderson (front cover) are 2 of 24 Latin American Latter-day Saints who shared their inspiring conversion stories and testimonies for *Mi Vida, Mi Historia*—an exhibit that was recently displayed at the Church History Museum in Salt Lake City. Read about 9 of these Latter-day Saints on pages 16–21. You can view the whole show online in Spanish or English at lds.org/churchhistory/museum/exhibits/mividamihistoria.