

This well-traveled bag has become a part of a family tradition of missionary service that I hope never wears out.



A Laundry Bag of Love

My decision to become a Latter-day Saint was difficult for my family to accept. As I announced that I would be serving a full-time mission without pay, not everyone understood how or even why I would want to. My parents wanted to share my enthusiasm, but they had difficulty seeing me “give up” the religion they had raised me in.

When I received my call to the Honduras Tegucigalpa Mission, included in the envelope was a checklist of things I needed to bring. My mom noticed that one of the items on my list was a laundry bag. Now that was something she could understand! She quickly purchased some heavy blue denim and handcrafted a simple, functional laundry bag made with love. It

was a gift that would keep on giving.

That laundry bag accompanied me to the missionary training center and then to Honduras. It traveled with me from one small village to another, little by little aging from dark blue to light blue, in the way a pair of jeans becomes a favorite and perfect-fitting pair of pants. At the end of my mission, I gave away most of my clothes to a special family I had grown to love, but I held on to the laundry bag. My mom had made it just for me even though she did not understand the significance of a mission.

Nearly 30 years later, our oldest son received his call to the California Carlsbad Mission, along with a checklist of items he would need. We read it

together, and when we came to “laundry bag,” we retrieved the bag my mom had made for me. Though it was even more faded by then, off it went to California.

A few years later, my daughter was called to serve in the Ohio Cleveland Mission, and the laundry bag accompanied her there. When she returned, she brought it home a bit more aged but still without significant wear and tear.

The bag reminds me that some things, like the lessons learned from serving a mission and from showing love for others—as my mother did for me—can bless us over and over again. It has become part of a family tradition of missionary service that I hope never wears out. ■

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