



# A LEGACY OF LOVE AND SERVICE

BY ANN M. DIBB

President Monson's Daughter

It is a blessing for me to stand before you this day and offer remarks in remembrance of my father, President Thomas Spencer Monson, 16th President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Today this Conference Center is filled with your love and prayers. I thank you for your presence and support.

As a family, we wish to thank the numerous individuals who have blessed our father with their service and care. We offer sincere thanks to President Henry B. Eyring and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf. We thank each member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. We also thank the many other General Authorities and Officers of the Church. President Monson's office staff and other employees are unsurpassed. My father's security

team, notably Tracy Monson and Dan Stephens, with their professionalism and concern have provided exceptional service. We offer a special thanks to his nursing personnel, especially Sister Aleese Walker. We are grateful for my father's dedicated physical therapists, dentists, and doctors, including his internist, Dr. Russell Maxwell. You have all been remarkable in your unwavering compassion and care.

I want to thank my husband, Roger, and our children for supporting me as I served my father and their grandfather.

Dear Father, it has been a sacred blessing and an honor to watch after you as my devoted mother requested. I know we have had "angels round about [us], to bear [us] up."<sup>1</sup>

Finally, I want to thank you, the membership of the Church. Your 54 years of daily prayers, offered as my father served as an Apostle and then as the President of the Church, have made a difference.

Today I am profoundly grateful for my father and the legacy he created—a legacy of love and service. Although he was a prophet, my father knew he was not perfect. With all his heart, he humbly relied on and tried to be like our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. About a year ago, he was working at his office. A copy of the *Ensign* magazine was open, and there displayed was his picture. My father pointed to the picture and said, "I know that guy. He tried his best."



## A Legacy of Love

President Monson, by simply “trying his best,” left an unforgettable legacy of *love*. He loved the Lord and he loved people. He saw our potential and believed sincerely in our ability to change and progress through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

He loved his parents, siblings, and extended family. He loved his dear eternal companion—his beautiful, quiet, faithful supporter and enabler, Frances. He loved his family and each of his eastern Canadian missionaries. He especially loved his grandchildren. Despite his busy schedule, he created countless memories with them. He was genuinely interested in each of their lives.

Complete strangers also felt President Monson’s love. Once, while visiting a local nursing care facility, he shook the hand of a man in a wheelchair. The man looked up and timidly said, “President Monson, you have shaken my hand, but I need an embrace.” Without hesitation, Dad bent down and tenderly embraced this dear man.

My dad would often recite the Savior’s great commandment:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

“This is the first and great commandment.

“And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”<sup>2</sup>



He also chose to live this commandment each and every day.

## A Legacy of Service

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, William Shakespeare wisely wrote, “They do not love that do not show their love.”<sup>3</sup> My father understood this well and showed his love for others by following the Savior’s example: “[He] went about doing good, . . . for God was with him.”<sup>4</sup> My father spent his entire life serving others.

I was privileged to be my father’s companion on many of his personal visits. We regularly visited a lifelong friend, 98-year-old Elder Glen Rudd. Once, a little too much time had passed between our visits. One day a secretary in my father’s office answered a phone call from Elder Rudd. He asked, “Is President Monson out visiting the sick, the afflicted, and the aged? If so, I qualify!” We quickly responded with a visit to his home. After the visit, Dad turned with a smile on his face and



**Family members wear yellow roses in honor of President Monson's favorite color.**

said, "Ann, I feel we've done some good today."

My father's desire to serve others often went beyond his capacity to do so, considering his many responsibilities. Undaunted, he found a solution: he'd enlist others to provide the needed service on his behalf. He would call carefully selected individuals and say, "Is this my friend Mac? This is Tom. How would you like to paint a bright spot on your soul today?" Translated, this meant that President Monson needed a "service-favor." "Mac" was only too happy to comply.

We do not need to be the President of the Church to notice another's need and "paint a bright spot on our souls." My dad acted upon his frequent feeling, "That would be a kind thing to do," only to find it was the answer to another's prayer. By following the promptings of the Spirit, our simple acts of service can also be answers to prayers, and we can carry on this legacy by serving others.

A little over a year ago, my father and I visited another longtime friend, who was 94 years old

and gravely ill. In a booming voice, my father said, "Is that my friend Brent Goates?" Brother Goates opened his eyes and said with great effort and emotion, "Tom, you came. Wonderful. Wonderful."

My dad explained, "Brent, there is no place I would rather be than right here with you. It's where the Lord would have me be." My father spoke with him as though they were both young again and Brent was a vibrant, capable man; he then gave Brother Goates a priesthood blessing. As we left and walked down the sidewalk to the car, my father said, "The Lord gave us the priesthood to serve and to bless others. This is a great blessing to visit my friend and let him know he is remembered. I feel we've done some good today, Ann." That day my father couldn't stop smiling. He was whistling. He was happy.

Watching him, I realized my dad knew how to obtain true joy. Through his devoted service, he had learned that joy comes from loving the Lord and serving your neighbor. This joy is available to each of us. There is no better way to honor my

father, the prophet, and our Savior Jesus Christ than to live every day so that at its close we can truly say, "I feel I've done some good today."

I have a testimony. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. I know God lives and loves His children. Thank you to all who have loved and honored my father, President Thomas Spencer Monson. May each of us continue to follow the Lord's prophet. May we look to Christ, our perfect Lord and Redeemer, as our everlasting example. It is my sincere prayer that my dear father, and someday all of us, will hear these words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord."<sup>5</sup>

I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

#### NOTES

1. Doctrine and Covenants 84:88.
2. Matthew 22:37–39.
3. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. William Aldis Wright, Cambridge edition (1936), act 1, scene 2, line 31.
4. Acts 10:38.
5. Matthew 25:21.