

Liahona



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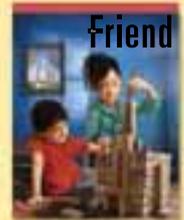
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THE FRIEND COVER
Illustration by Craig
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See if you can find
the Fijian CTR
ring hidden in this
issue. Choose the
right page!



Comment

Answers to My Questions

I am very grateful for this marvelous magazine and for the testimonies, new information, explanations of the scriptures, and material for teaching lessons it contains. So many times when I have asked questions of Heavenly Father, I have been led by the Holy Ghost to the *Liahona*, where I have found the answers to my questions. I receive each issue with joy.

Eugenija Samarskaja, Russia

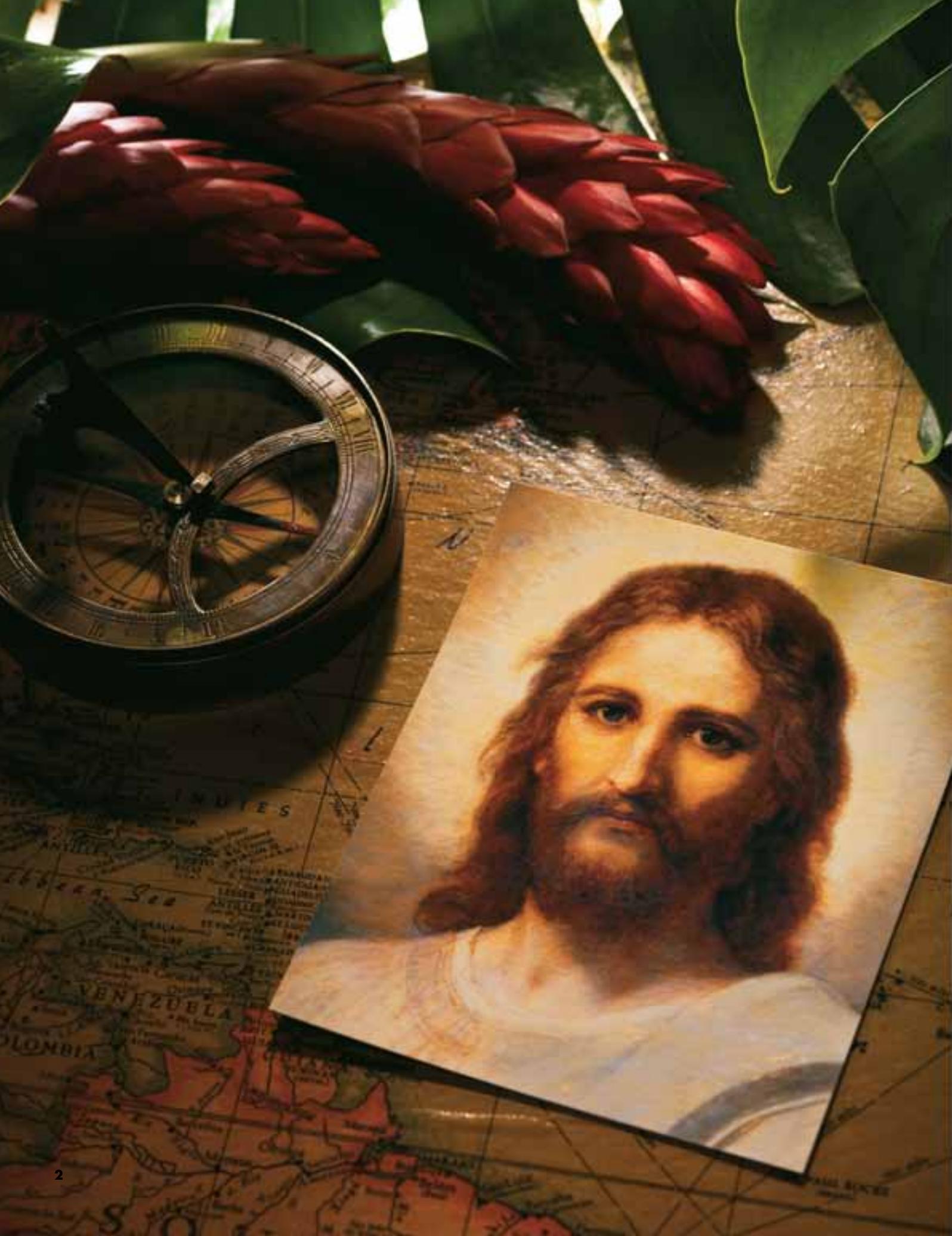
Happy to Find the *Liahona*

I love the *Liahona*, and my husband and I have had up to five subscriptions

at a time. We use the extra magazines as gifts for our neighbors. One neighbor told me that when she came home tired and depressed from work, it made her happy to find the magazine in her mailbox. I know that everything in the magazine is inspired—from the General Authority messages to the stories from members—and reading it brings me knowledge and blessings and helps me gain love and understanding for my fellowman.

Bertha Viola Rétiz Espino, Mexico

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Finding Strength through Obedience

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

In our world today, the accent is on youth. Everyone wants to look young, feel young, and be young. Indeed, vast sums of money are expended each year for products that people hope will restore the youthful look. Well might we ask ourselves, “Is the search for youth new to our day, to our generation?” We need but to thumb the pages of history to find our answer.

Centuries ago, in the great age of exploration, expeditions were outfitted and ships containing confident and adventurous crews set sail on uncharted seas in search of a literal fountain of youth. The legend of the day promised that somewhere in the “great out there” was a magical fountain containing the purest of water, and all one had to do to regain the vibrancy of youth and to perpetuate this vigor was to drink deeply of the flowing water from this fountain.

Ponce de León, who sailed with Columbus, made subsequent voyages of exploration, searching in the Bahamas and other Caribbean areas in full trust of the legend that this elixir of youth could be found. His efforts, like those of many others, yielded no such discovery, for in the divine

plan of our God, we enter mortal existence to taste of youth but once.

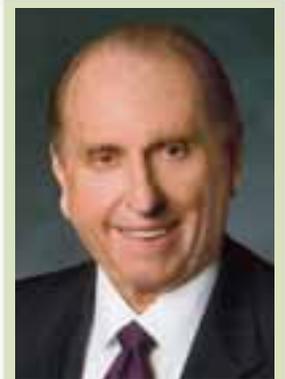
The Fountain of Truth

Although there is no fountain of youth that we may wisely seek, there is another fountain containing more precious water, even the waters of eternal life. This is the fountain of truth.

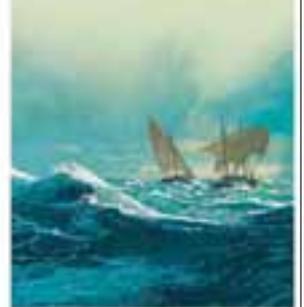
The poet captured the real significance of the search for truth when he wrote these immortal lines:

*Yes, say, what is truth? 'Tis the brightest prize
To which mortals or Gods can aspire.
Go search in the depths where it
glittering lies,
Or ascend in pursuit to the loftiest skies:
'Tis an aim for the noblest desire. . . .*

*Then say, what is truth? 'Tis the last and the first,
For the limits of time it steps o'er.
Tho the heavens depart and the earth's
fountains burst,
Truth, the sum of existence, will weather
the worst,
Eternal, unchanged, evermore.¹*



There is no need to sail uncharted seas in search of the fountain of truth. For a loving Heavenly Father has plotted our course and provided an unfailing map—obedience!



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW BEER; CHRIST'S IMAGE BY HENRICH HOFMANN; COURTESY OF C. HARRISON CONROY CO.; RIGHT: ILLUSTRATION BY JERRY THOMPSON



In a revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith at Kirtland, Ohio, in May of 1833, the Lord declared:

“Truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come; . . .

“The Spirit of truth is of God. . . . He [Jesus] received a fulness of truth . . . ;

“And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

“He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things.”²

There is no need for you or me in this enlightened age, when the fulness of the gospel has been restored, to sail uncharted seas or travel unmarked roads in search of the fountain of truth. For a loving Heavenly Father has plotted our course and provided an unfailing map—*obedience!*

His revealed word vividly describes the blessings that obedience brings and the inevitable heartache and despair that accompany the traveler who detours along the forbidden pathways of sin and error. To a generation steeped in the tradition of animal sacrifice, Samuel boldly declared, “To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”³

The prophets, ancient and modern, have known the strength that comes through obedience. Think of Nephi: “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded.”⁴ Or Mormon’s beautiful description of the strength possessed by the sons of Mosiah:

“They had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth; for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God.

“But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God.”⁵

Keep the Commandments

President David O. McKay (1873–1970), in one of his opening messages to the membership of the Church at a general conference, gave us direction for our time very simply and yet very powerfully: “Keep the commandments of God.”⁶

Such was the burden of our Savior’s message when He declared, “For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and

the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world.”⁷

The Master’s very actions give credence to His words. He demonstrated genuine love of God by living the perfect life, by honoring the sacred mission that was His. Never was He haughty. Never was He puffed up with pride. Never was He disloyal. Ever was He humble. Ever was He sincere. Ever was He true.

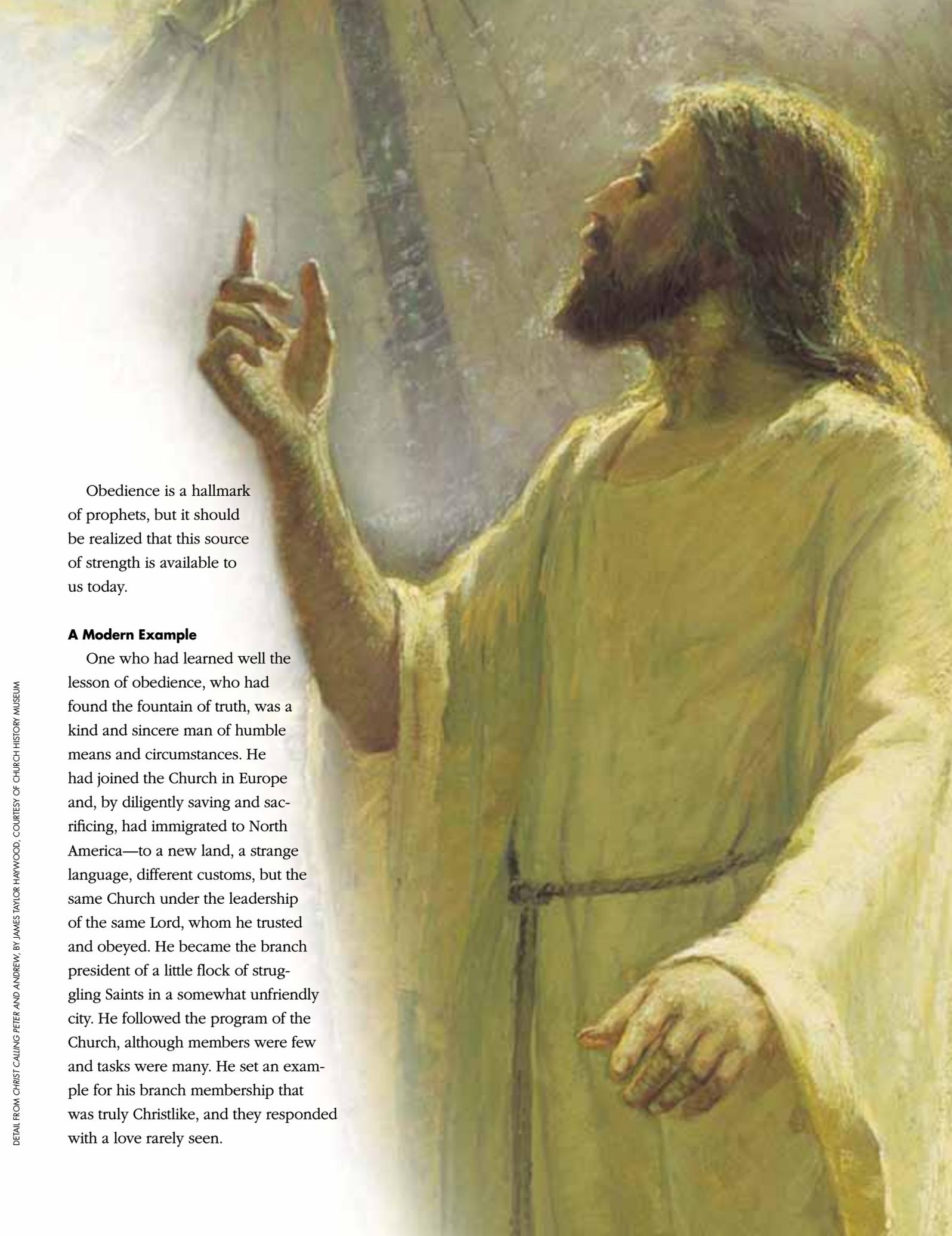
Though He was tempted by that master of deceit, even the devil; though He was physically weakened from fasting 40 days and 40 nights and “was afterward an hungry”; yet when the evil one proffered Jesus the most alluring and tempting proposals, He gave to us a divine example of

obedience by refusing to deviate from what He knew was right.⁸

When He was faced with the agony of Gethsemane, where He endured such pain that His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, He exemplified the obedient Son by saying, “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”⁹

To Peter at Galilee, Jesus said, “Follow me.” To Philip came the same instruction, “Follow me.” And to the publican Levi, who was sitting at receipt of customs, came the beckoning call, “Follow me.” Even to one who came running after him, one who had great possessions, came the words, “Follow me.”¹⁰ And to you and to me that same voice, this same Jesus, says, “Follow me.” Are we willing to obey?

To Peter at Galilee, Jesus said, “Follow me.” To Philip came the same instruction, “Follow me.” And to you and to me that same voice, this same Jesus, says, “Follow me.” Are we willing to obey?



Obedience is a hallmark of prophets, but it should be realized that this source of strength is available to us today.

A Modern Example

One who had learned well the lesson of obedience, who had found the fountain of truth, was a kind and sincere man of humble means and circumstances. He had joined the Church in Europe and, by diligently saving and sacrificing, had immigrated to North America—to a new land, a strange language, different customs, but the same Church under the leadership of the same Lord, whom he trusted and obeyed. He became the branch president of a little flock of struggling Saints in a somewhat unfriendly city. He followed the program of the Church, although members were few and tasks were many. He set an example for his branch membership that was truly Christlike, and they responded with a love rarely seen.

He earned a living with his hands as a tradesman. His means were limited, but he always paid a full tithing and donated more. He started a missionary fund in his little branch, and for months at a time, he was the only contributor. When there were missionaries in his city, he fed them, and they never left his house without some tangible donation to their work and welfare. Church members from far away who passed through his city and visited his branch always received his hospitality and the warmth of his spirit and went on their way knowing they had met an unusual man, one of the Lord's obedient servants.

Those who presided over him received his profound respect and his extra-special care. To him they were emissaries of the Lord; he ministered to their physical comforts and was especially solicitous in his prayers—which were frequent—for their welfare. One Sabbath day some leaders visiting his branch participated with him in no fewer than a dozen prayers in various meetings and in visits to members. The leaders left him at the day's end with a feeling of exhilaration and spiritual uplift which kept them joyous throughout a four-hour drive in wintry weather and which now, after many years, warms the spirit and quickens the heart as that day is remembered.

Men of learning, men of experience sought out this humble, unlettered man of God and counted themselves fortunate if they could spend an hour with him. His appearance was ordinary; his English was halting and somewhat difficult to understand; his home was unpretentious. He didn't own a car or a television. He wrote no books and preached no polished sermons and did none of the things to which the world usually pays attention. Yet the faithful beat a path to his door. Why? Because they wished to drink at his fountain of truth. They appreciated not so much what he said as what he did, not the substance of the sermons he preached but the strength of the life he led.

To know that a poor man consistently and cheerfully gave at least twice a tenth to the Lord gave one a clearer insight into the true meaning of tithing. To see him minister to the hungry and take in the stranger made one know that he did it as he would do to the Master. To pray

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. Consider bringing a container of water to use as a visual aid. Share the story of Ponce de León, and explain that “there is another fountain containing more precious water, even the waters of eternal life. This is the fountain of truth.” Discuss with the family where and how to find truth and what President Monson says we need to do to reach the “fountain of truth.” Share your testimony of how being obedient has blessed your life.

2. Read from the section “Keep the Commandments,” and discuss President Monson's question “Are we willing to obey?” Share the story at the end of the article of the humble man. How did his obedience and willingness to follow the Savior bless others? Invite the family to ponder and do those things that show they are willing to serve the Lord.

with him and partake of his confidence of divine intercession was to experience a new medium of communication.

Well could it be said that he kept the first and great commandment and the second which is like unto it,¹¹ that his bowels were full of charity toward all men, that virtue garnished his thoughts unceasingly and, consequently, his confidence waxed strong in the presence of God.¹²

This man had the glow of goodness and the radiance of righteousness. His strength came from obedience.

The strength which we earnestly seek today to meet the challenges of a complex and changing world can be ours when, with fortitude and resolute courage, we stand and declare with Joshua, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”¹³ ■

NOTES

1. John Jaques, “Oh Say, What Is Truth?” *Hymns*, no. 272.
2. D&C 93:24, 26–28.
3. 1 Samuel 15:22.
4. 1 Nephi 3:7.
5. Alma 17:2–3.
6. David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1957, 8; or *Improvement Era*, June 1957, 391.
7. D&C 132:5.
8. See Matthew 4:1–11.
9. Luke 22:42.
10. Matthew 4:19; 9:9; John 1:43; see also Matthew 19:16–22; Mark 2:14; Luke 18:18–22.
11. See Matthew 22:37–40.
12. See D&C 121:45.
13. Joshua 24:15.

Worth the Wait

BY VALERIA SALERNO

When I entered the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple with the youth of my ward to do baptisms for the dead, we waited a few minutes in a reception room. Then the temple workers asked us to go down a hall where there were several chairs and to wait again.

Because it was a Saturday, many people had come to the temple from all over Argentina. We waited there for two and a half hours, just sitting quietly. Some not very pleasant thoughts began to run through my mind: “How can they make us wait all this time? I’m tired, and apparently it would have been better if I hadn’t come, because this is a waste of time.”

I got up and started walking down the hall. Soon one of the workers came out and said: “Young people, please don’t be impatient. I understand that you have been waiting for a long time, but do you know something? In the spirit world millions of people have been waiting for this moment for centuries, and I can assure you that they are very anxious for their turn to come. The brethren are baptizing and confirming, and they cannot do more than they are doing.”

When he said these words, I felt embarrassed. I realized that I was being selfish because I didn’t want to give hours for those people who had waited such long years and who did not have the opportunity I had to hear about the true Church and be baptized on earth.

The worker came out again, and he began to call names

from our ward. A sister gave us white clothing that more or less fit. After we got dressed, she pulled back our hair and tied it with a white tie.

Then, barefoot, we walked to the benches in the baptistry. The carpets were so soft and high it was as if we weren’t even walking on the ground.

When it was my turn, I was as nervous as if it were the day of my own baptism. But the workers were so nice and they had such patience with each of us that it felt incredible.

When I came out of the font, a sister was waiting for me with a big white towel and a huge smile. I changed my clothes and went into a room where I was confirmed. The same sister who had given me the towel went with me and thanked me for being willing to do the Lord’s work.

When I left the temple, I realized it had been one of the best experiences of my life. The temple is a holy place and the Lord’s Spirit is there, directing His great work. It is worth any wait. ■



Place of Peace

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY
Church Magazines

Dilcia Soto, 16, still remembers the day the temple was dedicated in her hometown of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic: “I was only nine then, but I said, ‘Wow! A temple here!’ I was used to seeing people go to other countries to be sealed and to make covenants. I thought, ‘Now my family and I will not have to go to another country because we have our own temple nearby.’”

Today that temple stands majestic and tall in the capital city, so striking with its spire and well-kept grounds that

A large, vibrant fan palm tree stands prominently in a well-maintained park. The tree's fronds are a bright yellow-green, radiating from a central trunk. In the background, other palm trees and a clear blue sky with light clouds are visible. The ground is a lush green lawn. A portion of a person's arm wearing a blue and white patterned shirt is visible in the bottom right corner.

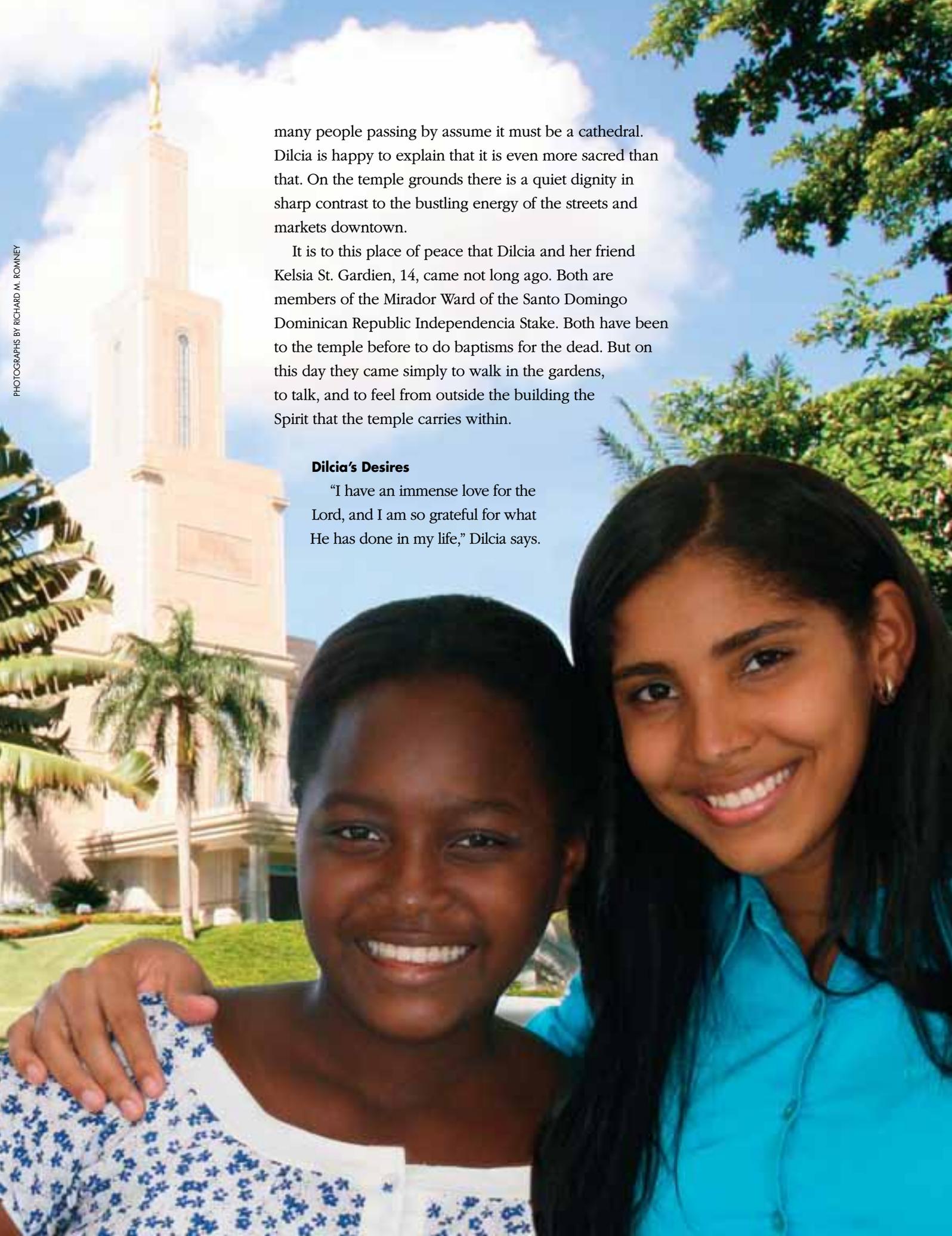
For these two young women in the Dominican Republic, the temple is far more than a beautiful building. It is also a vivid reminder of their fondest hopes and dreams.

many people passing by assume it must be a cathedral. Dilcia is happy to explain that it is even more sacred than that. On the temple grounds there is a quiet dignity in sharp contrast to the bustling energy of the streets and markets downtown.

It is to this place of peace that Dilcia and her friend Kelsia St. Gardien, 14, came not long ago. Both are members of the Mirador Ward of the Santo Domingo Dominican Republic Independencia Stake. Both have been to the temple before to do baptisms for the dead. But on this day they came simply to walk in the gardens, to talk, and to feel from outside the building the Spirit that the temple carries within.

Dilcia's Desires

“I have an immense love for the Lord, and I am so grateful for what He has done in my life,” Dilcia says.





“My immediate family are members of the Church, but my aunts, uncles, and cousins are not. When they come to my house, I always have a Book of Mormon ready because there might be an opportunity to share the gospel with them.” She also shares the gospel with friends and “with any person I might meet who is truly interested.” And every time she does, she says, “I feel the Spirit so strongly. Every time I share my testimony, I feel the truthfulness of the Church all over again.”

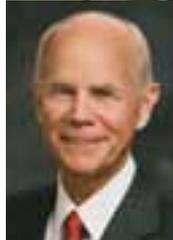
She remembers a seminary lesson about the plan of salvation. “Before this world was, we were in a great Council in Heaven, and we chose to follow our Heavenly Father and accept the sacrifice that Jesus Christ would make on our behalf,” she says. “Our teacher explained that we could tell we obeyed



Dilcia quotes 1 Corinthians 3:16: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

Heavenly Father *then* because we are here on earth *now* with bodies of flesh and bones. When he said that, I knew it was true. That night in my prayers, I cried and gave thanks to God for that knowledge.”

Dilcia quotes 1 Corinthians 3:16: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” “If I am also a temple,” she says, “I need to be as clean and beautiful as the temple. What a



THE TEMPLE IN US

“When we visit the temple as often as distance and individual circumstance permit, the temple will be in us. Then, despite the buffetings of life, we will always be in a holy place.”

Elder Lance B. Wickman of the Seventy, “In a Holy Place,” *New Era*, Apr. 2005, 45.

marvelous blessing it is to be in this Church and to be a virtuous young woman!”

She says her greatest desire is to live with her Heavenly Father again someday. “I am so grateful that He has given us the temple so that we can do all we need to do to return to Him,” she says. “The best form of thanking Him is to live the way He asks us to live.”

Dilcia says, “The Lord wants us to enter His house, to learn about Him, and to work our way toward eternity with Him.” She says she enjoys participating in baptisms for the dead because “it is a way to help those who are waiting on the other side of the veil, to do something for them that they cannot do for themselves.”

Kelsia’s Commitments

Kelsia agrees. “Our ancestors need us to do the work, and I know they are going to be grateful to us,” she says. “In particular I am looking forward to seeing my grandmother whom I never got to know in this life. We are going to make sure all her temple work is done for her.”

Talking about the temple brings out strong emotions for Kelsia. "I am committed to making decisions that will help me to be sealed to my family," she says. "We have to respect the gospel and observe the commandments *al pie de la letra* [to the letter of the law]," she says. "We do it because we love our Heavenly Father, and obedience is how we show our gratitude to Him."

Her family joined the Church in December 2006, six years after her parents moved to the Dominican Republic from Haiti. "I'm so grateful for the missionaries who knocked on our door. It was great to feel the Spirit and to learn about Heavenly Father's plan for us. Since the gospel came into our lives, our family is much closer. I am grateful that He gave me a family that is so united, even in the most difficult moments. To think that we can have the privilege of being sealed eternally seems like one of the greatest blessings of all."

Her parents are taking a temple-preparation class right now, and that reminds her to prepare for the day when she will be married in the

temple. "That is my main goal, that my future husband and I will be worthy for each other and worthy to be an eternal family."



Sharing Serenity

The two friends walk past the pole where the flag of their nation unfurls in a gusting breeze. "Even the flag at the temple reminds us to be faithful," Dilcia says. "It is more than just colors. It contains the motto *Dios, patria, libertad* [God, country, liberty] and shows a Christian cross and the Ten Commandments. It reminds us that our country was founded by people who believed in God and that God is still important here."

They also walk past the entrance to the temple, where the words *Santidad al Señor, la Casa del Señor* (Holiness to the Lord, the House of the Lord) are inscribed above the doorway, as they are at every temple.

"Whenever I read those words, I am filled with a powerful witness that they are true," Dilcia says. "I remember coming here with our Mutual group one evening, just to visit the grounds. After we were done, the bishop asked us what we felt here. We talked about it and came up with a one-word answer: peace."

And Kelsia and Dilcia walk away thinking of that perfect one-word answer . . . perfect because the temple is *the* place of peace. ■

For more about the youth of the Church in the Dominican Republic, see "Search and Rescue" in the March 2009 issue.



Blessings of the Temple



The temple is a sacred edifice, a holy place where essential saving ceremonies and ordinances are performed to prepare us for exaltation.

BY ELDER ROBERT D. HALES

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The temple endowment blessings are as essential for each of us as was our baptism. For this reason we are to prepare ourselves that we may be clean to enter the temple of God.

The opportunity to enter the temple and to take upon ourselves the sacred covenants therein is one of the greatest blessings available to us in mortality. Then, after we take upon us those covenants, our obedience in living them daily stands as a demonstration of our faith, love, devotion, and spiritual commitment to honor our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Our obedience also prepares us to live with Them in the eternities. The temple's saving ordinances are essential to—and even the central focus of—the eternal plan of happiness.

The Temple Doctrine

The temple is truly a place where you are “in the world and not of the world.” When you are troubled and have crucial decisions that weigh heavily on your mind and soul, you can take your cares to the temple and receive spiritual guidance.



We need to acquire a testimony and a reverent feeling of the temple being the house of the Lord. To preserve the sanctity of the temple and to invite the Spirit to bless those who enter the holy

temple for their ordinances and covenants, we are taught that no unclean thing should enter the temple. Reverence in the temple is a vital element in inviting the Spirit to reside within it every hour of every day.

When I was a boy, my father brought me from Long Island, New York, to walk on the Salt Lake Temple grounds, to touch the temple, and to discuss the importance of the temple in my life. It was on that occasion that I made up my mind that someday I would return to receive the ordinances of the temple.

Throughout history, in every dispensation, the Lord has commanded prophets that temples should be built so that His people could receive temple ordinances. Moses and the Israelites were blessed with a portable temple, the tabernacle, where the sacred ordinance work under the law of Moses was performed—and where, on occasion, the Lord came to converse with Moses. King Solomon completed a beautiful temple in Jerusalem, which was later destroyed. Then,

during Christ's ministry, another temple in Jerusalem was being built.

We learn from the Book of Mormon that Nephi built a temple "after the manner of the temple of Solomon" (2 Nephi 5:16). Other Nephite prophets, including Jacob and King Benjamin, taught the people at the temple (see Jacob 1:17; Mosiah 1:18).

Significantly, when the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ appeared to the Nephites in A.D. 34, He came to the temple (see 3 Nephi 11:1–11).

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "The Church is not fully organized, in its proper order, and cannot be, until the Temple is completed, where places will be provided for the administration of the ordinances of the Priesthood."¹

The Kirtland Temple was the first temple in these latter days, and it played an important role in the restoration of priesthood keys. Joseph Smith, as a result of a prayer, was visited by Jesus in the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836 (see D&C 110). The Savior appeared in glory and accepted the Kirtland Temple as His house. On that occasion Moses, Elias, and Elijah also appeared in order to commit the priesthood keys they held. Elijah restored the keys of the sealing power, as promised by Malachi, so that we could enjoy the fulness of the blessings of the temple in our lives.

Our pioneer ancestors completed the Nauvoo Temple and performed sacred ordinances therein. The Nauvoo Temple was the first temple in which endowments and sealings were performed, which proved a great strength to the pioneers as they endured the hardships crossing the plains to Zion in the Salt Lake Valley. They had been endowed with power



Moses and the Israelites were blessed with a portable temple, the tabernacle, where the sacred ordinance work under the law of Moses was performed—and where, on occasion, the Lord came to converse with Moses.

in the holy temple. Husband and wife were sealed to each other. Children were sealed to their parents. Many of them lost family members to death along the way, but they knew that wasn't the end for them. They had been sealed in the temple for all eternity. Later, through revelation received by President Brigham Young, the Saints built more temples in the West.

Today there are 130 functioning temples, allowing faithful members of the Church around the earth to go to the house of the Lord to receive their temple ordinances and make covenants with Him.

The Temple Ordinances

The primary purpose of the temple 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 meaning of the word *endowment* is “gift.” The ordinance consists of a series of instructions on how we should live and covenants we make to live righteously by following our Savior.

Another important ordinance is being sealed for eternity in celestial marriage. This covenant of marriage allows children to be sealed to their parents and children born in the covenant to become part of an eternal family.

The Doctrine and Covenants teaches us: “Whatsoever you seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever you bind on earth, in my name and by my word, saith the Lord, it shall be eternally bound in the heavens” (D&C 132:46).

When a couple is kneeling at the altar, as a sealer I am aware of my role as a representative of the Lord. I know that what is sealed on earth is literally sealed in heaven—never to be broken if those being sealed remain faithful and endure to the end.

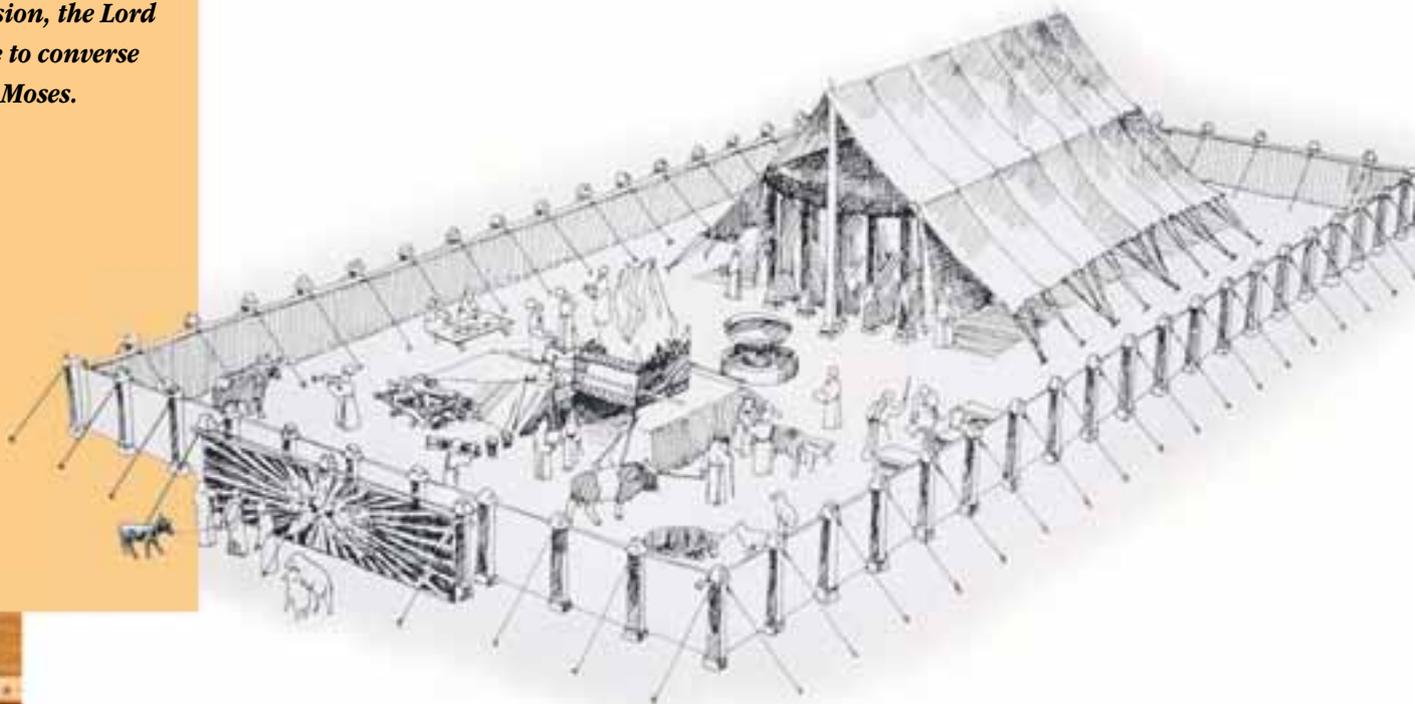


ILLUSTRATION BY TED HENNINGER

I have observed over the years many couples who have been able to maintain strong and vital marriages as they remain true to the covenants they take upon themselves in the temple. These successful couples have several things in common.

First, these couples know individually who they are—sons and daughters of God. They set eternal goals to once again live with our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. They strive to leave the ways of the natural man behind (see Mosiah 3:19).

Second, they know the doctrine and the importance of the saving temple ordinances and temple covenants and their necessity in achieving eternal goals.

Third, they choose to obtain the eternal blessings of the kingdom of God rather than the temporary possessions of the world.

Fourth, these couples realize that when they are sealed for time and all eternity, they have chosen an eternal companion—their days for courting others are over! There is no need to look any further!

Fifth, these couples think of one another before themselves. Selfishness suffocates spiritual senses. Communicating with the Lord in prayer, they grow together and not apart. They converse with each other, thereby never letting little things become big things. They talk early about the “little hurts” with little fear of offending. In this way, when the pressure in the kettle builds and the whistle goes off, there is no explosion of bitter feelings. It is so much better to let off a little steam before the top blows off the pressure cooker. They are willing to apologize and ask forgiveness if they have hurt the one they love. They express their love for each other and become closer. They lift and strengthen one another.



The Temple Blessings

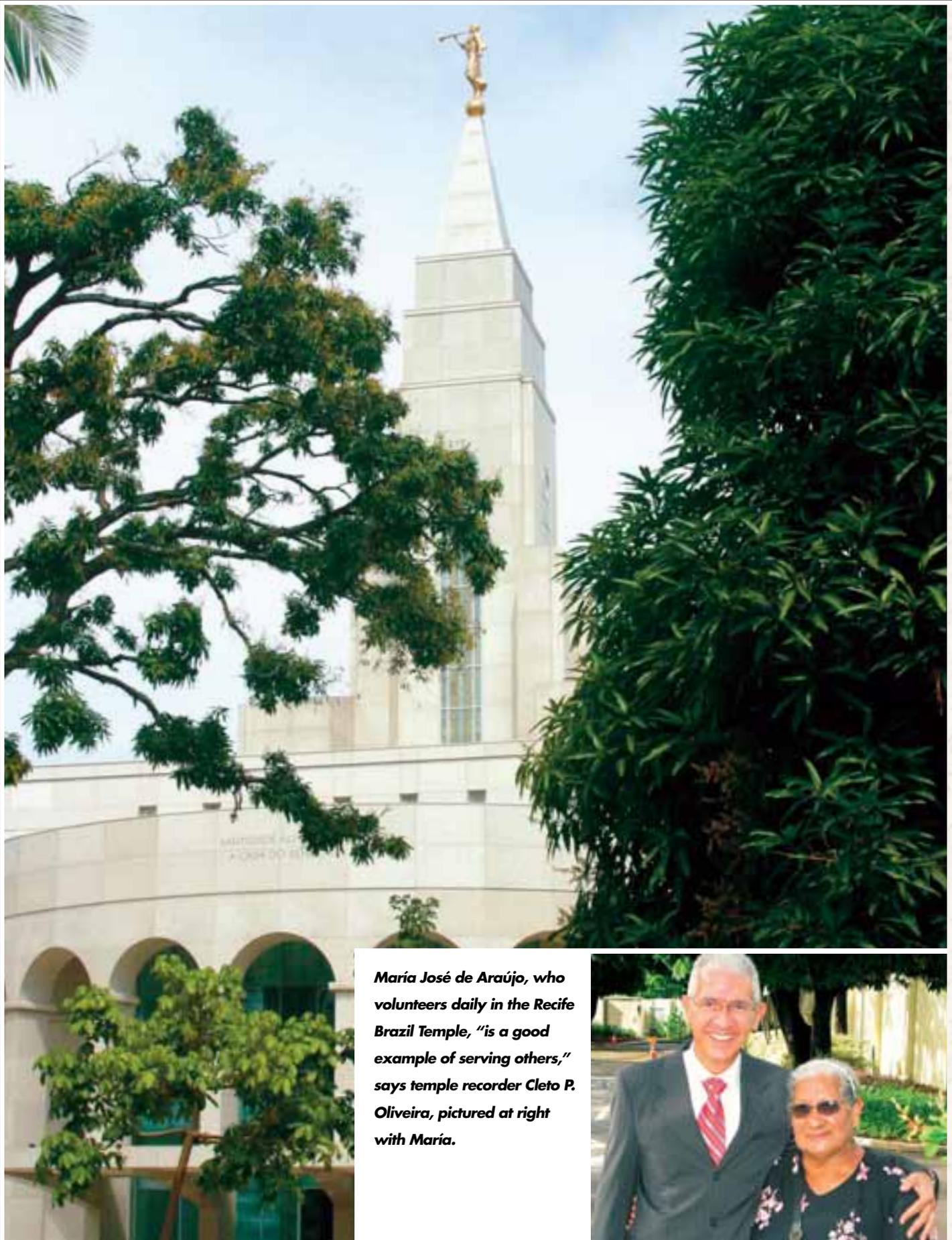
The temple is a sacred edifice, a holy place, where essential saving ceremonies and ordinances are performed to prepare us for exaltation. It is important that we gain a sure knowledge that our preparation to enter the holy house and that our participation in these ceremonies and covenants are some of the most significant events we will experience in our mortal lives.

We voluntarily came from the presence of God the Father to this mortal probation with agency, knowing we would have “opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11). Our objective is to take upon us the whole armor of God and withstand “the fiery darts of the wicked” with the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit (see D&C 27:15–18), to endure to the end, and to be worthy to stand and live in the presence of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, for all eternity—to achieve what is called eternal life. ■

From a Brigham Young University devotional address given on November 15, 2005. For the full text of the address in English, see <http://speeches.byu.edu>.

NOTE

1. *History of the Church*, 4:603.



Maria José de Araújo, who volunteers daily in the Recife Brazil Temple, "is a good example of serving others," says temple recorder Cleto P. Oliveira, pictured at right with Maria.

My Privilege to Serve

BY MICHAEL R. MORRIS

Church Magazines

Before the doors of the Recife Brazil Temple open for another day of administering saving ordinances, 70-year-old María José de Araújo arises to prepare for another day of selfless service.

To get to the temple, María must travel an hour and a half on four separate buses from her home in Cabo de Santo Agostinho, south of Recife, on Brazil's northeast coast. But before she can leave, she prepares food and other necessities for a blind cousin she cares for in her home.

"María is a good example of serving others," says Cleto P. Oliveira, temple recorder. "Since the temple was dedicated in December 2000, she has volunteered to serve here every day the temple has been open. She even comes on holidays."

From 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. every Tuesday through Saturday, María works in the temple cafeteria, washing dishes and making salads. She would work longer, she says, but with a long bus ride home, she must leave early enough to return before dark.

Brother Oliveira tells María she doesn't need to come to the temple every day, but he admits that he would need two people to replace her. "She just smiles and says she has dedicated her life to the Lord," he says.

For María, serving in the temple daily is a great privilege.

"My Father in Heaven has blessed me with good

health, and my goal is to continue to come every day as long as my health permits," she says. "I have made a covenant to dedicate all of my talents and abilities to serve the Lord. When I arrive home after serving in the temple, I don't feel tired. The Lord has blessed me in that way."

Previously, while serving for six years in her ward's family history center, María researched her family line. Then, on numerous Saturday mornings before going to work in the temple cafeteria, she completed vicarious temple work for four generations of her female ancestors. She also had the work completed for four generations of male ancestors.

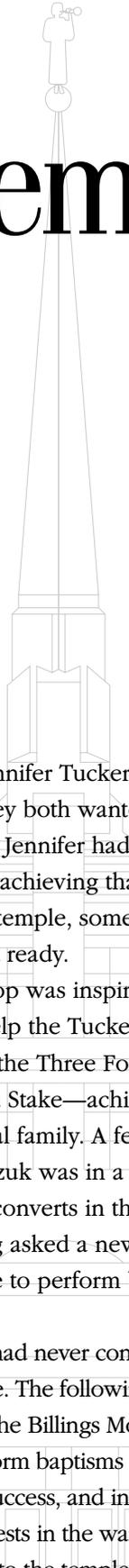
When she began researching her family history, María felt that the task was impossible—especially when she was unable to determine the names of two great-grandparents. But one night their complete names were revealed to her in a dream. At first she wondered whether the names could be correct, but as she searched among her mother's records, she found the names and was able to make family connections that had eluded

her. She believes the dream came as a blessing for her efforts to serve the Lord and His children.

"The temple is my life," María says. "People who don't come to the temple are missing out on a great opportunity and blessing. By serving in the temple, we come to understand the real meaning and power of the temple." ■



"People who don't come to the temple are missing out on a great opportunity and blessing," says María José de Araújo.



A Temple-Going People

BY RYAN CARR
Church Magazines

Gary and Jennifer Tucker had a dream. They both wanted an eternal family. But Jennifer had almost lost hope. The path to achieving that dream leads through the temple, something for which Gary wasn't ready.

Then their bishop was inspired with an idea that would help the Tuckers—as well as many others in the Three Forks Ward, Bozeman Montana Stake—achieve the dream of an eternal family. A few years ago Bishop Aaron Baczuk was in a meeting for bishops and new converts in the stake. The Area Seventy who was presiding asked a new member, “Have you been to the temple to perform baptisms for the dead?” He had.

Bishop Baczuk had never considered taking unendowed adults to the temple. The following week he made an appointment with the Billings Montana Temple for adults in his ward to perform baptisms for the dead. The visit to the temple was a success, and in the months that followed, elders and high priests in the ward accompanied more unendowed adults to the temple. “It proved to be a very



Family history, fellowshipping, and baptisms for the dead inspire adult members to receive their temple endowments.

spiritual experience for them, compounding their desire and commitment to receive their endowments,” says Bishop Baczuk.

Preparing

To prepare, adult members work with the bishop to become worthy to attend the temple. Then they take the temple-preparation class. Their interest in the class really peaks after they perform baptisms for the dead. They find that talking about the temple in class is one thing, but actually

feeling the Lord's Spirit *in* the temple is another.

“Having the option to take someone to the temple who may not be prepared for additional covenants but can still have an experience participating in ordinances is huge,” says Bishop Baczuk. “I think it fits with the sentiment the Church is trying to convey in its temple-preparation booklet: ‘Come to the temple!’”¹

Three Forks Ward elders quorum president David Boyd says attending the temple to perform baptisms makes a goal tangible: “They begin to see the possibility that they can receive their own endowments. Many of them have



not even stepped foot on temple grounds before, so these adult baptism trips give members that opportunity.”

Many recently activated members in the ward perform baptisms for the dead before receiving their own endowments. “It was never a question of worthiness,” says Bishop Baczuk. “It was a question of preparedness. Some were worthy and prepared to do baptisms but were not prepared mentally or spiritually to take on the covenants of the endowment.” For the men, it’s also a time to prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Family history also propels the temple work. Ward members, such as Larry and Carolyn Isom, work in the ward’s family history center to provide hundreds of family names. These three efforts—the

temple-preparation class, family history, and worshipping in the temple—work together. Those doing family history get excited to provide names for those going to the temple. Members going to the temple are excited to do temple work for their own ancestors and for those of their fellow ward members. And being in the temple motivates the members to prepare to return to the temple.

In the past few years, 22 members of the Three Forks Ward have taken the temple-preparation class, and 14 of them began attending the temple regularly to perform baptisms for the dead. Then, upon finishing the class, 13 of those 14 received their own endowments. Some of them were single or widowed, but others, like Gary and Jennifer Tucker, were sealed as a family.

Happy to be at the Billings Montana Temple on the day of their sealing are Gary, Jennifer, Cody, and Garrett Tucker.

Fellowshipping

Gary joined the Church in 1992, a couple of months before he and Jennifer were married. She was already a member. But working long hours and associating with the wrong friends made it hard for Gary to stay active in the Church, even with his wife's support. He says he spent many years "chewin' and cussin'."

When their daughter, Cody, was born, Sister Tucker tried to raise her in the gospel by taking her to church, even though Brother Tucker didn't want any Church materials at home. Although he encouraged his family to attend church, he didn't attend. When Cody turned eight, she was baptized by a missionary, not by her father. Brother Tucker says, "I'm very happy I was there, but that's a huge regret—watching instead of participating in it."

In the following years, fellowshipping helped Gary return to Church activity. Jennifer would invite ward members or the missionaries over for dinner, knowing that would give them a chance to talk with Gary. He is grateful

to those members and missionaries for being a good influence on him.

Dale Price, for example, home taught Jennifer's mother and got to know Gary and Jennifer that way. When Brother Price visited with Brother Tucker, they didn't talk about the gospel at first. They talked about a common interest: hunting. The Prices also sat with the Tuckers at ward activities, brought them food from their food storage when Brother Tucker was out of work, and gave them honey produced by their own honeybees. Honey is the Tuckers' favorite topping on toast. That little gift, as Brother Price describes it, was "to sweeten the relationship."

Doing Small and Simple Things

Counsel from their stake president also helped the Tuckers. President David Heap asked stake members to do "seven small and simple things": (1) Read the scriptures personally every day; (2) read the scriptures at least

Members of the Three Forks Ward regularly drive two-and-a-half hours to serve in the Billings Montana Temple. Several who attend are adults who perform baptisms for the dead as they and their spouses prepare to receive their endowments and be sealed.



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF BILLINGS MONTANA TEMPLE BY STEVE BUNDERSON; PHOTOGRAPH OF BILLINGS MONTANA TEMPLE BAPTISTRY BY NORMAN CHILDS; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY DRAKE BUSATH, © BUSATH PHOTOGRAPHY

five days a week as a family; (3) have personal prayer every morning and night; (4) have family prayer every morning and night; (5) attend church every Sunday as a family; (6) hold family home evening every Monday night; and (7) attend the temple every month.

Gary could see that these things would help his family be closer—something he very much desired—so the Tuckers began having family prayer, scripture study, and home evening. These efforts helped prepare Gary to be receptive to his bishop's invitation to prepare to go to the temple.

In January 2006 the Tuckers were attending a fireside at the bishop's home. Bishop Baczuk pulled Gary aside and talked to him about the temple. Right there, Gary gave the bishop his can of chewing tobacco so it wouldn't continue to be a temptation to him. He had many questions for the bishop then and in subsequent interviews. The bishop emphasized living the covenants that Gary had made at baptism so he could be worthy of the Spirit.

The Tuckers began taking the temple-preparation class, and Jennifer began attending the temple with her ward each month to perform baptisms for the dead. Gary was working on becoming worthy to go. Their daughter, Cody, who was 11 then, was excited to be able to go to the temple soon to perform baptisms. By the time she turned 12, Gary was able to go to the temple with her. It was the first time either of them had been in the temple.

Cody says, "It was wonderful. It's very peaceful there. My dad went, so that was even a bigger deal." Gary says he felt "unbelievable peace and joy that first time."

The next Sunday in the temple-preparation class, Gary was a different person. "A light had gone on," says Sister Elna Scoffield, who has taught the class for several years.



WE WILL BE A BETTER PEOPLE

"I hope that everyone gets to the temple on a regular basis. I hope your children over 12 years of age have the opportunity of going to the temple to be baptized for the dead. If we are a temple-going people, we will be a better people, we will be better fathers and husbands, we will be better wives and mothers. I know your lives are busy. I know that you have much to do. But I make you a promise that if you will go to the house of the Lord, you will be blessed, life will be better for you."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley," *Ensign*, July 1997, 73.

Gary stayed after class to ask questions. He had felt the Spirit at the temple and wanted to return—not just to perform baptisms but to receive his endowment and to have his family sealed to him.

The next month the Tuckers again attended the temple with the bishop and other ward members.

Overcoming Trials

In the weeks before Brother and Sister Tucker received their endowments and were sealed, they felt the adversary's opposition. Gary was making progress, but he still had doubts about his worthiness to be in the temple. Their dream of an eternal family was close, but it felt just out of reach. The Tuckers knew they had to pray together more often, asking for

strength. "We always received it in the form of calming peace and reassurance that all things are in the Lord's hands," says Sister Tucker. "Even up to the time we walked inside the temple, His calming Spirit was with our whole family."

After Gary and Jennifer received their endowments, they knelt in the sealing room with their children, Cody and Garrett, dressed in white. When six-year-old Garrett saw his mom crying, he reached up to wipe the tears from her cheeks. Gary and Cody were crying for joy too. Even the sealer was emotional.

The Tuckers say their family now enjoys stronger relationships and better communication. Gary says, "We are happier. My wife and I are closer, and our children see that." Gary feels like he's a better example to his family members who are not members of the Church, and he hopes that other families in his ward will want the same blessings that the Lord has given the Tuckers through the temple. ■

NOTE

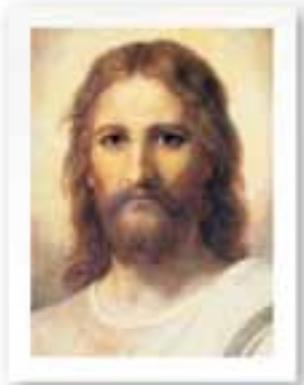
1. See *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (booklet, 2002), 1.

The New *Gospel Art Book*

One affordable spiral-bound book now gives Latter-day Saints access to 137 color pictures for use in gospel learning and teaching.

BY MICHAEL G. MADSEN
Church Curriculum Development

In the office of President Thomas S. Monson hangs a painting of the Savior by artist Heinrich Hofmann. The prophet says that this painting reminds him to do what the Savior would have him do. Pictures can have a powerful influence on each of us, just as this painting does on President Monson.



Out of a desire to provide affordable pictures for members to use in Church classes and in our homes, the Church has made available the *Gospel Art Book* with 137 paintings and photographs. These pictures

can complement lessons taught anywhere from Gospel Doctrine to Primary sharing time. They can also be used in family home evening, personal scripture study, missionary work, and home or visiting teaching.

Each illustration in this book invites a teaching moment—the opportunity to tell a scripture story and teach a principle. To aid us, the *Gospel Art Book* includes a list linking pictures to their accounts in the scriptures. Searching these scriptures will deepen our understanding of the events and gospel principles depicted in each picture.

Following are three ways the *Gospel Art Book* might be used in teaching a lesson:

1 Consider inviting individuals to search the scriptures linked to a particular picture. Ask them to read the scripture aloud or to summarize it as you discuss the picture together.

2 Consider asking individuals to describe what they see in a picture. What gospel principles does the picture teach? How can we apply those principles in our lives today?

3 After teaching a particular gospel principle, invite others to search the *Gospel Art Book*, looking for pictures illustrating that principle. Ask individuals how they feel when they look at the picture now that they have discussed its meaning.

In all our learning and teaching of the gospel, let us prayerfully seek inspiration (see D&C 42:14–17). As we do, the Holy Ghost will bring other ideas into our minds tailored to meet the needs of those we are teaching. The new *Gospel Art Book* is an important tool that can help us help one another come unto Christ and receive the blessings of eternal life. ■





POWER IN VISUAL AIDS

“Teachers who desire to increase learners’ ability to understand and learn will also use visuals. Most people will learn better and remember longer when you present ideas by using pictures, maps, word groupings, or other visuals rather than merely speaking.”

Teaching, No Greater Call (1999), 182.



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1. You can find an online version at www.gospelart.lds.org.
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VIRTUE

THE GOLD STANDARD



FILL YOUR THOUGHTS WITH VIRTUE,
AND CONFIDENCE WILL FILL YOUR LIFE.
(SEE D&C 121:45.)

Nurture the Rising Generation



Teach these scriptures and quotations or, if needed, another principle that will bless the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you visit to share what they have felt and learned.

D&C 123:11: “It is an imperative duty that we owe to all the rising generation.”

What Is My Responsibility to the Rising Generation?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Reserved by the Lord for this time, [the rising generation] must now be *preserved* . . . and *prepared* for their special moment in human history! They have been *held back* to come forth at this time, but now they need to be *pushed forward* to meet their rendezvous. . . .

“Youth are not unlike prospective converts. There are those critical

moments when their souls begin to tilt—toward the Lord or away from Him. These moments of decision cannot always be created, but when they occur, they must not be wasted. More often than not, these moments will occur in quiet and reverent conversation with parents, grandparents, a bishop, an adult leader, or a righteous peer” (“Unto the Rising Generation,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1985, 8, 10).

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Presidency of the Seventy: “Our rising generation is worthy of our best efforts to support and strengthen them in their journey to adulthood. . . . In every action we take, in every place we go, with every Latter-day Saint young person we meet, we need to have an increased awareness of the need for strengthening, nurturing, and being an influence for good in their lives” (“Our Rising Generation,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 47).

How Can I Nurture the Rising Generation?

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008): “Never forget that these little ones are the sons and daughters of God and that yours is a custodial relationship to them, that He was a parent before you were parents and that He has not relinquished His parental rights or interest in these His little ones. . . . Rear your children in love, in the

nurture and admonition of the Lord. Take care of your little ones. Welcome them into your homes, and nurture and love them with all of your hearts. They may do, in the years that come, some things you would not want them to do, but be patient, be patient. You have not failed as long as you have tried” (“Words of the Living Prophet,” *Liahona*, May 1998, 26–27; “Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley,” *Ensign*, July 1997, 73).

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president: “To nurture means to cultivate, care for, and make grow. . . . Nurturing requires organization, patience, love, and work. Helping growth occur through nurturing is truly a powerful and influential role bestowed on women” (“Mothers Who Know,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 76, 77).

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency: “As Relief Society sisters we can help one another to strengthen families. We are given opportunities to serve in many capacities. We constantly come in contact with children and youth who may need just what we can offer. You older sisters have much good advice and experience to share with younger mothers. Sometimes a Young Women leader or a Primary teacher says or does just the thing that is needed to reinforce what a parent is trying to teach. And obviously we don’t need any particular calling to reach out to a friend or neighbor” (“I Will Strengthen Thee; I Will Help Thee,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 117). ■



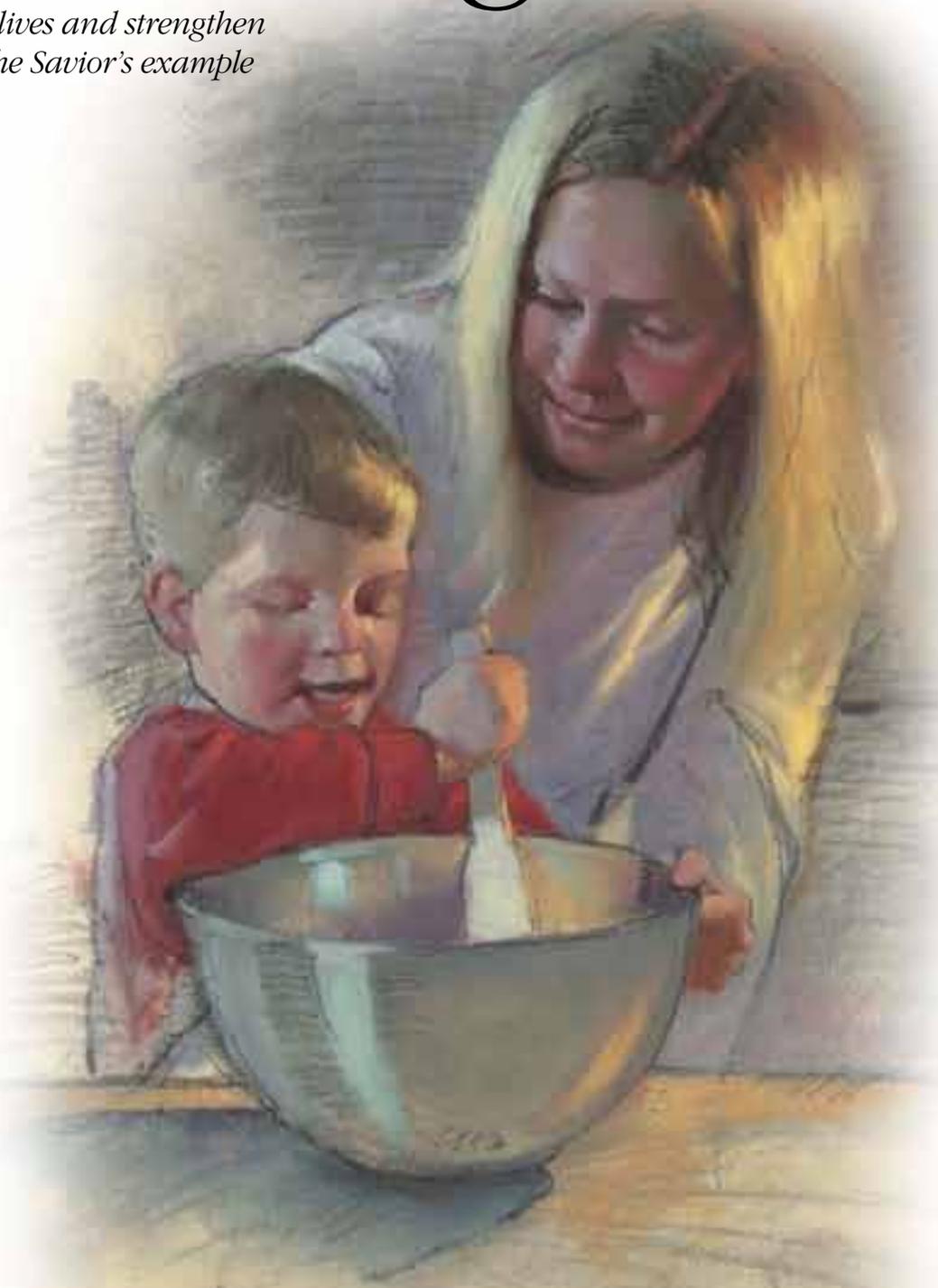
The Blessings of Ministering

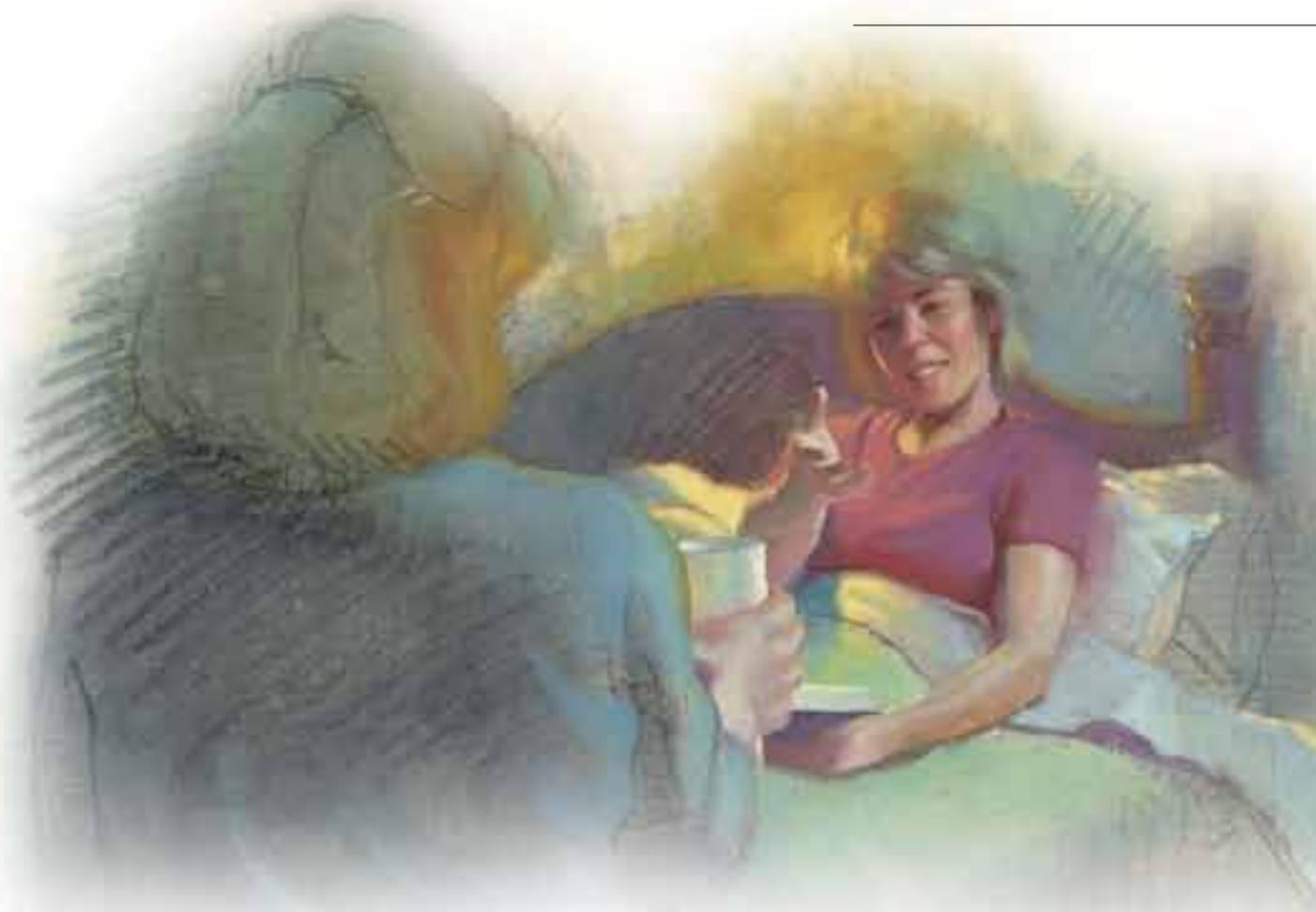
Members of the Church bless lives and strengthen testimonies as they emulate the Savior's example of ministering to others.

The exemplary ministry of President Thomas S. Monson is well-known among members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For more than six decades he has reached out to those in need, giving comfort and peace to countless individuals and personally ministering to the sick and afflicted.¹

“Today there are hearts to gladden, there are deeds to be done—even precious souls to save,” President Monson has declared. “The sick, the weary, the hungry, the cold, the injured, the lonely, the aged, the wanderer, all cry out for our help.”²

In his personal ministry, President Monson has shown the difference between *administering* and *ministering*. Church members *administer* programs and ordinances, but they *minister* to individuals, loving them and coming to their relief. In reaching out to others, President Monson has emulated the Savior, who “came not





to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Mark 10:45).

As the following four accounts illustrate, Latter-day Saints who “go, and do . . . likewise” (Luke 10:37) bless others, the Church, and themselves.

Samaritan with Pancake Batter

My recovery following minor surgery was not as easy as I had been led to expect. But as ward Relief Society president, I felt that I should be giving help to others, not asking for it. On Monday morning, three days after my surgery, I had to get seven children up and ready for school. I wondered if I would have to keep my oldest daughter home to help with the baby.

As these thoughts went through

my head, the doorbell rang. Vickie Woodard, my first counselor and a good friend, had come to help. She announced that she was there to make pancakes. She had a bowl of batter in her arms and asked where she could find a frying pan. The children were delighted.

After breakfast, Vickie got the children off to school, cleaned up, and took the baby home until his noon nap time. Later, when I asked who was caring for her own young children, she told me that her husband had taken a couple of hours off work so she could help me.

Vickie’s and her husband’s service that day allowed me to gather my strength and contributed to my recovery.

Beverly Ashcroft, Arizona, USA

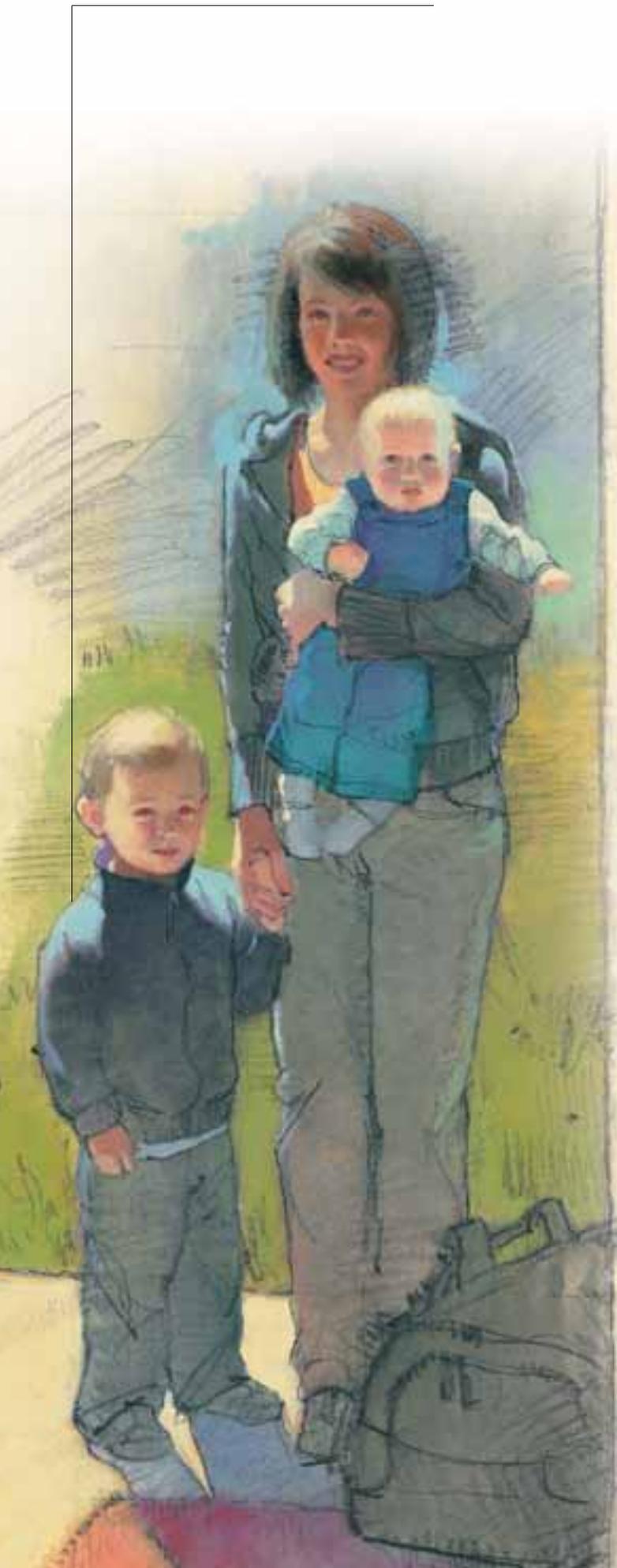
Unto the Least of These

One day when I was home alone with my youngest son, I slipped on a step and fell. Resulting abdominal pain persisted for several days, so I went to see a doctor.

I was pregnant at the time, and tests indicated that my placenta had become detached. This condition required complete rest, or I could lose the baby.

I was worried because we had three little children and could not afford to pay for help. The sisters in my branch, however, found out about my condition and, without being asked, came to my aid. They organized themselves into three groups that helped me in the morning, afternoon, and evening.

They came to wash, iron, cook, clean, and help my children with their



homework. A sister named Rute, who was baptized into the Church while I was confined to bed, became well-known in our home. Rute, a nurse, helped at night and administered necessary injections.

I didn't need to ask for anything; these sisters anticipated my needs and took care of everything. When they had more help than they needed, one sister would sit and visit with me. They did this for three months.

These sisters gave me strength, love, and dedication. They gave of their time and talents. They made sacrifices to be there. They never asked for anything in return. They loved and they served, following the example of the Lord, who taught us, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

Enilze do Rocio Ferreira da Silva, Paraná, Brazil

Just Bring Their Clothes

While my husband, Brandon, was in Orlando, Florida, on business, he woke up one night with a high fever and difficulty breathing. He called for an ambulance to take him to the hospital, where he learned that he had a serious case of pneumonia.

Because Brandon and I have toddler-age sons, I couldn't immediately travel from our home in Pennsylvania to Florida. I called Brandon daily, hoping for his improvement so that he could return to us.

However, Brandon's condition worsened. When a nurse at the hospital urged me to come to the hospital as soon as possible, I started thinking about who might be able to take care of our boys.

My mother agreed to take time off from work and said she would come as soon as she could, but the flight I needed to take left before she would arrive. I called a few friends to see if they could watch the boys until my mother arrived. A friend from Relief Society, Jackie Olds, said she'd be happy to watch them.

"Just bring their clothes and diapers," she said, "and I'll keep them for however many days you need to be gone."

I started to refuse because this sister, with three children

of her own, had a busy life, but she insisted. When I dropped our boys off a short while later, she comforted me by saying, “Don’t worry about them. Worry about getting Brandon better and getting him home. I’ve taken care of toddlers before.”

I knew then that the boys would be safe, happy, and well taken care of, which they were. I was able to be with my husband, who was seriously ill by the time I arrived at the hospital. But after a few days, he was well enough to return home.

I am grateful for a good friend who responded—far beyond what I would have asked of her—and ministered to us in a time of need.

Kelly Parks, Pennsylvania, USA

Service at a Bedside

Brother Anderson, the dynamic 35-year-old ward Young Men president, was the kind of youth leader everyone admired: returned missionary, father of five, business owner, young at heart. But now he had leukemia. After receiving this news from the bishop, Ryan Hill, the priests quorum first assistant, swung into action, calling

each active and less-active priest in his quorum.

“We’re going to the hospital to see Brother Anderson. We need everyone. Can you come?” he repeated during each call.

“I’m not sure I can make it,” one priest said. “I may need to work.”

“Then we will wait until you get off work,” Ryan responded. “This is something we must do together.”

“OK,” the quorum member said. “I will see if I can switch shifts with someone else.”

All 11 priests went to the hospital. Those who were less active and those who never missed a Sunday meeting were there. Together, they laughed and cried and prayed and made future plans. In the ensuing months, they scheduled times to rub Brother Anderson’s feet when his circulation was difficult, took turns

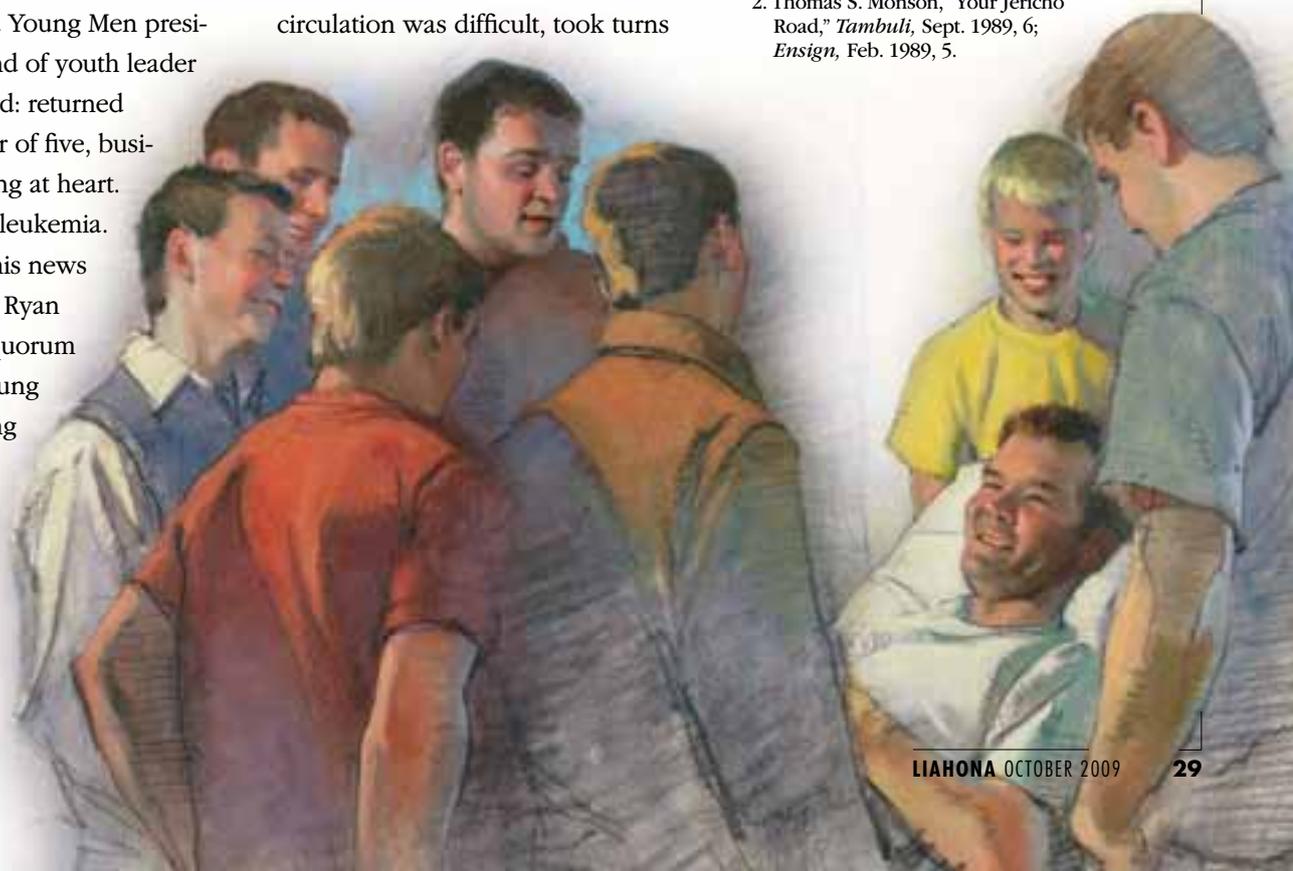
donating blood platelets during two-hour sessions so he would get only their blood, and even drove 20 miles (32 km) on prom night with their dates (including two young women who were not members of the Church) to his hospital bedside so he could share in their high school experiences.

In his final days, Brother Anderson asked them to serve missions, marry in the temple, and keep track of each other. More than a dozen years later, home from their missions, married in the temple, and starting families of their own, they still recall these watershed spiritual experiences of service together with their beloved leader. ■

Norman Hill, Texas, USA

NOTES

1. See Quentin L. Cook, “Give Heed unto the Prophets’ Words,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 49–50.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Your Jericho Road,” *Tambuli*, Sept. 1989, 6; *Ensign*, Feb. 1989, 5.



Me?

A Shepherd in Israel?

BY ELDER DANIEL L. JOHNSON
Of the Seventy

One of the practices that distinguishes The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that of having lay shepherds. We have no paid clergy in the wards, branches, stakes, and districts of the Church; rather, the members themselves minister to each other.

Every member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a calling to be a shepherd in Israel. Member-shepherds serve in bishoprics and branch presidencies, as priesthood and auxiliary leaders, as clerks and secretaries, as teachers of every kind—including home and visiting teachers—and in countless other capacities.

Lay shepherds have several things in common. Each has sheep to nourish, encourage, and serve. Each is called by the Lord through His appointed servants. Each is accountable to the Lord for his or her stewardship as a shepherd.

Seeking the Lost Sheep

Joseph Serge Merilus left his native Haiti at the age of 19 and moved to the Dominican Republic in 1980 in search of work. Eighteen months later he went back to Haiti, fell in love, and returned to the Dominican Republic with his new bride, Marie Reymonde Esterlin.

As they began their married life together in their newly adopted country, Joseph experienced a spiritual hunger. He and Marie visited several churches seeking to satisfy that hunger, but as Haitian Creole speakers in a Spanish-speaking country, they had difficulty understanding and being understood. Eventually they ran into two Latter-day Saint missionaries, who invited them to church. After Joseph and Marie had attended several meetings, the missionaries patiently taught them the discussions in Spanish, and they were baptized in September 1997.

Joseph was called to serve in the Sunday School presidency, then as a counselor in the branch presidency, and later as branch president. But because of a series of misunderstandings and hurt feelings, much of it resulting from miscommunication, Joseph,



Marie, and their five children fell into inactivity and were largely forgotten by local Church members.

During the next seven years, the couple had four more children and welcomed a nephew and a niece from Haiti into their home. Through much effort Joseph became fluent in Spanish and English and began teaching English and Haitian Creole for a local company.

In August 2007 two priesthood leaders, in the process of seeking out the Lord's lost sheep, appeared on the family's doorstep. They discovered that Joseph and Marie still had testimonies of the gospel, even though they had not attended meetings for seven years. The leaders invited the family to return to church, which they did the very next day—all 13 of them. They have been attending ever since.

Today Joseph is a branch mission leader in Barahona, located in the southwestern part of the Dominican Republic. His two eldest sons also serve in branch leadership, and his nephew, a newly ordained elder, is the Young Men president. Recently the family traveled to the temple, where they were sealed as an eternal family.

Just think of it, 13 lost sheep are now found because two member-shepherds were willing to search for, nourish, and bring this family back to the Lord's fold. They were led to this home just as you and I will be led as we seek out the lost sheep who are our responsibility.

I have been a witness of and a participant in thousands of shepherding visits. I testify to the marvelous outpouring of the Spirit that accompanies them. I have seen many lost sheep return and have felt the joy that



I have been a witness of and a participant in thousands of shepherding visits. I testify to the marvelous outpouring of the Spirit that accompanies them.



negligent shepherds. Because of their negligence, the flock had been scattered. Of those shepherds, the Lord said:

“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds[:] . . . should not the shepherds feed the flocks? . . .

“The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost. . . .

“ . . . Yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

“Thus saith the Lord God; . . . I will require my flock at their hand” (Ezekiel 34:2, 4, 6, 10).

In many respects, we have become a chapel-based church. We go to great effort to provide spiritual and emotional nourishment for those who come to church, but what of those who have lost their way to the chapel?

If I have received a calling to serve in the Church, then I have sheep to whom I have a divine obligation to minister and to serve. For example, as a teacher I am a shepherd not only to those who show up for my class but also to those who do not attend. I have the responsibility to find them, become acquainted with them, be their friend, minister to their needs, and bring them back to the fold.

comes as they are welcomed back into the fold. I have seen hearts touched, blessings pronounced, tears shed, testimonies borne, prayers offered and answered, and love expressed. I have seen lives changed.

Feeding the Flocks

Sometime between 592 and 570 B.C., God spoke to His prophet Ezekiel regarding

Leading Them Back

As member-shepherds we would do well to remember and ponder the teachings in Luke 15. In that chapter the Lord taught the parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the prodigal son. All three relate to “that which was lost” and then found again. In the parable of the lost sheep, the Lord asks:

“What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

“And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

“And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.



“I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Luke 15:4–7).

In the parable, only one sheep strayed and was lost, but such is seldom the case in our wards and branches. The parable’s application remains the same, however, regardless of the number of sheep who have strayed from the fold.

The parable does not indicate how long the recovery process took. In our shepherding efforts, some sheep will return after a single visit, while others will require years of constant and gentle encouragement.

During the process of recovering our brothers and sisters, let us not forget that the sheep we are “bringing . . . back to the fold” are “dear to the heart of the Shepherd.”¹ He knows each one of them individually. He loves each one of them with a perfect love. Because they are His, He will guide us, direct us, and inspire us in what to say if we will ask and then listen to the voice of the Spirit. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, many will respond positively as we sincerely and humbly reach out.

May we remember our responsibilities as shepherds so that we can give a good accounting to the Lord regarding our stewardship over the sheep He has assigned to each of us. ■

NOTE

1. “Dear to the Heart of the Shepherd,” *Hymns*, no. 221.



WATCHING OVER THE SHEEP

“We are shepherds watching over Israel. The hungry sheep look up, ready to be fed the bread of life. . . . Our task is to reach out to those who, for whatever reason, are in need of our help.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “True to Our Priesthood Trust,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 57–58.

“In my family I am the youngest by many years. I always feel left out of my siblings’ activities and conversations. What can I do to improve our relationship?”

This challenge can be an opportunity to let your brothers and sisters know that you want to feel more involved in their lives. Maybe they don’t know you feel left out. You could also talk to your parents about this. They will have some good ideas.

Suggest to your siblings some activities that you can do with them, and think of topics that you can talk to them about. Keep in mind their schedules and interests as you plan ways to spend time with them. Listening to them and showing interest in their activities will not only improve your relationship with them but help you learn. They are going through things you might go through in a few years.

Remember how important families are in Heavenly Father’s plan. If you pray for His help, He can inspire you with ideas for improving your relationship with your siblings. Have the courage to act on the promptings you receive.

Talk with Them



In my family, I too am the youngest by many years, but what I found out is that my siblings want to get to know me as much as I want to get to know them. Your siblings would probably be thrilled if you called them up just to talk or invited them to go out for lunch sometime. Tell them what is going on in your life. It will mean a lot to them that you feel comfortable enough to share your thoughts and feelings with them. Also talk to them about spiritual topics. It will help you become closer not only with them but with your Heavenly Father.

Kelsey H., 16, Alberta, Canada

Be a Good Example



I have also experienced this difficult situation. I think the best thing that we can do is be an example to our older brothers and sisters. This way, love and peace can dwell among us. We should tell them how much we love them, and we should try to be united as a family. Sooner or later they will realize how much we love them. I know these things will work out step-by-step.

Ádám B., 16, Gyor-Moson-Sopron, Hungary

Spend Time Together

It's sometimes hard to spend time with older brothers and sisters because of school and other daily activities. But when you can, just go and talk with them, tell them about your day, and see how they are doing. If you are having troubles with something, you can ask for their opinion so that they know you value their ideas. Treat them the way you would want them to treat you. You can play games and spend time together—it helps a lot. You should also tell them how much you love them. But most importantly, pray. Heavenly Father will always help you.

Katherine M., 14, Idaho, USA

Treat Them with Kindness



As the youngest child of my family, sometimes I feel left out of my siblings' activities and conversation, and for me it is hurtful. But when I think of Jesus Christ, I realize that by sharing common values with my family, we can strengthen and encourage each other. Treat everyone with kindness and dignity. Show interest in them, and let them know you care about them.

Joseph M., 16, Leyte, Philippines

Enjoy Every Moment Together



Sometimes I feel forgotten because my sisters have their own activities, just as my parents do. As time has gone by, I have come to understand that they all love me and that it isn't that they don't want to spend time with me but that to everything there is a time. It is important to enjoy every moment you can be with

them, to laugh, be kind, be affectionate, and above all to show them your love. It is important for you to pray and ask our Father to help you to be close to your brothers and sisters. He will hear you and will help you.

Roberto S., 18, Santiago, Chile

Take Time to Talk



I am the youngest of seven children. When I was younger, I felt left out, but I also realized that they do love me, even more than I thought. Perhaps you cannot relate to them right now, but the best times I had with my siblings were talking. I realized that they trusted in me a lot, and it's still that way. In order to talk with them, I would try to help them in their duties, be kind to them, avoid getting angry at them, and team up with them so they could help me. That helped me feel included and loved.

Maria H., 19, Mexico City, Mexico

NEXT QUESTION

“What does it mean to ‘stand as a witness of God at all times’ (Mosiah 18:9)?”

Send your answer by November 15, 2009, to:

Liahona, Questions & Answers, 11/09

50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420 Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Or e-mail: liahona@ldschurch.org

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

Please include the following information and permission in your e-mail or letter:

FULL NAME

BIRTH DATE

WARD (OR BRANCH)

STAKE (OR DISTRICT)

I grant permission to print response and photo:

SIGNATURE

PARENT'S SIGNATURE (IF YOU ARE UNDER 18)

TRY TO LOVE THEM MORE



“It is likely that some of you may not always get along with your brothers and sisters. Remember that even though you squabble and argue with them, they are very important to you. Hopefully, they will be your best friends one day.

“We should treat our families with love not only because it is a commandment to love one another but because this is the way to be happy. If you are having difficulty with someone, the best way to solve the problem is not to try to get the other person to change, but to try to love him or her more.”

Elder Cecil O. Samuelson Jr. of the Seventy, “Friend to Friend,” Friend, June 1996, 6.

Ugly Duckling or Majestic Swan? It's Up to You!



BY ELDER ERROL S. PHIPPEN

Served as an Area Seventy from 2004 to 2009

As a young child, I remember my mother reading to me the story “The Ugly Duckling,” by Hans Christian Andersen. Maybe it was because I was shy and felt like I didn’t fit in, but the memory and the moral of that story have always remained with me.

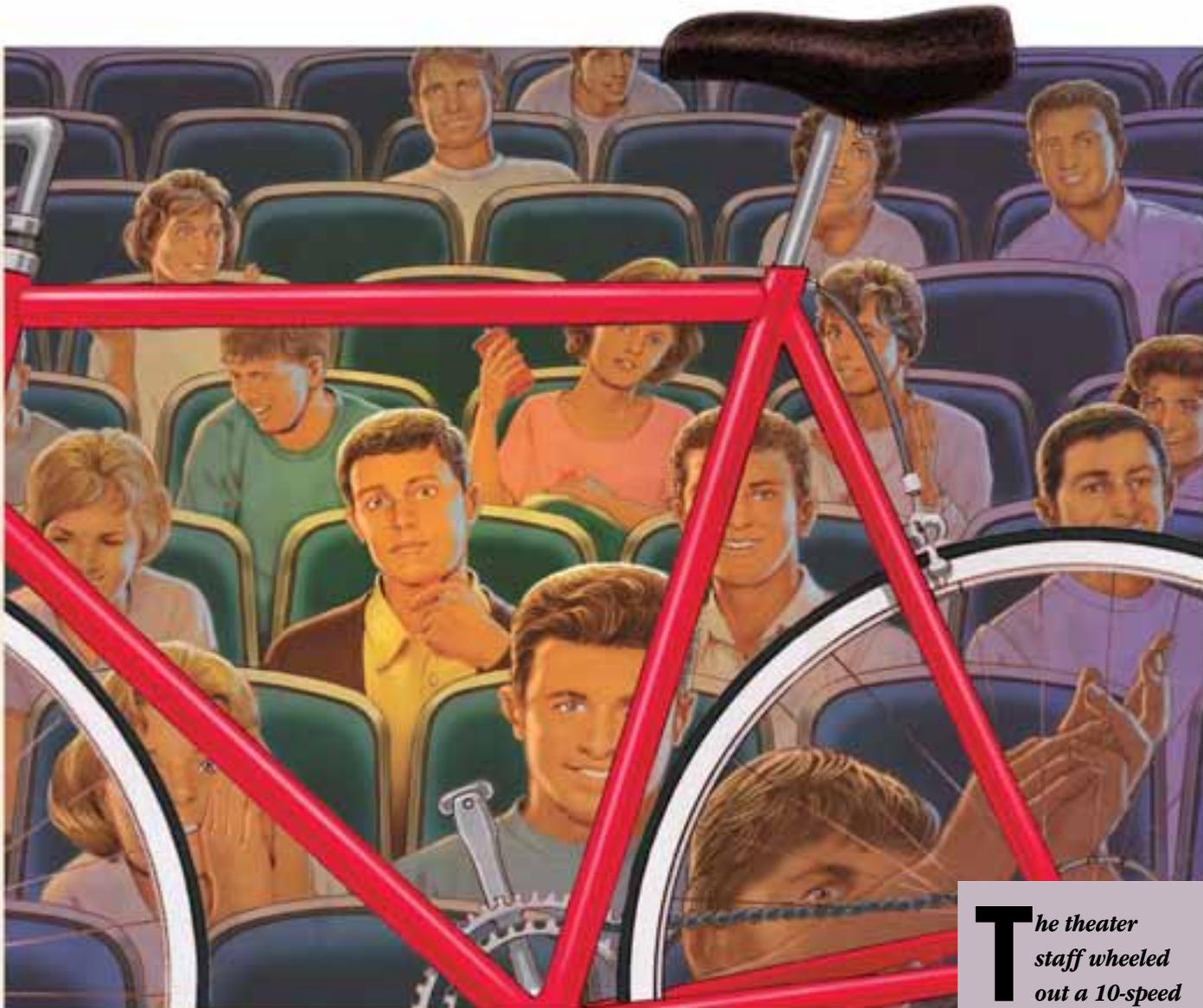
In the version that I remember, a mother duck waits patiently for her eggs to hatch into little ducklings. Before long, the fuzzy, yellow ducklings emerge to the delight of the mother duck. However, there is one slightly larger egg that still has not hatched. The mother and her ducklings wait and watch. When the egg finally cracks open, the yellow ducklings notice that this new member of the family looks different. They gather around him and declare to their mother and father, “He’s not like us. He’s ugly.” They leave him alone in the nest and swim away. The ugly duckling wanders away from the nest and tries to hide.

Every encounter he has is negative and discouraging. He would often think to himself, “Everyone hates me because I’m ugly.”

Then a miracle takes place in his life. He sees others who look and act just like he does! He becomes friends with them, and they take him to their mother and ask,

You are a chosen son or daughter of God. Choose to live up to the divine potential that lies within you.





The theater staff wheeled out a 10-speed bicycle. It was red, it was beautiful, and they were going to give it away. Oh, how I wanted that bicycle!

“Mother, Mother, we’ve found a little brother! Can he stay with us forever?” The beautiful, graceful swan mother folds her white wing around the ugly duckling and says to him in a gentle voice, “You’re not a duckling at all! You are a little swan, and someday you will be the king of the pond.”

I loved hearing this story as a child. I didn’t realize that the lessons I learned from it would help me through my difficult teenage years. I was baptized a member of the Church when I was eight, but gradually my family became less active.

In the small town in Idaho where I grew up, there was a movie theater that featured

an afternoon matinee every Saturday. I would always go with two or three of my friends. The theater would show a short movie about sports and another about current events. The main feature was usually a cowboy movie with lots of action.

One Saturday during intermission, the staff wheeled out a 10-speed bicycle. It was red, it was beautiful, and they were going to give it away to the person in the audience who had the winning ticket stub! Oh, how I wanted that bicycle!

The announcer reached into the container and pulled out a ticket. As he read the number on the ticket, I discovered that I had



I discovered that I had the winning ticket. Yet I didn't move or say anything. I was too shy and embarrassed.

the winning ticket. Yet I didn't move or say anything. I was too shy and embarrassed. I did not have enough confidence in myself to stand and let everyone know that I had the winning ticket. He announced the winning number two more times, and each time I held the ticket down so that no one could see it. Finally, the announcer read another number. One of the friends I came to the movie with happened to have the new number. He jumped up, screamed, and ran to the stage to claim his bicycle. That bicycle could have been mine!

As I walked home alone from the movies that Saturday, I thought of the story of the ugly duckling. I was feeling a lot like that

little swan. I felt like I was wandering around in the woods trying to hide and that no one liked me. I didn't realize who I was or what I could become. By the time I arrived home, I knew something had to change. I remember thinking, "It's time to grow up. That will never happen to me again."

I began to discover that there were others around me who loved and cared about me. My ward bishopric took an interest in me, as did my stake president, who lived just down the street from me. They taught me the gospel. They bore their testimonies to me of the reality of the Savior and His precious Atonement and what it could do for me. They read to me repeatedly the story of Joseph Smith and his

vision in the Sacred Grove. From that experience I have developed the wonderful habit of reading Joseph Smith—History every week. By doing so, I know that I can have the strength to overcome anything placed before me that week.

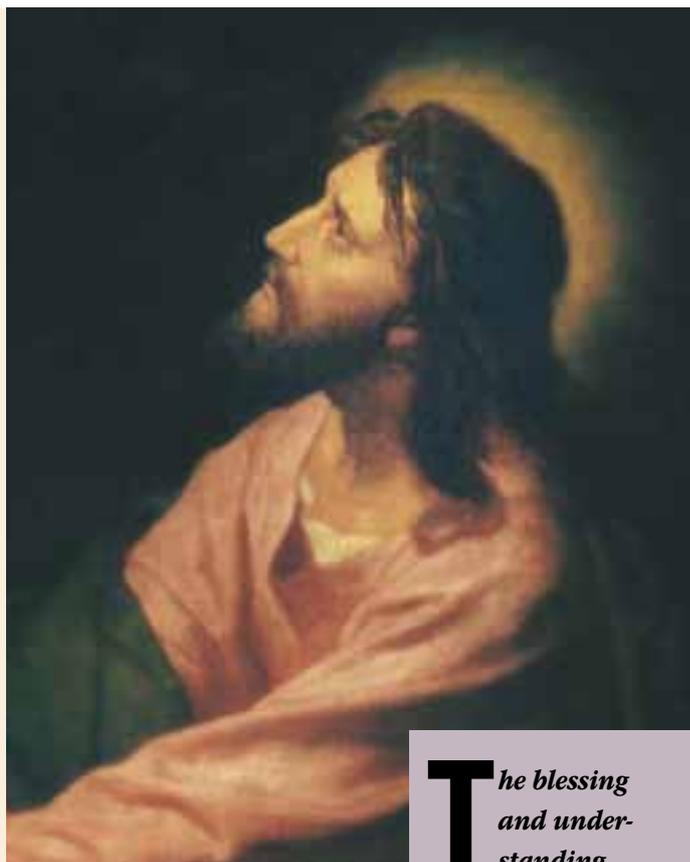
At that time in my life, when I needed someone so badly, my Heavenly Father blessed me. He knew who I was, and He sent His servants to help me discover that for myself. They wrapped their arms around me and told me by their actions that I wasn't an ugly duckling at all and that if I was worthy and kept the commandments of God, I could become "the king of the pond." The blessing and understanding of the Atonement began to give me added strength and confidence.

When I reached the age of 16, these good men encouraged me to receive a patriarchal blessing. After I received my recommend, I got on my old bike and rode several miles to the patriarch's home. He explained once again what a patriarchal blessing is and how it would bless my life. He laid his hands on my head. After that experience, my life was never the same.

I accepted a mission call to Scotland and had a wonderful experience. A few weeks after I returned home, I met my future wife at a Church meeting. We dated, and I proposed marriage. We were married in the Salt Lake Temple.

One sentence in my patriarchal blessing indicates that I would be permitted to live in mortality with an angel. At the time the patriarch gave me that blessing, I didn't know what an angel was, let alone the meaning of the phrase. As I left the temple the day my wife and I were sealed, I knew what it meant. She has been the light of my life. Thanks to her, I have been permitted to live in an environment of light. She has brought joy and happiness to our 8 children, 25 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren. My children have all come to call her blessed. I give thanks to God for the blessings of the gospel and the eternal blessings of the covenants and ordinances of the holy temple.

Satan would have us believe that we are ugly ducklings with no chance of becoming like our Heavenly Father and His holy Son. I bear witness that God loves each of us in special ways. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004)



The blessing and understanding of the Atonement began to give me added strength and confidence.

of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said so often, "God's personal shaping influence is felt in the details of our lives."¹ We are His children. I have come to know that we can rise above our current environment and become "kings and queens of the pond" by following the gospel commandments.

I know something else. I know who you are and where you came from. The revelations remind us of our faithfulness in the premortal life (see Revelation 12:7–11; D&C 138:56; Abraham 3:22–23). As we tie our testimonies to that great truth, each day becomes a wonderful blessing for each of us.

Stay on the Lord's side of the line. If He can take care of a bashful, shy boy like me, He will take care of you now and in the future. You are a chosen son or daughter of God. Choose to live up to the divine potential that lies within you. ■

NOTE

1. Neal A. Maxwell, "Becoming a Disciple," *Ensign*, June 1996, 17.

Begin with Prayer

*Searching for answers?
These teens in Ottawa, Canada,
say prayer is the place to start.*



Above: Bridgitte Leger, Jenni Holt, Dawson Lybbert, Dayna Conway, Rebekah Wagoner, and Alexander Richer-Brule, along with other youth from the Ottawa Ontario Stake (left), know that help from Heavenly Father is just a prayer away.

BY JANET THOMAS
Church Magazines

When 15-year-old Jenni tells about having a prayer answered, she starts with an apology. She is sorry to admit that she hadn't been praying regularly for almost a year. Things in her life had not been going well—not at school, not with her friends, not even at church.

One night, Jenni explains, she wanted to watch a movie. She bent down to look at the movies on the lowest bookshelf when she caught sight of a photo of her uncle who had tragically passed away not too long before. Suddenly, the weight of everything she was worried about made her want to cry. "I just knew in that instant that I had to pray," says Jenni. She knelt where she was and prayed.

Jenni describes receiving her answer: "As soon as I was done, I had the answers to my questions. I felt that everything was all right again. Everything is going to be OK. Everything with my uncle is OK. I realized that I love school and my friends. As soon as I finished praying, I knew that I had to go to church because it is for me. It really hit me, and I felt so comfortable and so warm. I know my Heavenly Father loves me and He will help me through things."

For Jenni, this prayer was one she had been wanting to say but somehow couldn't. Now, even thinking about it, she gets that same feeling of comfort over again and the same assurance that her answer was from the Lord.

Jenni Holt is from Ottawa, Canada's beautiful capital city built on the wooded banks of the Ottawa River. She and friends from the Ottawa Ontario Stake talked with Church magazines about how prayer affects their lives.

Where Do Answers Come From?

One of the most interesting things the Ottawa teens discussed was how their prayers were answered. First, Susan Brook said, "If you want an answer, you have to listen for it."

Susan said her answers sometimes come by reading the scriptures. She had a good example: "One day, I was just really tired, and I was being mean to everyone. I didn't want to talk. I remember reading in the scriptures, I don't even remember where, and it said, 'Be humble.' It hit me. That's my answer." (See D&C 112:10.)

Ariana Keith listens carefully at church. "I think many of our prayers are answered by speakers at church," she said. "There was a time when I wanted my patriarchal blessing. Then the week before I was scheduled to get it, our stake patriarch actually came to our ward and spoke. I had been praying about it so hard, and hearing him was great."

Mackenzie Loftus said her prayers are often answered through her family. She prayed about a family decision, and "I felt the



Above, from top: Fred King and Ronan Filamont agree that the sacrament prayer is sacred and should be said with reverence. Kyffin de Souza is grateful for family prayers.

Youth in Ottawa pray for comfort during tough times, for help with schoolwork and friends, and for blessings they desire. They know that Heavenly Father answers their prayers. “Sometimes you don’t get the answer you expect,” says Dawson Lybbert, “but you’ll get the answer you need.”



Above: Matt Larson reads a scripture tacked on his wall before he prays, and Nick Moolenbeck says prayer requires effort.

Spirit right away, knowing the decision we were making was the right thing.”

Sometimes the answer literally walks right up to you. When Thomas Francis and his family moved to Ottawa, he needed to make new friends at a new school. He prayed to find good friends. “One day,” said Thomas, “this person in my class comes up to me and says, ‘You want to come and meet my friends?’ Ever since then, we’ve been friends. It helped me a lot.”

Dawson Lybbert had something quite important to say about answers to prayers. He said, “Sometimes you don’t get the answer you expect, but you’ll get the answer you need.” He said sometimes you can’t really see it right away, but you can when you look back.

Someone To Talk To

Several of the teens said how nice it is to have a family that prays together. Kyffin de Souza especially likes knowing that her family prays together each evening. “We have sort of a schedule to take turns. I feel the Spirit, and I know that if I am away from home, they are praying for me to be safe.”

Another teen loves praying with her parents every morning. “I go to their room, and we pray,” she said. “I have a testimony that the Holy Ghost is with me, and if I ever need His help, I will ask Heavenly Father for it.”

Her friend Ruth Decady said, “It’s really important that when we say our prayers, we know that Heavenly Father is listening. There is someone there for you.”

Katie Cameron loves how prayer makes her feel. “When I talk to the Lord, it feels like someone is actually wanting to talk to me. I know I can tell Him anything.”

Prayers Given for Others

The young men—especially those of priest age like Ronan Filamont, Fred King, and Dawson and Davin Lybbert—spoke about the significance and sacred duty of giving the sacrament prayers for the members of their wards and branches.

Dawson said, “Praying over the sacrament makes you think more clearly about its significance. I have this priesthood authority, and I feel that I can’t abuse it.”

Fred remembers saying the sacrament

prayer when he was first ordained a priest: “It was hard at first, and I kept making mistakes. Once I had to start over again and again. But the Spirit whispered to me that it didn’t matter how many times I had to try; I would eventually get it right. It was a nice feeling.”

Prayer Takes Preparation

Several of the teens talked about the important things they have to do to prepare to pray. Matt Larson has a scripture reference tacked to the wall of his bedroom, Doctrine and Covenants 78:19: “He who receiveth all things with thankfulness shall be made glorious; and the things of this earth shall be added unto him, even an hundred fold, yea, more.” It reminds him to be grateful for the things the Lord has given to him. He knows gratitude needs to be part of his prayers.

Nick Moolenbeck said, “Prayer doesn’t work if I just ask without giving serious thought and putting my heart and soul into it.”

The Miraculous Power of Prayer

Sierra Lybbert has a great story about prayer. When she was two, a horse stepped on her hand. Her thumb was severed, and several fingers split open. Her parents rushed her from one hospital to another to find a surgeon willing to take on the seemingly impossible repair. She said, “One doctor told my parents that the surgeon didn’t have a prayer of being successful. My mom told him that the surgeon didn’t have one prayer with him—he had many. My mother had called the temple to add my name to the prayer roll.”

Now, at 13, Sierra has a functioning hand. Her thumb works just fine, and she raised it for a few other girls from her ward to see. They had never really heard the story. All they could see on Sierra’s hand was a thin, hardly noticeable scar encircling the base of her thumb. The result seemed truly amazing.

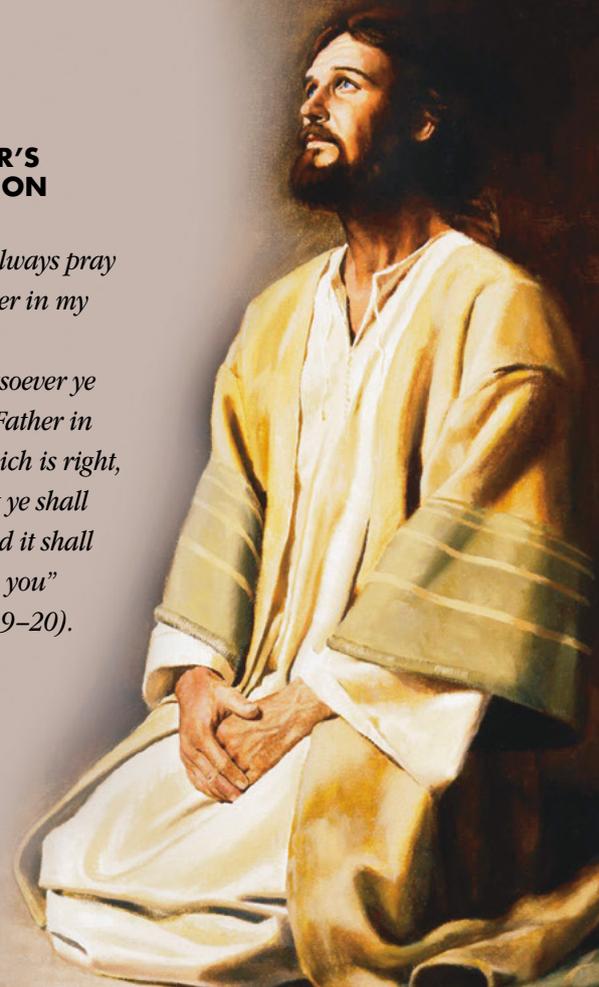
Sierra said, “It makes me feel happy to know what prayer can do for me. It is a wonderful thing in my life.”

Everyone seemed to agree with Kale Loftus when he said, “Prayer is a great habit to acquire.” ■

THE SAVIOR’S TEACHING ON PRAYER

“Ye must always pray unto the Father in my name;

“And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you”
(3 Nephi 18:19–20).



Katie Cameron, Carolyn Albers, and Sierra Lybbert love the feeling they get when they pray.

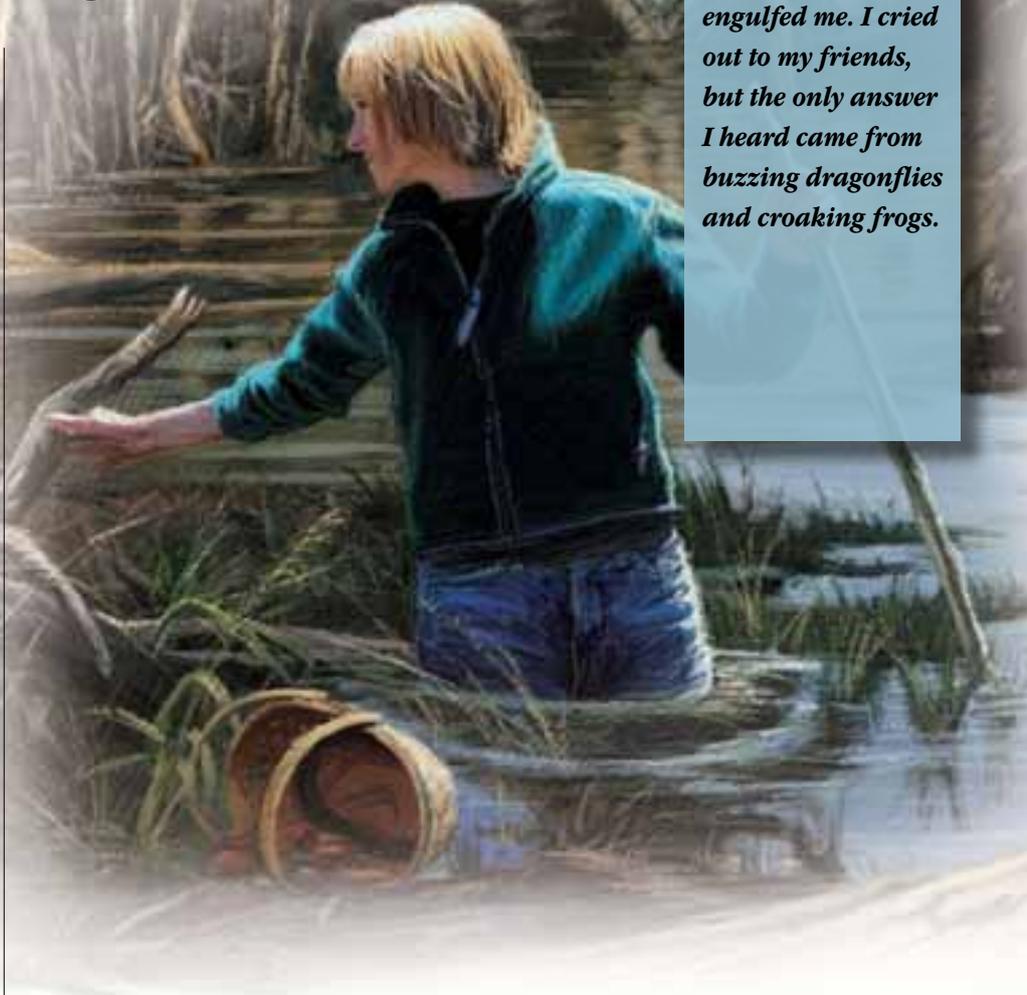
Grabbing the Strong Roots

When I was a schoolgirl in Russia, I read a scary story about two boys who encountered a bear in a forest. Years later, after I had become a teacher, some friends asked me to join them on a trip to collect mushrooms. The forest still scared me, but I agreed to go with them.

Entering the forest, I grabbed a wooden stick so I could defend myself in case I ran into a bear. My friends soon found the brown mushrooms they were looking for. I, on the other hand, was looking for mushrooms with bright red tops, so I started off in a different direction. Before I knew it, I was alone.

While I was searching, I slipped and fell. My mushroom basket flew into the air, but I held tight to my stick. When I tried to get up, I noticed that the ground was muddy and sticky. To my horror, I realized that I had wandered into a swamp! My rubber boots quickly filled with water, and I began to sink. I tried to move my legs, but instead of freeing myself, I was pulled deeper. When the mud reached my waist, deep fear engulfed me.

I cried out to my friends, but the only answer I heard came from buzzing dragonflies and croaking frogs. As I began to weep, I suddenly remembered my mother. Whenever she was in a bad situation, she prayed. She often invited me to pray, but I always refused,



When the mud reached my waist, deep fear engulfed me. I cried out to my friends, but the only answer I heard came from buzzing dragonflies and croaking frogs.

answering, "There is no God."

But in my watery soon-to-be grave, there was nothing else I could do but pray and call upon God for help. "If You live, please help me!" I cried.

Almost immediately I heard a kind voice tell me, "Believe and be not afraid. Grab the strong tree root."

As I looked around, I saw a big tree root behind me. Using my stick, I was able to latch onto it. Something then gave me the power to pull myself out of the swamp.

Covered with mud, I fell to the ground and thanked God for answering my prayer. I now believed that He lived. I had felt His presence and heard His voice, and He had given me power to pull myself free.

A short time later, when the full-time missionaries taught me that the Prophet Joseph Smith had received an answer to his prayer in the Sacred Grove, I believed them. After all, God had answered my prayer in a forest. I latched onto the strong roots of

the gospel, was baptized soon thereafter, and serve today in the Gyumri Branch in Armenia.

I know Heavenly Father loves all of His children, and I'm grateful to be a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I'm also grateful for the many other blessings I have received from Heavenly Father, especially for His answer to an atheist's prayer in the forest many years ago. ■

Melsida Hakobyan, Armenia

We're Here to See the Temple

One autumn day during my shift as a worker in the Salt Lake Temple, a young man and his friends, clearly not dressed for temple worship, arrived.

"We're here to see the temple," the young man said.

"Do you have a recommend?" I asked.

The young man thought for a moment. Then he said, "Yes. My mother has a Mormon friend in Minnesota. She recommended that we come see the temple."

I felt impressed to pull the young people aside and talk to them. The young man's name was Lars. I explained to him that not only *could* he come to the temple but also that Heavenly Father *wanted* him to come. I told Lars that he first had to prepare, and I explained how.

At the time, I had been active

in the Church only a short while. I had served a mission but later left the Church after getting caught up in the entertainment industry and using drugs and alcohol. I thought my family would be impressed with my career and wealth, but my mother didn't care about any of that. Instead, she always put my name on the temple prayer roll, which angered me.

The woman I married had also left the Church. By the time our eight-year-old daughter, Tori, began asking questions about Jesus Christ, we had bottomed out spiritually. Despite my missionary service, I couldn't remember anything about the Savior.

"There are people who are qualified to teach you about Jesus," I told Tori. "Why don't you talk to them?"

A few days later, two sister missionaries knocked on our door. Tori invited them in and began taking the discussions. Eavesdropping from another room, I heard the sisters teaching doctrines that I recognized to be true.

"Would you like to be baptized?" one of the sisters asked Tori after the third discussion.

"Yes," she replied.

"Will your dad baptize you?"

I had not been to church for 20 years, but I knew my life was about to change. I sat in on the last few discussions, we started attending church, and my wife and I met with the bishop. As I repented, I decided that I must do everything possible to compensate for the years I had



lost. I changed careers, magnified my Church callings, was sealed to my wife and daughter, and became a temple worker. That's how I knew that a curious group of young people could become temple worthy.

The following spring, Lars wrote me a letter, thanking me for explaining the real meaning of a temple recommend. "I *did* learn more about a temple recommend," he wrote. "Actually, I was baptized and received a recommend of my own last January!" My eyes filled with tears as I looked at the photograph he had enclosed of himself in his white baptismal clothes and of the missionaries who had taught him.

My journey back to the temple was remarkable, and learning of Lars's journey was a wonderful blessing that reminded me how we can all touch lives for good. ■

Rees Bandley, Utah, USA

Grandma's Baptism

On June 30, 2001, I was making a birthday cake for my daughter when the phone rang. It was my sister in Brazil, informing me that our grandmother had passed away.

The news was sad, but I was not sad. After all, my dear grandmother had lived to be nearly 102. I was happy that she was

free of her aged, mortal body and had gone to the spirit world.

Then I started thinking about the coincidence of her death occurring on my daughter's birthday, and I wondered if there was some significance in the timing. As the days passed, I discovered what it was: it would be easy for me to remember to be baptized for my grandmother a year after her passing. I assumed this responsibility, knowing that I had to wait just until my daughter's next birthday.

The year passed quickly. I did not have the opportunity to go to the temple on the exact anniversary

of my grandmother's death, however, because I lived in Portugal and attended the Madrid Spain Temple. But hardly a day went by that I did not think about my responsibility to be baptized for Grandma Josefina.

It was not until October 2002 that we were able to go to the temple. My husband and I went along with our son, Mathew, who was going to receive his endowment in preparation for his mission. I was happy to be going to the temple, and I thought I might feel something special when I was baptized in behalf of my grandmother.

My husband performed the baptism, but I didn't feel anything. My son performed the confirmation, but again, nothing. My anxiety over not feeling anything passed, and I was just glad that the ordinances had been performed for my grandmother.

After the endowment, we went to the sealing room to have Grandma sealed to her parents. When we knelt across the altar to perform the ordinance and the sealer began to speak,

I felt as if a shock had started at my head and passed through my body. It is difficult to describe, but at that burning moment, I was certain that Grandma Josefina rejoiced in being sealed to her parents. ■

*Marilena Kretly Pretel Busto,
São Paulo, Brazil*





decided that helping at a mission would be better than sitting at home feeling lonely and bitter. A few days later I found myself placing hot mashed potatoes on the plates of hungry people.

Lifting Others and Myself

It was Thanksgiving of 1990. I had just gone through a difficult divorce, and I was a first-year law student in an unfamiliar city. My children were going to be at their father's house for the holiday, and for the first time in my life, I would be alone on Thanksgiving.

At first I wanted to feel sorry for myself and have a good cry. But then I began to count my blessings. I had two beautiful children, a nice house, an opportunity to gain knowledge, and the gospel of Jesus Christ to guide my life. I truly had been blessed with many things.

As Thanksgiving approached, I discovered that a group of law students had planned to go to a local mission to help serve an early Thanksgiving dinner to the homeless. I decided that helping at the

mission would be better than sitting at home feeling lonely and bitter, so I joined my fellow students.

A few days later I found myself placing hot mashed potatoes on the plates of hungry, grateful, life-tossed people. The tears that welled up in my eyes were not for the sadness I felt for myself; rather, they were tears of love for all of God's children, no matter their circumstances.

Thanksgiving wouldn't have been Thanksgiving without a turkey in the oven. But a 14-pound (6-kg) turkey would be too much for me, so I invited several students who were from other countries and faraway states to join me. I wanted to share a traditional American Thanksgiving dinner, but I invited them to contribute. I asked each to bring a favorite dish from home.

Our Thanksgiving dinner turned out to be a delightful and memorable meal—egg rolls and all.

King Benjamin declared, "Behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17).

I learned wisdom that Thanksgiving Day. By offering service when it was easier to sit around and mope, I found joy. Service is the key to happiness not only during the holidays, when it is easy to get caught up in what is missing from our lives, but also during any season. No matter what our situation, we can always find someone to help. By lifting our brothers and sisters, we also lift ourselves. ■

Cathy Whitaker Marshall, Washington, USA

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

These teaching suggestions are provided to give you some ideas. You can tailor them to your family.

“Blessings of the Temple,” p. 12: Show a picture of a temple. Place a family picture across the room from the picture of the temple. As you summarize the article, move the family picture closer to the temple. Ask



family members how they feel when the family arrives at the temple. Read Doctrine and Covenants 109:7–23,

looking for additional ways to prepare for the temple and the blessings that come through temple attendance. (See also Silvia H. Allred’s talk, “Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants,” from the October 2008 general conference.)

“Me? A Shepherd in Israel?”

p. 30: Read the section “Leading Them Back,” and discuss how we can be shepherds to others. As an activity for young children, take turns hiding and searching for each other like a shepherd searching for lost sheep. Think of people you can help bring back “into the fold.” Conclude by praying for guidance on how to help them. (See also Elder Eduardo Gavarret’s talk, “Returning Home,” from the October 2008 general conference.)

“Begin with Prayer,” p. 40:

Summarize the main points from the article. Reread the first paragraph of the section “Someone To Talk To.” Ask family members to share times when they were strengthened by family prayer. To emphasize the importance of praying for others, consider reading the last

three paragraphs of Elder David A. Bednar’s talk, “Pray Always,” from the October 2008 general conference.

“The Tortilla Miracle,” p. F6: Read the story, and discuss the challenges Raoul’s family faced as they prepared to go to the temple. Consider making tortillas as a family or acting out the steps of making tortillas, from planting the corn to selling the tortillas to the tourists. Conclude by reading Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander’s quote.

APPLY THE GOSPEL



“It is not difficult to take the principles of the everlasting word and apply them to our specific needs. The abstract truth must live in the lives of men if they are to bear fruit.”

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, in Teaching, No Greater Call (1999), 9–10.

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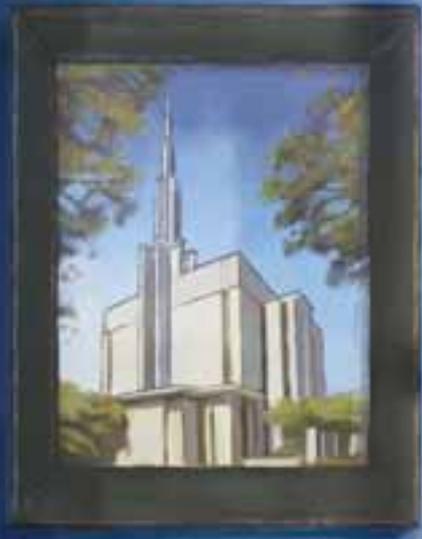
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CALL FOR ARTICLES

What experiences have helped you come to know the Savior better? How have you gained a greater appreciation for and understanding of repentance, forgiveness, the Atonement, the sacrament, or other aspects of the Savior’s ministry and mission? Please send a description of your experiences and what you learned from them to liahona@ldschurch.org.

the Friend



A Prophet's Love

BY PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Some years ago, President Thomas S. Monson came to a regional conference in Hamburg, Germany, and it was my honor to accompany him.

President Monson asked about Brother Michael Panitsch, a former stake president who had been one of the stalwart pioneers of the Church in Germany. I told him that Brother Panitsch was seriously ill, that he was bedridden and unable to attend our meetings.

President Monson asked if we could pay him a visit.

I knew that shortly before his trip to Hamburg, President Monson had undergone foot surgery and that he could not walk without pain. I explained that Brother Panitsch lived on the fifth floor of a building with no elevators. We would

have to climb the stairs to see him.

But President Monson insisted. And so we went.

I remember how difficult it was for President Monson to climb those stairs. He could take only a few at a time before needing to stop and rest. He never uttered a word of complaint, and he would not turn back. Because the building had high ceilings, the stairs seemed to go on forever, but President Monson cheerfully persevered until we arrived at the apartment of Brother Panitsch on the fifth floor.

Once there, we had a wonderful visit. President Monson thanked him for his life of dedicated service and

cheered him with a smile. Before we left, he gave him a wonderful priesthood blessing.

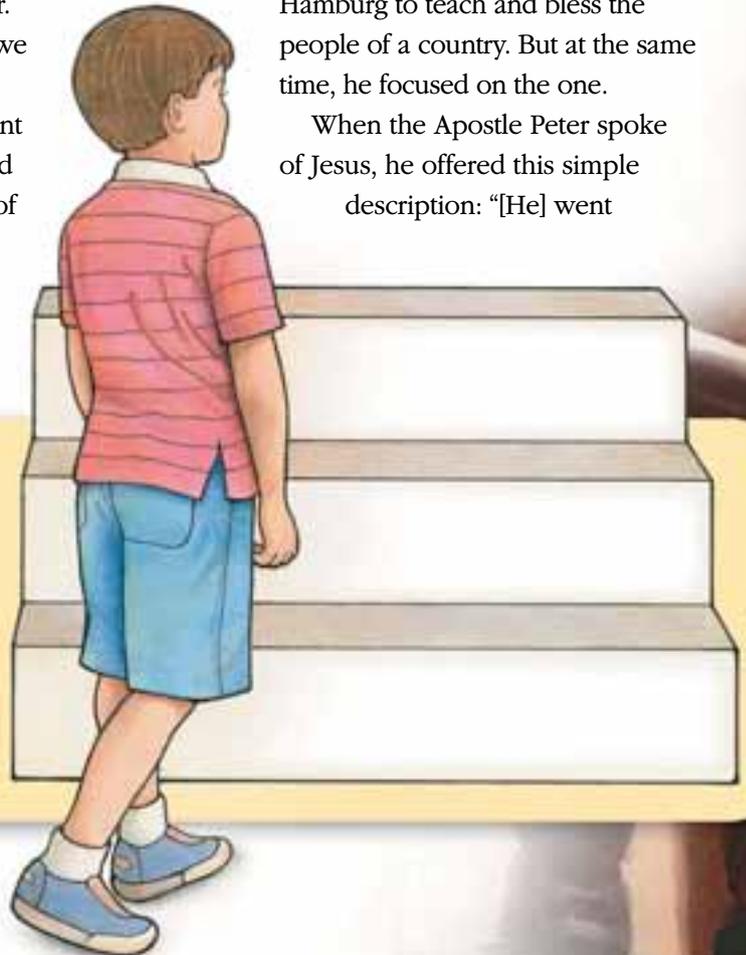
President Monson could have chosen to rest between our long meetings. He could have asked to see some of the beautiful sights of Hamburg. I have often thought of how remarkable it was that of all the sights in that city, the one he wanted to see more than any other was a feeble and ailing member of the Church.

President Monson came to Hamburg to teach and bless the people of a country. But at the same time, he focused on the one.

When the Apostle Peter spoke of Jesus, he offered this simple description: "[He] went

CLIMBING THE STAIRS

President Monson had to walk up a lot of stairs to help Brother Panitsch. Think of three different things you can do to help someone, especially at home. Draw a picture or write on each stair step to help you remember your ideas.



LEFT AND TOP: ILLUSTRATIONS BY BETH M. WHITTAKER; RIGHT: ILLUSTRATION BY SAM LAWICK

ER SPRICHT DEUTSCH ("HE SPEAKS GERMAN")



President Uchtdorf is the first person from Germany to serve in the First Presidency. When he was a child, he spoke German. Now when he speaks in general conference, he speaks English. Look at the sentences at right from a talk President Uchtdorf gave in general conference in April 2008. See if you can translate the German words into your own language.

about doing good" (Acts 10:38). The same can be said of the man we sustain as the prophet of God. ●

From an April 2008 general conference address.

"I rejoice to have the great privilege of calling myself a member of *die Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der Letzten Tage* _____."

"I pray that God will grant me *Kraft* _____ and an understanding *Herz* _____ to magnify this sacred calling."

"I feel so privileged to work closely with *Präsident* _____ Monson. . . . He is the *Prophet Gottes* _____."



THE FAMILY

A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

WE, THE FIRST PRESIDENCY and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children.

ALL HUMAN BEINGS—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.

IN THE PREMORTAL REALM, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshipped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize their divine destiny as heirs of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. 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 FIRST COMMANDMENT that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

WE DECLARE the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God's eternal plan.

HUSBAND AND WIFE have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. "Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness,

to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, and to teach them to love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God, and be law-abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.

THE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed.

WE WARN that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

WE CALL UPON responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.

This proclamation was read by President Gordon B. Hinckley as part of his message at the General Relief Society Meeting held September 23, 1995, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

We Believe the Family Is Ordained of God

“The family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World”).

BY CHERYL ESPLIN



Amalickiah was a wicked man. He promised the Nephites many things if they would make him the king. Many people believed him and turned away from righteousness.

Moroni was the captain over the Nephite armies. He was righteous and believed in Jesus Christ. When Moroni heard that many people were being led away by Amalickiah, Moroni became angry with him. He knew the people were in danger of losing their freedom.

Moroni tore off a piece of his coat and wrote on it, “In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children” (Alma 46:12). He fastened the fabric to the end of a pole and called it the title of liberty. Then he prayed for the people and visited them, waving the title of liberty and calling on the Nephites to join him in protecting their freedom. (See Alma 46:1–21.)

You live in a day when there are people like Amalickiah who want to lead us away from following Heavenly Father’s plan. One of the most important parts of that plan is families.

Heavenly Father wants members of the Church to understand His plan for families. The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” to declare what we believe about families. Like the title of liberty, the proclamation can encourage us to remember and explain what we believe.

Activity

Remove page F4, and mount it on heavier paper. Hang the proclamation in a place where your family



can see it and remember the importance of strengthening each other.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” is modern-day revelation. Have the children listen for how many times they hear the words “reveal” or “revealed” as they repeat the ninth article of faith together. Teach that

God continues to reveal His will to His children. This communication from God is called revelation. Give a copy of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” to each child, and explain that the proclamation is revelation given in our day through God’s chosen servants. Provide each class with a different sentence or phrase from the proclamation with some words missing. Have them work together to fill in the blanks with the correct words. For example: “The ____ is ____ to the Creator’s ____ for the eternal destiny of His children.” Invite each class to stand and recite their completed phrase or sentence. Sing the first verse of “The Family Is of God” (Liahona, Oct. 2008, F12–F13). Emphasize that the proclamation on the family is revelation from God and that we need to understand and live its teachings. Gather the copies of the proclamation; you will use them again in week three.

2. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” teaches the importance of marriage. Invite a few members of the ward or branch approved by the bishop or branch president to participate in a panel discussion on the importance of marriage (see “Panel Discussions,” Teaching, No Greater Call [1999], 175–76). Ahead of time, give them the questions you will ask. Examples: How has Heavenly Father blessed you and your spouse? Could you share a story about a gospel teaching that has helped you be a good wife (or husband)? What can children do now to prepare for being married someday? You may want to suggest that the participants review “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” Let the children take turns choosing and reading a question. Have the panel members volunteer their answers. Bear testimony of the importance of marriage in Heavenly Father’s plan. ●

The Tortilla Miracle

“Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of . . . God” (2 Nephi 12:3).

BY JANE McBRIDE CHOATE

Based on a true story

Two young men dressed in white shirts and ties came to our home in Honduras. “We are from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” they said.

Mama welcomed them in. The missionaries taught our family about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Though I was only nine, I felt the truth of their words in my heart.

“What must we do to become members of Christ’s Church?” Papa asked.

“Be baptized,” one of the elders said.

Mama, Papa, and I were baptized one month later. My brother, Tomas, who was six years old, would be baptized in two years.

While teaching us more about the gospel, the elders explained how families could be sealed together in the temple.

The closest temple was in Guatemala, many kilometers away. We would need to pay for a two-day bus ride and two nights’ lodging in the city. We had no money for such a trip, but Mama and Papa refused to let that stop us from attending the temple.

Every year our family grew corn. We used it to make tortillas to sell to travelers who passed through our village.

Mama pulled out a paper and pencil. She added up some numbers and said, “We must sell 2,500 tortillas to pay for our trip.”

My eyes widened. That was so many tortillas! “We have never sold so many tortillas,” I said.

Mama didn’t look worried. “The Lord will provide,” she said. “Raoul, you and Tomas must help your papa harvest the corn,” Mama told me.

Tomas and I helped Papa harvest the corn. Every day, Mama ground it, made the dough, and fried it. Tomas and I took the tortillas to the village.

“A bus of tourists came today,” I told Mama when we returned home the first day. “We sold many tortillas.”

“It is a miracle,” Mama said.

Every day we sold more tortillas. Within a few months we had saved the money we needed to make the journey to Guatemala. But I was still worried. I had heard stories about robbers who stopped buses passing through the jungle.

They took all the passengers’ valuables.

“What about the robbers?” I asked.

“The Lord will protect us,” Mama said. Then she

asked, “Raoul, do you believe in the gospel?”

“Yes.”

“Then you know that we must do all in our power to follow the Lord and His prophets.”

One year after we were baptized, my family was ready to make the trip to the temple. We rode to Guatemala City in a bus. I will never forget the Spirit I felt as my family was sealed together for time and eternity.

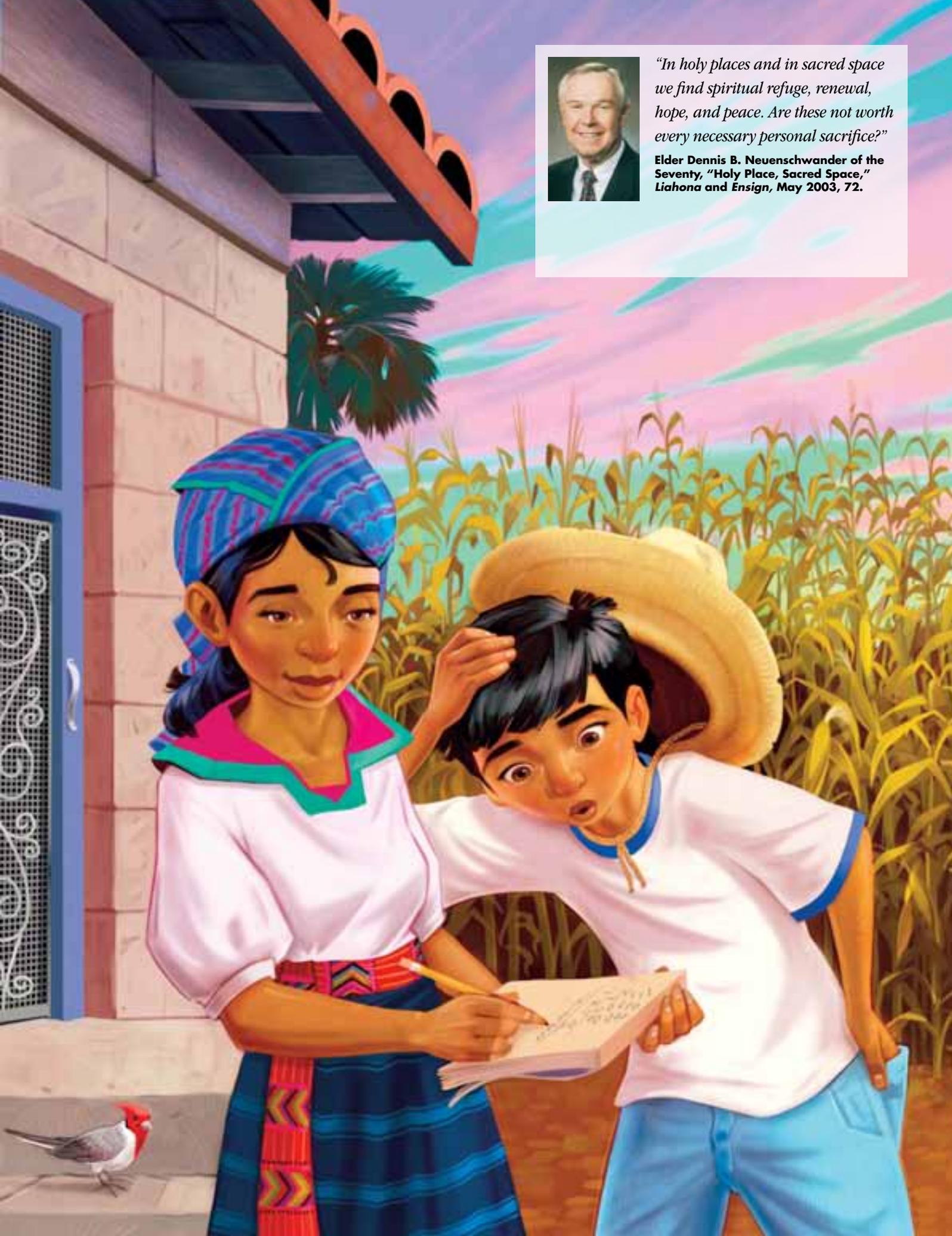
That night, as I knelt to say my prayers, I thanked Heavenly Father for the blessings of the temple. ●





"In holy places and in sacred space we find spiritual refuge, renewal, hope, and peace. Are these not worth every necessary personal sacrifice?"

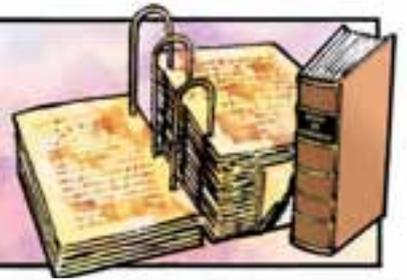
Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander of the Seventy, "Holy Place, Sacred Space," Liahona and Ensign, May 2003, 72.





FROM THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

A Generous Man



After moving to Nauvoo, Illinois, Joseph and Emma Smith built the Red Brick Store. It served as Joseph's office and as a business to support his family.

I'll take 20 pounds of flour, Emma.

Do you need anything else?

James had recently moved from England to Nauvoo with his sister and her husband, Henry. James was not a member of the Church.

We've searched for work all day, Henry. I don't think we're going to find anything.

Let's ask the Prophet for help.

James had never met Joseph Smith or been near him before. He felt an overwhelming spirit just by looking at him.

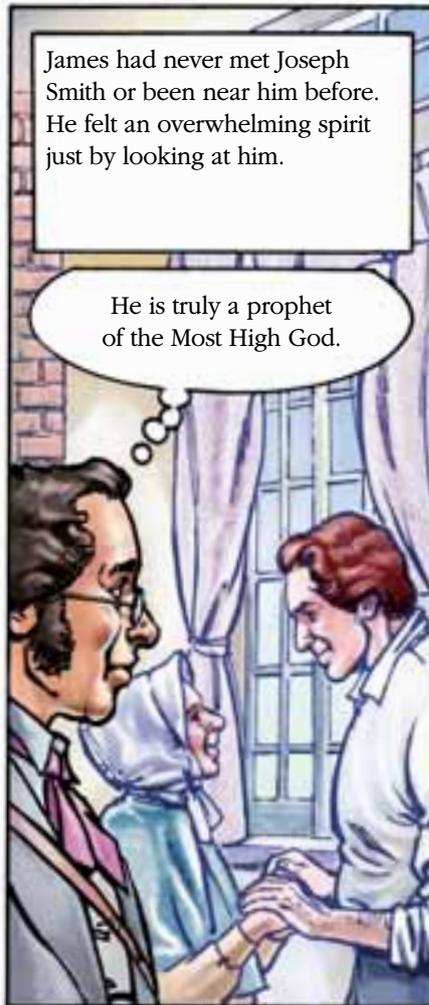
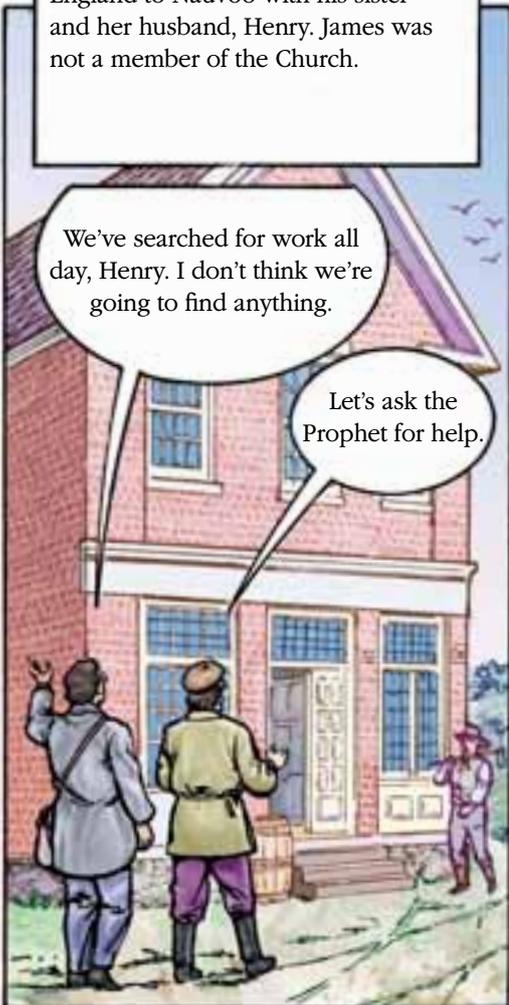
He is truly a prophet of the Most High God.

Brethren, how can I help you today?

Mr. Smith, have you any employment?

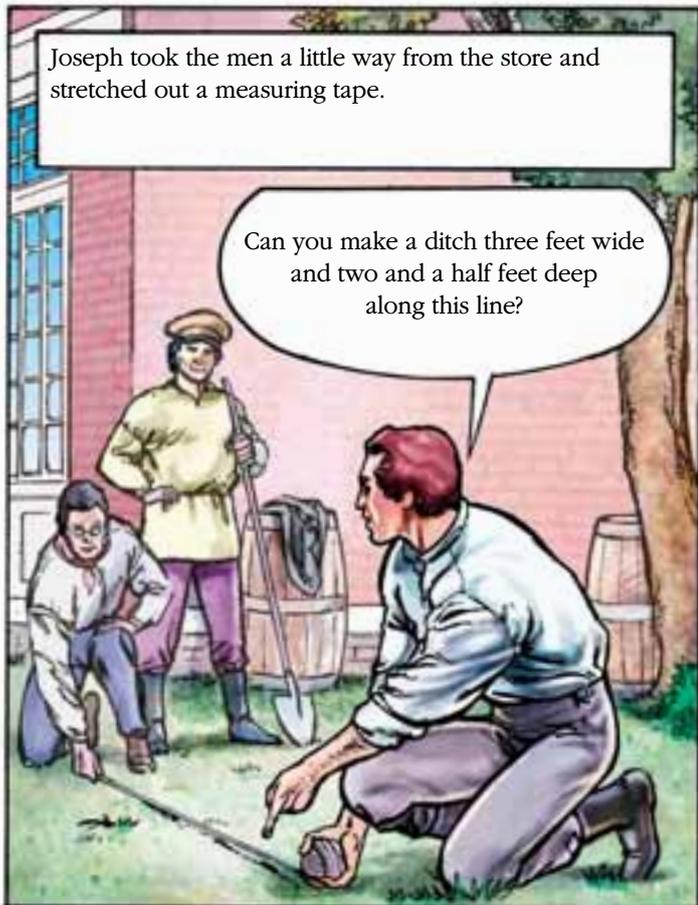
Can you make a ditch?

We'll do our best.



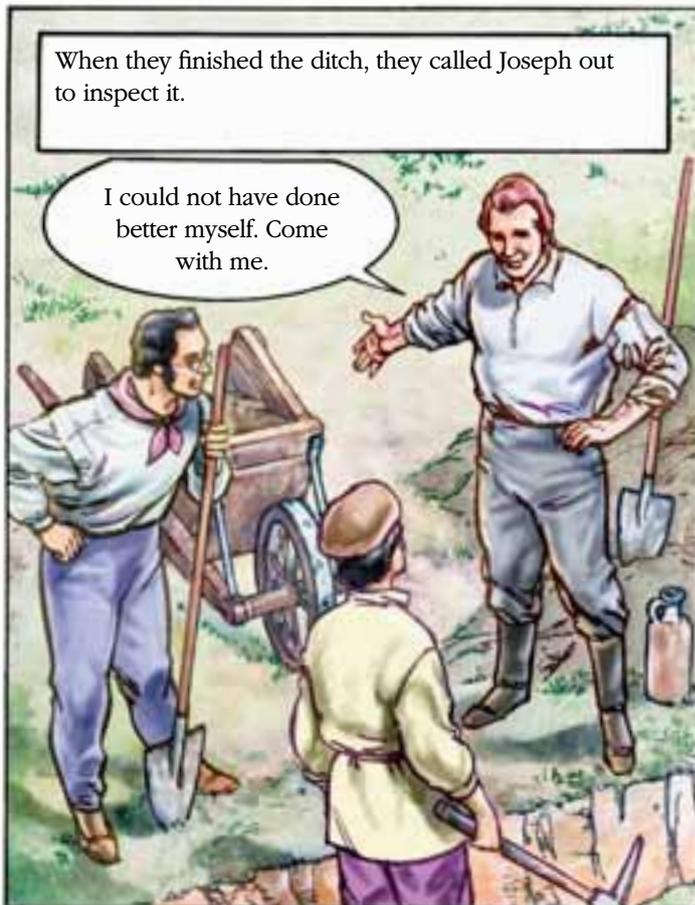
Joseph took the men a little way from the store and stretched out a measuring tape.

Can you make a ditch three feet wide and two and a half feet deep along this line?



When they finished the ditch, they called Joseph out to inspect it.

I could not have done better myself. Come with me.

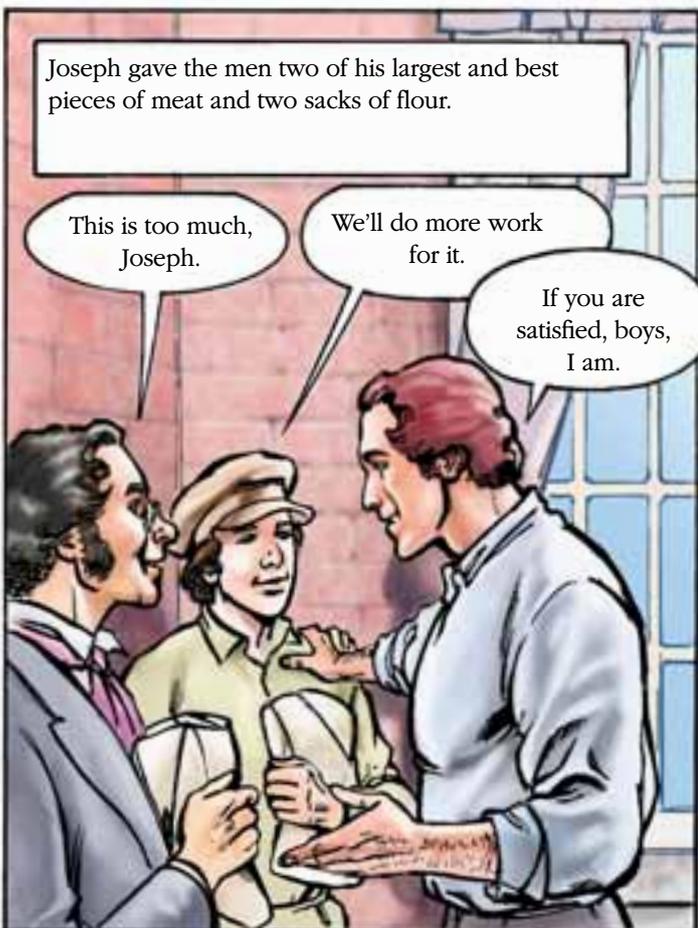


Joseph gave the men two of his largest and best pieces of meat and two sacks of flour.

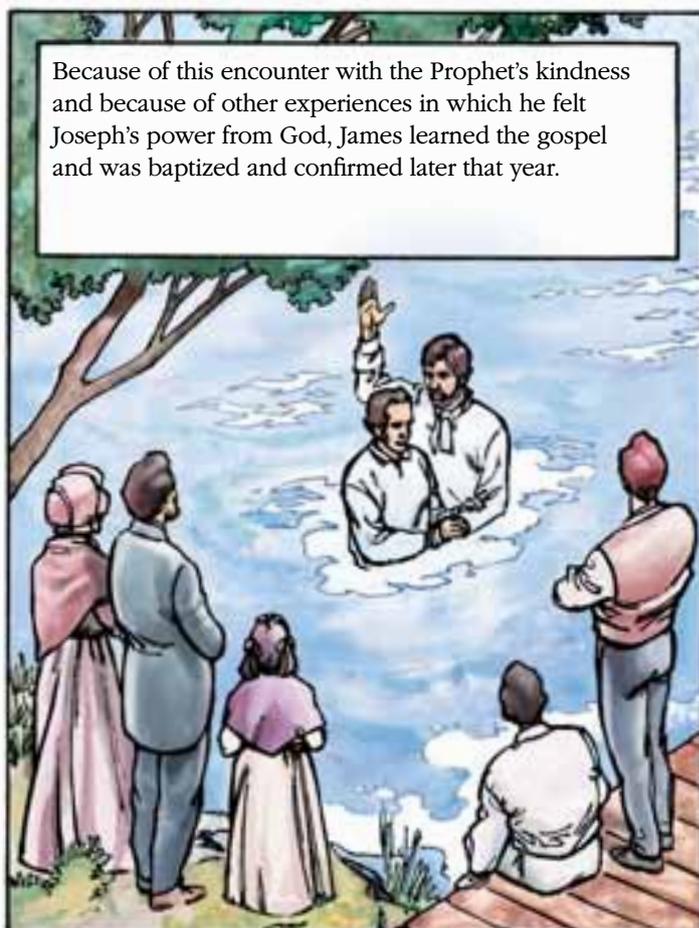
This is too much, Joseph.

We'll do more work for it.

If you are satisfied, boys, I am.



Because of this encounter with the Prophet's kindness and because of other experiences in which he felt Joseph's power from God, James learned the gospel and was baptized and confirmed later that year.



Trying to Be Like Jesus

"He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).



I PROMISED HEAVENLY FATHER

When Yukari was three years old, her preschool served milk with coffee in it. Because Yukari's mother had taught her about the Word of Wisdom, Yukari would not drink the coffee milk. She would fill up her cup with water and drink that instead.

One day Yukari said to her mother, "I want to drink coffee milk like everyone else." Her mother sat down with her and helped her understand that Heavenly Father loves her, that He doesn't want her to drink coffee, and that it is a commandment. From that day on, Yukari was sure she never wanted to drink coffee. More than a year passed.

A KIND HELLO

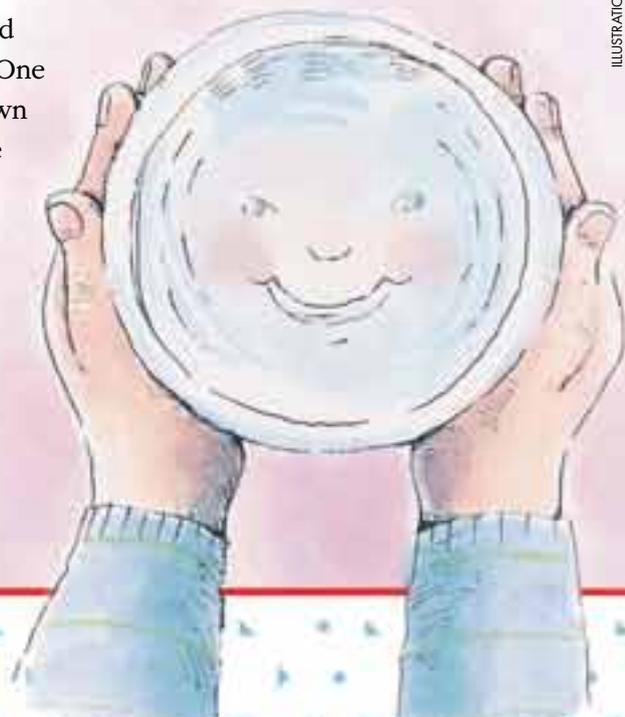
There's a girl on my bus who acts a little different. She doesn't have any friends, and everyone is mean to her. I felt bad, so I went over and said hi. She wanted me to sit with her, so I did. Now I often sit with her on the way to school. She seems happier, and that makes me feel good. I have a little sister with special needs, and I hope someone will do the same for her when she grows up.

Brittany H., age 9, Ohio, USA

TEACHING ABOUT PRAYER

My little sister, Lily, doesn't like to say her prayers. She cries and whines when it's time to pray. One night Lily saw me kneeling down to say my bedtime prayers. She wanted to say the prayer with me. I told her how important it is to say your own prayers to thank Heavenly Father for all your blessings. That night Lily was excited to say her prayers.

Connor M., age 7, California, USA, with help from his mom



ILLUSTRATIONS BY EISEL BLACK

One day when Yukari's teacher could not be there, another teacher came to the class. As usual, Yukari was drinking water. The teacher saw this and asked, "Why are you drinking water?" Yukari explained that she attended church and she had promised Heavenly Father she would not drink coffee. The teacher was impressed. From that time on, the preschool stopped serving coffee milk and served other drinks instead.

Hiroko Fukuda, Tochigi, Japan

BEARING TESTIMONY

"I will go first," says Irinka every first Sunday of the month. With hands holding tight to the chair and eyes full of excitement, she works up the courage. Irinka is only nine years old, but it seems like she's the

bravest of all eight members who come to church regularly in her branch in Bulgaria.

Before she stands up, Irinka usually waits to see if someone else wants to bear testimony first. Everyone secretly gives her a glance and waits for her to go up front. Finally, with a big smile, she walks to the pulpit. The branch president gets her a stool to step on so she can see the members. Irinka, the only child in Primary, looks at the small congregation and starts talking.

She doesn't appear nervous that everyone is looking at her. The members listen to her sweet voice. As she speaks of Christ, the scriptures, and the truthfulness of the Church, she is influencing the testimony of everyone else.

When she sits down, everything is quiet and it seems that the Spirit has touched other hearts. Then one of the members stands up to bear testimony, and then another and another . . .

Maria Kaneva, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria



The Priesthood of Our Lord

(Optional round)

Boldly ♩ = 100–120



1. Breth-ren, pow'r by earth - ly stan-dards Comes by rank or wealth or sword;
2. It is ours, the to - tal ar - mor— Priest-hood held by Christ, our Lord—
3. Let us ven - ture forth in free - dom With the priest-hood as our guide—



© But the pow'r a - bove all oth - ers © Is the priest - hood of our Lord.
If, as breth - ren, we are wor - thy Of the Spir - it's whis-pered word.
Dea-cons, teach - ers, priests, and el - ders, Seek - ing vir - tue side by side.

Optional Round

For the music director: Divide singers into four groups. When the first group reaches a circled letter, have a new group start from the beginning of the song. Sing unaccompanied or with the accompaniment below.

For the accompanist: Repeat the first ending until all groups have finished. Then play the second ending.

Round accompaniment



Text and music: John Craven, 1929–93. © 1985 IRI

Doctrine and Covenants 121:34–46
Doctrine and Covenants 107:1–4

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Cleaning the Temple Grounds



BY JOSHUA J. PERKEY
Church Magazines

In Kentucky, in the southern United States, it gets hot and muggy during the summer. One day people noticed that green mold was growing on the fence around the Louisville Kentucky Temple. And not just a little—there was a lot!

So the Primary children of the Crestwood Second Ward in the Louisville Kentucky Stake decided to do something about it. One warm June day they had an activity. “We took rags and buckets of water and soap to clean the fence and help keep our Heavenly Father’s house clean,” said Sara M., age 10. She got soaked, but “it was fun because all our friends were there.”

Josh H., age 9, said he got a little tired cleaning the high parts of the fence. But he had lots of help. In fact, almost all of the Primary children came, about 75 in all. Many brought their brothers and sisters and moms and dads to help.

The children knew they were on the temple grounds, so they tried to be reverent. And no one complained about the hard work. “We had to scrub really hard because the stains had been there for a while,” said Megan H., age 6. But it was worth it. “I knew we were taking care of our Heavenly Father’s home.”

Sara felt the same way. “I really felt the Spirit because I knew Heavenly Father was happy we were doing that,” she said.

After the work was done, the group gathered at the Church building next door to eat hot dogs and to talk about what they learned.

The Primary children can’t wait until they can go in the temple themselves to do baptisms for the dead.

But for now, they are happy knowing they helped the outside look beautiful—just like Heavenly Father’s house should. ●

“All children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven” (D&C 137:10).

Temples Are a Gift from Heavenly Father

BY ELDER YOSHIHIKO KIKUCHI
Of the Seventy

A few years ago, I had a stake conference assignment in California. On the flight back to Utah, a beautiful lady in her mid-70s sat beside me. Her name was Patti, and she loved to talk.

Patti told me all about her family—about her husband and her son who had died. Our conversation went on until we were about to land. I said, “Patti, you have been talking for most of the flight. Before we land in Salt Lake City, I’d like to ask you a few questions.”

I asked her sincerely, “Patti, do you know you will see your deceased husband again?”

She said, “Oh, is that possible?”

Then I asked, “Do you know you will also see again your deceased son, Matt, who died as a baby?”

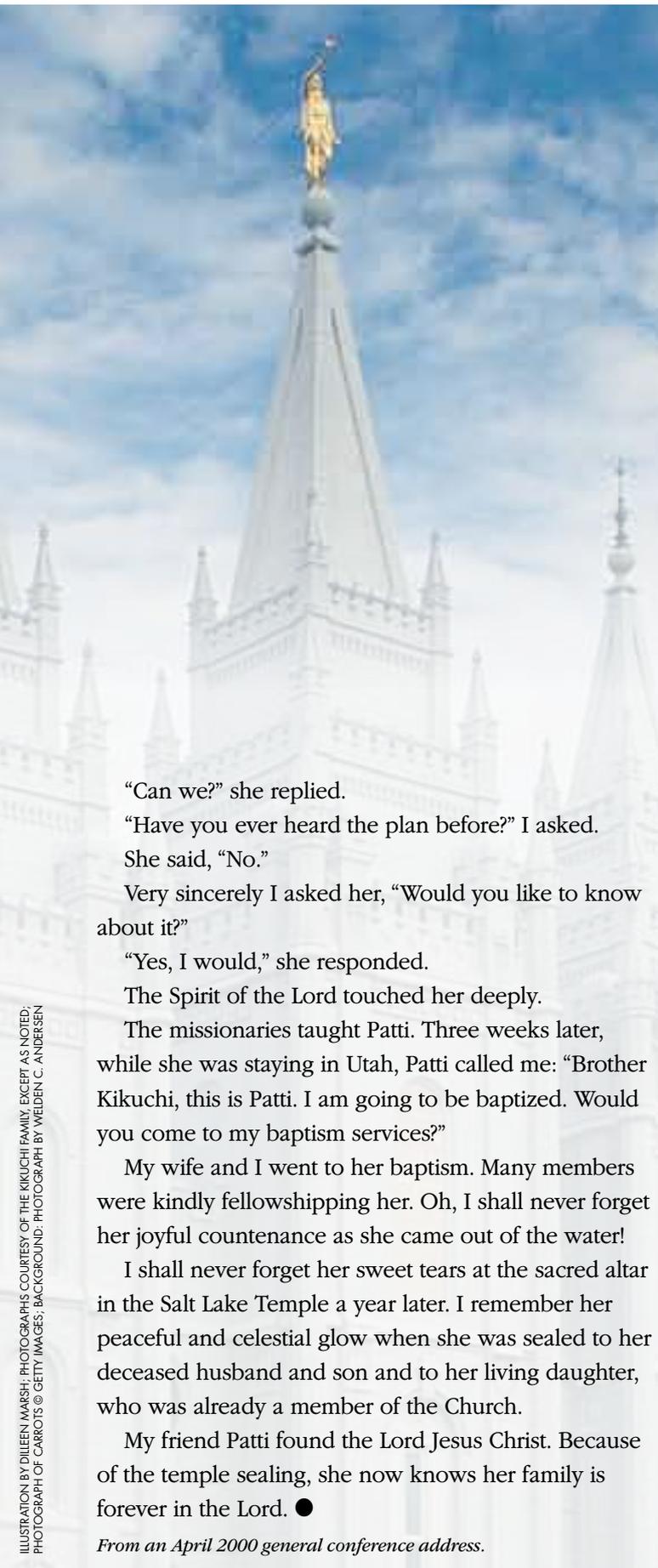
Her eyes became moist, and her voice was shaking. The Spirit of the Lord touched her. She had missed them so much.

Then I prayerfully asked her, “Patti, do you know you have a loving and kind Heavenly Father, who loves you so dearly?”

She said, “Do I?”

I asked, “Patti, do you know your Heavenly Father has a special plan for you and that your family can be forever?”





“Can we?” she replied.

“Have you ever heard the plan before?” I asked.

She said, “No.”

Very sincerely I asked her, “Would you like to know about it?”

“Yes, I would,” she responded.

The Spirit of the Lord touched her deeply.

The missionaries taught Patti. Three weeks later, while she was staying in Utah, Patti called me: “Brother Kikuchi, this is Patti. I am going to be baptized. Would you come to my baptism services?”

My wife and I went to her baptism. Many members were kindly fellowshiping her. Oh, I shall never forget her joyful countenance as she came out of the water!

I shall never forget her sweet tears at the sacred altar in the Salt Lake Temple a year later. I remember her peaceful and celestial glow when she was sealed to her deceased husband and son and to her living daughter, who was already a member of the Church.

My friend Patti found the Lord Jesus Christ. Because of the temple sealing, she now knows her family is forever in the Lord. ●

From an April 2000 general conference address.

A VERY GOOD BOY

Elder Kikuchi was born in Japan and grew up there. Every morning when he was small, he got up and got dressed. Then he bowed to his father and said, “Good morning, Father. I will be a good boy.” Then his father hugged him and said, “I love you.” His father’s beard scratched him, but he always knew his father loved him.

Elder Kikuchi’s father died in World War II. His mother planted a large garden to help feed the family. She grew potatoes, pumpkins, eggplants, beans, carrots, and cabbages.

When Elder Kikuchi was 14, he worked in a tofu factory in the day and went to school at night. Then one day two young men wearing hats, rubber boots, and overcoats knocked at the door. They were missionaries. Elder Kikuchi felt the Spirit when the missionaries taught him about the gospel. Just 14 days later, he was baptized.

A few years later he went to college and graduated.

In 1977 Elder Kikuchi became the first General Authority from Japan.



Elder Kikuchi wore a kimono for this photo taken on his second birthday. Can you see the toy he is holding?



Elder Kikuchi (left front) at age 13 with junior high friends and teachers.

ILLUSTRATION BY DILLIEN MARSH; PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE KIKUCHI FAMILY, EXCEPT AS NOTED; PHOTOGRAPH OF CARROTS © GETTY IMAGES; BACKGROUND: PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



"THE FAMILY: A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD" TEACHES ME ABOUT FAMILIES
"The family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children"
(*"The Family: A Proclamation to the World"*).

We'll Tell You a Secret If You Promise to Share



The New *Liahona* Will Arrive in 2010

Your *Liahona* will be different—in some very good ways.

A few of those ways are:

- A redesigned table of contents and section titles to make it easier for you to find what you're looking for.
- A section especially for youth.
- A section especially for young adults.
- A focus on the teaching that can occur in families, with some articles designed to appeal to readers of all ages.
- Material for new members of the Church.

Many of your old favorites—the First Presidency Message, the Visiting Teaching Message, Latter-day Saint Voices, Questions and Answers—will be easier to locate and will have a new look.

We could have surprised you with your first new issue. But you will likely want to make sure that you and those close to you have current subscriptions and don't miss out.



“The opportunity to enter the temple and to take upon ourselves the sacred covenants therein is one of the greatest blessings available to us in mortality,” writes Elder Robert D. Hales. “Then, after we take upon us those covenants, our obedience in living them daily stands as a demonstration of our faith, love, devotion, and spiritual commitment to honor our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.”
See “Blessings of the Temple,” p. 12.

