

A SPIRIT OF SERVICE

About two years ago I was living in Mexico City. My family and I were enjoying it there, but we saw a lot of people living in poverty. A wonderful opportunity to provide charity came when we had a little money we felt could be used to help someone else.

That Christmas our stake organized a “Family Help Tree.” We chose a name from the tree and started planning. We couldn’t wait to help this family on Christmas.

One month later, Christmas arrived and our family was ready to deliver the presents. We drove to the address and walked down a dark alley. There were gray, eroded cement walls, a plastic roof, and a wooden door that was too small for the doorway. When we knocked on the door we saw dirt floors and only one couch. There was a fridge that was not plugged in and a little bit of food on the shelves. We then found out that the mom, dad, 9-month-old baby, 4-year-old girl, and 6-year-old boy all slept either on the floor or on the couch and had only two light blankets.

We explained why we were there and then proceeded to give them the presents. The look of joy and happiness on their faces was truly priceless. We gave them a couple of alphabet toys, some food, and last but not least, some warm blankets. They were so grateful. Everyone cried tears of joy. I felt the love of the Savior for this family.

After that humbling experience, I asked my parents if we could use any money that was going toward my gifts for others who are less fortunate, and then my two little brothers asked if they

could too. That moment made it a Christmas to remember. It was truly a humbling event and increased my testimony of service and the love of the

Savior. When we are in the service of others, we are in the service of God, just as it states in Mosiah 2:17.

Hunter S., Virginia, USA



TRULY BLESSED

Our house was getting too small. With my newborn brother, there were eight of us (five girls, one boy, and my mom and dad) living in a three-bedroom house. My family prayed and fasted about it, and eventually we felt like it was the right decision to move to a bigger house in the same town but in a different ward. I was crushed. Yes, it was small, but I loved our little home. I especially didn't want to leave my ward.

After I heard the news, I felt prompted to read the scriptures. I went to my room and opened them up to where I'd left off the day before. It was 1 Nephi 2. When I got to verse 4, I read:

"And it came to pass that [Lehi] departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness."

It hit me like lightning. I, unlike Lehi and his family, got to keep all my "precious things." This reminded me to count my blessings. I realized that my parents wanted the best for our family and that I should remember how blessed I truly am.

Kelsee M., Wyoming, USA

ROLE MODELS

Trying my best to honor and obey my parents has blessed my life tremendously. I consistently make it home before my curfew, I take out the trash every week, and I do any

NEVER TOO OLD

Grandma was 75 years old when she initiated a "12 days of Christmas" secret Santa project with her Sunday School class of 14-year-olds. "How would you like to do something nice for someone?" she asked. Each person in the class, including Grandma, would secretly take treats to Brother Johnson, who had recently lost his wife. "Sometimes," Grandma had said, "people may feel alone and need service even if they are not poor."

Brother Johnson's house was set far back from the road, and there was a wrought iron fence surrounding the property. On the night of her first turn, Grandma parked down the street and stealthily crept up to the door. She placed the package, rang the bell, and suddenly realized she couldn't run fast enough to get away. She quickly crouched behind the car and held her breath. Brother Johnson came to the door, picked up the package, and looked around.

He stepped out into the night to get a better look and came up to

chores I'm asked to do. I also honor them by asking for advice, trusting their judgment, and telling them that I love them whenever I get the chance. The result has been a sweet, trusting bond between us. They give me privileges that a lot of my friends don't have because they know my decisions



the car. Grandma slumped down behind the bumper, scarcely breathing. Brother Johnson gave up the search and went back into the house. Grandma was safe this time.

On the night of her second turn, she found the gates locked. Somewhat relieved that she wouldn't need to crouch behind the car again, she hung the gift on the gate and returned home.

On the night of her third visit, we received a call. "Please," she said, "would you come and help me deliver my secret Santa gift?" We accepted and started toward the house with the gift. We started to laugh when we saw how challenging this house was to approach.

In church that Sunday, Brother Johnson expressed his gratitude that the gifts had made him feel the love of the ward on his first Christmas alone. Grandma will always be our example of compassion and charity and has taught us that you're never too old to serve.

Debbie C., New Mexico, USA

will be good ones. My parents have become not only my best friends but also great role models. I know that we have been commanded to honor and obey our parents for a wise purpose, and I have definitely reaped the benefits of living this commandment.

Michael Z., Idaho, USA