

GROWING

IN THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD



David Schlacter knows that when you advance through the Aaronic Priesthood, you grow in the right direction.

By Sally Johnson Odekirk

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When he first received the Aaronic Priesthood as a 12-year-old, David Schlacter was excited just to be able to pass the sacrament. As a teacher, he learned to enjoy home teaching. Then, when he became a priest, he discovered the importance of the sacrament. Now an 18-year-old, he says that ever since that day he has seen over and over again that the priesthood is about serving others.

A member of the Champlain Ward in the Ottawa Canada Stake, David has learned a lot as he has progressed through the Aaronic Priesthood. He says, “The Aaronic Priesthood really is the preparatory priesthood, because as 12-year-olds we’re not called on to do certain things, such as giving someone a blessing. We start out passing the sacrament, collecting fast offerings, helping someone move. We begin to understand that the priesthood is about serving people.”

One of David’s favorite priesthood responsibilities is home teaching families in his ward. Home teaching taught him that service in all forms is appreciated. For example, when he was first ordained, he and his dad were assigned to visit an elderly couple. “They just enjoyed the company,” he says, “and I enjoyed doing little things to help them out. It’s nice to get out and do something for someone else.”

As he progressed in the Aaronic Priesthood, David also learned about the importance of quorums. In his ward the Aaronic Priesthood quorums are small, so he and the other priests go out of their way to invite others to come. He says, “We try to encourage quorum members who haven’t been participating to come to activities like dances and firesides. We try to be friendly and show that we welcome them.”

David has also learned about service from observing his quorum advisers. They make sure the quorum activities are running well and set the example for him to follow. He says that most of his advisers are young and have new

families. “It’s good to see them making decisions that led them to where they are now. We can see by their examples and the experiences they share with us how it leads to the lives they are living now and how that leads to having a happy family.”

One of the most important responsibilities for priests in the Aaronic Priesthood is to bless the sacrament. David says that the sacrament is one of the important things that Christ did with His disciples in Jerusalem and again when He visited the New World. “The sacrament is one of the main purposes of Sabbath observance,” he says. “It’s an important responsibility, and so you have to live your life worthily so that you can offer the prayer and be involved in the sacrament in a way that’s above reproach. You set the example when you bless the sacrament by living the standards.”

His advice to those just starting out in the Aaronic Priesthood: “Fulfill your responsibilities and magnify your callings, even if you think it’s just a small calling. We need to do our best for the benefit of those around us.” **NE**

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For more information on the Aaronic Priesthood, go to **GospelTopics.lds.org** and read the entry under Aaronic Priesthood.

DAVID’S FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

David lives the standards by following the example of the sons of Mosiah, found in his favorite scripture:

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

“But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; . . . and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God” (Alma 17:2–3).