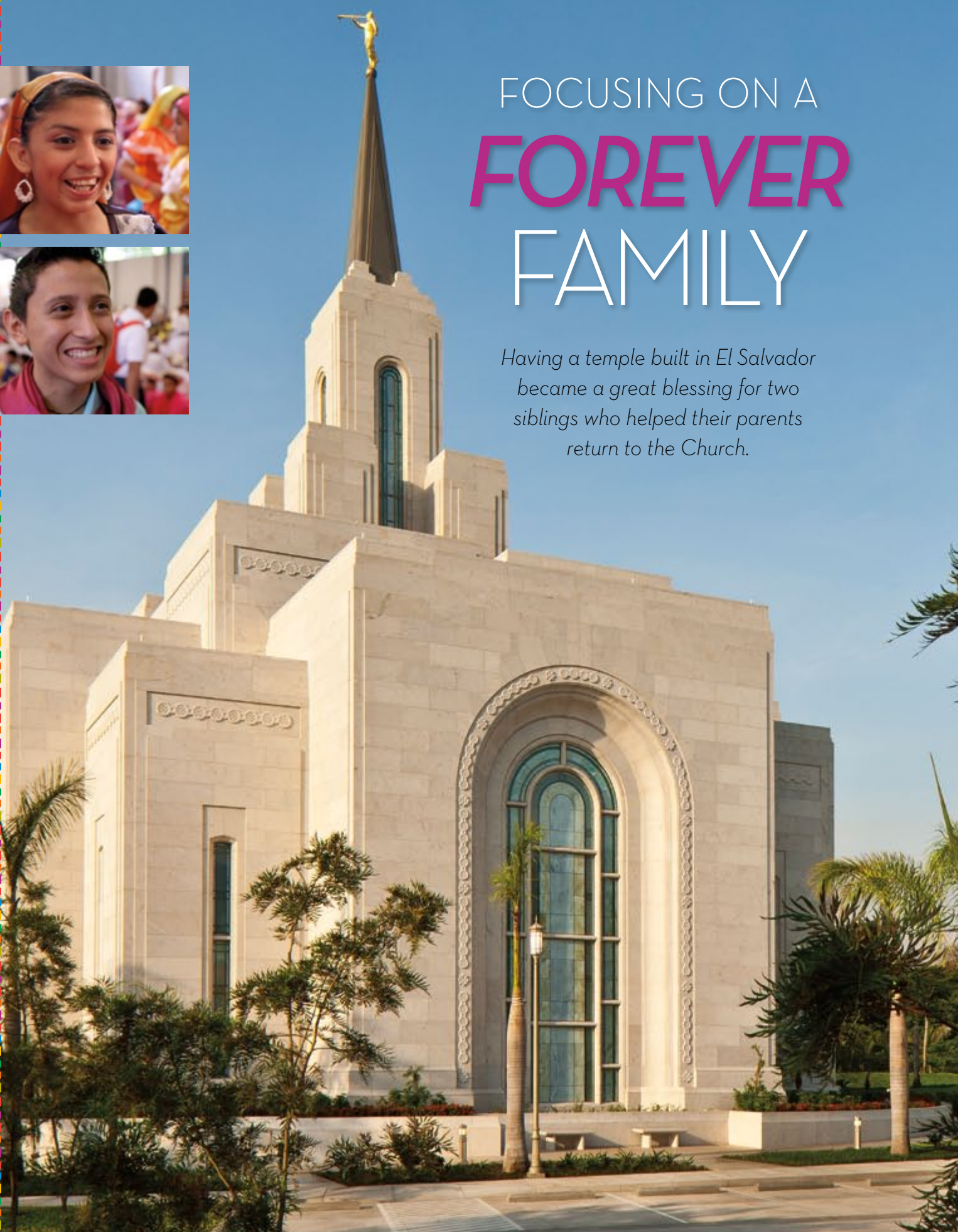




FOCUSING ON A **FOREVER** FAMILY

Having a temple built in El Salvador became a great blessing for two siblings who helped their parents return to the Church.



By Mindy Raye Friedman

Church Magazines

Kevin and Jacqueline S., a brother and sister in El Salvador, are the best of friends, and they stick together in everything. They have a great love for the gospel and for their family. They want their family to be together forever.

When Kevin and Jacqueline were younger, people at church would ask their father, “When are you going to be sealed in the temple?” And he would respond, “When there is a temple in El Salvador.”

Praying for Their Parents

However, by the time the San Salvador El Salvador Temple was announced in 2007, Kevin and Jacqueline’s parents had stopped attending church. But Kevin, now 18, and Jacqueline, 15, kept going to church, praying that one day their parents would return.

“I never stopped praying and asking Heavenly Father that they would become active again,” Jacqueline says. “I know Heavenly Father wants the best for us, and He wants us to be an eternal family.”

They also tried to be good examples for their parents. “I never lost hope,” Kevin says. “I always read the scriptures and prayed, and my parents would see me study and leave to go do home teaching visits and to go to Church activities. As I worked to keep the commandments and to progress, my parents saw my example.”

Feeling the Spirit of the Temple

Kevin and Jacqueline’s prayers for their parents began to be answered as the temple neared completion. “When our leaders announced the dedication and cultural

celebration, we invited our parents,” Kevin says. “We told them about the privilege we would have as youth to participate, and this motivated them a lot and helped them progress spiritually.”

In addition to attending the cultural celebration, the family was also able to attend the temple open house.

“Even though my parents hadn’t been going to church, they still view the Church and the gospel as something sacred,” Kevin says. “When we entered the temple, my father began explaining to my sisters and me that when we enter the temple, we wear white and that this is where we perform sacred ordinances.”

Kevin was amazed that his two-year-old sister, who normally has a lot of energy, remained quiet while they were inside the temple, and he noticed how his mother had tears in her eyes as she viewed the different rooms and paintings. When the family entered a sealing room, a volunteer tour guide explained to them that this is where families are sealed together forever.



PHOTOGRAPHS © IRI AND COURTESY OF KEVIN AND JACQUELINE S.



THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL

"If you have not yet been to the temple or if you *have* been but currently do not qualify for a recommend, there is no more important goal for you to work toward than being worthy to go to the temple.

"... The all-important and crowning blessings of membership in the Church are those blessings which we receive in the temples of God."

President Thomas S. Monson, "The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World," *Ensign*, May 2011, 93.

"Our little sister then began to touch each one of us and say, 'My mom, my dad, my Kevin, my Jacqueline,'" says Jacqueline. "It was like Heavenly Father spoke through her to tell us that we are all hers."

"Then she hugged us and started giving us kisses and pointing to the mirrors," Kevin says. "We looked at ourselves together in the mirrors, and it was amazing. When we left the sealing room that day, we made a goal to be able to get back there."

Regaining Perspective

After attending the temple open house, the family began making some changes. "Since we went to the temple, our family has regained perspective," Kevin says. "Since then we have been having family home evening, and our parents are bringing us to church and sitting with us on the front row of the chapel."

In August 2011, Kevin and Jacqueline felt blessed to sit with their parents in the stake center as they viewed the broadcast of the temple dedication.

"When the temple was announced in 2007, my parents were less active, and I thought I would never have the opportunity to be with them at the dedication," Kevin says. "When they were sitting with me, I could really feel that Heavenly Father had answered my prayers. To be there with my family was one of the greatest blessings I have had in my life."

"This experience of the temple has strengthened me," Jacqueline says. "What has strengthened me more than anything is seeing that the temple changes lives, because it helped my parents become active in the Church again. Now we have made the goal that we will be sealed in the temple. I know Heavenly Father wants the best for us." **NE**



ONLINE EXTRA

Watch a video about Kevin and Jacqueline and the San Salvador El Salvador Temple dedication at lds.org/go/122E.



WHEN THERE'S LOVE AT HOME

Kevin and Jacqueline are very close as brother and sister, and they have learned that the bond between siblings can be a very rewarding part of life. Here's how they support each other.

Jacqueline says, "My brother always helps me in my duties at home and at school. I always have his support, and I know without a

doubt he loves me and will support me at anytime. When I am sad or feeling down on myself, he is always there to encourage me."

Kevin says, "When I feel discouraged, my sister supports me and encourages me. She tells

me positive things about myself, and it makes me feel much better. I have learned a lot from her example. In times when I start to give up on my faith, she tells me to not doubt and that things are going to come out better than I hoped."

These two youth say they enjoy their relationship and the fact that they don't fight like a lot of other siblings do. "You could say that we are weird, but I thank my Heavenly Father for this relationship with my sister," Kevin says.

LOVING

Your

SIBLINGS

ALL ABOUT
FAMILIES

These three stories show what your siblings can mean to you.

We know that through the blessings of temple covenants, we can live forever as families.

So how should we prepare ourselves? The answer is simple, even if the action can sometimes be hard: we need to love our siblings. Though it's sometimes easy to forget, we should do our best to support them and show them how much we appreciate them.

The following stories show a few examples. As you read, ask yourself how you could show your love for your siblings and strengthen your family relationships today.

BEING EACH OTHER'S ANGELS

My sister and I shared a room. People would ask me if it was hard, but I would tell them I loved it. Of course, we had arguments. We would sometimes go a few hours without talking to each other over some silly disagreement, but we still loved each other.

There came a time when Laura was struggling. She was having problems with friends and was struggling to keep up with her schoolwork. I didn't realize just how unhappy she was until she confided in me and asked me for advice. I suggested that she should get a priesthood blessing. She agreed.

We asked a member of our ward to give my sister a priesthood blessing. I sat on the couch while Laura sat on a stool in the middle of the room. The words that were spoken were powerful. I'll never forget when the person giving the blessing said that the Lord would always be there for my sister and that He had already sent angels to her. Then the blessing said that one of these angels was me, her sister.

I am so thankful for Laura. She's been an angel for me just as I've tried to be an angel for her, and I know that when we're there for each other, we're helping the Lord in His work.
Crystal M., Idaho, USA

