

T H E

New Era

A P R I L

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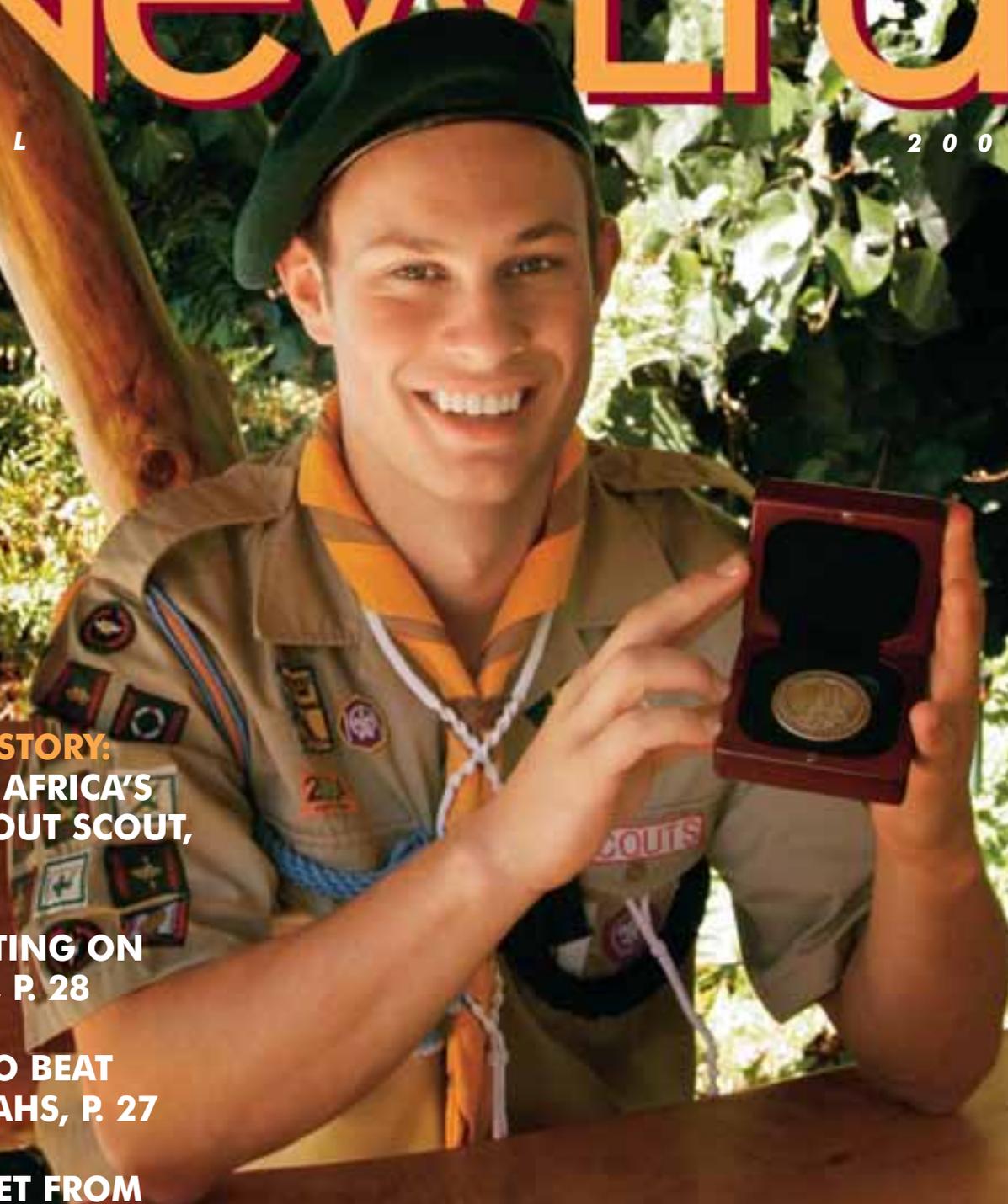
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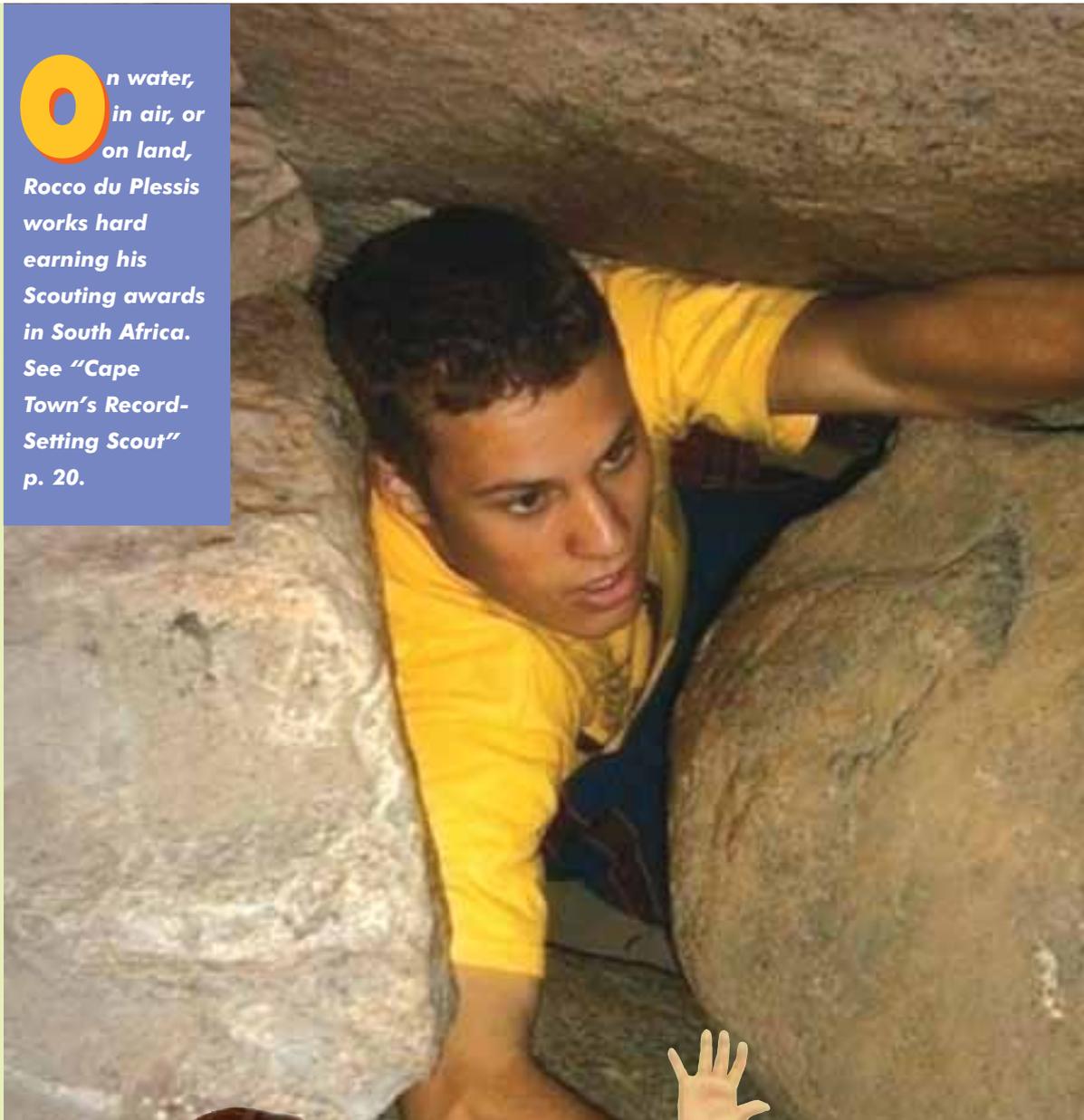
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Cover: Rocco du Plessis
combines Duty to God
with Springbok Scout.
See "Cape Town's Record-
Setting Scout" on p. 20.

Cover photography:
Paul VanDenBerghe
(front) and Ruth Sipus
(back)

On water,
in air, or
on land,
Rocco du Plessis
works hard
earning his
Scouting awards
in South Africa.
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Town's Record-
Setting Scout"
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Coming unto Christ

BY ELDER HENRY B. EYRING
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

After all you can do, after all your effort, you need confidence that the Atonement is working for you and on you.



The pull upward is far beyond what you would call a desire for self-improvement. When I felt it, I knew I was being urged to live so far above myself that I could never do it on my own.

One of my early memories is reading the scriptures in a schoolroom. The law of the land did not yet forbid it, so the Princeton, New Jersey, public schools began each school day with a standard ritual. I can't remember the sequence, but I remember the content. In our classroom, we pledged allegiance to the flag—in unison, standing, hand over heart. One student, a different one each school day, read verses he or she had chosen from the Bible, and then we recited aloud together the Lord's Prayer.

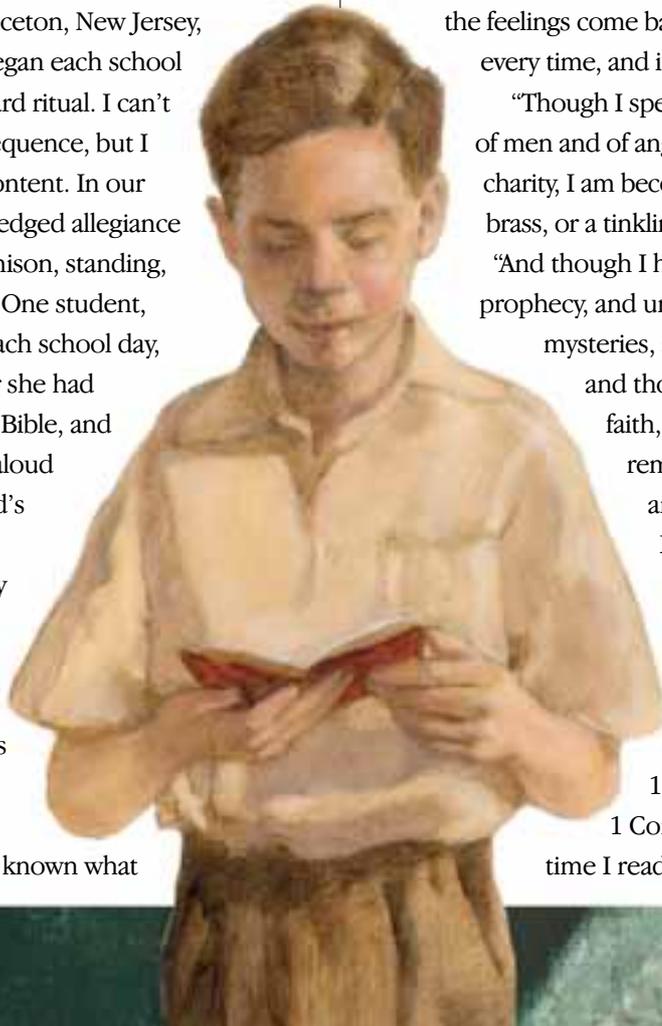
So about every 25 school days, my turn came to choose the scripture. I always chose the same one, so my classmates must have known what

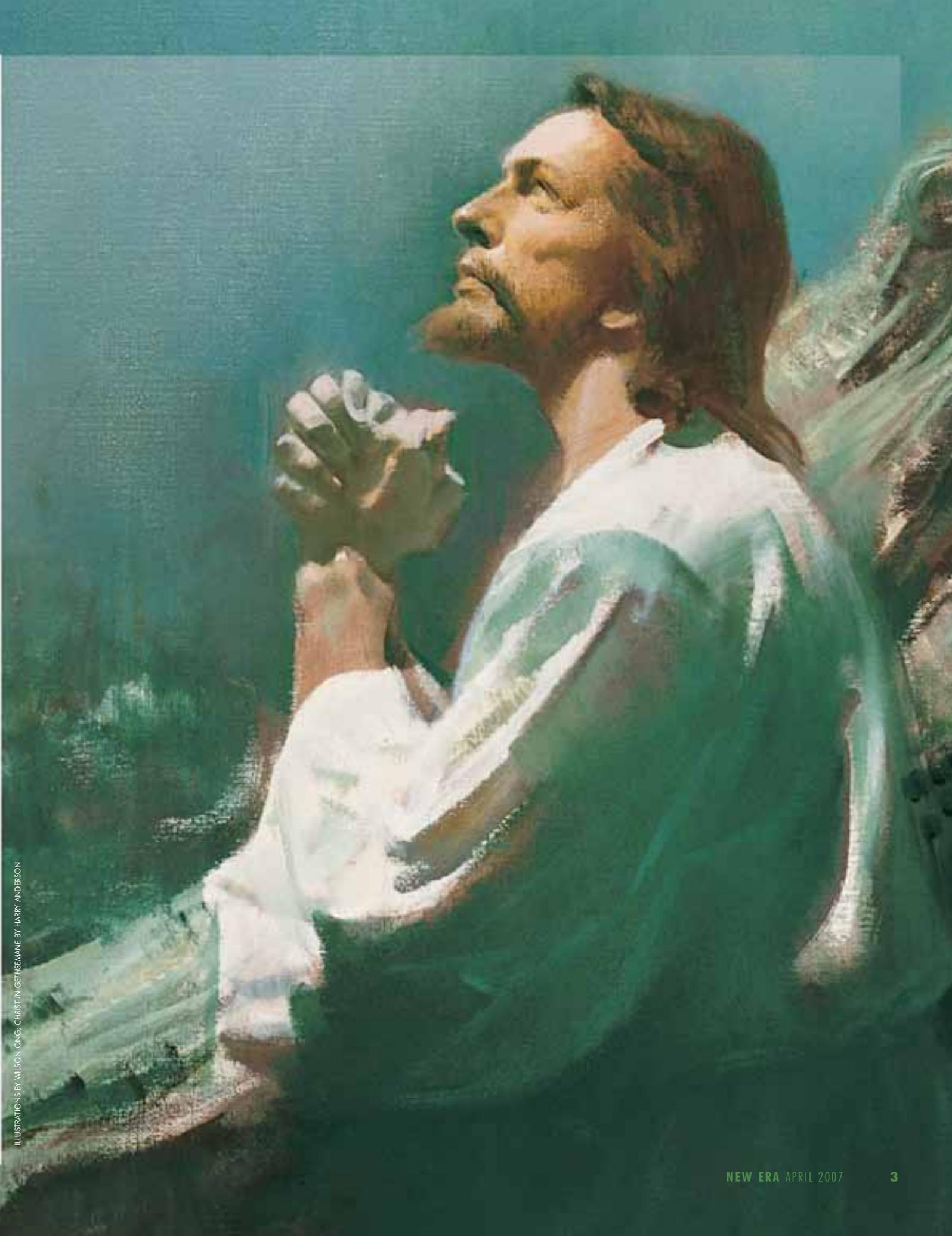
was coming when it was my day. I don't remember when I first heard the words, but I can recite them to you now, and with them the feelings come back. It happened every time, and it still does:

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing”
(1 Corinthians 13:12).

You remember the rest, through the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians. By the time I read the first few





ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILSON ONG; CHRISTIN GETSEMANE BY HARRY ANDERSON

words, the feeling would come back. The feeling was not just that the words were true, but that they were about some better world I wanted with all my heart to live in. For me, the feeling was even more specific, and I knew it did not come from within me. It was that there would or could be some better life, and that it would be in a family I would someday have. In that then-distant future, I would be able to live with people in some better, kinder way, beyond even the best and the kindest world I had known as a boy.

Now, little boys don't talk about such things, not to anyone. You might confide in someone that you wanted to play big league baseball someday. But you wouldn't say that you knew someday you'd have a home where you would feel the way you felt when you heard the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians. So I never talked with anyone about those feelings.

When I was 11, my parents dropped me off at the Salt Lake City home of my great uncle Gaskell Romney. He was a patriarch, and, because he was my father's uncle, he could give me, a boy from the mission field, a patriarchal blessing. I don't think he even sat down to visit with me. He didn't know me except as my father's son. He just led me through the house to a room where a recording device was on a table. He sat me down facing a fireplace, put his hands on my head, and began to give first my lineage and then a blessing.

He began to tell me about the home in which I would someday be the father. That's when I opened my eyes. I know the stones in the fireplace were there because I began to stare at them. I wondered, "How can this man know what is only in my heart?" He described in concrete detail what had been only a yearning, but I could recognize it. It was the desire of my heart, that future home and family that I thought was secret. But it was not secret, because God knew.

Now your impressions will not have been quite like mine, but you have felt a tug, maybe many tugs, to be someone better. And what sets those yearnings apart from

all your daydreams is that they were not about being richer, or smarter, or more attractive, but about being better. I am sure you have had such moments, not just from my experience, but because of what President David O. McKay once said. Listen very carefully:

"Man is a spiritual being, a soul, and at some period of his life everyone is possessed with an irresistible desire to know his relationship to the Infinite. . . . There is something within him which urges him to rise above himself, to control his environment, to master the body and all things physical and live in a higher and more beautiful world" (*True to the Faith: From the Sermons and Discourses of David O. McKay*, comp. Llewelyn R. McKay [1966], 244).

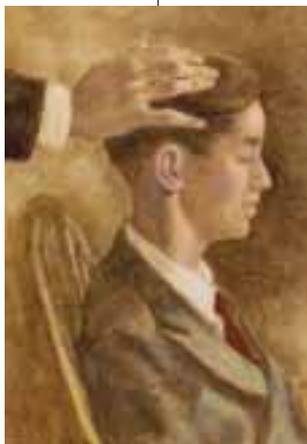
That pull upward is far beyond what you would call a desire for self-improvement. When I felt it, I knew I was being urged to live so far above myself that I could never do it on my own. President McKay had it right. You feel an urging to rise above your natural self. What you have felt is an urging from your Heavenly Father to accept this invitation:

"Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness;

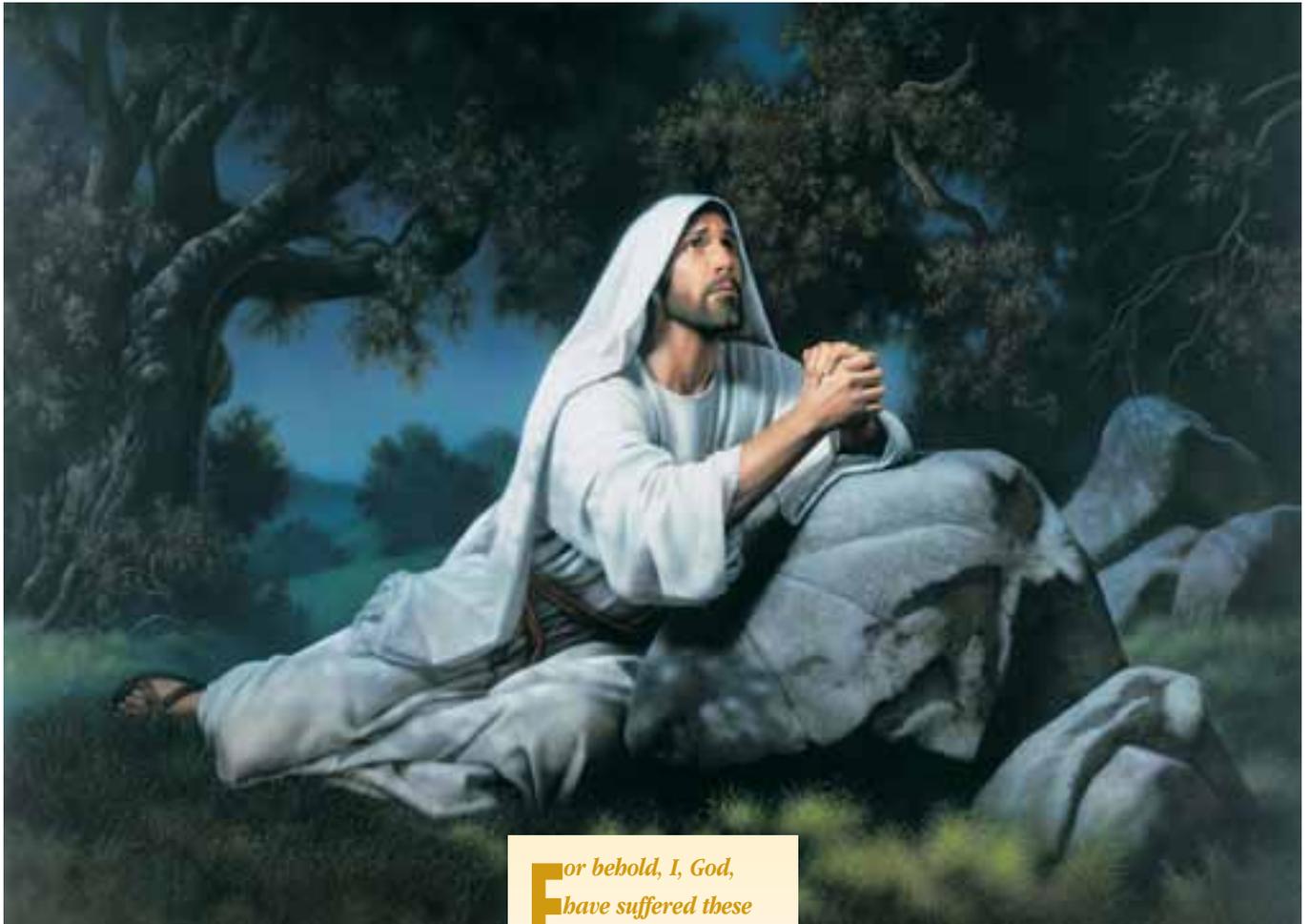
and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

"And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot" (Moroni 10:32-33).

That urge to rise above yourself is a recognition of your need for the Atonement to work in your life, and your need to be sure that it is working. After all you can do, after all your effort, you need confidence that the Atonement is working for you and on you.



My great uncle,
the patriarch,
set me down, put
his hands on my head,
and began to give
first my lineage and
then a blessing.



For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I.

Something Better Drawing Us Up

You may feel that upward pull. I did one afternoon when I came to understand, as I hadn't before, how much I need the Atonement, what I could do to make it work in my life, and what evidence I could have that it was working.

It was the hour of a devotional at BYU–Idaho. I wasn't the speaker; I was sitting there, just behind and to the right of the speaker. I've still got the book that I held that day. It still has the words in the margins that I wrote then.

In my memory, the room that afternoon was almost as light as the sunshine and as warm. The speaker was Elder A. Theodore Tuttle. I suppose there was a spotlight on his face. Stages always seem light when you're on them. But the brightness was in more than what I saw. It was inside me that day. I think it happened because I walked into that room with the yearning President McKay says will come to everyone. And for me that day it was irresistible; I was in the right place with the right preparation.

I had been trying hard, and yet I wanted to know: "Isn't

there something more I can do?" And Elder Tuttle told me there was and that I would need the Atonement of Jesus Christ working in my life to go where I wanted to go. Elder Tuttle said he had taken a trip to South

America on assignment with Joseph Fielding Smith, then a member of the Council of the Twelve. That was in the days when you went to South America by ship. Elder Smith could have used the time to rest. And he could have let Elder Tuttle rest. But he didn't. He organized daily scripture study, sitting on the deck in those wooden slat chairs most of you have only seen in old movies. They read their scriptures together, and they discussed them, and they marked them. And so what I have written on this page, in the margins, was written by Elder Tuttle in his Doctrine and Covenants on the ship's deck as Elder Smith taught it to him. I can only imagine who passed it to Elder Smith. And now I'm passing it on to you.

I will give you the few scriptures that have made the most difference—all the difference for me—in knowing

how to reach for that something better you and I sometimes feel drawing us up.

The first is not in the margin but is from the 19th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. On the bottom, in capital letters, is written: REPENTANCE. And then an arrow leads to a notation that reads: “Greek word. To have a new mind.” I heard it that day with new meaning.

“Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not.

“For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

“But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I” (vv. 15–17).

As he read those words that day, I felt the overwhelming suffering of the Savior. And then two things dawned on me. First, if I could not repent to qualify for His Atonement for my sins, I must suffer to the limit of my power to suffer. And, second, with all the requisite suffering of my own, with all I could bear, it would still not be enough. I would still be forever shut out of the only place where there will be the warmth of family, the family of my Heavenly Father whom I have loved and whom I miss, and that of my family here. Somehow I had gotten the idea that the choice was between repenting or not. And then I realized that whatever pain repentance might bring in this life, it was certainly no more than the pain I would face if I did not repent here, and yet that later pain could not lift me home. It could not bring the mercy I needed.

A determination flowed into me both to stay as far as I could from sin and to gain a confidence that my sins were being remitted. In that moment, the penalty for taking chances with sin or with forgiveness loomed larger than I had ever imagined it could. I wanted with all my heart to know both that the Atonement was curing the effects of sin in me and that I was being strengthened against future sin. I wanted

confidence whereas before I had been content with hope.

What I wanted, then, was to know what I could do to gain assurance that I was on the path home. Specific steps to assure that the Atonement is at work in your life will not always be the same. For some, at one point, it would be to see a bishop, a judge in Israel, to confess serious sin and to seek help. For another, it would be to accept baptism. But for everyone, at every stage of purification, there are constants. One is this: reception of the Holy Ghost is the cleansing agent as the Atonement purifies you.



wanted with all my heart to know both that the Atonement was curing the effects of sin in me and that I was being strengthened against future sin.

Protection against Sin

The effects of the Atonement—the lack of pride, of envy, of malice—are a shield against temptation. The Savior taught:

“Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you whom I love, and whom I love I also chasten that their sins may be forgiven, for with the chastisement I prepare a way for their deliverance in all things out of temptation, and I have loved you” (D&C 95:1).

I bear you my testimony that God loves you and that he has prepared a way for your deliverance in all things out of temptation. I bear you my testimony that the broken heart

and contrite spirit that are the requirements for forgiveness are also its fruits. The very humility that is the sign of having been forgiven is protection against future sin. And it is by avoiding future sin that we retain a remission of the sins of the past.

You may not know when you have been fully baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, but you can know you are inviting His presence. And you know when you are making His presence impossible. Although you may be determined to serve the Savior and thus invite the Spirit, some of you will be tempted by some thought like this: “Look, as long as you don’t commit great sin, repentance isn’t that hard. You just confess, take a little embarrassment, and you are clean again.” That is a lie in at least two ways.

First, I have never forgotten the voice of Elder Tuttle after he read this description of suffering for sin from section 19

of the Doctrine and Covenants:

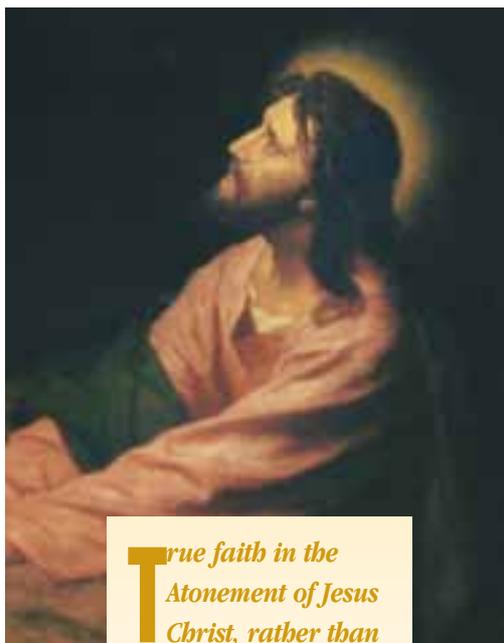
“Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink” (v. 18).

It was about there where I wrote these words: “Teach the people repentance hurts.” I bear you my testimony that you must never believe the lie that there is no pain from sin. You can be forgiven. The Atonement is real. True faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ, rather than leading you to try a little sin, will lead you to stay as far away from it as you can.

That brings me to a second falsehood. It is this: as the world grows more wicked, it is only reasonable to expect to be overcome by temptation. That is not true either. We do not face so bleak a prospect. Here is what President George Albert Smith taught. He said it more than 50 years ago, but it is still true in our time, and will be in the future, however dark it becomes. He said: “There are two influences ever present in the world. One is constructive and elevating and comes from our Heavenly Father; the other is destructive and debasing and comes from Lucifer. We have our agency and make our own choice in life subject to these unseen powers. There is a division line well defined that separates the Lord’s territory from Lucifer’s. If we live on the Lord’s side of the line Lucifer cannot come there to influence us, but if we cross the line into his territory we are in his power. By keeping the commandments of the Lord we are safe on His side of the line, but if we disobey His teachings we voluntarily cross into the zone of temptation and invite the destruction that is ever present there. Knowing this, how anxious we should always be to live on the Lord’s side of the line” (*Improvement Era*, May 1935, 278).

How Do You Know?

Now you may feel that I have given you only modest hope. You and everyone want to know, to be sure—if possi-



T *True faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ, rather than leading you to try a little sin, will lead you to stay as far away from it as you can.*

ble, by some clear sign—that your sins are remitted.

As if he knew my concern, and yours, to discern whether we were moving toward Christ, Elder Tuttle took me to a scripture. The reference is written in the margin next to the beginning of the 15th verse. Here is all it says: “Alma 5:14, 15, 26–31.” And then these words, written very small: “Born again and retaining remission. How do you know?”

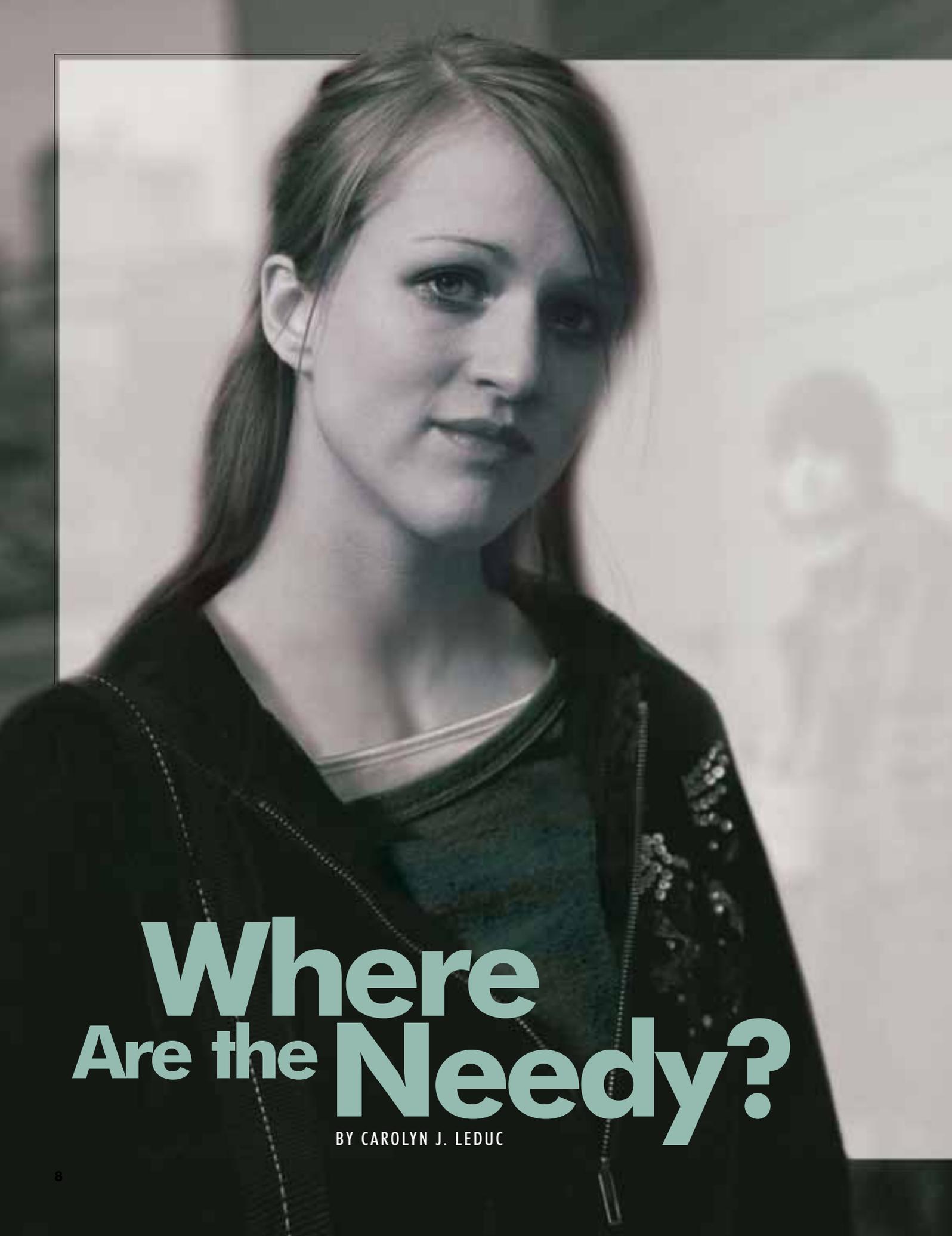
“And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?

“Do ye exercise faith in the redemption of him who created you? Do you look forward with an eye of faith, and view this mortal body raised in immortality, and this corruption raised in incorruption, to stand before God to be judged according to the deeds which have been done in the mortal body?” (Alma 5:14–15).

As Elder Tuttle read those words that day, I knew what I wanted. I wanted the Master’s image in my countenance, perhaps not visible to others, but so that I might look forward with the eye of faith to that grand reunion. I wanted to have confidence that I would someday and somewhere hear the words: “Come unto me ye blessed, for behold, your works have been the works of righteousness upon the face of the earth” (Alma 5:16).

I pray that you and I will make the choices today and tomorrow and as long as we live that will bring the influence of the Holy Ghost into our lives in the service of the Master. I testify that as we do, we will feel the cleansing that comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and with it the confidence that we are coming unto Him. And when we are there, with Him and sanctified, we shall never hunger nor thirst again. **NE**

From an address given at Brigham Young University on October 29, 1989.



Where Are the **Needy?**

BY CAROLYN J. LEDUC

I pored over my patriarchal blessing once more. One part caught my eye: “You may help the needy with your time, effort, and means.” I imagined myself establishing homeless shelters, starting literacy programs, eradicating unemployment, ending starvation. I should have talked to my parents about my plans first, but I was eager to get started. So I headed out the front door determined that the sullen old beggar at the mall would be my first “project.”

I imagined that first we’d have lunch together. He’d tell me his tragic story. I’d weep. We’d eventually become good friends. I’d buy him a suit, find him a job, witness his baptism, change his life forever. It was all so simple.

I spotted the man outside the mall’s entrance, leaning on the rusted shopping cart he pushed around town. I could see his cart was filled with . . . onions? He picked up an onion, whacked it in half on the cart, then bit into it like it was an apple. I was taken aback but undaunted. “Would you like to join me for lunch?” I asked, wide-eyed and tentative. “I have a few dollars and . . .”

Suddenly, loud, unintelligible jabber poured out of the man’s mouth. He shook his fist at me and toward the sky. His gestures were wild and frantic. Was he sane? He seemed upset with me and was definitely not interested in lunch, so I turned with an apologetic grimace and went home.

Several days later, I spied a woman with a “will work for food” sign. Recognizing my second chance to be charitable, I stopped to talk with her.

“I need gas money,” she told me. “My dad’s in Texas, and if only I can get to him, he can help me out.”

“Gee, I don’t have any cash,” I replied.

“How long will you be here?”

“Till noon.”

“I’ll be back by 11:00. I promise.” At 10:45 I was back with a gift certificate for gas. She was nowhere in sight.

“Boy,” I thought, as I walked home, “this is not turning out like I expected.” I kicked a pebble. “Helping the needy is going to be tougher than I thought. Is this something I’m supposed to do later in life?”

I kicked the pebble again. “How can I help the needy? Couldn’t I get started now? Isn’t there someone who needs my help? Isn’t there someone who wants my help?”

I arrived home. I heard crying as I walked in. It was Steven, my brother. He’d been teased at school and didn’t want to go back. The words from my patriarchal blessing echoed in my mind: “You may help the needy with your time, effort, and means.” Here was my brother in need.

“Hey Steven, you wanna go get some ice cream? Tell me what happened.”

Steven and I talked about his peers. Maybe I didn’t say anything helpful, but I could tell that my companionship meant a lot to him.

That experience with Steven taught me a lesson: the poor are just as likely to be in your home as on the streets. There are all sorts of needy people in the world—those who need food and shelter, of course—but also those who need love, counsel, and encouragement.

I haven’t given up my dream of ending the world’s social troubles, but for now, whenever I get the itch to seek out the needy, I’m inclined to go knocking at my brother’s bedroom door first. **NE**

had always felt it was important to help the needy, but you’ll never guess where I found someone who needed my help.

For ideas on helping the needy in your community, go to www.providentliving.org.

WISEMANS

BY MATTHEW DINGER

I had to visit two of the most knowledgeable members of the ward on my first home teaching assignment!

The Wisemans really lived up to their name. What was I going to talk to them about?

“**M**atthew, Brother Erickson is here!” These were the words I had been dreading to hear all day. It was the type of situation you knew you would have to face eventually but hoped desperately would always be one more day away. But this was the day.

Earlier that morning, just before opening exercises for priesthood, 80-year-old Brother Erickson had caught me. “You have been called as my home teaching companion. Would it be all right if we visited one of our families later today?”

I was shocked. All my friends had been assigned to be their dads’ companions. At least when they made a fool of themselves it would be in front of a family member, not someone who has had eight decades to get to know everything about the gospel. I muttered to him that it would be fine.

He replied, “We will be going to the Wiseman family. You are going to love it!”

I was convinced this was a rather large lie.

The Wiseman family truly lived up to their name. Like Brother Erickson, they were older and wiser members of the ward. They had known apostles and even prophets and had a reputation for having a great understanding of the gospel. If that

weren’t enough, there were two of them; what one didn’t know, I was sure the other one would. So I trudged out the door and into the car where Brother Erickson waited, smiling.

We talked a bit about school and my family on the way to the Wisemans. I think Brother Erickson sensed I was nervous. We finally arrived at the door, and I forced a smile. When I entered the home, warm smiles and hearty handshakes greeted me. The Wisemans were as amazing as I had thought, only they were so much cooler than I imagined they would be.

“Will you be starting school soon, Matt?” Sister Wiseman asked.

“I will be in ninth grade in August,” I responded quickly, not knowing how Sister Wiseman would react.

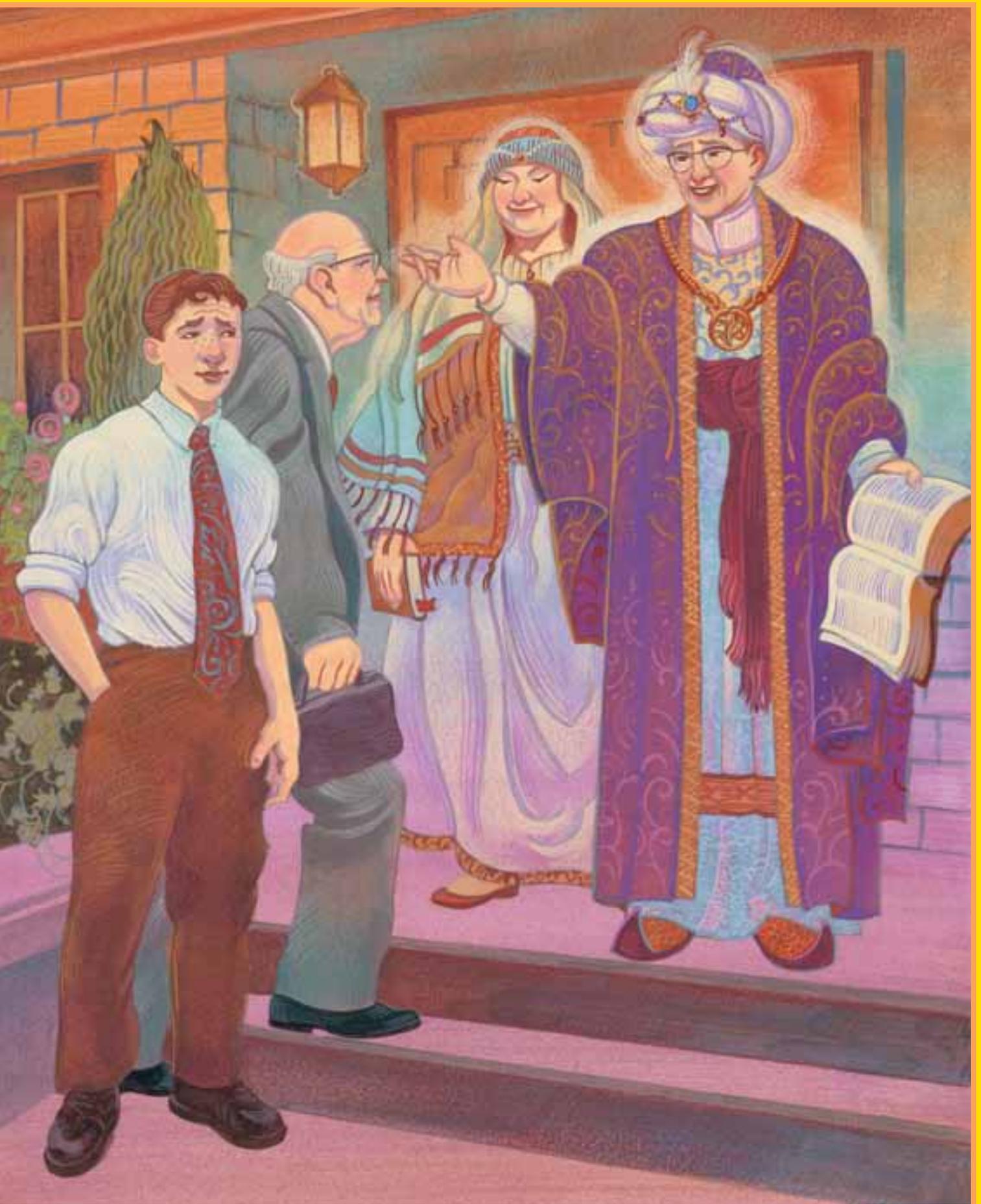
“That’s wonderful!” she exclaimed, and she actually meant it.

“What things do you like to do in school?” she said, diving in for more.

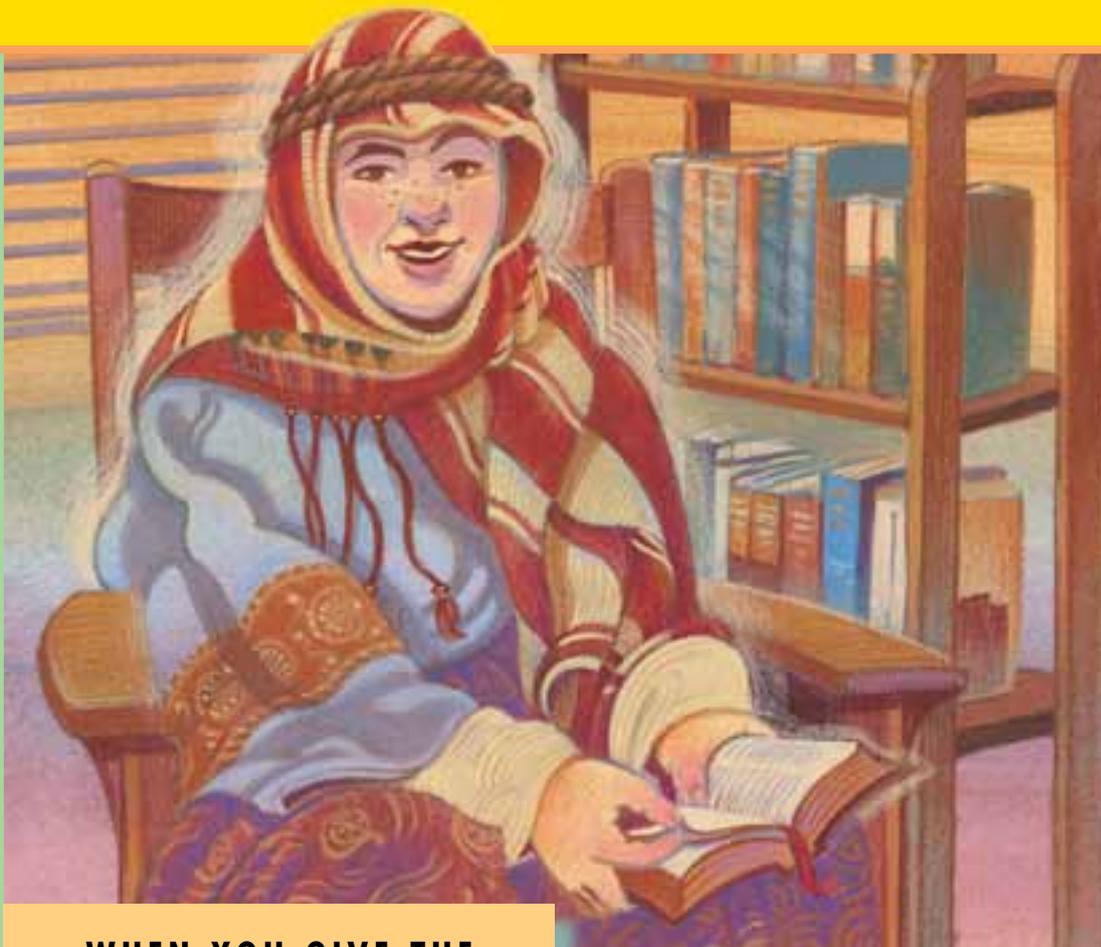
“Well, I’m in the choir,” I said a little less timidly.

“I used to love to sing too,” Sister Wiseman said, and the conversation continued more fluidly from there as my nervousness slowly eased away.

We continued talking about school,



As they taught me and allowed me to teach them, my reluctance turned into appreciation, and I realized I had more in common with the Wisemans than I thought.



WHEN YOU GIVE THE MESSAGE

As a home teacher, you “preach, teach, expound, exhort, . . . and visit the house of each member” (D&C 20:46–47). You and your companion will share a message each month, usually using the First Presidency Message in the *Ensign*. Here are a few tips for preparing and giving the message:

- Read the article ahead of time, and find some ideas that would be helpful or interesting to the families you visit.
- Think of ways to teach those ideas. Keep in mind the ages of those you teach. For instance, children might enjoy acting out a part of the message. An older family member could read part of the article. You could hand out questions about the topic and then have the family members answer them. Teaching suggestions are found at the end of each First Presidency Message.
- As part of your message, bear your testimony and say what the topic means to you.
- If your companion is giving the message, pray for the Spirit to be with him and the family. Be prepared to comment on the topic if he asks you to.

skiing, television, and everything else imaginable. I was amazed that I actually had things in common with these people! And more than that, they seemed to enjoy talking to me. To my great surprise I found that when the lesson was over and the closing prayer said, I didn’t want to leave. My fear of home teaching turned into a fear of the clock telling us it was time to go.

As I continued as a home teacher I grew to love my companion, Brother Erickson, and the Wiseman family more than I thought I ever could. They taught me much and allowed me to teach them as well. I never knew I had so much in common with other members of the Church, regardless of age, background, or education.

I know that even though the home teaching program is meant to bless the lives of the families taught, it also has a great impact on the home teachers. To this day I still consider Brother Erickson and the Wisemans as three of my best friends. **NE**

Tender Mercies of the Lord

Thoughtfully ♩ = 76-84

Words and music by Janice Kapp Perry

1. Ten - der mer - cies of the Lord Come in qui - et ways,
 2. Ten - der mer - cies of the Lord Come in times of need.
 3. Ten - der mer - cies of the Lord Come as we re - pent.
 4. Ten - der mer - cies of the Lord Com - fort us and guide.

Not by mere co - in - ci - dence, But by hea - ven's grace.
 Gifts of faith and con - fi - dence Fill us as we plead.
 Sweet for - give - ness, peace of mind Fol - low, hea - ven - sent.
 In His time and in His way, We re - ceive His light.

As we choose to fol - low Him With full heart and soul,
 Words of guid - ance, hope, and peace Help us feel God's love.
 Faith - ful - ness, o - be - di - ence Help us to dis - cern
 As we yield our will to His, Bless - ings free - ly flow.

We be - come His cho - sen ones And ten - der mer - cies flow.
 By our faith, His mer - cies come Like man - na from a - bove.
 Bless - ings sweet and per - son - al For which our spir - its yearn.
 We par - take of love di - vine Thru mer - cies He be - stows.

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Q & A

“One of my Church friends is not living some gospel standards. I’m worried about him. How can I help?”

NEW ERA

You can help by being a friend. Your friend might be trying to understand who he is and where he fits in.

He needs someone to talk to, go to good activities with, and look to for an example. Without being self-righteous or critical, find opportunities to talk with him about times when you’ve lived up to your standards and been blessed.

Keep your standards high. Whatever you do, do not lower your standards in the name of helping your friend. Stay out of situations where the Holy Ghost will not be there to prompt you. Despite your friendship and concern, your friend may decide to continue making wrong decisions. You might have to associate with other people rather than be brought down too.

Take time to pray. Pray for your friend, but pray for yourself too. Pray for opportunities to help him, and pray that you’ll recognize those opportunities and be guided when they come. Pray that your actions will be motivated by a Christlike love for your friend, not just a desire to change him. Then act!

■ **Don’t lower your standards in order to help your friend.**

■ **Pray that the Holy Ghost will help you know what to do, and then act!**

■ **Trust that Heavenly Father will work through you to make a difference in your friend’s life.**

■ **Invite your friend to participate in uplifting activities so he can feel the Spirit and have the desire to make good decisions.**

■ **Be an example of how keeping the commandments brings you happiness.**

Don’t give up. Your friend probably won’t change all at once. It takes continual, sincere effort. In fact, you may never know what effect your words or example is having, but if you are reaching out to him, you are making a difference. The Book of Mormon prophet Jacob may have thought his son Enos was not paying attention to his teachings, but one day Enos remembered “the words which [he] had often heard [his] father speak,” and he repented (see Enos 1:3–5). Your words and example will have an effect, though it may not be right now.

Include your friend. Remember the Savior’s parable about the shepherd who left the 99 sheep to find the lost one. He did not just visit the lost sheep and then return to the flock alone. He brought that sheep back with him. (See Luke 15:4–7.) Invite your friend to activities with people who have high standards. These experiences will help him see the blessings of righteous living and feel comfortable with people who have high standards. Hopefully, he will recognize that the happiness he feels through these activities



READERS

is better than the temporary pleasure he gets from disobedience.

As you try to help your friend, you can count on the Lord to help you because He wants your friend to make good choices too. As Nephi went about helping his people, the Lord told him, “I will make thee mighty in word and in deed” (Helaman 10:5; emphasis added)—and He did. Heavenly Father will work through you if you make your time and effort available to Him.



Keep being a friend. Your friend looks up to you and watches what you do. He probably wants what you have;

he just doesn't know how to get it. You don't have to agree with all the things he says and does; just let him know you are there for him. It might be hard some days, but it will be worth it. Ask the Lord for help, and it will work out.

Stephanie C., 16, Utah, USA



An example is very important in these kinds of situations. We can also pray continually for our friends and seek out ways to help

them. We can fast and ask Heavenly Father to give us the right words to say to help them understand why living the gospel makes us happy.

Virginia C., 17, Montevideo, Uruguay

I had a friend who was active for a long time in the Church. He always came alone

because his family had decided they no longer wanted to come. I was impressed by his strength and courage. But then one day I heard that he no longer came to church. I felt strongly prompted by the Spirit that I should talk with him. I told him how impressed I had been that he had come alone to church, and I told him not to give up. That next Sunday he came to sacrament meeting and since then has continued to come to church. By being faithful and living the gospel, we can be examples to our friends and give them the love and support they need.

Marina V., 18, Småland, Sweden



I really think it is best to talk to him. Be straightforward but gentle. I think it will require courage, and I think it would be best to do it after praying because you can get

help. I also have friends like this, and because I want to go with them to the celestial kingdom I am trying hard to lead them in a good direction. You may have to change yourself in order to have an effect on someone else. It is important that you strive every day to become a better person.

Eimi H., 17, Tochigi, Japan



I have a friend who didn't follow a couple of Church standards, and I regret not telling him how I felt about it. Tell your friend how you feel, and pray for him. Continue

being his friend as long as you don't end up doing what he is doing. If it is serious, talk to the bishop.

Deborah S., 14, California, USA

You need to be a good example to your friend. Invite him to attend a youth activity. It is more effective if you go with him. Share your testimony



“Many of our young people are tugged in the wrong direction and enticed to partake of the sins of the world. Yearningly such individuals seek for the strength of those who have the ability to stand firm for truth. Through righteous living and by extending the helping hand and the understanding heart, you can rescue, you can save. How great will then be your joy. How eternal will be the blessing you will have conferred.”

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “An Example of the Believers,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 98.

about what you have received when you have followed gospel standards.

Jared Q., 16, Quezon City, Philippines

With my friend I would try to do fun and wholesome activities that don't deviate from gospel principles. In this way he would see that there are many ways to have fun without doing things that aren't right. I wouldn't support him in things that are wrong but would counsel him and strengthen him through my example. It would be good to talk to him and let him know you care about him and remind him that his weakness can become a strength (see *Ether 12:27*). Let him know that he's the one who has to make the decision but that you are there for support. You need to stay strong and not allow your friend's activities to influence your actions.

Jorge B., 17, Pichincha, Ecuador

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

NEXT QUESTION

“How should I respond when my friends say that Jesus Christ was a great moral teacher but not the Savior or the Son of God?”

SEND YOUR ANSWER, along with your full name, birth date, ward and stake (or branch and district), and photograph (including your parent's written permission to print the photo, if you are under 18) to:

New Era, Q&A, 4/07

50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420

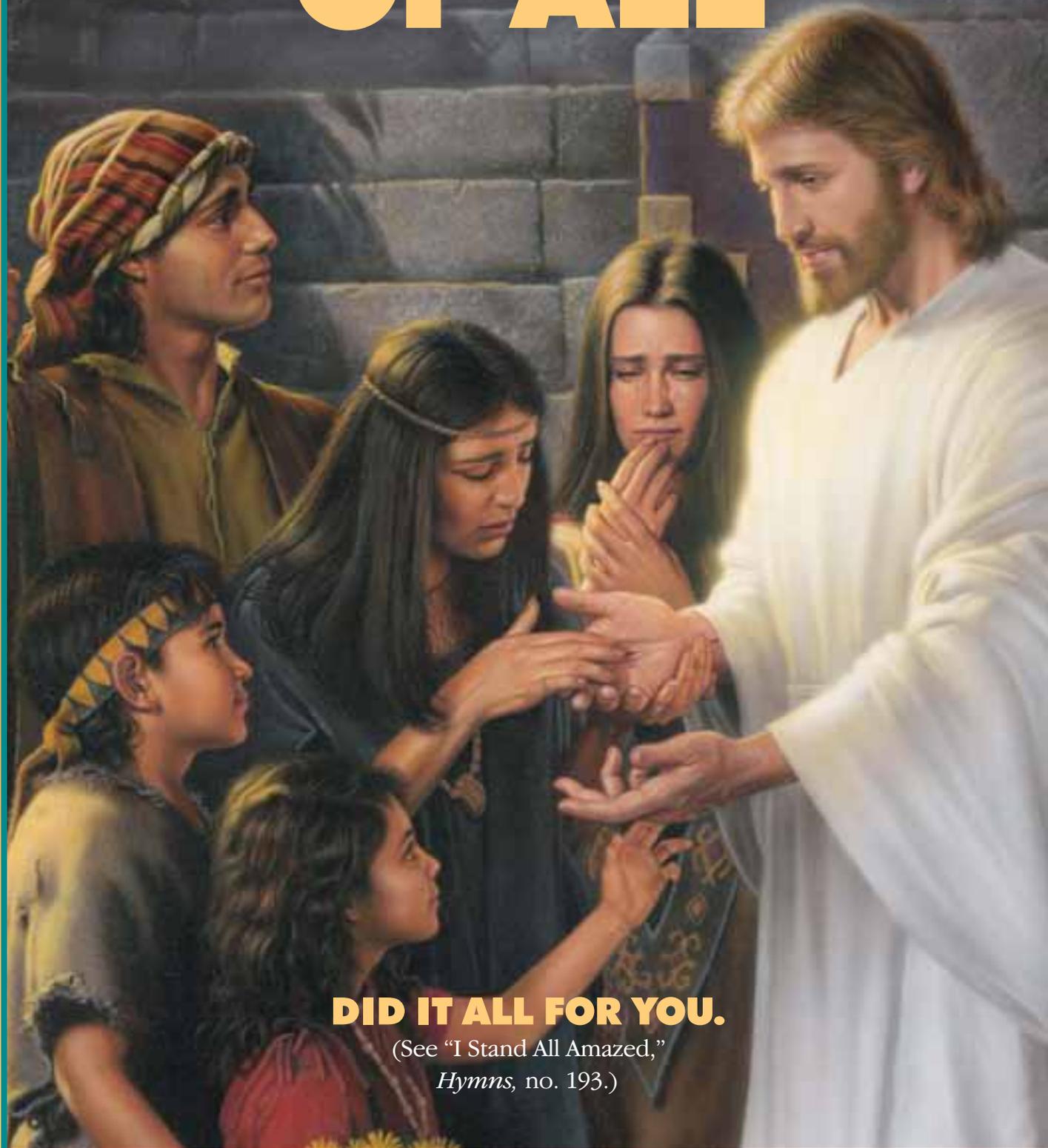
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA

Or e-mail: newera@ldschurch.org

Please respond by April 15, 2007.

Look on pages 2–3 in *For the Strength of Youth* for valuable information to share with those struggling with standards.

THE SAVIOR OF ALL



DID IT ALL FOR YOU.

(See "I Stand All Amazed,"

Hymns, no. 193.)

WHAT

Cathy Knew

BY SUSAN WINTERS

My friend Cathy hadn't been to school for several days, so I called her mom and found out that she was in the hospital being tested for mononucleosis. I went to see how she was doing and to give her a hard time about having the so-called "kissing disease."

When I arrived at the hospital, she was sitting up in bed quietly. I asked if she had mono, and who she'd been kissing.

"I don't have mono," she said. "It's leukemia."

I was speechless. It couldn't be true—not Cathy. I immediately tried to think of some way to make this all better. Then a thought occurred to me.

"You got your patriarchal blessing, right? Does it say that you will be married and have children?"

"Yes."

"Then," I concluded, "you'll be okay."

"I hope so," she said. "But sometimes our blessings are for the next world as well."

The next? I didn't want to hear anything about the next world. She was living in this world, and I wanted it to stay that way.

We hugged and cried, and finally I had to go.

Over the following several months Cathy went through chemotherapy. She lost all her hair. The lining of her mouth became so raw that it was painful for her to eat. She was nauseated all the time. Her immune system was weak, so she was susceptible to infection. Anyone who went into her room had to put on a hospital gown, gloves, and a mask.

I visited her almost every day. She was usually too sick to talk, so I just sat with her. Through all this she remained at peace with Heavenly Father. She said she had faith in His plan for her.

To me it was simple. Faith precedes the miracle. Cathy had great faith. I had faith in her faith. Her being healed was just a matter of time.

Eventually Cathy was able to come back to school. She wore a bandana and had planned to wear a wig until her hair grew back. But when her hair started to sprout, it was really itchy, and she couldn't stand to wear a wig. A good friend of hers shaved his head as a show of support.

Cathy jumped right into her classes. She

T*o me, it was simple. Faith precedes the miracle. Cathy had great faith. I had faith in her faith. Cathy would be healed; it was just a matter of time.*



even started marching with the pep club and spending time with her friends. For me, it was a relief when things seemed back to normal. Toward the end of the school year she ran for a student body office and won.

I was so happy to have my friend back. Everything was just like it had been before the cancer. Her faith had worked, and she was healed—or so I thought.

Around Christmas, Cathy started to get sick again. She went back into the hospital for another round of chemo, but this time it was different. When I went to visit, she was weaker. Her body had already been through so much that she just didn't have any strength. I think she knew that she didn't have much time left on earth because she was quietly saying good-bye. I was devastated.

My friend Cathy died shortly after her 18th

birthday. No one had more faith in Heavenly Father's ability to heal than she did. So why had she died? What was faith good for if people like Cathy still died? I didn't understand.

Slowly it dawned on me. I might not understand, but I knew that Cathy did. Her faith allowed her to have peace as she trusted in Heavenly Father's plan for her. Sometimes we think that if only we have enough faith, our problems will be taken away. But because of Cathy I learned that faith is what helps us accept Heavenly Father's plan. Then we can say, "Thy will be done," and really mean it. **NE**

CAPE TOWN'S RECORD-SETTING SCOUT

He's only the third Scout in the history of South Africa to become a three-time Springbok Scout, but he's the first to also earn his Duty to God Award.

BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE
Church Magazines

Whatever country you live in, it takes a lot of effort to earn the top award in Scouting. So imagine the effort required to earn the award three times. Rocco du Plessis is the first Springbok Scout in the 26-year history of the First Edgemean Troop in South Africa. So becoming a three-time Springbok Scout is a huge accomplishment.

However, there's another award Rocco earned last year that is equally important to him. "Earning the Duty to God has helped me achieve even more for my personal and spiritual growth," he says. "It's about your relationship with your Father in Heaven."

"The Scouting program here is very demanding," says Rocco, who is a member of the

Panorama Ward in the Cape Town South Africa Stake. It's hard to earn the Springbok. Sure, the Scout leaders are there to help you. But it's still tough. "If you don't work very hard, if you don't pull your weight, you're not going to get it," Rocco adds. A lot of time, planning, and effort goes into every award as you advance in the Scouting program, which in South Africa is not Church sponsored.

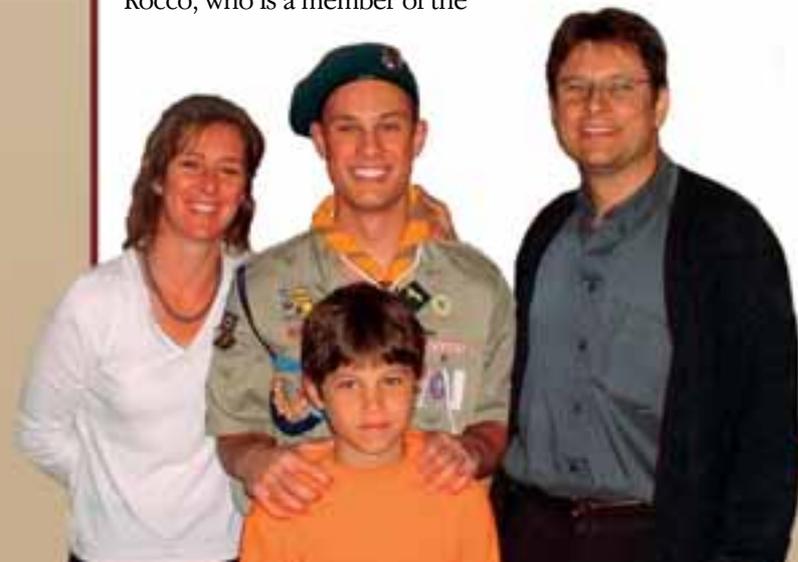
For the Duty to God Award, Rocco says the support of his parents and his Young Men leaders has made a big difference. "They *want* you to earn your Duty to God," he says, "and so many of the requirements are things you're doing daily already." Then it's just a matter of working with your parents and leaders to record your progress in those areas. "Most of the normal Mormon aspects of your life fill Duty to God requirements—if you do them." In other words, if a young man is attending Church meetings, praying regularly, studying the scriptures, and fulfilling his priesthood responsibilities, he is on the right track.

Becoming a Springbok Scout

Only about one or two percent of all Scouts nationwide receive South Africa's top Scouting award. And then only about one or two percent of these Springbok Scouts complete more than one of the three possible Explorer challenges. Rocco completed all three challenge awards, becoming only the third Scout in South African history to accomplish the feat.

A South African Scout advances through the program from Pathfinder to Adventurer to First Class then to Explorer. The Explorer badge is split into three different sections: Land Scouts, Air Scouts, and Sea Scouts. Usually a Scout will choose one of these sections to focus on as he works toward his final advancement—Springbok. Rocco focused on all three.

Along with the other badges and requirements, there are compulsory badges specific to each type of Explorer:



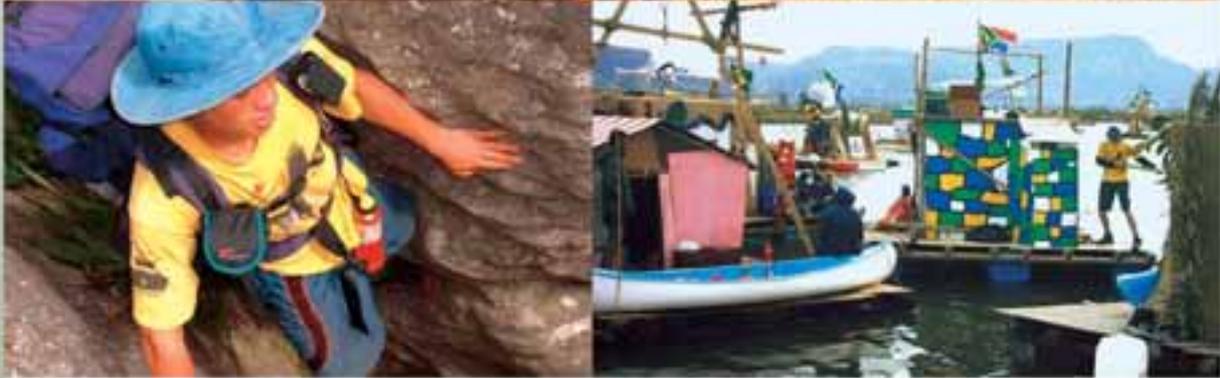


Rocco says that earning his Duty to God Award helped his personal and spiritual growth. Opposite page: Rocco with his mother, Sally; his father, André; and his brother, Jean-Jacq. Bottom left: Rocco led a group of Scouts on a three-day hike to fulfill one of the requirements for his Springbok award. Bottom right: Rocco shooting at the Cederberg marksmanship base, run by Latter-day Saint Scouts from Cape Town.





Above right: As part of his Air Explorer requirements, Rocco flew over the Cederberg wilderness and learned about air navigation. **Right:** Rocco was coleader of 10 Scouts as they hiked through the Cedar Mountains. **Far right:** Scouts build rafts for an annual competition. **Below:** Scouts work to build a bridge Rocco designed. **Opposite page:** Rocco holds the model of his bridge and his hike log.



The Land Explorer earns his Backwoodsman and Mapping badges. The Air Explorer earns his Air Navigator and Air Traffic Controller badges. And the Sea Explorer earns his Helmsman and Boatsman badges for sailing and rowing.

Rocco explains that it usually takes about two weekends at a badge course to earn each award. There are the white badges—the theory behind a skill. And then there are the green badges—the practical application of the skill. For example, to earn your Backwoodsman badge, first you'll learn things like wilderness survival, navigating with the stars, and making fires without matches. Then comes the practical application. You get dropped off in the bush for 48 hours, and you're on your own.

So Rocco has been pretty busy with Scouting for several years now. From February until December last

year, for example, he was away many weekends. "It seemed I was up permanently on badge courses," he says. Plus, for the past five years, Rocco has been the troop leader. That means he's been in charge of organizing all the troop camps. He's had to plan meals, do the shopping, coordinate troop meetings, type up consent forms for the other Scouts and their parents to sign, and oversee each of the campouts.

One valuable trait Rocco has learned along the way is persistence. "At least half of my badges I didn't pass the first time on the course," he says. "Within six months you can go back and do it again or have an adult who has done the badge test you on it." For instance, one of the requirements for First Aid is bandaging. "I failed bandaging because part of the knot on one of my bandages stuck out," Rocco says. "So I had to redo the bandaging portion in order to earn my



level-two First Aid.”

In addition to the badges, there are other projects a Scout must complete to earn his Springbok. One of these is a construction project. Rocco chose to build a bridge. He had to first design and build a scale model of the bridge. Then, with a team of six other Scouts, Rocco had to build it full size, about 20 feet tall (6 m) and 30 feet long (9 m). It took nearly nine hours to build the bridge and then disassemble it.

Then there’s community service, which is a big part of earning both the Springbok and the Duty to God Award. For his Springbok service requirement, Rocco visited more than 40 homes of seniors to help them with various chores and repairs. “The only big thing that overlapped



was the 40-hour service project I was able to use for both Scouts and the Duty to God Award,” says Rocco.

Of all the requirements Rocco has fulfilled to earn his various awards, he points to one in particular as most valuable for his personal growth: “Reading the Book of Mormon,” Rocco says without hesitation. “That was the biggest and most rewarding challenge.”

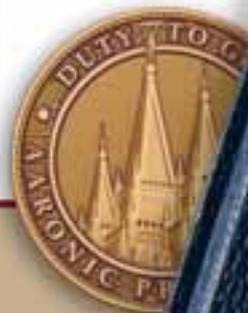
Becoming a Missionary

“I had read the Book of Mormon once already, a year or so ago, but I was just reading to get it done,” Rocco explains. “When I started reading it again, I really wanted to learn and gain a testimony of it.” He approached reading the Book of Mormon in a completely different way his second time through. “Every time I read now, I pray before to ask Heavenly Father’s Spirit to be with me as I read.”

Rocco’s already begun on his next big project—to more actively share his testimony with others as he prepares to serve a full-time mission. His Scouting experiences and earning the Duty to God Award have helped him in his personal development and in becoming a missionary. “To spread the gospel, I needed to know what is in the Book of Mormon, and I needed to know that it is true,” he says. “After reading the Book of Mormon for the second time, I received a testimony of it.”

Even if there was not a Duty to God Award to earn, Rocco says he would have fulfilled most of the requirements simply because he wanted to prepare for missionary service. Attending church, reading the scriptures, praying daily, and giving service are just part of who Rocco is, of being what a Latter-day Saint is supposed to be.

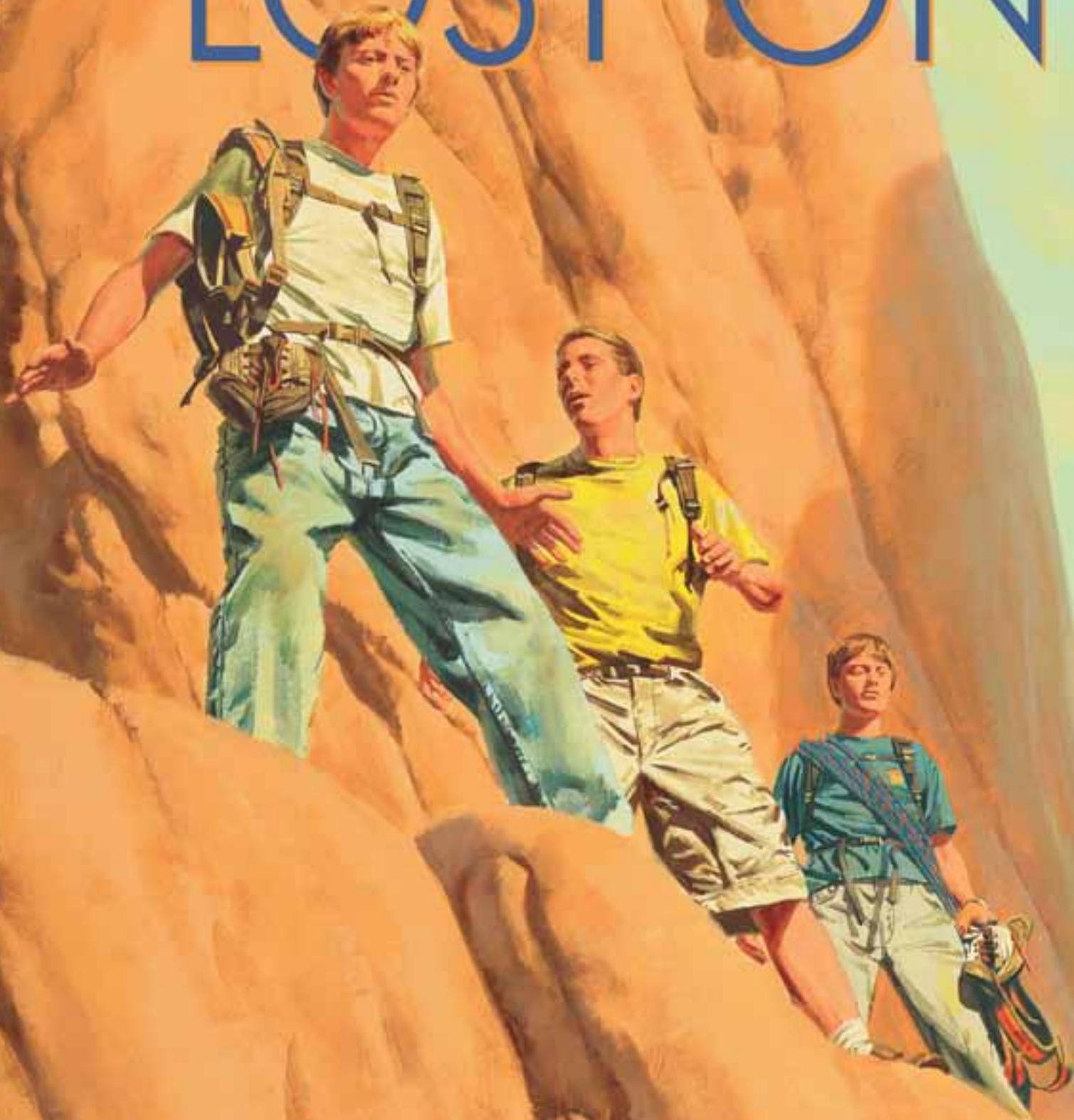
Now that he has received his call to serve as a full-time missionary, the testimony Elder du Plessis has built is proving much more useful than the rope-and-log bridge he built for his Springbok construction project. However, some of the backwoodsman skills he learned as a Scout may come in handy as he serves in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi. **NE**



THE
BOOK
OF
MORMON

ANOTHER TESTAMENT
OF JESUS CHRIST

LOST ON



THE LEDGE

BY NATHAN WAITE

Our cell phone didn't work, but our prayer did.

It had been a perfect day of exploring a narrow sandstone canyon and basking in the rugged beauty of southern Utah. I was a little worried that we hadn't come across any signs of previous hikers in the canyon, but we had researched the route and had a good map, so we knew what lay ahead: a spectacular 150-foot rope descent through a waterfall into a picturesque canyon, leading out to the main road. As Dustin, Roland, and I neared what we expected to be the end of our adventure, we stopped to eat the last of our food and grinned at each other in anticipation.

Half an hour later, the canyon opened up to the sunlight, and in front of us the riverbed curved in a different direction than the map indicated. Our spirit of adventure overcame our better judgment, so we followed this new course. The soft sand quickly turned to rock, and we scrambled over boulders and potholes. We successfully negotiated a 40-foot drop, turned a corner—and stared in disbelief. There in front of us the ground melted away, dropping hundreds of feet to the Virgin River below.

It dawned on us that we had messed up somehow. There was no turning back; the slick canyon walls made ascension impossible. My two friends scouted the narrow ledge for a possible route down while I pored over the map. After awhile, my eye spotted another canyon on the map, and this one definitely matched the canyon we were in. Scanning the map, I could see that the cliff we were on was over 400 feet high. Dustin and Roland returned, and we talked about the possibility of trying to descend the cliff with the rope we had. Roland suggested we pray about it, and we quickly agreed.

It was a simple, sincere prayer. We thanked the Lord for keeping us safe and admitted that we had made mistakes. We told Him we were now trying our best to correct ourselves and return to safety. Laying before Him our problem and the possible solution of descending the cliff, we asked for a confirmation. And the Lord truly responded, touching each of us with a quiet feeling in our hearts that we should not try to go down the cliff.

As darkness fell, we realized our only way out was rescue. Our cellular phone received no signal, and we couldn't go forward or back. When the sun sank behind the opposite mountains, the temperature dropped sharply, and we spent a sleepless night shivering together, hungry and thirsty, a few steps from a 400-foot cliff. Before



We placed our trust in the Lord, and as the helicopter burst over the canyon wall, we knew He had answered our prayers

trying to sleep, we again offered up a prayer of sincere thanks for protection, and a blessing of peace for our families, who had certainly figured out, by now, that something had gone wrong.

The next morning, by the time it was light enough to safely walk around the cliff's edge, we had decided on several courses of action. We burned leaves to send up white smoke and scattered our equipment around the ledge to make us easier to spot from the air. After we split a granola bar, Dustin climbed up to higher ground to try to get reception for the phone, while Roland and I set about purifying water from a pool. We had made mistakes, and now we could only do everything in our power to be rescued, trusting that the Lord would comfort our families and lead rescuers to us. The day wore on, and our situation worsened. The fire melted our water container, Dustin had no luck with his phone, and we made plans

for surviving another night. In that helpless state, I realized like never before my utter dependence on the Lord. I'd never felt so close to Heavenly Father when I prayed.

We thought we heard planes throughout the day, but neither the fire nor our yells brought them any closer. Around noon we heard the thumping sound of an engine grow and saw a helicopter in the distance, but our hopes faded when it flew out of sight. Then, quite suddenly, the search and rescue helicopter burst over the far canyon wall. It spotted Dustin above us and circled, looking for a place to land. Not long after, a rope dropped down to us, quickly followed by the search and rescue team with food, water, and our way home.

As we flew over canyon and mountain to our waiting families, I offered a silent prayer of thanks. The Lord had helped us make wise judgments and had helped our rescuers find us. He had also answered our plea to comfort our families. While they had spent a sleepless night, they had felt the Spirit whisper that we were OK. The Savior's promise in 3 Nephi 18:21 is true: "Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name, that your wives and your children may be blessed." I learned that on the edge of a 400-foot cliff, waiting to be rescued. **NE**

Do you have a story about a prayer that was answered? Share it with us at newera@ldschurch.org.

BEATING THE BLAHS

Everyone feels a little down once in a while.* It's part of life. But those down times should be temporary, and we have more control over them than we sometimes think we do. The seminary class of the Kirkland Ward in Montreal, Canada, has some suggestions for snapping out of those blahs.

The Holy Ghost is called the Comforter for good reason, and there are a number of suggestions for inviting His healing influence. They're not new, but when you are feeling low, you may be tempted to ignore them because Satan does not want you to be happy. So remember these basics:

- ❖ Pray. God's love for you is perfect, and He can communicate that love to you through the Spirit.
- ❖ Read the scriptures. They help you feel the Spirit and help put your problems in perspective.
- ❖ Read your patriarchal blessing. It's your own personal revelation and will help you see your great worth.

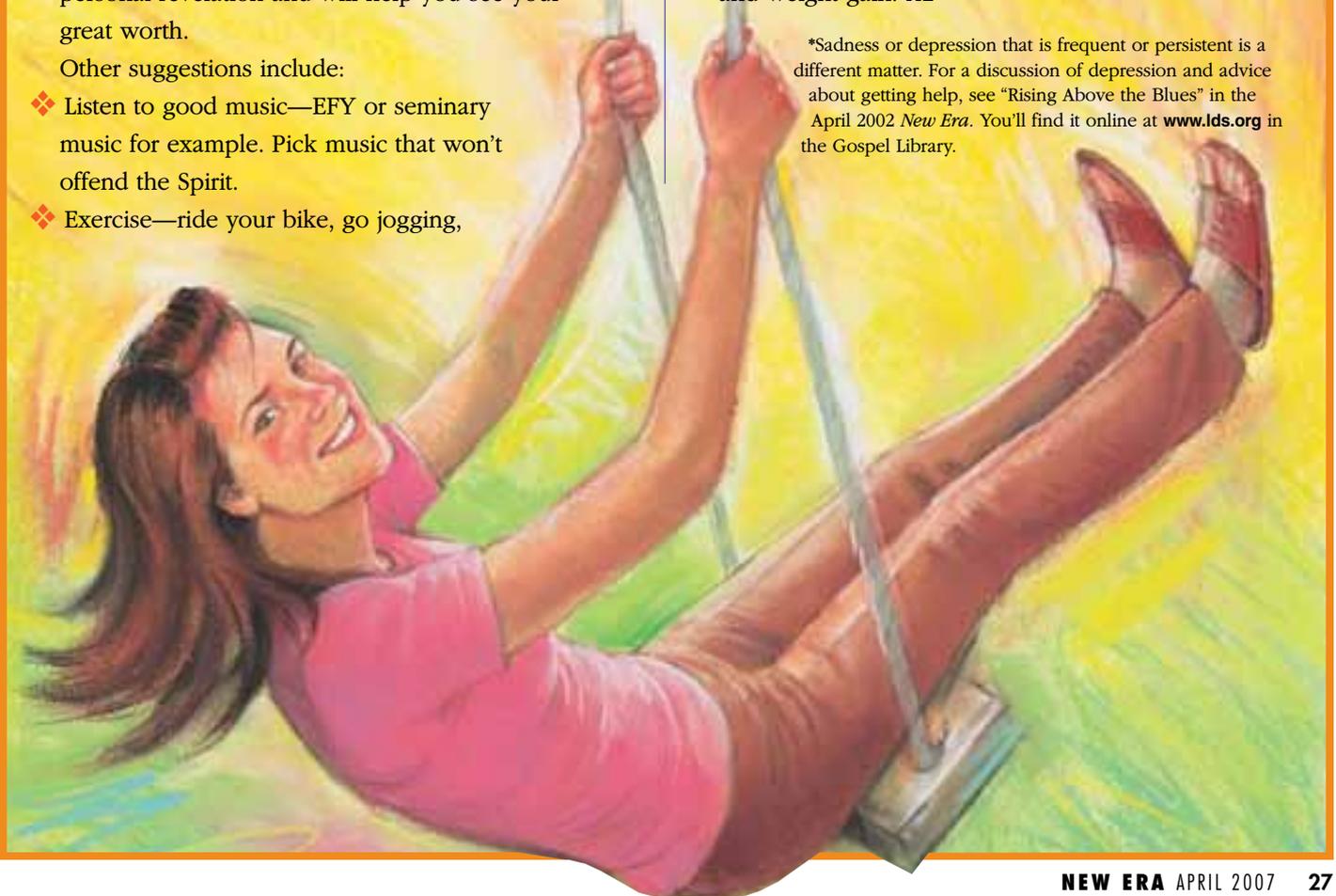
Other suggestions include:

- ❖ Listen to good music—EFY or seminary music for example. Pick music that won't offend the Spirit.
- ❖ Exercise—ride your bike, go jogging,

or just take a brisk walk. It stimulates brain chemicals that improve your mood.

- ❖ Get some perspective—read your journal or look at your scrapbook. Remember all of the good things that have happened to you and you'll see that down times are temporary.
- ❖ Write in your journal. This helps you to sort through your thoughts and feelings.
- ❖ Do something nice for someone else. When you serve others, you invite the Spirit and your own problems shrink or even disappear.
- ❖ Spend time with and talk to good friends—the kind who help you be your best self.
- ❖ Go to church; participate in activities.
- ❖ What about eating chocolate or other favorite “comfort” foods? You need to be careful. Eating to fill emotional needs can lead to unhealthy eating habits and weight gain. **NE**

*Sadness or depression that is frequent or persistent is a different matter. For a discussion of depression and advice about getting help, see “Rising Above the Blues” in the April 2002 *New Era*. You'll find it online at www.lds.org in the Gospel Library.



THE FREEDOM TO

BY ADAM C. OLSON

Church Magazines

The ballerina glides across the stage—spiraling, spinning, then springing into the air so easily it’s as if she caught gravity napping. She is in every movement a fluid expression of freedom.

Like many little girls, when Maria Victoria Rojas Rivera of Chile—Mavi to her friends—was four years old, she decided she wanted to become a ballerina. And like all of those other little girls, she quickly discovered that the grace and freedom she saw on the stage came at a pretty steep price. The effort and discipline required to become a professional ballerina are too much for many young dreamers.

The Cost of Dreams

“When you’re little, you don’t understand the sacrifice it takes,” Mavi says. “When I started studying at age 10, our

*Rules
can seem
restrictive,
but obedience
allows Mavi
to soar.*

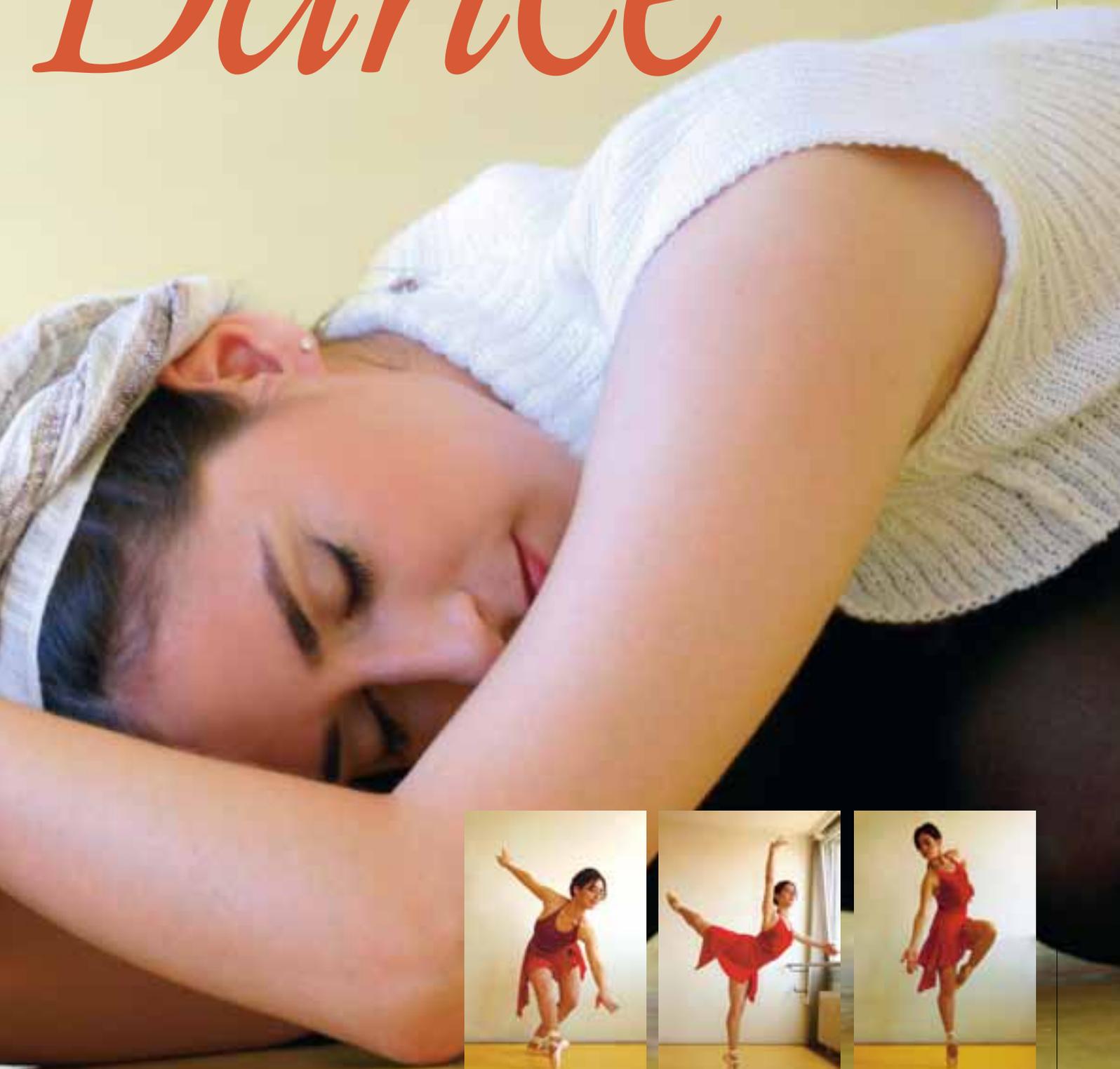
teachers told us that half of our lives would be spent dancing. We’d have to give up a lot of things.”

Things like free time and certain foods. Mavi would have to put a lot of time and effort into exercising and practicing. She’d have to watch carefully what she ate. And after schoolwork and dance, there wouldn’t be much time for friends.

Mavi decided that her dream was important enough to her to try.

“The teenage years can be a complicated time,” she says. “My friends didn’t always understand why I wouldn’t eat certain things or stay out late with them.”

Dance





The Price of Freedom

Mavi learned early on that what appeared to be restrictions on her freedom were actually the only way she could free herself from things that would keep her from her goal.

“I chose not to stay out late, and I chose to spend time practicing instead of going to the mall with my friends,” Mavi says. “If I was tired because I stayed out too late or if I didn’t know the steps because I didn’t practice, I couldn’t dance.”

That kind of discipline isn’t easy, but Mavi says it is worth it.

“Everyone has moments when you want to give in,” Mavi confesses, “but you have the power to choose. Discipline can appear restrictive, but self-discipline is a choice. And I chose to accept this lifestyle in order to dance.”

A More Long-Term Goal

At some point during her drive to become a ballerina, Mavi realized that dancing was not the only goal she had or the only worthwhile thing she would need to sacrifice for.

Along the way, she gained a desire to follow Jesus Christ, and she realized that what ballet had taught her about discipline applies to gospel discipleship as well. Just as her friends had wondered why she would do what she did for dance, they asked why she lived such restrictive gospel principles.

“I explained that we have the liberty to choose, and I chose to accept this lifestyle in order to be free from sin and have the Holy Ghost with me,” she says.

Or as the Savior said it, a disciple must “take up his cross,” meaning to deny oneself all ungodliness and every worldly lust and to keep God’s commandments (see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:26). Such self-discipline brings us to “liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator,” while trying to live outside the commandments leads to “captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil” (2 Nephi 2:27).

“Obedience brings greater freedom and peace than anything,” Mavi says. “My goals aren’t limited to this earthly life but include eternity.”

Worth the Sacrifice

Mavi floats across the stage like a leaf carried by the current, stretching and flowing from one move to the next—*développé* and *pirouette*, *glissade* and *grand jeté*.

A ballerina can make her body move in ways that would hurt most other people. This freedom of movement is essential for communicating with the audience. But even though a good ballerina makes every move look effortless on stage, she has put in a lot of effort off the stage.

After eight years of sacrifice and hours of training almost every day, she is living her dream on stage—and in the gospel.

“People think it looks so beautiful and graceful,” Mavi says. “But the movements are very controlled. It takes a lot of strength to control yourself like that.”

The gospel parallel is important. Following Christ takes strength. And the rewards are sweet.

“The rewards from so many sacrifices are that I can dance,” Mavi says. “I feel strong, and I feel the guidance of the Holy Ghost in

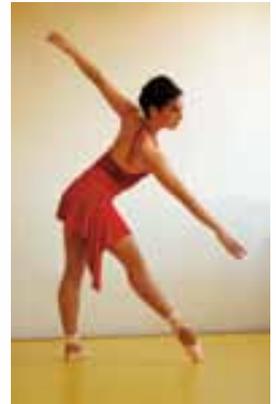
every step I take—on stage and off.”

Not Done Dancing

According to Nephi, once we’ve felt the desire to follow Christ and have been baptized and confirmed, we must still endure to the end (see 2 Nephi 31:19–20). For Mavi, ballet requires similar dedication.

After dancing in Paraguay, she returned to Viña del Mar, Chile, to teach for a few years. Now she wants to take her dancing to the next level. She has set new goals that have taken her to Argentina, Germany, Ireland, and Spain to study and audition with different ballet companies.

She knows she must continue to strive—both on the stage and in the gospel. She must continue with discipline if she wants the freedom to dance. And she must continue in faith if she wants the freedom that comes from discipleship. “If ye continue in my word,” the Lord taught, “then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31–32). **NE**



DANCING WITH WISDOM

Mavi has to put in a lot of effort off the stage to stay healthy and in shape. Aside from watching what she eats and getting enough rest, Mavi exercises a lot, and she dances at least five hours almost every day. But she doesn’t take care of herself just because she’s a dancer.

“As a member of the Church, I understand that my body is the temple of my spirit. As an artist, I need every part of

my body to work right, so I protect it as best as I can. But as a member, I already knew I should do that.”

Her testimony of the Word of Wisdom’s inspired nature has been strengthened by her experience with ballet. “When you

treat your body right, you can tell,” she says.

You have to take care of yourself to be a ballerina, but Mavi says, “We should all take care of our bodies, even if we aren’t dancers. We don’t get to choose our bodies, but we should all be grateful for and take care of what we have been given. They are gifts from God, and we’ve each been given our body for a purpose.”





The LONG WAIT

BY ALEXA JUSTESEN

I was impatient after waiting in the temple for a few hours. How would it feel to wait hundreds of years?

My ward had been planning a temple day for a long time. So, early on a Saturday morning, my sister and I woke up, groggily drove to the church, met the youth of our ward, and then drove to the temple. When we arrived, we noticed a large group ahead of us that was also waiting to perform baptisms for the dead. Our leaders had made the appointment for us to be at the temple that morning, and they had been told that at 8:00 we would be able to go and perform baptisms.

Well, 8:00 came and went, and the group ahead of us was still there. Soon it was 9:00, and no one in our group had been baptized yet. A few people started to grow impatient. I'll admit, I did, too.

I looked around. The leaders' faces were showing a bit of concern. Some teens had to be home by 10:00. The temple workers let them go ahead of everyone else and be baptized. Since I didn't have to be home by a certain time, I waited.

Around 10:15, the temple workers let me and the rest of the girls in my ward go to the font. But we still had to wait, because they were letting others come in before us to be baptized. I grew a little bit impatient. We were so close to being baptized, but we still had to wait. I watched the minutes creep by slowly on the clock. When would it be my turn?

I watched a deacon walk down the steps into the font. It must have been his first time, because he climbed down

the steps very slowly and looked rather nervous. That was when it hit me. I had been waiting for two and a half hours, but the people we were being baptized for had been waiting for much longer than that, some for hundreds of years! Who was I to grow impatient because I was giving up a Saturday, while many people who had passed on were waiting for someone to find their names and submit them to the temple? I said a silent prayer to Heavenly Father asking for forgiveness.

Soon it was my turn to enter the font. As I walked down the steps, I thought of the people who had been waiting for this day. How did they feel knowing that finally they had the opportunity to accept the gospel of Jesus Christ? How would I feel if I were one of them? I read the name on the screen of the first woman I was being baptized for. She had died in 1752. She had been waiting for more than 250 years! My mind couldn't even start to comprehend that.

After I was baptized, I stepped out of the font, feeling gratitude toward my Heavenly Father for letting me be born into a family that had the gospel so that I didn't have to wait my turn after I passed on. I was so grateful that I had made good choices and was able to come to the temple. In the dressing room, I distinctly heard a voice whisper, "Thank you." Tears filled my eyes as I towed off my wet hair.

After we left the temple, one of my Young Women leaders remarked, "You girls have been here for a long time, but what better place to spend a few hours than in the temple?" For the feeling I had right then, I would gladly give up Saturday morning just to come to the temple. **NE**

ROAD RASH AND REPENTANCE

BY NATHAN RICHARDSON

I knew I should have listened to my dad's warning, so now I didn't want him to find out I'd hurt myself.

Sliding to a stop on the gravelly pavement, I winced at the pain in my arm. It was then I realized my brother's idea might not have been such a great one.

One summer afternoon when I was 12 years old, my brother Jason and I began snooping around the garage looking for something to do. Jason got the brilliant idea of tying our old red wagon behind his bike so he could pull me up the street. I, being foolish, thought it was a good idea.

As we tied the two ends of a rope to the bike seat and the wagon handle, Dad saw us from the kitchen window and came out to stop us. "I don't want you kids doing that. Somebody will fall and get hurt." We made a show of slowly untying the knots, but as soon as he was back inside, we cinched them tight again.

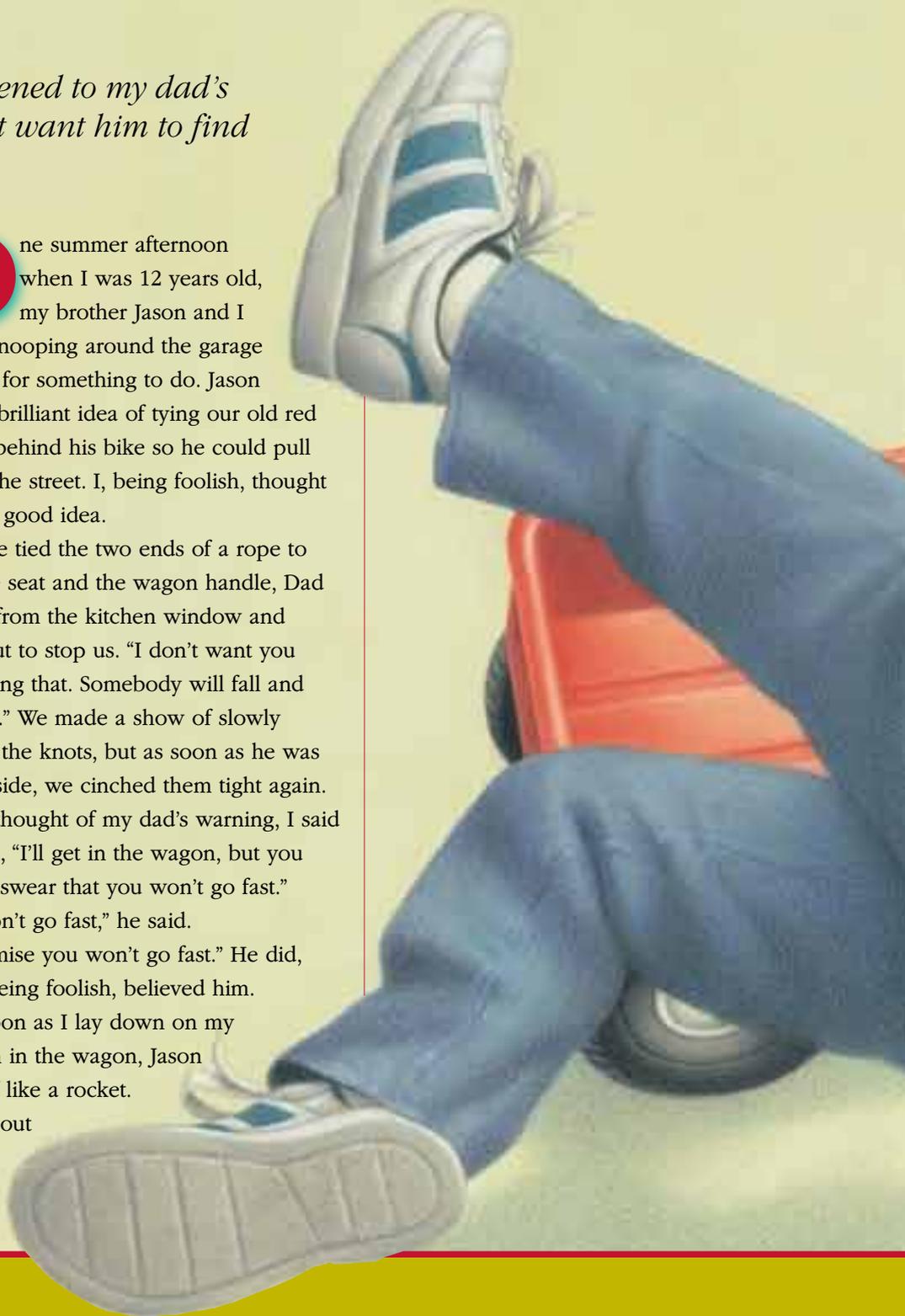
As I thought of my dad's warning, I said to Jason, "I'll get in the wagon, but you have to swear that you won't go fast."

"I won't go fast," he said.

"Promise you won't go fast." He did, and I, being foolish, believed him.

As soon as I lay down on my stomach in the wagon, Jason took off like a rocket.

I called out for him to slow down,



but apparently he didn't hear me. He rounded a corner to go down the alley, and my wagon went up on two wheels, dumping me onto the pavement amidst a mixture of gravel, dirt, crushed glass, and who-knows-what-else. I slid to a stop and lay for a moment to get my breath back. I winced as I picked myself up. The pavement had left a big scrape the size of a bacon strip on my left forearm.

My brother hadn't noticed what happened, so I was left alone. I sniffled to myself as I walked carefully home, trying not to jostle my burning arm while I picked bits of gravel out of my wound.

I knew I was going to have to clean it because it was so big and dirty. But my greatest fear was what my dad would say when he saw me because he had specifically told us not to do what we had just done.

When I got home, I quietly slipped past

the kitchen where Dad was reading the paper. He called out to me and asked if everything was okay. He must have sensed my hesitancy. I said I was fine as I headed down the hall to the bathroom. There I ran some warm water over my arm, which felt good. I hoped a bandage would keep infection out so it could heal. However, there was no gauze or tape in the bathroom. I would have to go upstairs.

To do so, I quickly walked past the kitchen again, keeping my arm hidden from view. Upstairs in the fully equipped mom-and-dad bathroom, I tried to cut some gauze and tape it on my arm, but I couldn't do it one-handed. I began to get frustrated because I was so helpless. I was on the verge of crying as I placed two very inadequate Band-Aids over my scrape.

About that time my dad came in. I'm sure he decided to investigate because he had that instinct and

usually knew when something was up. I braced myself for a scolding, but instead he saw my arm and said, "Oh my gosh, that's not going to do it. We need to put something on that." I told him what happened. I remember feeling ashamed that I was in the very predicament he'd warned me of, and vaguely wondering why he didn't bring up that fact.

Dad opened the cabinet to get out his arsenal.

Out came the hydrogen peroxide. He squirted it all over my cut and I could see it foam up, fizzling like soda. Next he lathered on the ointment, which now felt nice and cool. Then he cut a strip of gauze the right size and taped it over my cut, leaving no loose edge to catch on things. I was silent the whole time because I



When my dad found me hurt, he wasn't so concerned that I had ignored his warning; he was focused on taking care of me.

was trying not to cry—but not because of my pain. When he was done, I gave him a hug that lingered longer than usual.

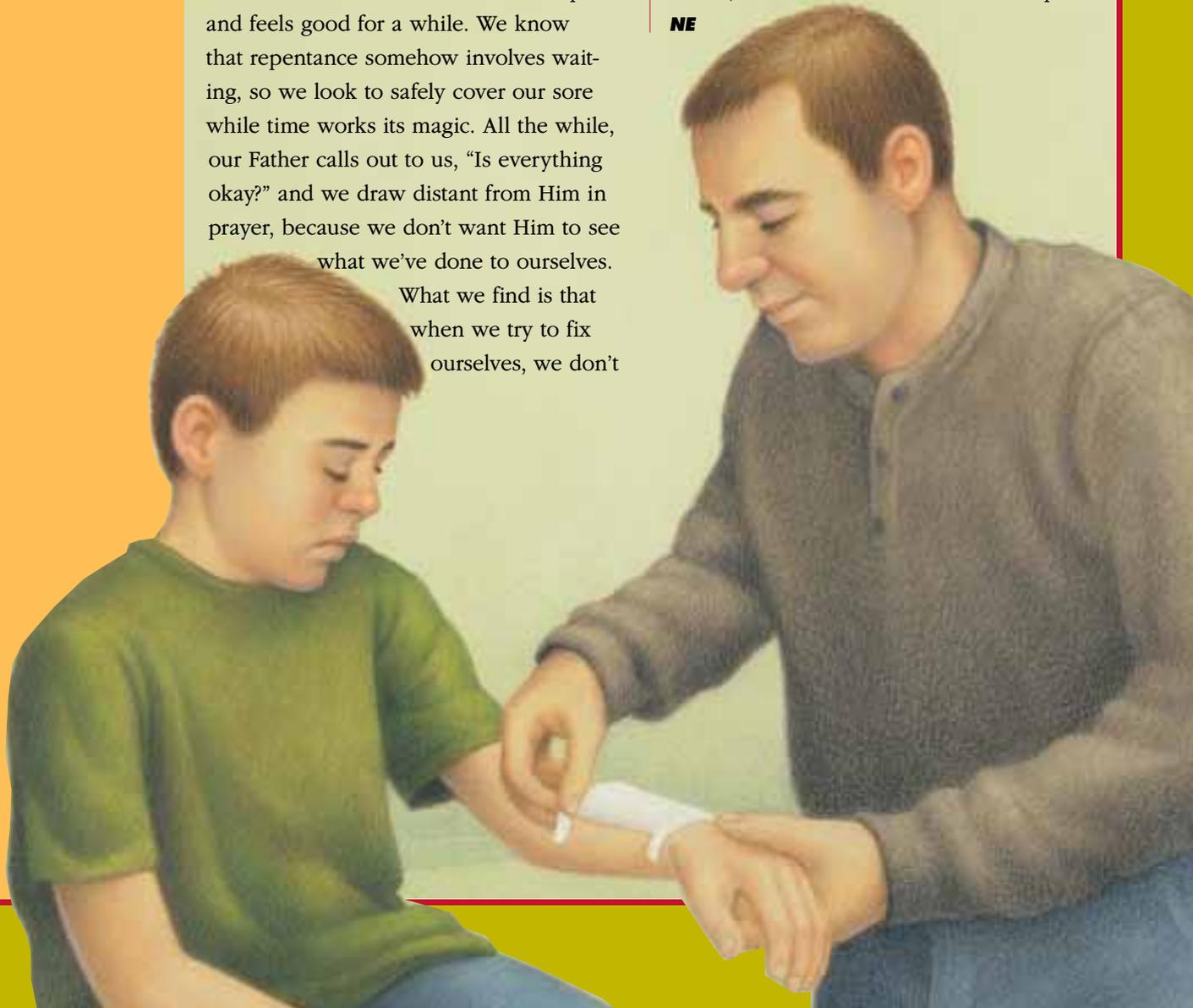
I've often thought of how little we understand our Father in Heaven. I think if we really knew Him, we wouldn't hesitate to go to Him for repentance. We hear His repeated warnings and often ignore them. Then, when we find ourselves in the very situation He foretold, we are terrified at the thought of asking Him for help. We imagine in our minds a tyrant, some kind of prosecuting attorney who will demand we pay for our acts. Yet we find ourselves bearing an infected wound that can lead to even worse sickness if we don't do something about it. We've learned about the repentance process, so we run warm water over the sin. It dulls the pain and feels good for a while. We know that repentance somehow involves waiting, so we look to safely cover our sore while time works its magic. All the while, our Father calls out to us, "Is everything okay?" and we draw distant from Him in prayer, because we don't want Him to see what we've done to ourselves.

What we find is that when we try to fix ourselves, we don't

have the needed equipment. So we might try to approximate the repentance process. But the medicine hurts too much, so we don't apply it; and the bandage is impossible to put on by ourselves, so we try to cover it with a few little Band-Aids.

Then the Father comes in and sees our raw sore, which we had tried to hide from Him. He helps us clean it out. He applies the Atonement to our wounds, which begins the healing process. If it doesn't burn at first, we're not repenting. Then He helps us tape on a bandage that we could never have gotten on by ourselves. With our red wound now dressed in white, we are left to wonder why we were ever afraid to ask our Heavenly Father for help. I think that if we really came to know Heavenly Father, we wouldn't be so scared to repent.

NE



THE EXTRA SMILE



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

“Having the whole family work together on your calculus homework does not count as a family home evening activity.”

“The last clue on this crossword is ‘genius,’ but I can’t seem to get my name to fit!”



JON CLARK

“Man! I could have sworn I had a 20-dollar bill in here.”



JON B. HANLEY

“That was before the bakery.”



RYAN STOKER

Unity Float

“Unity Among All His People” declares the sign carried by the Young Women of the Bismarck North Dakota Ward. Dressed in their Native American “fancy shawls,” they are marching in the International Powwow and Bismarck Folkfest Parade ahead of a grand float, complete with a large headdress. The Bismarck Young Women have become a fixture in the parade over the last several years, and their float has won multiple first-prize honors. Much of this success is thanks to the guidance and inspiration of Sister Marilyn One Feather, who started the unity float.

Sister One Feather wanted the float project to promote unity. She invited the Young Women to be involved in building and decorating the float, which encouraged a spirit of



friendship among the girls. Speaking of the experience, Mia Maid Barbara Gietzen said, “It builds faith. It takes a lot of faith to get these things together.”

During the parade, Mia Maids Jenna Byzewski and Mindy Bowen, who both have Native American ancestry, participated in traditional dances alongside the float with several other Native American youth from the community. This kind of collaboration and interaction will, Sister One Feather hopes, foster a greater spirit of fellowship within the community at large.

The float brought the Young Women together as a group and taught them the value of unity—within the Church and the community. “Having unity in your life is really important,” says Beehive Becky Gietzen. “Everybody—not just the people you hang around with, but everybody—should be a part of the group. You try not to leave anybody out.”

“The greatest events of history are those that affect the greatest number for the longest periods. By this standard, no event could be more important to individuals or nations than the resurrection of the Master.”

Ezra Taft Benson, “The Meaning of Easter,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1992, 2.



PLAYING THE SANTIAGO ORGAN

The famous Santiago de Compostela Cathedral in the northwest region of Spain is the supposed final resting place of the Apostle James, the brother of John. It is an impressive structure with a world-renown organ. Over 100,000 Catholics travel to the city each year to visit the Shrine of St. James inside the cathedral.

When Elder Tyler Clair Neel and his companion, who are serving in the Spain Bilbao Mission, visited the cathedral, Elder Neel asked for permission to play the “awesome” organ. The dean of the cathedral directed him to the organist and permission was granted.

“I’m probably the first Latter-day Saint to ever play the Santiago Cathedral organ, and I played hymns of the Restoration!” Elder Neel said about the experience. In fact, Elder Neel was able to play the organ three times. And the cathedral organist enjoyed the hymns so much that Elder Neel presented him with a large-size, spiral-bound copy of the LDS hymnbook as a thank-you.

In the photo above, Elder Neel is playing the organ at the cathedral in Leon, Spain, one of his previous areas.



Write Away!

Do you know how to knit? Can you change the oil in the family car? Maybe your mother taught you how to make fudge. We’d love to hear about skills or talents your parents or grandparents have passed on to you. And more importantly, how learning from them has

helped you build relationships in your family. You can submit your story to: Learning New Skills
New Era Editorial
50 East North Temple St.
Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT
84150-3220 USA
Or e-mail us at newera@ldschurch.org

What’s up where you are? Let us know at newera@ldschurch.org.

SINGING FOR ROSE

BY NERISSA DAWN CANNON

As a teenager, I didn't want to participate in the branch choir. I loved to sing, but singing with the branch never thrilled me. One day, though, I grudgingly decided to accompany my mom to choir practice. Believe it or not, I actually had fun that day. I couldn't exactly explain what it was, but for the first time I could remember, I wanted to be there. I continued to go.

At our last practice before we were to sing at branch conference, a recently returned missionary suggested that our choir go sing for Sister Rose. Sister Rose was a sweet 90-year-old lady whom I'd heard a lot about but never met. She was homebound, and the leaders were always telling us youth that she was lonely and that we should visit her. Not knowing her, I felt funny about just showing up on her doorstep. When this returned missionary suggested we sing, I jumped on the idea. Everyone else did too.

The next week, our choir sang at branch conference. Our stake president said that we were one of the best choirs in the stake. Even though we were a small branch, we had the best turnout as well.

Finally, we got to go sing for Sister Rose. I don't recall having met a sweeter lady. While we were singing, she caught my eye and smiled. I struggled hard to choke back the tears as I saw her singing the chorus of "Praise to the Man" with us. That day I knew why I had participated in the choir.

After we were done, Sister Rose said we were one of the best choirs in the stake. Members of our choir enthusias-

tically reported to her that the stake president had said the same thing.

The joy I saw on her face was worth dragging myself from my Sunday afternoon nap to choir practice. In fact, it was a small price to pay. I shudder to think that if I had been hardhearted and not gone to choir, I would have missed out on this amazing experience. It was wonderful to be a part of something that brought another person such happiness. **NE**



A FRIENDLY INVITATION

BY CHRIS LARSON

During my freshman year of high school, I met a girl who shared something with me that has changed my life permanently.

I knew she held her family and church very close to her. She always seemed to be talking about these things and never failed to invite me to a church activity. I always had an excuse for not being able to go, but in truth, I was simply afraid of the rumors I had heard about Mormons. After 18 months of invitations, I decided to go help her father with a Cub Scout activity at her local meetinghouse. The members were a lot of fun, and even though I didn't recognize it by name, I felt the Spirit very strongly. I went to more activities until eventually I found myself waking up at 4:30 a.m. to see what seminary was all about.

My friend invited me to read the Book of Mormon and meet with the missionaries. I agreed to meet with them in her home where I was able to feel the love and support from her family and also hear their conversion stories. The missionaries and this family encouraged me to read and to pray. Through their examples and support, I was able to gain a testimony of the Book of Mormon and the restored Church of Jesus Christ. I was baptized and later served in a branch presidency while on my mission in Lubbock, Texas. I loved to share this experience with those I taught and will be forever grateful for what a friend was willing to share with me. **NE**

THE MERITS OF SCOUTING

BY HIKIMAI JOHNSON

While earning the merit badges for Scouts, I noticed that most of the badges involve some sort of service.

Scouting is a great learning process. Earning merit badges has helped me explore different professional opportunities in many different careers. It gave me a lot of experiences that help me now and will continue to help me in the future. Scouting has taught me basic survival skills in case of emergencies and it taught me the values of service to others. It helped me with my communication and leadership skills and it taught me how to set goals and accomplish them. It also taught me how to have fun camping with my family and friends!

Now I use the skills that I learned while earning the merit badges and my Eagle rank in my schooling,



especially in the business area. I have listed Scouting and my Eagle rank when applying for academic honor societies, and I will be able to use it for other things. Scouting is a great tool to help me and other young men in schooling and in preparing for a mission, a career, and life in general. Through my experiences I have found that Scouting and the Duty to God program go hand in hand and both have helped me in the learning process of life.

As den chief for my mom I had the opportunity to help teach and work with other Scouts and Cub Scouts and I have also worked with my brother, who just received his Eagle, so I have had many opportunities to further the Scouting program. Scouting is awesome! **NE**

MY COMFORT

BY WHITNEY HOLYOAK LIFFERTH

I was 14 and had just moved to a new school with very few members. I had lived in a town made up mostly of LDS residents, so living in a place where I was the minority was a whole new experience. I didn't quite know how to take it in. I was really struggling to find where I belonged while still upholding my standards.

After one extremely trying day, I fell

to my knees in prayer, pleading for comfort and support. Then a calm feeling came over me. I felt arms embrace me as if someone were holding me gently. It was like my dad was giving me a big hug, only the warmth went all the way through. I knew without a doubt that the Lord felt my pain and was there to reassure me that my struggles were known. That's something I will always keep with me in times of pain. **NE**

Share your own experience with us at newera@ldschurch.org.



THE WINDOWS *of* HEAVEN

BY ELDER H. BRYAN RICHARDS

Served as a member of the Seventy
from 1998 to 2006

I got my first real job when I was about 13 years old. I was a newspaper delivery boy. I still remember riding my bike around my neighborhood in Salt Lake City every evening, throwing papers onto my neighbors' front steps. I didn't make a whole lot of money at it, but each month when I received my wages, there was no question that I would pay tithing. My parents had set the example of paying tithing, and I knew it was a commandment from the Lord (see D&C 119:3-4).

I remember attending tithing settlement as a youngster with my mother and father. It was such a natural thing to me to visit with the bishop and to declare myself a full-tithe payer. Even as I got older and started earning more money, I always paid tithing first.

When I became a parent, it was important to me that each of my children visit individually with the bishop at tithing settlement. My wife and I tried to teach them early on to pay tithing on the little allowance we gave them so that when they grew older it was something they had already seen the blessings of and knew they should do.

Blessings Will Come

When Sister Richards and I were first married, we were going to school and had very little income to meet our expenses. Paying our tithing was a great sacrifice. But Sister Richards never even considered using our tithing money for other things we greatly needed, like food or rent. She insisted that we pay our tithing first, and we always did. Sometimes we had only a penny left when all of our obligations were met, but we always seemed to have just enough to meet them. That was a blessing from exercising our faith to pay tithing.

One blessing that I believe has come from paying tithing is that over the course of my career I never once went for a long time without a job. At one point early in my career I was laid off from my job, and within two weeks I had another job making more than I had at my previous one. During 25 years with one company, I went through many periods when employees were laid off all around me, but I wasn't. I believe the Lord blessed me for paying tithing.

My young brothers and sisters, if you will exercise the faith necessary to pay tithing, I promise you, you will be blessed. No matter how small your contribution may seem, pay



*If you will exercise
the faith necessary
to pay tithing, I
promise you, you
will be blessed.*



While in India, at the groundbreaking ceremony for the chapel in Rajahmundry, I met faithful Latter-day Saints. I was reminded that tithing is not a monetary commandment—it is a principle of faith.

it without the situation. Make it the first thing you do when you earn some money. You will develop faith to

do things you otherwise may not think you have the ability to accomplish. You will be wiser in how you manage your money, and you will gain the sweet assurance that comes from knowing you are doing what the Lord asks of you. This will be a

source of strength, and you will be able to draw on that strength in the future.

I know that Sister Richards and I received many blessings as a result of paying tithing. I have also witnessed the overflow of blessings that have come to faithful Latter-day Saints in remote parts of the world because they were willing to pay tithing.

The Church in India

One incident in particular made a great impression on me. In 2000 I had the opportunity to attend the groundbreaking ceremony of the first Latter-day Saint meetinghouse that would be built from the ground up in India. The location for this chapel was in Rajahmundry, a city near the eastern coast of the country. It is a relatively small city for India, even though about three million people live there.

I traveled to Rajahmundry with my wife; the mission president, Ebenezer Solomon; and his wife. As we arrived at the crowded train station in Rajahmundry, my heart

went out to the many people I saw living in extreme poverty. There were many people sleeping on the hard floor wherever there was an empty space. When we arrived at the location of the groundbreaking, I noticed a great contrast between the misery I had just witnessed and the joy I saw in the faces of the members gathered to greet us. They were beaming and waving as we approached. They were so happy and excited. While they too lived in poor conditions by some standards, there was no sign of despair or emptiness.

I immediately began to understand why this location had been chosen for a chapel. I admit I had been somewhat unsure why the Church's resources were being focused in this out-of-the-way location. But after I met briefly with the Saints in Rajahmundry, all of my questions were answered. These Latter-day Saints were so faithful and so excited to have their own meetinghouse.

The Widow's Mite

After the groundbreaking ceremony, President Solomon introduced me to four widows who had been baptized several years before. They were all in their 70s. President Solomon informed me that these women had all been full-tithe payers since their baptisms. I was impressed that in an area with so much need, these faithful sisters had never missed an opportunity to pay their tithing, though I'm sure it had been a sacrifice for them.

I asked President Solomon about how much each sister would pay in tithing every month. He gave me a figure in rupees, the currency used in India. I did not understand the amount, so I asked him how much they



would pay in U.S. dollars. I will never forget his answer: “They would pay between one-and-a-half and two pennies.” I was reminded again that paying tithing isn’t a matter of money, but it requires faith! It was humbling to realize that the blessing of a chapel had come to these Saints because of their willingness to sacrifice by paying tithing—even though it was only pennies. I’m sure the Lord must turn those pennies into millions of dollars.

Tithing is not a monetary commandment—it is a principle of faith. The Lord asks 10 percent of our income and waits to see if we will exercise faith in Him to make that sacrifice. The Saints in Rajahmundry had that faith.

I was impressed when we arrived at the building site to find a red carpet rolled out from the road to the canopy where the Saints were gathered. It was about 30 meters long. Under the canopy were red velvet chairs. They were

large and impressive. The carpet and the chairs were worn, but it was the very best these Saints had to offer. They would not give less than their best. It was a humbling experience for me. These Saints in Rajahmundry set the example of faithfully giving to the Lord, whether it was in paying their tithing or providing their best accommodations for the visiting Church leaders.

It may seem to you that 10 percent of your income, small or large, cannot do much good or is not that important. I promise you, it is important. It is important that you live the law of tithing now because it will strengthen your faith and prepare you for trials later on.

The Lord gave us a promise that if we would obey His commandments, He is bound to provide us with the promised blessing (see D&C 82:10; 130:21). I witnessed that blessing in the lives of the Saints in Rajahmundry, and you can witness that blessing in your own life if you will be faithful in paying your tithing. **NE**

LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ELDER RICHARDS; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE

TITHING AND OTHER OFFERINGS

Want to make a difference in the world but don't know how? The answer is as close as your tithing envelope. Here's a look at how the money you put in that little envelope helps build the Lord's kingdom worldwide—and right in your own ward or branch.

Name

It may seem pretty obvious, but be sure to fill out this line exactly the same way each time. That's so your ward or branch clerk won't have to figure out if K. Anderson and Kim Anderson are really the same person.

Tithing

Your 10 percent is sent to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, where Church leaders carefully decide where it is needed most—maybe to help build a new meetinghouse somewhere in the world.

Fast offering

Every fast Sunday, Latter-day Saints have the opportunity to donate to the fast offering fund. First, the bishop or branch president uses this money to help people right in your own ward or branch who need money to buy food or pay for housing. Then, if there is a surplus, fast offerings are passed along to help needy people in other areas.

Ward missionary

Donate here to help support missionaries from your own ward or branch.

General missionary

Donate here to support missionaries and missionary work in locations throughout the Church.

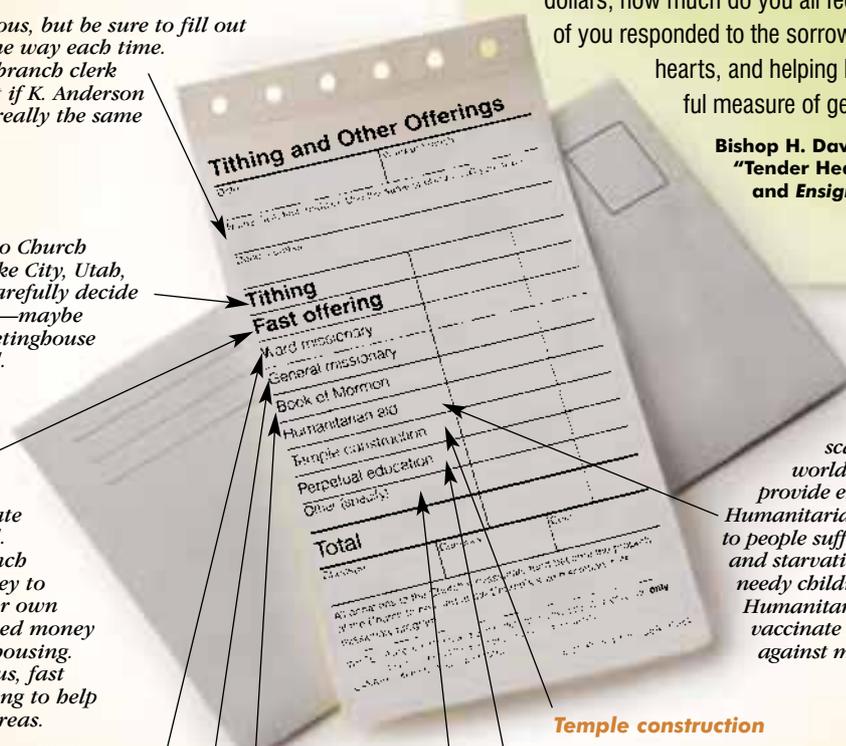
Book of Mormon

If you'd like to help pay for copies of the Book of Mormon, which can help convert people throughout the world, donate here.



"A group of men were talking with the Prophet Joseph Smith one day when news arrived that the house of a poor brother . . . was burned down. Everyone expressed sorrow for what had happened. The Prophet listened for a moment, then 'put his hand in his pocket, took out five dollars and said, 'I feel sorry for this brother to the amount of five dollars; how much do you all feel sorry?'' . . . Last year millions of you responded to the sorrow of others with your means, tender hearts, and helping hands. Thank you for your wonderful measure of generosity."

Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop, "Tender Hearts and Helping Hands," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 8.



Humanitarian aid

Whenever there is a large-scale natural disaster in the world, the Church is there, helping provide emergency supplies. The Humanitarian Aid Fund also sends food to people suffering from malnourishment and starvation and education kits for needy children. For example, the Humanitarian Aid Fund recently helped vaccinate millions of African children against measles.

Temple construction

If you want to help pay for the building of temples throughout the world, donate here.

Perpetual education

In many areas of the world, a post-high-school education is beyond the reach of many Latter-day Saint young adults. The Perpetual Education Fund gives education loans to make a brighter future for students from many countries.

Other

Need to pay fees for Scout camp, Young Women camp, or some other Church-sponsored activity? Write down these funds in the "Other" category. Although these funds are not actually donations, this category allows ward or branch leaders to account for the money and give you a receipt.

Mutual Activity Idea

- Turn back the clock for the older members of your ward. Invite them to a Mutual activity. Have everyone dress in black, white, or gray to match the black-and-white photos. Gather old pictures, and have a contest to see who can guess just who is driving that antique car or whose hair is fixed like a movie star's. Play music from the past, and conduct a dating panel with the oldest ward members. Ask them to talk about what it was like being a teenager in their day.

Personal Progress and Duty to God Idea

- Set aside some time every week, such as on Sunday, to look over where you stand and plan which experience

or goal you would like to work on next. Then plan out how and when you will accomplish it.

Family Home Evening Idea

- Start keeping a journal or minutes of all your family home evenings. Write down what it was like when your little sister gave the prayer for the first time. Or record the fun games you all played. Write down what announcements were made and what plans your family has for the week. Years from now this record will be a source of great enjoyment and a valuable addition to your family history.

SUNDAY LESSON HELPS

In addition to the Resource Guides (printed in May and November in the *Ensign*), Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood teachers may find these additional resources helpful in enhancing lessons 13–17.

Young Women Manual 2

Lesson 13: Patriarchal Blessings

“About Patriarchal Blessings,” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 32.
 Q&A (preparing for your patriarchal blessing),
New Era, Mar. 2002, 16.
 Rachel Murdock, “Worthy of My Blessing,” *New Era*,
 Mar. 2004, 36.

Lesson 14: Blessings of the Temple

Alexa Justesen, “The Long Wait,” this issue, 32.
 Greg Burgoyne, “Safe from the Storm,” *New Era*,
 Apr. 2004, 26.

Lesson 15: Temple Marriage

The October 2004 special issue of the *New Era*.
 Robert D. Hales, “Preparing for a Heavenly Marriage,”
New Era, Feb. 2006, 2.

Lesson 16: Journals

Idea List: Jazz Up Your Journal, *New Era*, Jan. 2005, 15.
 Spencer W. Kimball, “The Angels May Quote from It,”
New Era, Feb. 2003, 32.

Lesson 17: Keeping Family History Records

Sarah K. Brown, “Uncle Bir’s Letter,” *New Era*, Sept.
 2006, 8.
 Idea List: Starting Family History, *New Era*,
 July 2001, 43.

Aaronic Priesthood Manual 2

Lesson 13: Fasting

Esther Hansen, “The Real Fast,” *New Era*,
 May 2002, 11.
 Kendall Crookston, “Fare Enough,” *New Era*,
 Sept. 2003, 32.

Lesson 14: Obedience to God

Nathan Waite, “Lost on the Ledge,” this issue, 24.
 Richard L. Evans, “Why All the Rules?” *New Era*,
 Nov. 2003, 44.

Lesson 15: Exaltation through Keeping Covenants

John Bytheway, “Three Little Questions,” *New Era*,
 July 2006, 30.
 “Charting the Plan,” *New Era*, July 2006, 33.

Lesson 16: Tithes and Offerings

Line upon Line: Tithing and Other Offerings, this
 issue, 46.
 H. Bryan Richards, “The Windows of Heaven,” this
 issue, 42.

Lesson 17: Patriarchal Blessings

James E. Faust, “Your Patriarchal Blessing,” *New Era*,
 Nov. 2005, 4.
 Daniel Thomas Brady, “Twice Blessed,” *New Era*,
 Aug. 1999, 11.

WEIGHING IN

I, too, weigh too much to serve a mission. Thank you for the story “Weighing In for a Mission” (Sept. 2006). It really helped me understand that it is possible to lose a whole lot of weight. I used to think, “If God wants me to serve a mission, He can take me the way I am.” But now I realize I was wrong, and I’m shooting to lose some serious weight. Thanks again for this wonderful article.

Jeremy H., Oregon

CHURCH LEADERS

I want to say thank you for the article “The Body Is Sacred” (Nov. 2006). I love reading the articles written by the Church leaders. They give me courage to do the right thing, and I feel reassured to know that the leaders of the Church are concerned about us and love us.

I particularly liked what President Hinckley said, “How truly beautiful is a well-groomed young woman who is clean in body and mind. She is a daughter of God in whom her Eternal Father can take pride.” My goal is to have Heavenly Father always be proud of me.

Andrea B., Michigan

HELPING OTHERS

I read the article entitled “Learning to Hope” (Nov. 2006) and was deeply touched. I couldn’t believe how much Mariama Kallon had to go through. I was also amazed at how important a simple hygiene kit was to her. Reading this article made me want to do something to ease the pain of other suffering people. How can I help?

Courtney F., Pennsylvania

Editor’s Note: Go to www.providentliving.org, and click on Caring for Others, Humanitarian Services, and then How Can I Help?

“I love reading articles written by Church leaders. I feel reassured to know that the leaders of the Church are concerned about us and love us.”

TIME

I really enjoyed the poem “Time” by Carina Schwartz (Aug. 2006). It really struck me and made me think about how people take life for granted, even the things in the world that seem so small play a big part in Heavenly Father’s plan. Wouldn’t we be so much better off if we took a second to recognize and be thankful for our blessings?

Brittany B., North Carolina

STAYING ON COURSE

From the time I joined the Church in 1998 up to the present time, I have been in schools far away from meetinghouses and have not been receiving spiritual boosts in my life. When I come home, I always get the *New Era* magazines to read, and this helps me stay on course and get the strength I desire from reading experiences shared by other people. I want to say thank you.

Prosper N., Nigeria

MY BIG FEET

I really enjoyed the article “My Big Feet” (Nov. 2006) about how the author became a happier person when she learned how to accept her big feet. It helped me realize that having a negative attitude about one of our body features that we can’t change won’t help us find happiness. Thank you for this story.

Aaron W., Arizona

We love hearing from you. Write us at the following address. Please include the names of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

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Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA*

Or e-mail us at newera@ldschurch.org

Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.

SIMPLICITY

BY JAANA OLSEN

The simple things
like rain in the spring
and blue sky,
baby laughs
and grown men who cry.
These are the things
that catch an eye.
So why
call them simple?





COMING NEXT MONTH

- *“The Unseen Power” of the Aaronic Priesthood is a very real thing.*
- *What do you need to learn from your patriarchal blessing?*
- *Read about learning to see beauty, appreciating your skills, and having prayers answered.*

Just a few of the articles waiting for you in the upcoming May 2007 New Era.