



A Little Better Than Yesterday

By Luis Omar Cardozo

When his mission president called, Sergio had been out almost a year. He was our only son, and he was the first of our children to serve a full-time mission. My wife, Liliana, and I were proud of him and the example he set for his two sisters.

Sergio had a way about him that we knew would make him a good missionary. He was a natural leader, he was happy and sincere, and he could motivate others.

It didn't matter to him whether someone was a member of the Church—he made friends with everyone. And if

others made fun of him for being a Latter-day Saint, he took it with good humor and seldom got offended.

We were excited when Sergio received his mission call to the Peru Chiclayo Mission. He began his service on November 20, 2013. He loved his mission. At first, it was easy to write to him. But as the months passed, I needed more time to think about his letters and respond to his spiritual growth.

We didn't worry about Sergio. We thought that the mission field was the safest place he could be. His mission president called us on October 7, 2014.

We Never Felt Alone

The mission president told us that Sergio and his companion had been teaching investigators about the temple and eternal families. Afterward, as Sergio offered the closing prayer, he paused, suddenly lost consciousness, and fell to the floor. He received a blessing and was rushed to a medical center. Doctors determined that he had suffered a ruptured brain aneurysm. They tried in vain to revive him.

The news filled us with deep sorrow. Despite our grief, Liliana and I had to travel to Peru to retrieve Sergio's body and personal belongings. We had difficulty thinking clearly, so we were grateful that someone from the Church—from the moment we left our home until we returned—was there to help us. We also

received help from the Holy Ghost, who comforted us and helped us endure. We never felt alone.

It is difficult to find gratitude in tragedy, but I am grateful for the Lord's tender mercies associated with Sergio's death. When he died, I was serving as bishop, Liliana was teaching seminary, and our daughter Ximena was serving as ward Young Women president. We were busy serving and loving others, which grounded us in the gospel. If Sergio had to leave us, I will always be thankful that Heavenly Father took him while we were strong in the faith.

I am also grateful that Sergio departed this life while serving the Lord and while "in the service of [his] fellow beings" (Mosiah 2:17). The Lord has declared, "Those that die in me shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them" (D&C 42:46).

The Holy Ghost gave me a small glimpse of what Heavenly Father must have endured when His Only Begotten died for us. I realized that I didn't have any right to be angry with God. My Father in Heaven knew what I was going through. A peace came over me that allowed me to accept His will and the timing of Sergio's death. Liliana experienced and felt the same.

Comforting Words

Our family had been sealed in the temple in 2005, when Sergio and Ximena

were small. Ruth was born in the covenant a short while later. Before he left on his mission, Sergio baptized her.

Three days after his death, Ruth had a dream about Sergio. It was the night of her ninth birthday. Ruth dreamt that the two of them walked hand in hand together throughout the day and that he spoke comforting words to her.

Ruth and Ximena were very close to Sergio, and they miss him deeply. Ruth

still receives comfort from the memory of her dream.

One day as we were going through Sergio's belongings, Liliana and I found his mission day planner. We noticed that on each page of each day, Sergio had written the phrase "Be a little better than yesterday."

Those words have never left me. They remind me that we must continue to live the gospel. That's how we can be together as a family after this life. That's how Sergio can be ours again.

As we pass through difficult times, the Savior will succor us. I know that is true, just as I know that His promises are sure. So we hold onto the gospel, and we follow Sergio's example. We try to be a little better each day. ■

The author lives in Salta, Argentina.

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