

THE
New Era

JULY

2003

**COVER STORY:
PLAY YOUR PART,
P.30**

**NEPAL PIONEERS,
P.20**

**WISE CHOICES
IN SMALL THINGS,
P.12**

The New Era Magazine
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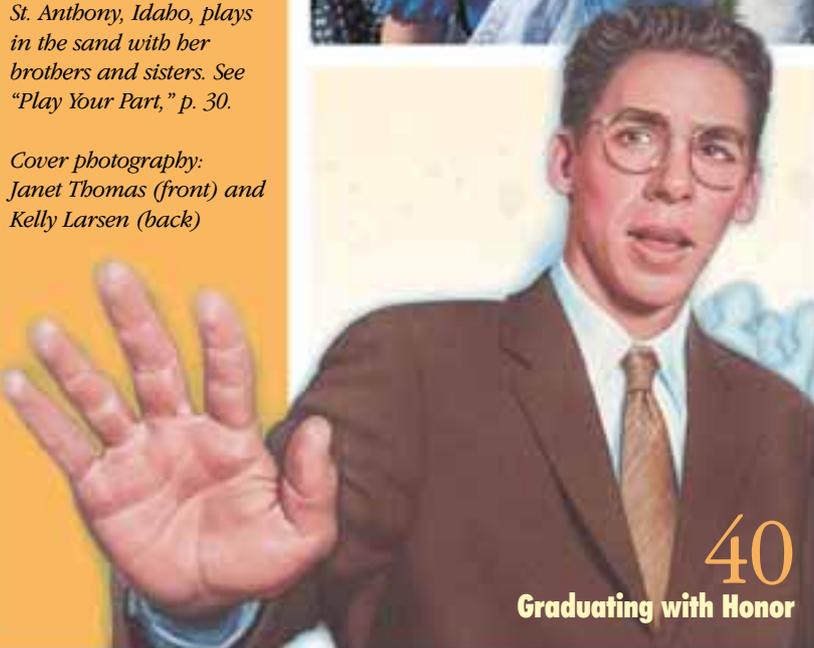
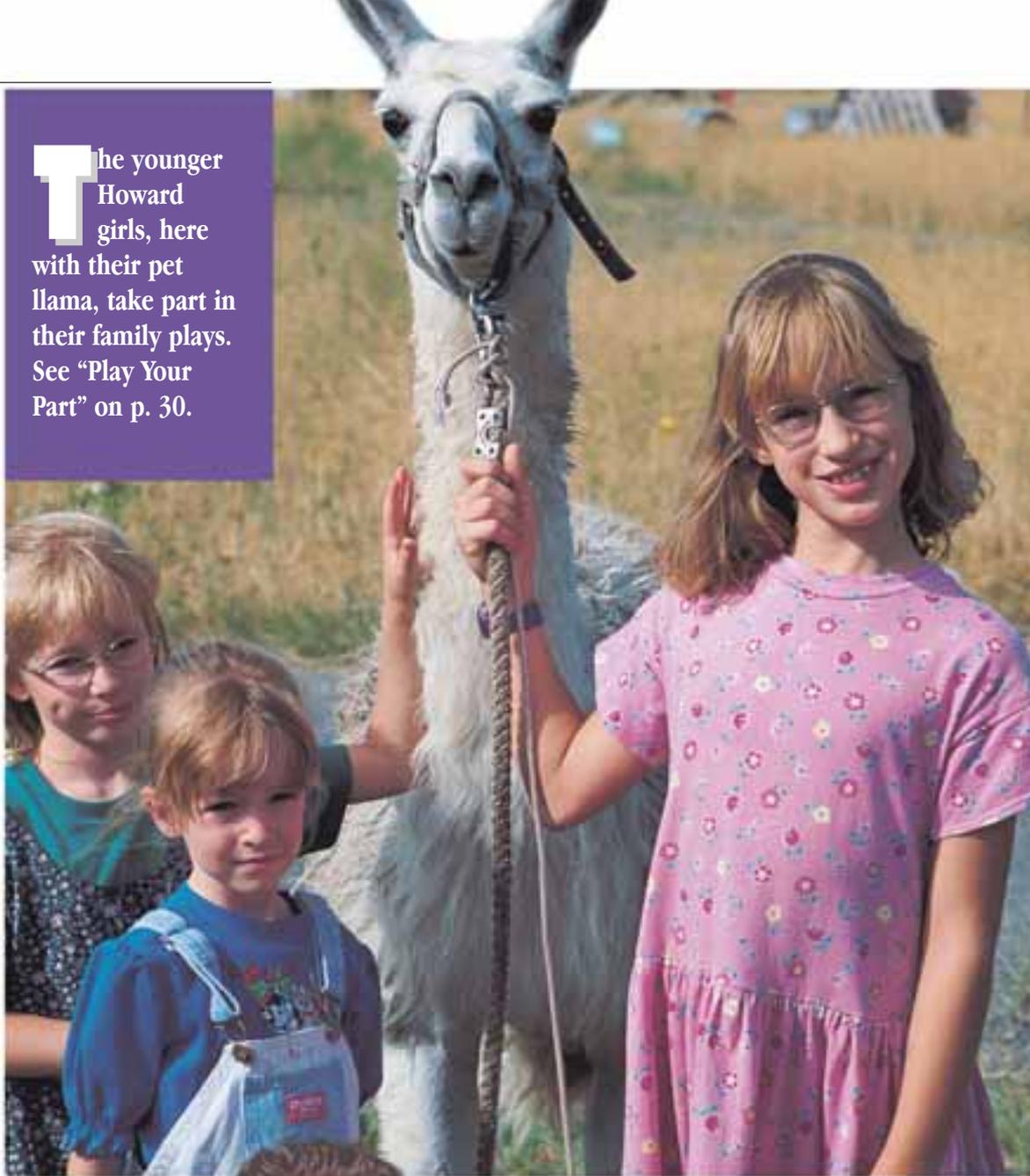
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Cover: *Trissa Howard of
St. Anthony, Idaho, plays
in the sand with her
brothers and sisters. See
"Play Your Part," p. 30.*

Cover photography:
*Janet Thomas (front) and
Kelly Larsen (back)*

The younger
Howard
girls, here
with their pet
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in their family plays.
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Following in Faith



The exciting global growth of the Church has focused our attention on the prophesied glorious future of the kingdom. As we look ahead with optimism, we should pause and look back on the faith of our humble pioneer forebears.

We can all serve in the kingdom of God.

BY ELDER JOSEPH B. WIRTHLIN
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In 1846, more than 10,000 people left the thriving city of Nauvoo, which had been built on the banks of the Mississippi River. With faith in prophetic leaders, those early Church members left their “City Beautiful” and struck off into the wilderness of the American frontier. They did not know exactly where they were going, precisely how many miles lay ahead, how long the journey would take, or what the future held in store for them. But they *did* know they were led by the Lord and His servants. Their faith sustained them. They hoped “for things which [were] not seen, which are true” (Alma 32:21). Like Nephi of old, they were “led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which [they] should do” (1 Nephi 4:6).

Fearing more of the mob violence that had claimed the lives of the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum on 27 June 1844, Brigham Young, leading the Church as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, announced in September 1845 that the Saints would leave Nauvoo in the spring of 1846. Most of those in Nauvoo believed fully that when Brigham

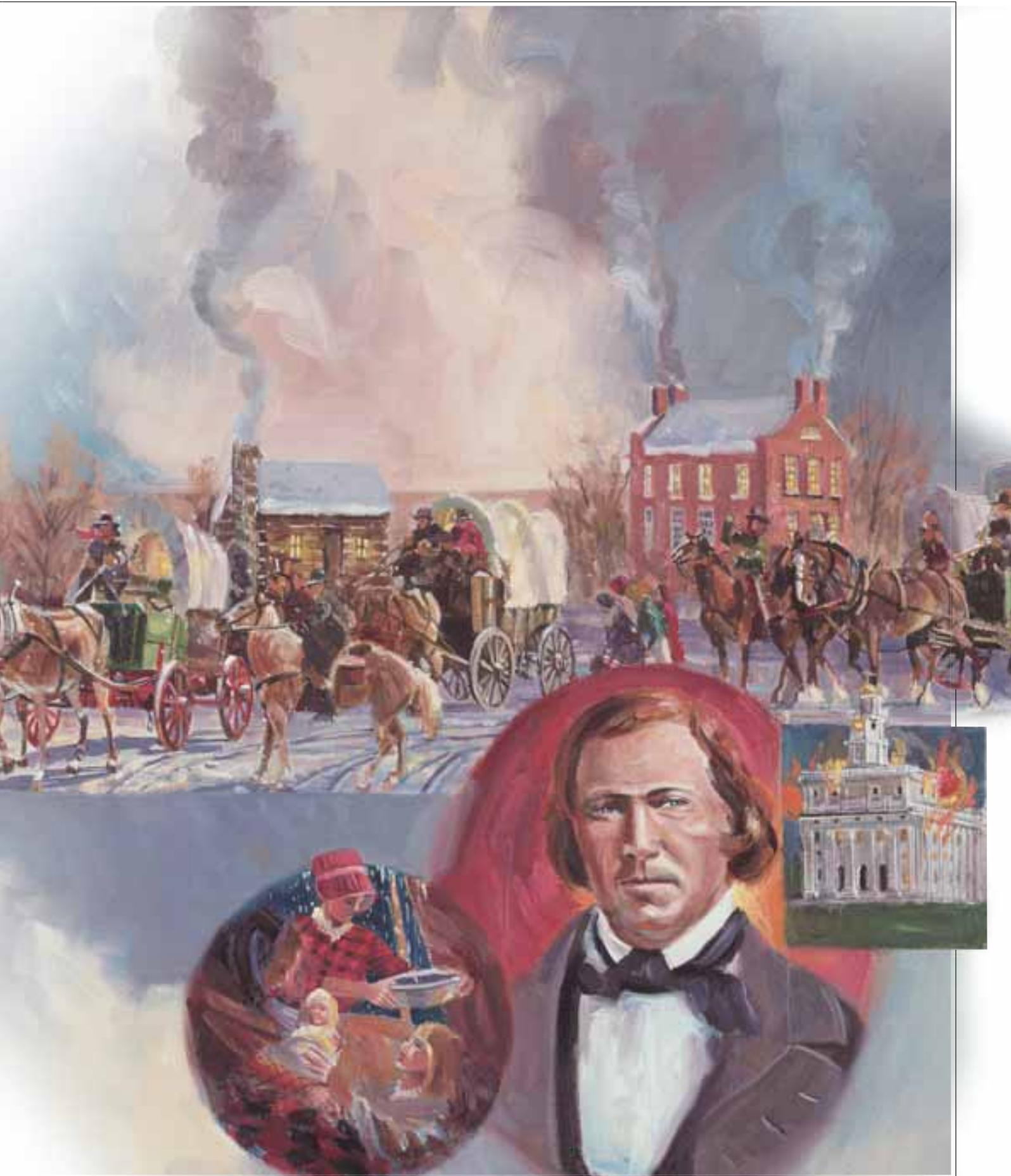
Young announced that they must leave, they were hearing what the Lord wanted them to do. They responded in faith to the direction of the Lord. Throughout the fall and winter months of 1845–46, Church members set about vigorously making preparations for the journey.

When Newel Knight informed his wife, Lydia, that the Saints would have to leave Nauvoo and move yet again, she responded with tenacious faith, saying, “Our place is with the kingdom of God. Let us at once set about making preparations to leave.”¹ Brother Knight had moved his family several times already as many of the Saints had moved from New York to Ohio to Missouri and to Illinois. Lydia Knight’s devoted submission to what she knew was God’s will typifies powerfully the faith of those heroic early Saints.

Leaving the “City Beautiful”

Though winter’s chill was not yet past, heightened fear of mob attacks and swirling rumors of government intervention compelled President Young to set things in motion to get the Saints under way. He directed the first company of pioneer families to leave Nauvoo on 4 February 1846, a cold







We who have been blessed to know the fulness of the restored gospel owe a debt of gratitude to those who have gone before us, who have given so much to build the kingdom into the worldwide miracle that it is today.

winter day. They drove their laden wagons and their livestock down Parley Street to a landing where they were ferried across the river to Iowa. Chunks of ice floating in the river crunched against the sides of the flatboats and barges that carried the wagons across the Mississippi. A few weeks later, temperatures dropped even further, and wagons could cross the river more easily over a bridge of ice.

Sister Wirthlin and I visited Nauvoo in early March 1996. The weather was bitterly cold. As we stood in the chilling wind, looking out across the broad expanse of the Mississippi, we felt a deeper sense of appreciation and gratitude for those Saints as they left their beloved city. We wondered how they ever survived. What a sacrifice to leave behind so much for the uncertain future that lay ahead! No wonder so many tears were shed as the fleeing pioneers drove their wagons rumbling down Parley Street to cross the river, with no hope of ever returning to their “City Beautiful.”

Once across the river, they camped temporarily at Sugar Creek before starting their trek west toward the Rocky Mountains. The journey had begun.

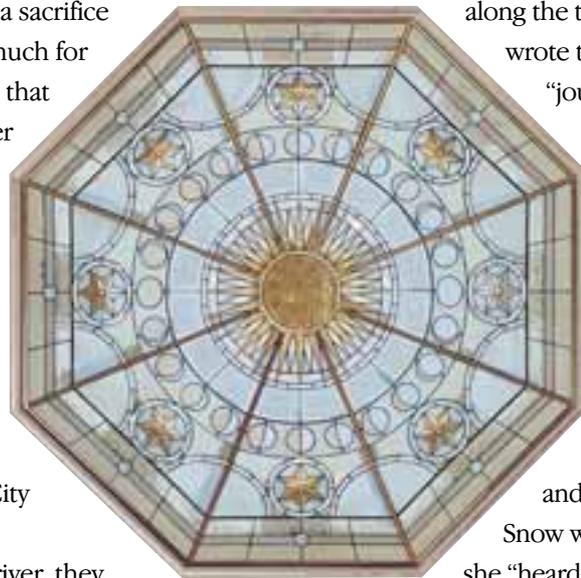
Faith of Fathers and Mothers

When President Brigham Young joined the departing pioneers at their campsite in Iowa on 15 February 1846, the Lord revealed to

him to begin organizing a modern “Camp of Israel.” On the first of March the advance company began its push westward across Iowa. Hardships caused by cold, snow, rain, mud, sickness, hunger, and death challenged the faith of these hardy pioneers. But they were determined to follow their leaders and to do, no matter the cost, what they believed fervently to be the will of God. Their faith was challenged, and for some it faltered in especially difficult times. But it did not fail them. Many were sustained by the assurances they had received in temple ordinances performed in the Nauvoo Temple.

One of the more difficult hardships endured by many of the sisters was delivering their babies under harsh, extreme conditions along the trail. Eliza R. Snow wrote that as the pioneers “journeyed onward, mothers gave birth to offspring under almost every variety of circumstances imaginable, except those to which they had been accustomed; some in tents, others in wagons—in rainstorms and in snowstorms.” Sister Snow went on to record that she “heard of one birth which

occurred under the rude shelter of a hut, the sides of which were formed of blankets fastened to poles stuck in the ground, with a bark roof through which the rain was dripping. Kind sisters stood holding dishes to catch the water . . . , thus protecting the [little one] and its mother from a showerbath [on its entrance to] the stage of human life.”²



ABOVE: PHOTOGRAPHS OF NAUVOO ILLINOIS TEMPLE AND TEMPLE SKYLIGHT BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; TOP RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF NAUVOO TEMPLE PROJECT; TOP INSET: PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY D. ALLRED, CHURCH NEWS; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH OF WORKER BY RAVELL CALL, CHURCH NEWS; FAR RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH OF TEMPLE DETAIL BY JOHN LUKE; PHOTOGRAPH OF HAMMER AND CHISEL COURTESY OF LDS CHURCH ARCHIVES



What a sacrifice these good sisters made! Some mothers lost their own lives in child-birth. Many babies did not survive. My wife's grandmother, Elizabeth Riter, was born at Winter Quarters in the back of a covered wagon during a rainstorm. Fortunately, both the mother and the newborn infant survived. With great love for the woman who gave life to her, Elizabeth often lovingly recounted how an umbrella was held over her mother



throughout the ordeal to shield her from the water leaking through the wagon's cover.

Let us never forget the faith of our fathers and the selfless sacrifice of our mothers, those pioneering Saints who set such an inspiring example of obedience. Let us remember them as we strive to be valiant servants in our work to "invite all to come unto Christ" (D&C 20:59) "and be perfected in him" (Moroni 10:32).

We who have been blessed to know the fulness of the restored

Now, more than 150 years after the pioneers left their "City Beautiful," the Nauvoo Illinois Temple has been rebuilt and rededicated. *The pioneers' faith built the foundation on which the Church continues to flourish.*



We can continue to build upon the pioneers' foundation of faith. Our faithful service will qualify us for great blessings bestowed by God, blessings that enrich and expand our lives.

gospel owe a debt of gratitude to those who have gone before us, who have given so much to build the kingdom into the worldwide miracle that it is today. Our debt of gratitude to our forebears is a “debt that can best be paid in service to this great cause.”³

Ordinary People

No matter who we are—no matter our talents, abilities, financial resources, education, or experience—we all can serve in the kingdom. He who calls us will qualify us for the work if we will serve with humility, prayer, diligence, and faith. Perhaps we feel inadequate. Maybe we doubt ourselves, thinking that what we have to offer the Lord personally is too slight to even be noticed. The Lord is well aware of our mortality. He knows our weaknesses. He understands the challenges of our everyday lives. He has great empathy for the temptations of earthly appetites and passions. The Apostle Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Hebrews that the Savior is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” because He “was in all points tempted like as we are” (Hebrews 4:15).

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, taught the importance of being willing to serve in this great cause when he asked: “Are we sufficiently in tune with the Spirit that when the Lord calls, we can hear, as did Samuel, and

declare, ‘Here am I’?

Do we have the fortitude and the faith, whatever our callings, to serve with unflinching courage and unshakable resolve?

When we do, the Lord can

work His mighty miracles through us”⁴ (see 1 Samuel 3:4).

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has reassured us that whatever our abilities, faithful service not only is acceptable to the Lord, but it also qualifies us for great blessings bestowed by Him, blessings that enrich and expand our lives. President Faust explained “that this church does not necessarily attract great people but more often makes ordinary people great. . . .

“A major reason this church has grown from its humble beginnings to its current strength is the faithfulness and devotion of millions of humble and devoted [members] who have only five loaves and two small fishes to offer in the service of the Master.”⁵

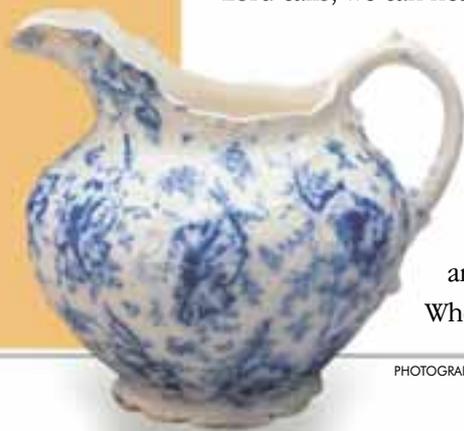
The exciting global growth of the Church has focused our attention on the prophesied glorious future of the kingdom. At the same time that we look ahead with optimism, we should pause and look back on the faith of our humble pioneer forebears. Their faith built the foundation on which the Church continues to flourish.

Let us dedicate ourselves to doing the Lord’s work to the best of our abilities. May we honor the faith of our fathers by giving our own faithful service to this great cause. May we follow the prophet and by so doing “come unto Christ, and partake of the goodness of God” (Jacob 1:7). **NE**

Adapted from an April 1996 general conference address.

NOTES

1. *Lydia Knight’s History*, (1883), 63.
2. Quoted in B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 3:45.
3. Joseph L. Wirthlin, *A Heritage of Faith*, comp. Richard Bitner Wirthlin (1964), 47.
4. “The Priesthood in Action,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 48.
5. “Five Loaves and Two Fishes,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 5–6.



P.S. *He Loves You*

Her letter gave me the answer I needed.

BY HEATHER SCHIFFMAN

At the end of eighth grade, I was having a really hard time. It seemed like nothing was going my way.

I never saw my mom. She worked a night shift and took care of my aunt who was dying of cancer. My dad had died a year earlier. I felt very lost and alone, like I had no friends or family to comfort me. At school I was quiet and didn't open up much. I quit hanging out with my friends. At the time, I didn't think I was acting that differently. I tried to be myself and be as happy as I could. Now I look back and realize I was feeling down and falling even further.

A friend who I had just started hanging out with had a very strong testimony. She was in one of my classes, and one day, out of nowhere, she handed me a letter. In it, she described her hardships and expressed her testimony, which was one of the strongest testimonies I had ever read.

At the end of the letter there was the scripture, John 14:18: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

I felt as though God was telling me through my friend that I was not alone, even though I felt as though I had no friends or family. Now I know I will never be alone because I can go to my Heavenly Father through prayer. He will always be there. **NE**

Heather Schiffman is a member of the Bridgerland Park Second Ward, Logan Utah Cache Stake.



Walking to church every week with my big family was embarrassing. I used to hope nobody was watching, but now I'm glad someone was.



GLADI

BY JESSICA N. EMBLEY

My family lives within walking distance of our chapel, so I had to walk to church every Sunday and to Mutual every Wednesday. I would beg my parents to drive me, but they firmly believed that I, along with the rest of the family, should walk. We walked in sunshine, rain, and even snow. I had to reassess my entire Sunday-shoe wardrobe.

Walking together was an embarrassing feat for our family of six children. We would straggle out of the house carrying scriptures, various bags, and even babies. Some of us would still be dressing as we ran out the door. My little brother would pause at each step to pull on a sock or tie a shoe.

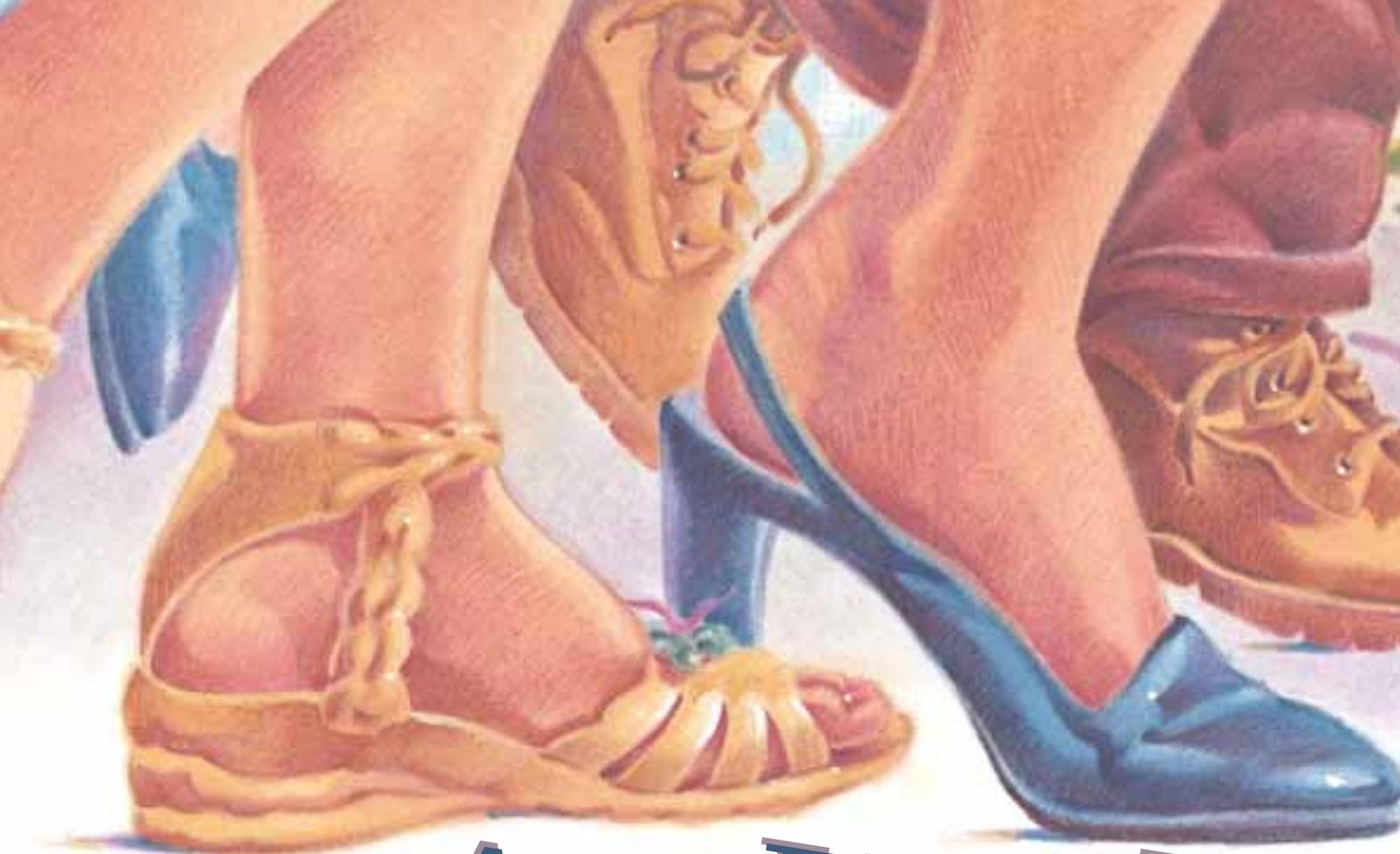
Occasionally, we would notice a neighbor watching, and my mom would laugh. "Here come the Embleys!" she would say. I didn't think it was very funny.

At this time I had been searching for a job. I had interviewed at several clothing stores with no luck and was beginning to lose hope. Because of my determination not to work on Sunday, it seemed no one wanted to hire me. Potential employers always asked if I would work on Sundays.

My reply, of course, was "No."

They would explain that being available to work on Sunday was part of their hiring policy, and then ask me again if I could work Sundays. My answer stayed the same. They would nicely say they could not hire me, but I could come back if I changed my mind.

One day I discovered that the local grocery store was



WALKED

hiring. I applied, and they wanted to interview me right away. I went to the store for my interview and was sent to the pharmacy and up a flight of stairs. I stood in an office until someone realized that I was there. Finally, a polite lady wearing a green smock invited me in.

She introduced herself and said, “I’m your neighbor.” It shocked me because I hadn’t made the connection that she lived across the street from me.

After looking over my application, she asked if we could revise the available hours I’d put down. This made me nervous after being turned down at so many places, and I got ready to be disappointed again. We made a few changes to my weekday schedule, then went to the weekends.

“For the most part, we require our employees to work on Sundays,” she said, “but I see you walking to church

every Sunday and Wednesday, and I think if it’s important enough for you to go to church every Sunday and Wednesday, then we can let you off those days. I’ll talk to your manager and work things out.”

I was amazed! Because my neighbor had seen my dedication in walking to church, I got a job that didn’t require me to work on Sunday.

Now every time I complain about walking to church, my mom simply reminds me that my salary comes because of my faith. If I hadn’t walked to church every Sunday and Wednesday, I wouldn’t have my job. I’m grateful that Heavenly Father provides a way when we do what He commands. **NE**

Jessica N. Embley is a member of the Frankfort Ward, Lexington Kentucky Stake.



OUT OF SMALL THINGS

*Following the example of
Jesus Christ is never a
small thing.*

BY ELDER STEPHEN A. WEST
Of the Seventy

Years ago, my wife and I served as a resource to a little inner-city branch of the Church that had about 35 members. The branch president, Daniel Sawyer, a man I greatly admire, may have been the only member of that branch who had belonged to the Church for more than three or four years.

Our meetings were held in a row house in one of the most troubled neighborhoods of a large eastern city. The house was located on a street where many buildings had been burned and looted during the riots in 1968, and 25 years later, some of those damaged or destroyed buildings still had not been repaired or rebuilt. Some of the rooms of the row house had been modified for use as classrooms and as an office. The basement was furnished with a sacrament table, a podium for the speaker, and folding chairs. Some of the most memorable Church experiences my wife and I have had took place in that setting.



The speaker happened to be talking about the parable of the good Samaritan as the homeless woman came in.

One Sunday, right in the middle of the branch sacrament meeting, a woman walked in the door from off the street. She was a homeless woman who was wearing dirty, ragged clothes, coughing, choking, and blowing her nose into a filthy handkerchief. In a loud, hoarse voice she said, “I want to sing! I want to pray!” and walked right to the front row and sat down next to a member who was wearing a white blouse, leaned against her, and laid her head on her shoulder. The member immediately put her arms around this guest and held her in her arms throughout the rest of the meeting.

It happened that the speaker had been talking about the parable of the good Samaritan (see Luke 10:30–37) as the woman had come in. As this woman coughed and choked, the speaker continued telling the parable. As he came to the end of his talk and was quoting a relevant scripture, suddenly, in a loud voice, this homeless woman finished giving the verse that the speaker had begun. In talking of this after sacrament meeting with the speaker, we thought it had probably been a long time since someone had affectionately put an arm around our visitor. We wondered what better illustration you could have of the parable of the good Samaritan than what we

had just seen, and we were reminded of the Savior's words that preceded His telling of that parable, "Thou shalt love . . . thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27).

All She Could Give

A second experience in the branch dealt with a kind and conscientious woman who faithfully turned in envelopes containing a few coins for payment of her tithing. One day as she came to church, she was also holding in her hand a plastic sandwich bag with a piece of dried-up bread in it. She handed the plastic bag to us and said: "If you are going to belong to a church, you ought to contribute. I can't contribute much, but I can contribute the sacrament bread."

As we used her bread for the sacrament, the whole experience carried an additional meaning that day. Going through my mind was the verse that reads: "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

"And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

"And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

"For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:41-44).

As the Savior Would Do

A third experience in the branch came during a discussion the members were having in Sunday School concerning when you should give to those who ask you for aid. One of the members, who had come with his wife from Africa to further his education, raised his hand and told us of the following experience.

As he had been walking home in the neighborhood, he had been approached by a man who put a pistol to his chest and demanded all his money. Our member took the money from his pockets and handed it over to the man and then said, "If you need the money that badly, I have more." He opened his briefcase and took out additional

money, which he gave to the robber, saying, "Understand, you are not taking this from me; I am giving it to you in the name of the Lord because you need it." He said the robber looked at him in amazement, put the pistol in his belt, and said, "Where do you live? I'm going to walk you home because you're too good a man to be on these streets, and you are not safe here."

As they started to walk to the member's apartment,

suddenly they were surrounded by police cars because a woman had seen the holdup from her apartment window and had called the police. The police arrested the robber and took him away. Having been the victim, this member was asked to be a witness later at the trial of the robber. At the trial, he testified that although the robber had demanded his money, he had told him that he gave the money to him in the name of the Lord and that if the robber needed it that badly, he wanted him to have it.

Since then, when I hear the Savior's words, "Him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also" (Luke 6:29), my mind goes back not only to the Holy Land but also to the hard streets in that eastern city.

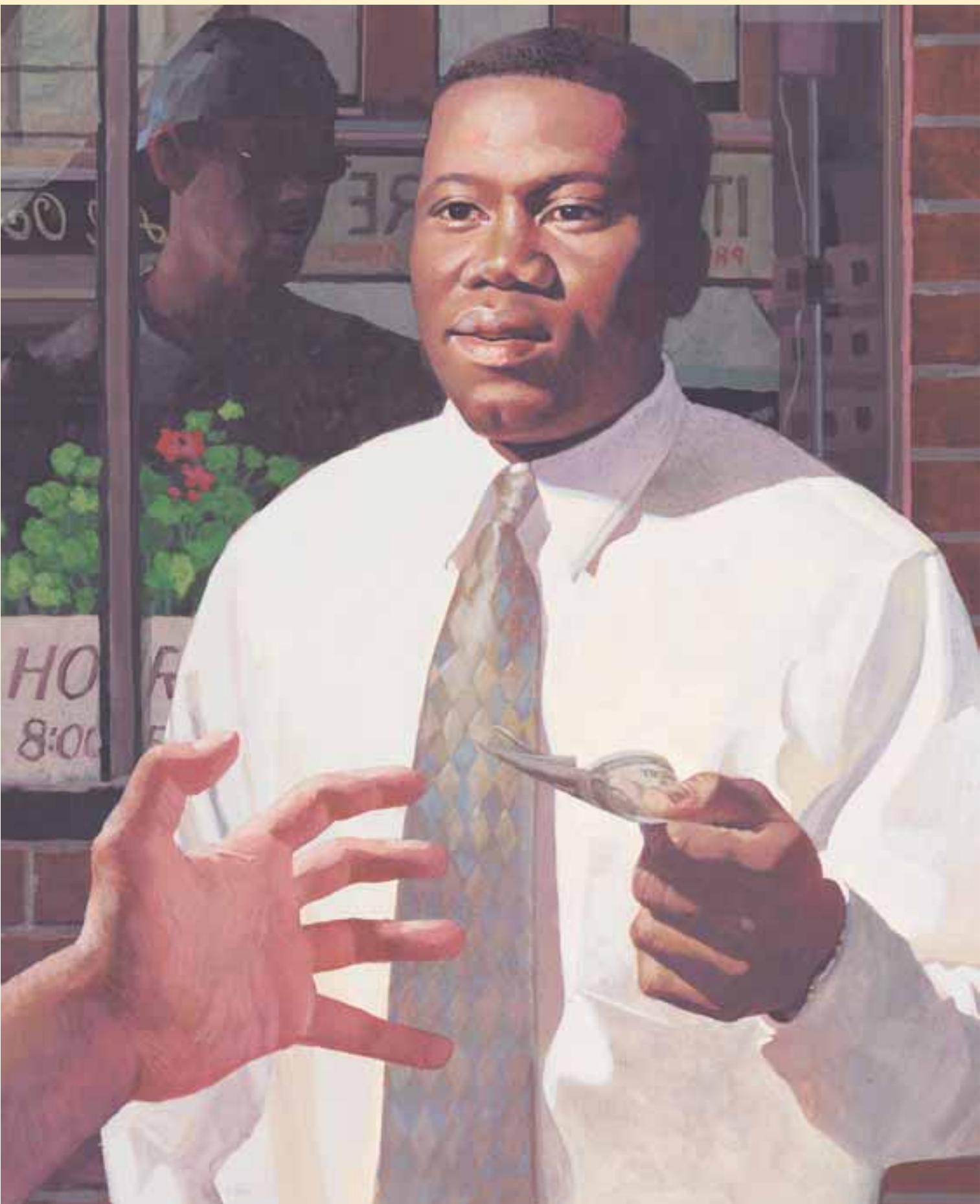
The Savior gave, among other things, a touch here, a kind word there, food (both real and spiritual) to the hungry, advice and counsel to those in need. He gave prayers with the frightened, kindness to the passed-

over, respect and affection for the children, loving care for those who are burdened. "And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things" (1 Nephi 16:29). "Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great" (D&C 64:33).

In these times when so much of our daily experience seems to point to a world moving in the wrong direction, may we take faith, courage, and comfort from the small, quiet, and gentle acts of caring, loving, humble, and dedicated followers of Christ. May we similarly replicate in our own lives the lessons the Savior taught is my prayer, to which I add my testimony that He lives. **NE**

From an April 1999 general conference address.





Q & A

Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?

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

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No one escapes suffering in this life. We all go through some pain, sadness, and adversity. God allows us to go through trials so we can be tested and have our agency.

Bad things can happen to good people when people misuse their agency. Those who make poor choices hurt themselves and sometimes other people, even good people. Crime and divorce, for instance, are often the result of poor choices.

But poor choices don't cause all suffering. Difficult circumstances like disease, accidents, starvation, or natural disasters are a part of mortal life. Difficulty rains "on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45).

The most important thing is to trust God and obey His will. Suffering in this life will eventually come to an end, and God's perfect mercy, justice, and judgment will resolve all the "why's" we wonder about now. The Lord loves us and sees the eternal view, so we can trust Him to guide our lives. He promises that our trials and difficulties can work for our good if we're trying to live the right way

Bad things often occur when people make bad decisions. Those decisions can affect others.

Bad things can be turned to our good if we seek to do God's will (see D&C 122:7).

By enduring our trials well, we become stronger and more understanding.

Rather than ask, "Why me?" ask, "What can I learn from this?"

We can turn to the Savior in any trial because He knows exactly how we feel and can help us.

READERS



I was diagnosed with cancer at the beginning of my senior year. Now, two years later, I am cancer free. I learned more from that trial than I thought possible. The Lord gives us trials that He knows we can handle, and that will help us learn and grow. He is always there for us. Aubre Snow, Wasilla, Alaska



When bad things happen to good people, it can humble them and test their strength. Job, in the Bible, had everything taken away from him, but he never turned away from God. In the end Job got everything back, but twice as much. Brian Anderson, Cary, North Carolina



We can be positive that suffering has a purpose: to make you stronger or maybe even to make someone watching stronger. It could be to give you wisdom to help others along when things get bad for them. It may seem hard and quite unfair, but



there is reasoning behind it. Just keep your trust in the Lord. Ashlie Dotson, Hereford, Texas



When you come to understand that Heavenly Father has a purpose and a plan for you and that our Savior, Jesus Christ, can give you comfort, trials take on a different meaning. When you have faith in our Heavenly Father and His eternal

plan, you can be assured that there is purpose in all that happens to us here on this earth. Josi Rust, Springfield, Oregon

By watching the news we can tell how confused our world is. To understand why, we can look at Alma 14:10-11 and Alma 60:13. Both passages testify that the righteous do not perish but pass with glory unto God and that God suffers this so that His justice and judgment can fall upon the wicked.

God allows evil to exist in the world, but He loves us and weeps for us. One day the Lord will answer all of our questions, revealing the purpose of all things. Joseph Novak, Kirtland, Ohio



When something bad comes into our life, how we deal with it shows God the faith we have in Him and His Son, Jesus.

Jared Michael Shrack, Muncie, Indiana

NEW ERA

(see D&C 90:24; 122:7). He promises us peace that transcends the evil of the world (John 16:33). Psalms 34:19 says, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.”

Joseph Smith, a faithful, obedient servant of God, suffered tremendously. Yet he was able to endure his trials with God’s help and with an eternal perspective. The Lord told Joseph to remember that “thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; and then if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high” (D&C 121:7-8). We have the same promise.

President James E. Faust said, “Into every life there come the painful, despairing days of adversity and buffeting. There seems to be a full measure of anguish, sorrow, and often heartbreak for everyone, including those who earnestly seek to do right and be faithful. . . . For some, the refiner’s fire causes a loss of belief and faith in God, but those with eternal perspective understand that such refining is part of the perfection process” (*Ensign*, May 1979, 54).

The pain and adversity we face in this life can be like a refiner’s fire. If we endure our trials well, we can emerge from the fire stronger and brighter.

Jesus Christ was the only perfect person who ever lived on the earth, yet He was scourged, smitten, and suffered all things (see 1 Nephi 19:9). Because He suffered, we don’t have to be alone in our hard times. He understands the pain everyone goes through and offers peace, healing, and eternal blessings if we endure our trials well. Because of the healing and blessing power of the Atonement, we can see our trials as chances to learn, to grow, and, most important, to come unto Christ. **NE**



To the sightless or hearing impaired, [God] sharpens the other senses. . . . With the loss of a dear one, He deepens the bonds of love, enriches memories, and kindles hope in a future reunion. You will discover compensatory blessings when you willingly accept the will of the Lord and exercise faith in Him” (*Ensign*, May 1996, 25).

—Elder Richard G. Scott
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

READERS

We should learn to recognize our trials as potential blessings. The Lord allows us to face bad things to shape us into better people. We can trust Him. I know He listens to our prayers and takes care of our needs. *Jerilyn P. Cales, Hong Kong, China*



Heavenly Father allows us to have trials so we can overcome our weaknesses and make them strengths. He wants us to come to Him and ask Him for help so He can make us better than we already are. *Jenae Plymale, Jackson, Ohio*

Sometimes we forget that we came to earth to be tested. Job was a very righteous man who had terrible things happen to him. We can use his example to help us through our own trials. We can also be comforted to know that the Lord will help us if we keep His commandments. *Joel Mowers, Sparks, Nevada*

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

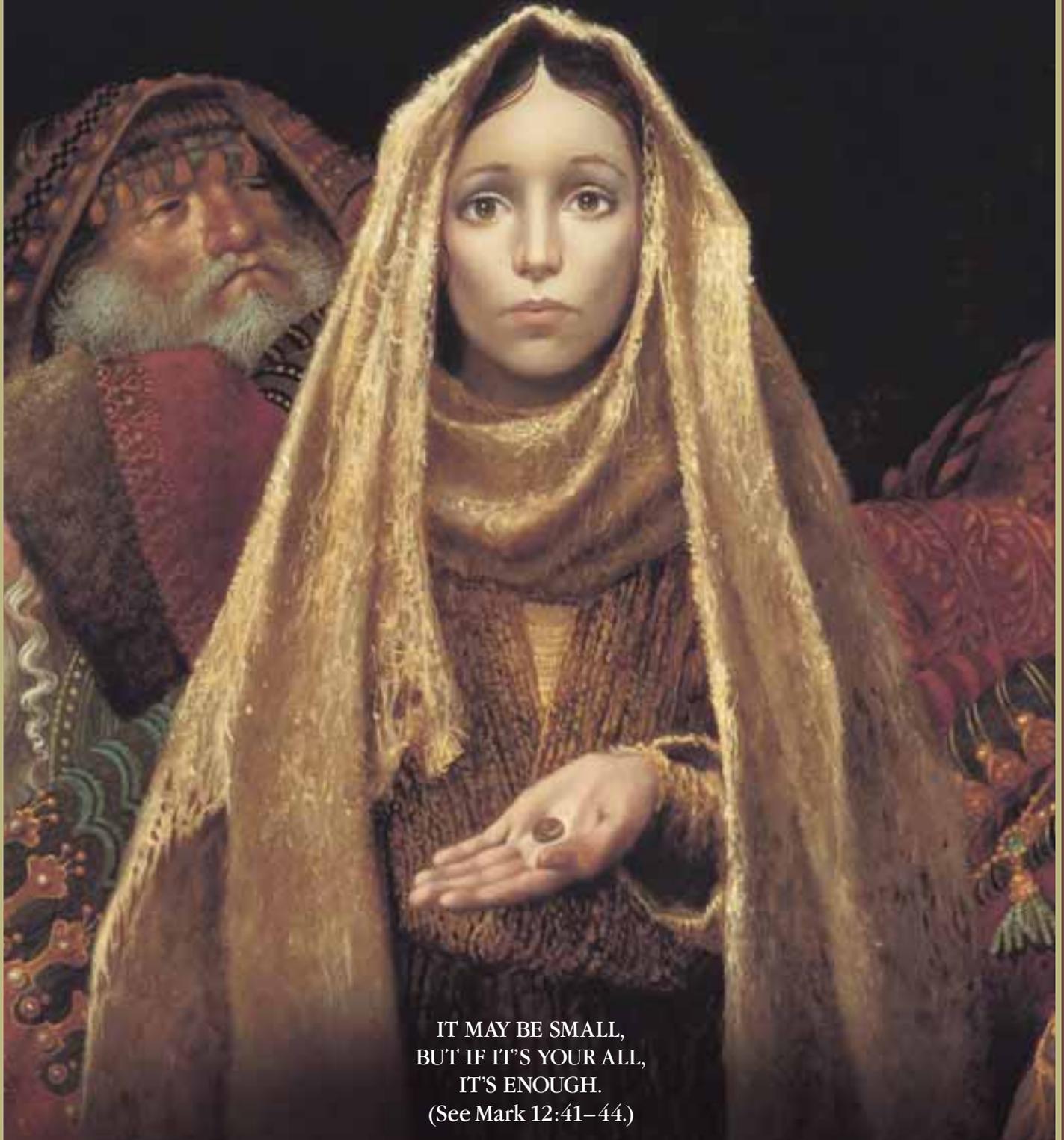
Send us your answer to the question below, along with your name, age, and the names of your ward and stake. Please include a snapshot of yourself that is 1 1/2 by 2 inches (4 by 5 cm) or larger. Please respond by September 1, 2003.

**Q&A, New Era
50 East North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150**

QUESTION

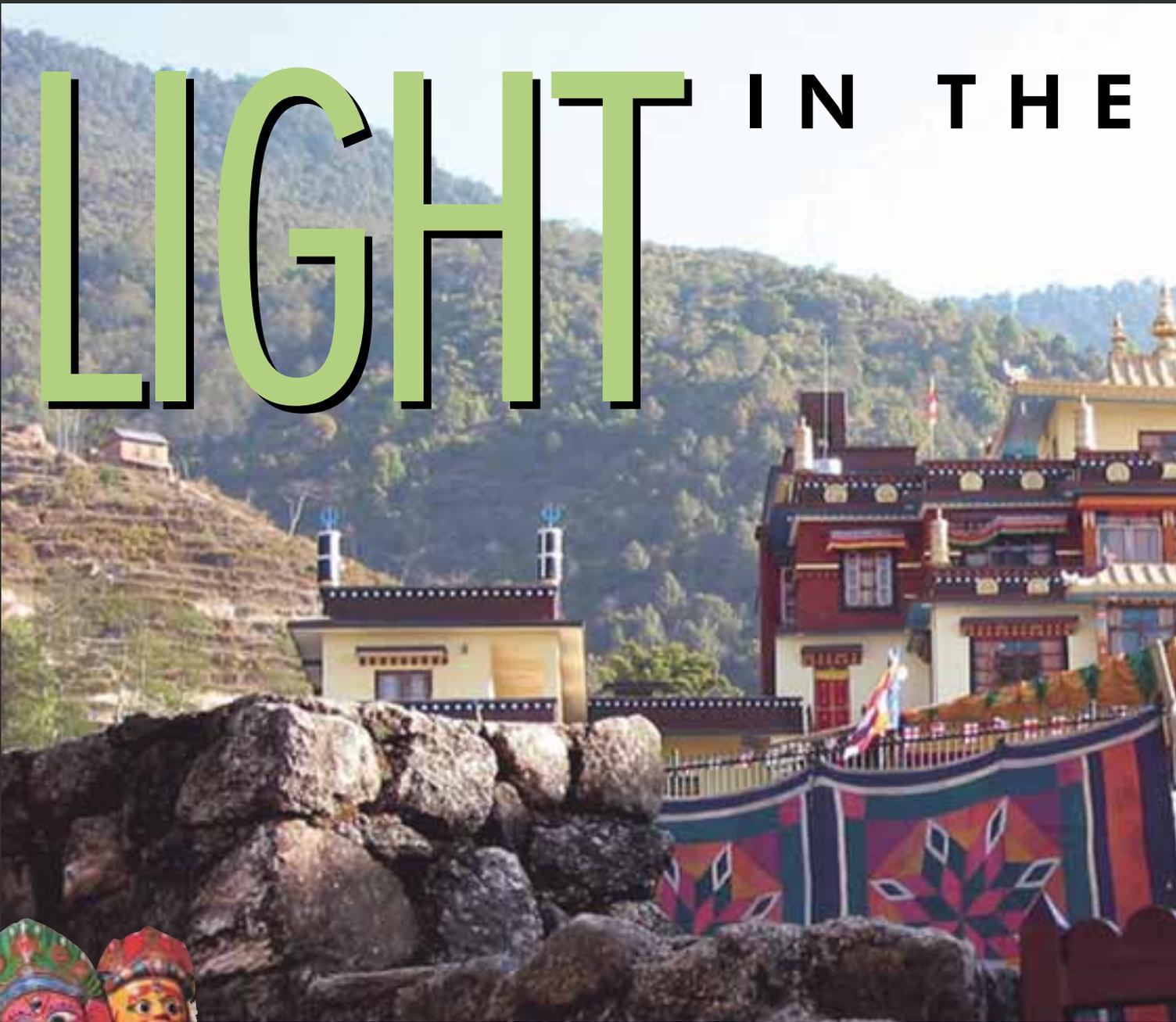
“Before I gained my testimony, my friends and I made fun of the Church. How can I show them that I was wrong?”

LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT



IT MAY BE SMALL,
BUT IF IT'S YOUR ALL,
IT'S ENOUGH.
(See Mark 12:41-44.)

LIGHT IN THE



The light of the gospel grows in Nepal, thanks to youth who have accepted their role as pioneers.

BY LYNNE S. TOPHAM

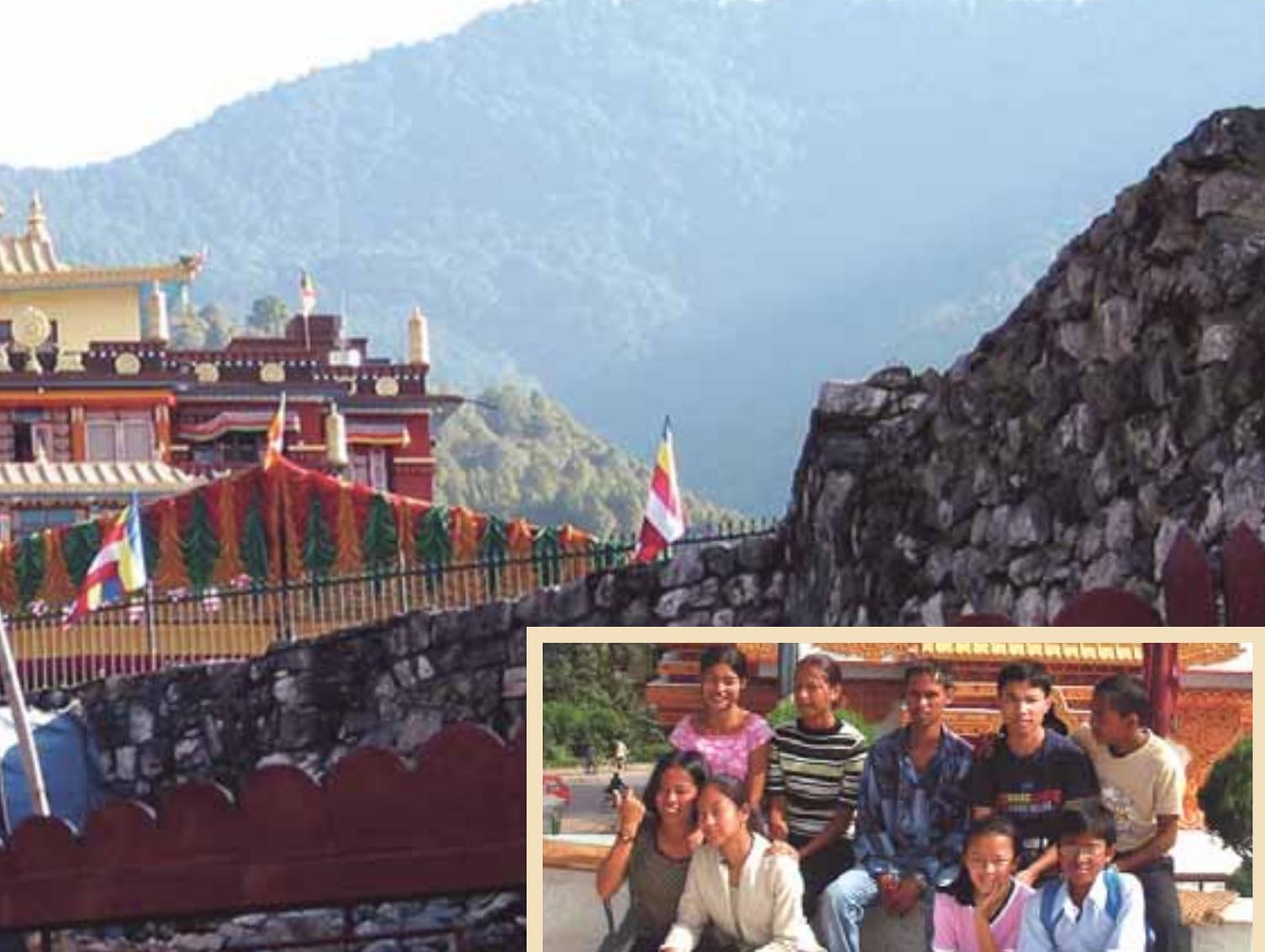
To most of the world, Nepal is a land of mystery. On a map, it can be hard to find, wedged as it is between Chinese Tibet and India. Nepal is a land of kindness, beauty, and vibrant colors. It is the land of Sagarmatha, as Mount Everest is commonly called.

It is a land of Hinduism and Buddhism and a land where everything that is worshiped—rocks, trees, stone statues with many arms—has been smudged with red powder and worn down by ceaseless rubbing. Rubbing

powder on such objects is a form of respect, and by rubbing the powder the Nepali people are praying to the god represented by the rock or tree. The Nepali greeting, *namaste*, means, “I bow to the god within you.”

Below the ridges of terraced rice paddies, in the middle of the crowded capital city of Kathmandu, is a small branch of the Church. In a country where missionaries are not allowed to teach, this branch of 50 active members is thriving. Much of its success is due to the young people who have become

LAND OF MYSTERY



pioneers for the Church and Christianity in Nepal.

How have they been so successful, averaging 12 baptisms a year, when there are no full-time missionaries to spread the gospel? Once converted, Nepali people can teach each other, and these young people have not been afraid to speak about their new faith.

Sisters and Friends

If you ask 13-year-old Manita Maharjan about the Church, she will happily tell you her story in beautiful



English. As a seven-year-old, she lived near two friends, sisters Usha and Sabita Thapa, who had joined the Church. They brought her to church regularly, and Manita says she was always happy there. “I got such love from the branch members as a little girl,” she says. “As I grew up, I learned to play the piano, lead music, and share my talents. I learned to pray and study the gospel. I thank Usha and Sabita for bringing me into this happy world.” Manita has

become the top student in her class at school, and she regularly brings her school friends to church.

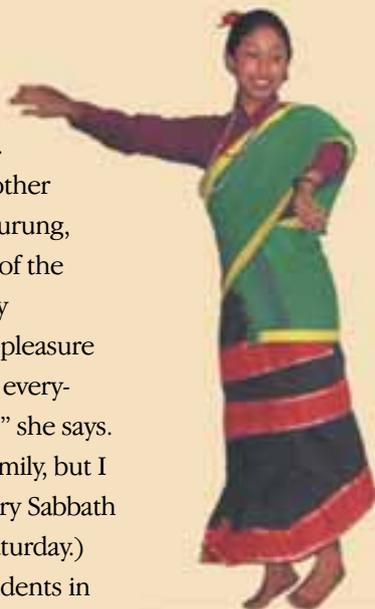
This same love soon brought another young lady to the gospel. Monika Gurung, now 14, also came under the wings of the Thapa sisters. Her family was already Christian, but she says she felt such pleasure when she joined the Church. "Here everybody loves me, and I love them too," she says. "I am still the only member in my family, but I bring my little brothers with me every Sabbath day." (In Nepal, the Sabbath is on Saturday.)

Monika is also one of the top students in her school class. She was permitted to give a talk in school about the Church and the Book of Mormon. This is unusual in the schools, but Monika was allowed to make her presentation because she is such a fine student.

To demonstrate their love for their culture, Monika and Manita both perform Nepali folk dances in native costumes with professional grace and ability.

Truly Committed

The day after the baptism of Veswengal Gharti Chhetri (known as G.C.), a political group in Nepal called a *bund* (strike). This meant that no vehicles were allowed



on the roads. But G.C., who lives a great distance from where the branch meets, knew people were counting on him to be at church to be confirmed. He walked 2 ½ hours one way on roads that, empty of the crushing traffic, were now crowded with people and wandering animals.

He first learned of the Church at the school where he teaches when he overheard a young Latter-day Saint teacher discussing the gospel with the school's principal. He quickly approached Ramesh Shrestha and began asking questions. Now, age 21 and a

Manita
Mabarjan
(above)

*performs at a
branch talent show.*

*Usha Thapa, Preeti
Khadgi, and Manita*

*(above, right) visit
Swayambhunath*

*Temple. Monika
Gurung (far right)*

exercises with friends.

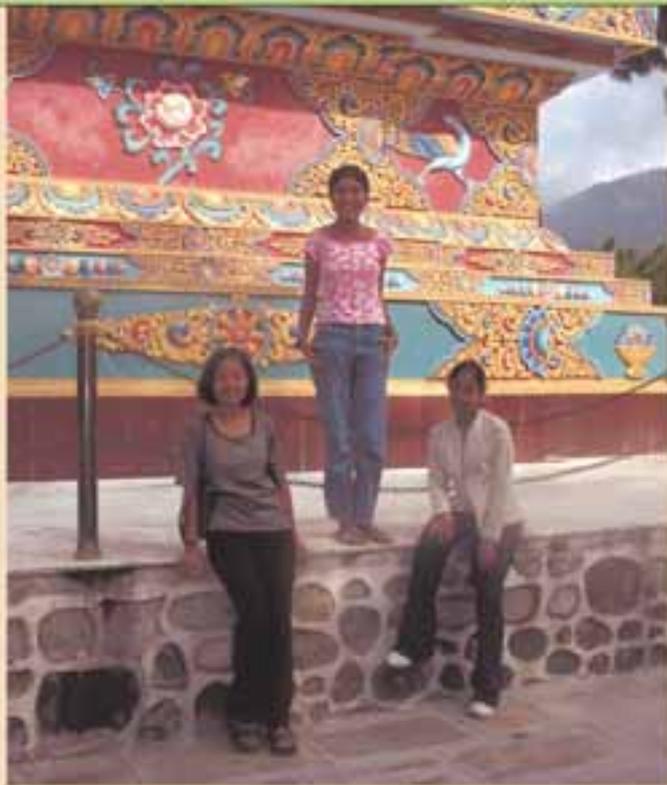
*Shrines with statues
line this street in
Bhaktapur (right).*



Manita Maharjan



Usha Thapa

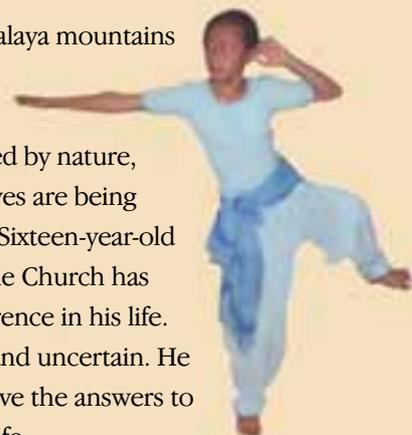


member of the Church for only a few months, he has been called as Young Men president. G.C. says, “The Church was something more than I expected.” He loves the concepts of eternal marriage, agency, the Word of Wisdom, and the plan of salvation. G.C.’s talents are the warmth of his personality and his great love of people, which make him a natural for his second calling as a branch missionary. When asked why he likes to teach the gospel, he says, “It is not good to have something so delicious and not share it.”

Love seems to be the central key for the growth of the branch in Kathmandu.

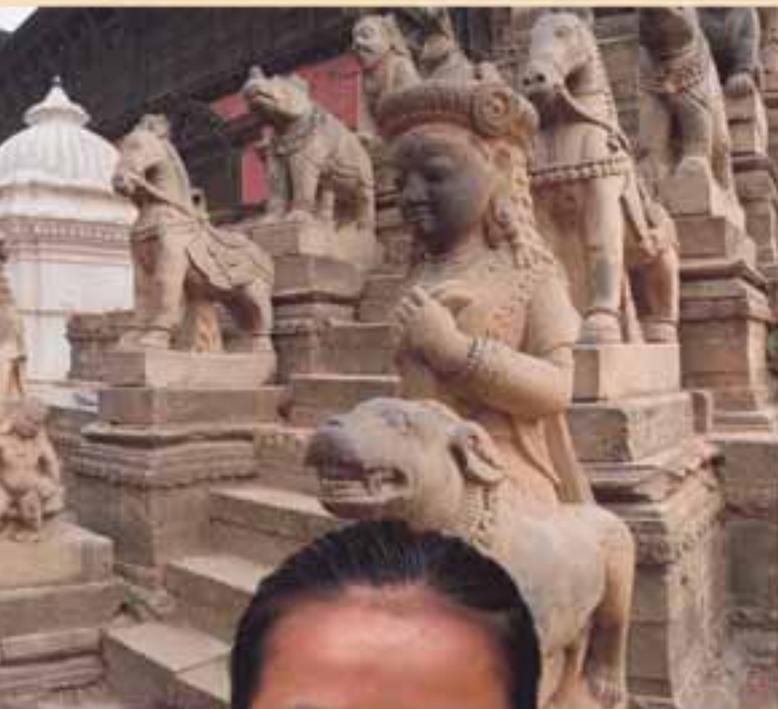
Reaching New Heights

Like the rugged Himalaya mountains in the north, which are geologically young and constantly being changed by nature, these young people’s lives are being changed by the gospel. Sixteen-year-old Suman Shilpakar says the Church has made a wonderful difference in his life. He no longer feels shy and uncertain. He knows the scriptures have the answers to all his questions about life.



Preeti Khadgi says that she has become more kind-hearted and she enjoys talking to people more since she became a member of the

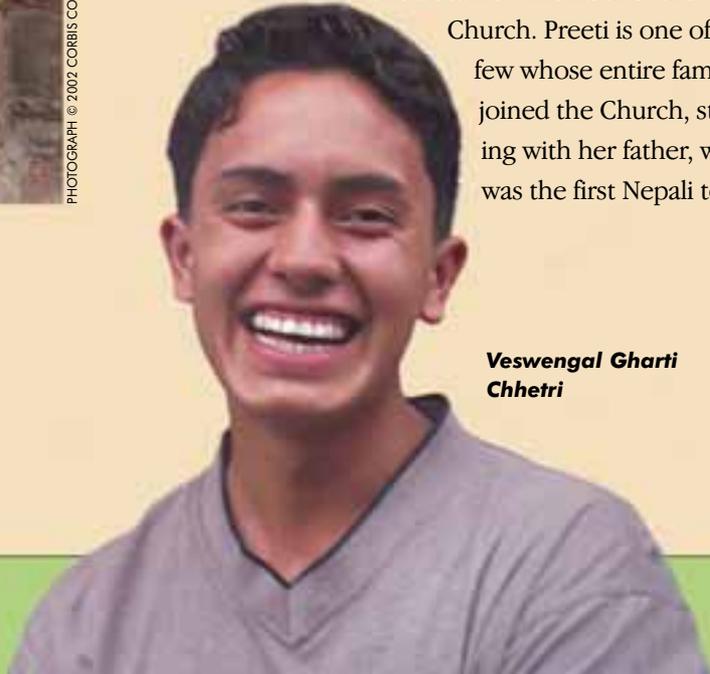
Church. Preeti is one of the few whose entire family joined the Church, starting with her father, who was the first Nepali to be



PHOTOGRAPH © 2002 CORBIS CORPORATION DIGITAL STOCK



Monika Gurung



**Veswengal Gharti
Chhetri**



baptized in Nepal and is now the branch president.

Before joining the Church, Preeti's mother had a dream in which she found a way "to make all of her children good children." The Khadgis feel the Church is fulfilling that dream. Preeti's brother, Pratik, is now serving in the



India Bangalore Mission.

In Nepal, students must pass 10th-grade exams to continue in school. Failing the exams ends their education. "One of my teachers," Preeti says, "wanted me to come on the Sabbath to a study session for the exam. I explained that I could not; I had to go to church."

"Is that necessary?" he asked.

"Yes,"

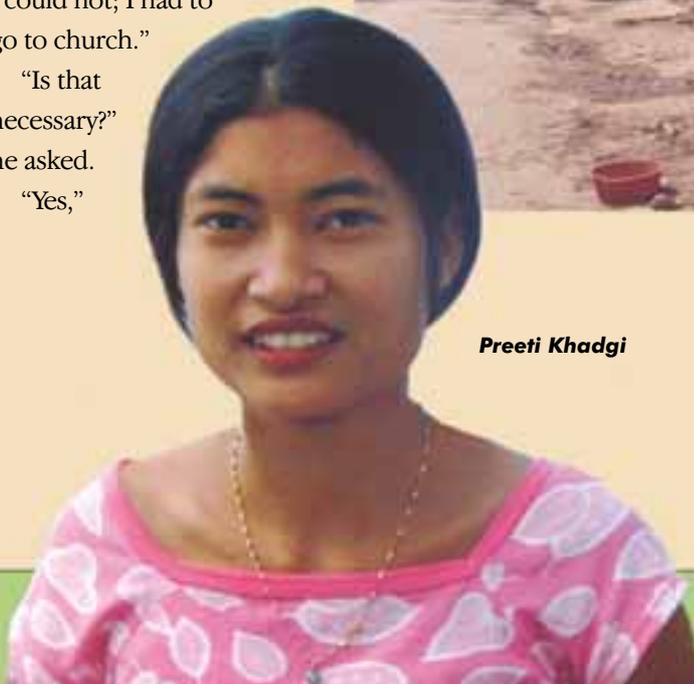
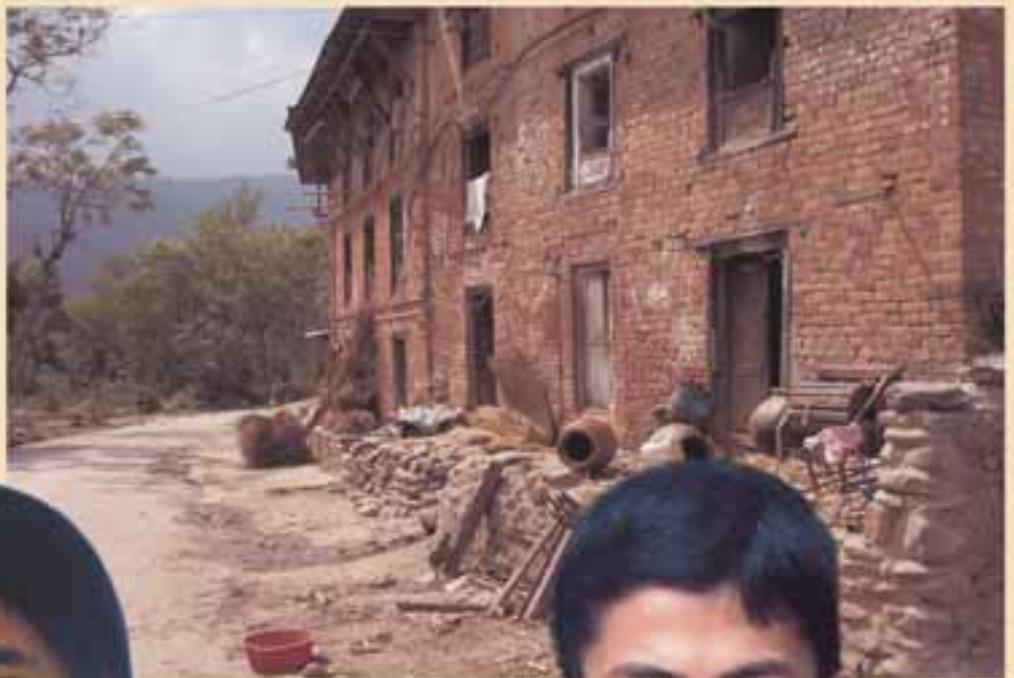
Preeti answered. "I have a teaching responsibility." She later passed her "iron gate," her name for these rigorous tests. "I prayed that whatever I had learned, Heavenly Father would help me remember," she says.



An Everyday Challenge

For Nepali families, drinking tea with milk first thing in the morning is an ingrained tradition. In every home and every tiny shop along every narrow street, small stoves brew tea. To begin to follow the Word of Wisdom has been difficult for many of these young converts.

When Deepak Shrestha's older brother, who was the



Preeti Khadgi



Deepak Shrestha

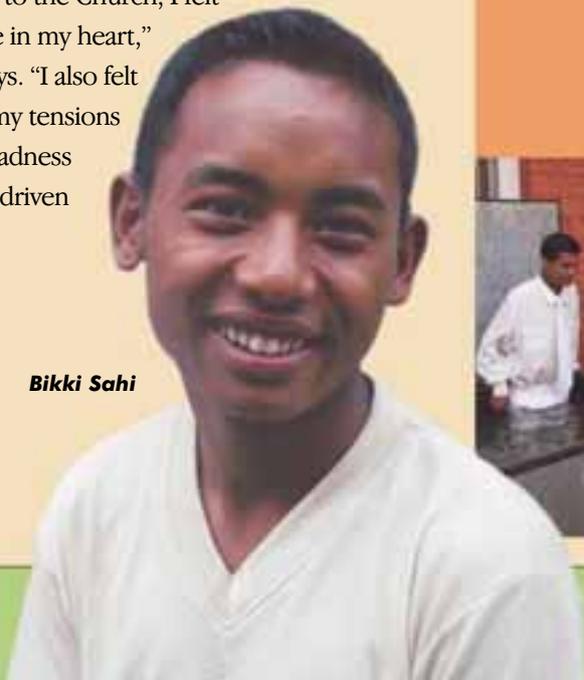


first missionary to serve from Nepal, told him the Church was the greatest thing in the world, Deepak was interested. Then his brother challenged him to live the Word of Wisdom. Deepak quickly felt the wisdom of this advice because “it affects the future.” The result of that decision has been the start of Deepak’s strong and continually growing testimony of the gospel.

Hoping for a Nepali Book of Mormon

Seventeen-year-old Bikki Sahi has recently been baptized. And like many of the other Latter-day Saint youth here, he is the only member in his family. He feels strongly that he has “chosen the right way.” Bikki has a new but beautiful testimony to share. “When I first came to the Church, I felt peace in my heart,” he says. “I also felt that my tensions and sadness were driven

Bikki Sahi



A stream runs through Thulogaau (far left) near a monastery (shown on p. 20). A street in Bungmati (left), near Kathmandu. Preeti Khadgi (above, left) performs a folk dance. Snow covers Machhapuchhare (above). Pratik Khadgi and Bikki Sahi at Bikki’s baptism (below).



away. The brothers and sisters showed me their love and taught me about Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon. When I obeyed the commandments, it helped me improve my habits, and I felt good. I know that Jesus is the Christ and that the Book of Mormon is true.”

The only thing these youth lament is not having the Book of Mormon in the Nepali language. For those who do not speak English well, it is difficult to study the gospel. They must accept on faith alone and learn what they can in class. Even for those who are quite fluent in English, it is a struggle.

Though they lack a Nepali Book of Mormon, these youth fill their lives with school, Church, and cultural activities. They sing, perform Nepali dances, and play the piano. They go bowling and rock climbing and have tried golf and tae-bo exercises. They do service projects and enjoy their friends both in and out of the Church. They face life with enthusiasm.

In the midst of the incredible mountains and valleys of Nepal, a clear voice is sounding. It is young, vibrant, and full of faith. These teens are pioneers in the truest sense of the word. They are leading the gospel forward in their native land. These young converts will continue to love their people into the gospel until that day comes when this country opens its welcoming doors to the missionaries.

Namaste. NE

Lynne S. Topham is serving with her husband, **W. Sanford Topham**, in the India Bangalore Mission. They are members of the Parowan Fourth Ward, Parowan Utah Stake.

LOCKED OUT

BY MICHELE TOLLEY

I was miserable and alone outside the stake center, thinking of all my family and friends inside without me. I should have been more prepared.

My stake was excited that the Palmyra New York Temple dedication was going to be broadcast at our stake center. The members seemed abuzz with anticipation. I was looking forward to it too, but for some reason I kept procrastinating getting my ticket.

Finally, on the day of the dedication, I talked to one of the counselors in the bishopric to get my ticket. He handed me a ticket, and without looking at it, I put it in my purse. During sacrament meeting, announcements were made about the dedication, but I tuned them out because I already had my ticket.

I went home that day and got lost in other activities. About 15 minutes before the dedication was to begin, I decided I should probably leave. I felt prepared as I put my white handkerchief in my purse and even double-checked to make sure my ticket was still there.

My family had left earlier to get good seats, warning me that I should come soon. I had planned to drive with them but hadn't been ready, so I decided to go separately.

As I pulled into the church parking lot, I was surprised at how full it was. It was

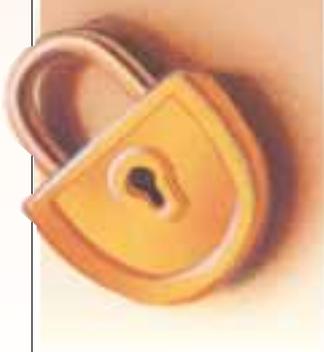
packed with cars, but there wasn't a person in sight. At first I feared I was late, but I looked at my watch and I had five minutes before the dedication was to start.

I walked up the steps to the church and tried the door. It was locked. I was puzzled but remembered hearing somewhere that they were letting people in only through certain doors. I wasn't sure which doors, so I decided to try them all. I went around the church, pulling at the doors, rattling them slightly, trying in frustration to open them.

As I approached the last set of doors, I felt my heart quicken. I tried the door, but it too was locked. I peered into the lobby, which was empty. The doors to the chapel were closed. I realized sadly that everyone was already inside, and I was alone outside—looking in.

As I walked dejectedly back to the car, I decided to double-check the time of the dedication. I fished through my purse until I found the ticket and saw that I had the time right. Anger ran through me at being locked out. Why wasn't I able to go inside? I was missing this historic event!

I turned over the ticket and was surprised to see writing on the back. I read it with





We always need to be prepared in every way, constantly filling our lamps, not just thinking we have enough oil.



curiosity. Clearly printed was the instruction to be seated 30 minutes before the dedication started.

Why hadn't I seen that before? I had never read the back of my ticket. I had placed it in my purse as soon as I received it. I hadn't prepared in one of the simplest ways possible. As I sat in the car, too sad to move, I realized I was like one of the five foolish virgins in the parable of the ten virgins. I was left outside the wedding ceremony with a lamp that was out of oil, while the others were inside with the bridegroom.

Whenever I had read that story in Matthew 25, I wondered how the five women had been so foolish. I always thought that purchasing enough oil was such a simple thing to do. I knew the oil and lamps represented our testimonies and the Holy Spirit's guidance (see D&C 45:57). I had thought I was prepared to attend the temple dedication, yet I wasn't inside listening to the prophet.

Alone in the parking lot, I realized that having a ticket wasn't enough. We have more to do than simply be present on the day Christ comes. We need to be prepared in every way, constantly filling our lamps, not just thinking we have enough oil.

As I drove back home, tears stung my eyes. It hurt to be alone, knowing that family and friends were inside being uplifted and I wasn't able to go in with them. I promised myself that from then on I would do all I could to be prepared with plenty of oil. I want to be part of the joyful wedding party instead of being one of the unprepared locked outside. **NE**

Michele Tolley is a member of El Cerrito Ward, Corona California Stake.

OPEN YOUR MOUTH

President Gordon B. Hinckley has challenged Church members to increase the number of converts and help them stay active (see *Ensign*, May 1999, 105). Here are some ideas from *New Era* readers on how you can do your part to spread the gospel.

Prepare

- Study the scriptures, pray, and attend seminary or institute so you will know how to answer people's questions. The Lord will help you if you are prepared.
- Prayerfully identify your friends and neighbors who would be most receptive to the gospel.
- Pray each day for opportunities to share the gospel and for the Holy Spirit to be with you.
- Keep an extra copy of the Book of Mormon handy—in your locker, schoolbag, or car.
- Be tolerant of the beliefs of others, and be understanding if your friends are not interested in the Church.

Share

- After you identify who you feel might be interested in the gospel, talk to or write to them about your beliefs. Share your testimony and a Book of Mormon with them.
- Find ways to serve nonmembers or less-active members in your ward. Invite them to a Church meeting or activity.
- Be an example. That's a great way to bear your testimony.
- When someone asks you what you did over the weekend, tell about a Church activity.
- Share a scripture with someone who's having a bad day.
- Go on exchanges with the full-time missionaries in your area if the opportunity arises.

Follow up

- Introduce your interested friends to the full-time missionaries. Involve yourself in teaching the gospel to them, preferably in your home.
- Welcome your friends and new members into the Church by being attentive and helpful.
- Get more ideas from full-time missionaries in your area when you've used up the ideas on this list. **NE**



PLAY YOUR

Each member of the Howard family gets in the act, whether it's putting on the plays their parents write or taking care of each other.



PART



BY ANNE BRADSHAW

When the lights go down and the curtain rises, the Howard family from St. Anthony, Idaho, is at the theater in force: backstage, onstage, in the concession booth, selling tickets, and in the audience.

There are 11 of them, sometimes more if they have a foster child at the time: Mom and Dad (Donna and Daris), Celese, Annicka, Trissa, Scott, Gavin, Tara, Jenna, Clarissa, and baby Heather. This is the fourth year the whole family, together with members of the St. Anthony community, has taken part in putting on summer shows written and produced by Brother and Sister Howard and performed in the local theater.

The Howards are musically inclined and play many instruments: piano, French horn, flute, clarinet, harp, trumpet, violin, guitar, organ, saxophone—the list goes on. They even have three pianos in their home so everyone who has a moment to practice can find one available.

So much going on makes for noisy living. But noise and chaos can still bring harmony, not always the musical variety, but the kind from which forever families are made.

Family Ties

Ever since their father's remarkable experience when writing the family's first musical, the Howards have had deep-rooted feelings about family ties spanning generations. Brother Howard never set foot on a stage as a young man and knew nothing about writing scripts. It was years later, when his children were growing, that he wrote the amazing script that started their performing.

Sixteen-year-old Celese tells the story. "Dad kept getting these promptings to write a play. He thought it was a crazy idea and





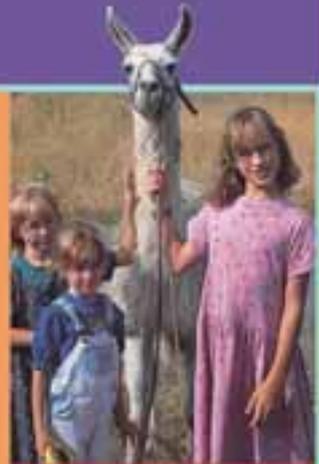
kept pushing it away. Besides, he was always too busy.”

Brother Howard adds, “It wasn’t until I was traveling to Salt Lake City one day at five in the morning, surrounded by peace and quiet, that the promptings came again—so strong that I couldn’t ignore them. I finally gave in and asked, ‘But what am I supposed to write about?’ ”

Annicka, 15, joins in. “I can hardly believe what happened next,” she says. “Thoughts kept coming into Dad’s mind. He was supposed to write a play about our ancestors who crossed the plains—the Jonathan Harriman Hale family.

“But the words came at such speed that he could hardly write fast enough to keep up. And then . . .” she smiles. “Then came the awesome part. A few months later, we were at my uncle’s house for Thanksgiving. This uncle has a lot of family history books. Dad wasn’t feeling too well that day, so he asked for something to read. Uncle Mark offered him a book he hadn’t noticed in his collection before. It was the story of the Jonathan Harriman Hale family. All the things Dad had been writing in the play really did happen all those years ago. Even the names my dad thought he’d invented for the play were actually real people!”





"I know the show was inspired," says Celese. "It's called 'Lilacs in the Valley,' and the audience laughs and cries in the same minute. It helped one young man decide to go on a mission and has changed many lives."

"And the music," adds Annicka, "that's awesome, too. My mother wrote it, and she'd never had any direction on how to do that. It turned out really good and made you feel everything that was happening in the show."

Twelve-year-old Scott says, "I think that the way the Lord inspired them is amazing."

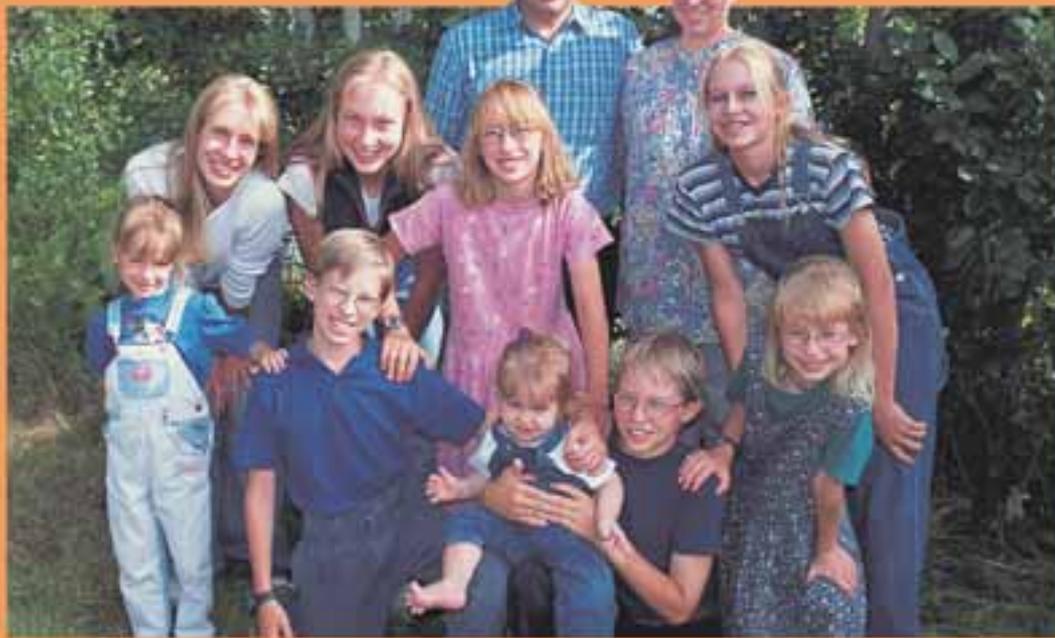
Trissa, 13, says, "One of my favorite things about the Church is knowing I'll be with my family forever. Family unity plays a big part in 'Lilacs in the Valley.'" She adds, "It's cool when we work at the theater. I just

love everything about doing it together."

Annicka agrees. "We all have certain jobs. Someone is in charge of the props, another is in charge of getting the baby dressed and the diaper bag ready, or getting dinner on

Just being together is great for the Howards. One of their favorite spots to have fun is the sand hills near their home. (Opposite page) A scene from their play, "Coming Home." (Above, left) A last-minute rehearsal of some of the songs from the play. (Above, right) Jenna, Clarissa, and Tara with the family's pet llama.





The family cleared part of the land behind their home to create a small pond where Gavin and Scott (opposite page) like to canoe. (Left) All nine children have the opportunity to study music and develop their talents. (Below) Annicka, Celese, and Trissa are close friends as well as fellow actors. They often take the leads in their family's plays.

the table early. Usually, everybody does his or her job, and we're able to get out of the house on time. Sometimes, though, someone doesn't do the assigned job, and everyone can tell what a difference it makes."

Making a Difference

The Howard family knows a lot about making a difference—the positive kind. They love supporting each other. Whether it's a band performance, choir concert, piano festival, stage performance, or sports, they each know the smiling faces and loudest cheers are coming from their own family.

Through togetherness they've learned to overcome jealousy. As Scott explains, "If someone gets a part in a play that I want, I find something else and enjoy it just the same. Of course I'm disappointed at first, but I'm into the technical stuff, so there's plenty for me to do. And I'm certainly not going to sit and mope about it."

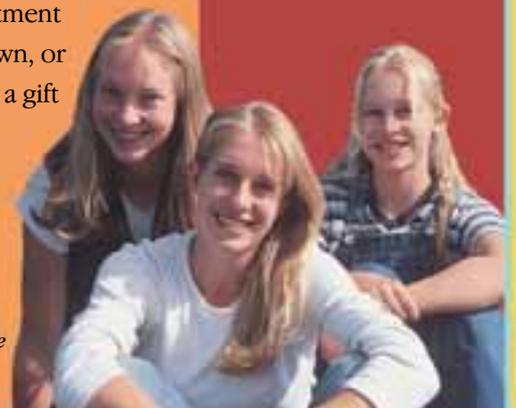
Being the younger brothers, Scott and Gavin have found a few more things to appreciate. "The best thing about having older sisters," says Scott, "is the way they usually find something to keep me occupied when I'm bored. And they can always offer

solutions to my problems. They can frustrate me at times, but they usually get me moving when I need to."

"We've also had many foster children in our home," Celese says. "I've learned a lot from being around them, especially patience. It gets really crowded, but it helps us learn how to get along without killing each other. We've taught those children what it means to have a family and be safe and warm. One foster child, who is my age, came back for a visit. He was upstairs while my mother and his aunt talked. He came running down and said to the aunt, 'Can't you just feel the love here?' It was an eye-opening experience for me to realize how blessed I am to have a family and parents such as mine."

Service, especially when it's done as a family, comes naturally to the Howard family. Whether it's bringing enchantment to an audience, the church lawn, or visiting elderly members with a gift of hot bread—somewhere in the process, they give and find the joy that leads to unity in both their home and their community. **NE**

Anne Bradshaw is a member of the Mapleton 11th Ward, Mapleton Utah North Stake.



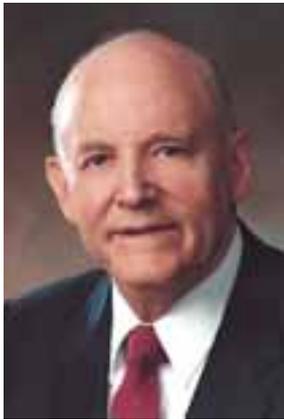
Be HONEST *with* YOURSELF

Lying

Each lie, each deception, each act of dishonesty combines to create a monster that can destroy your character and your life.

Dishonesty

Cheating



BY PRESIDENT HOWARD W. HUNTER
(1907–95)

As we strive for achievement and success, so much of our time is consumed in thought and study of the complex that we seldom take time for the simple—the simple things, the little things that are in reality the basis upon which we build and without which a strong foundation cannot exist. A structure may tower to the sky, and we may look at it with awe because of its stature and great height; yet it cannot stand unless its foundation is anchored in rock or in steel and concrete.

Character must have such a foundation. I draw your attention to the principle of honesty. Why is it so many believe in the high and lofty principles of honesty, yet so few are willing to be strictly honest?

Several years ago there were posters in the foyers and entries of our chapels that were entitled “Be Honest with Yourself.” Most of them pertained to the little, ordinary

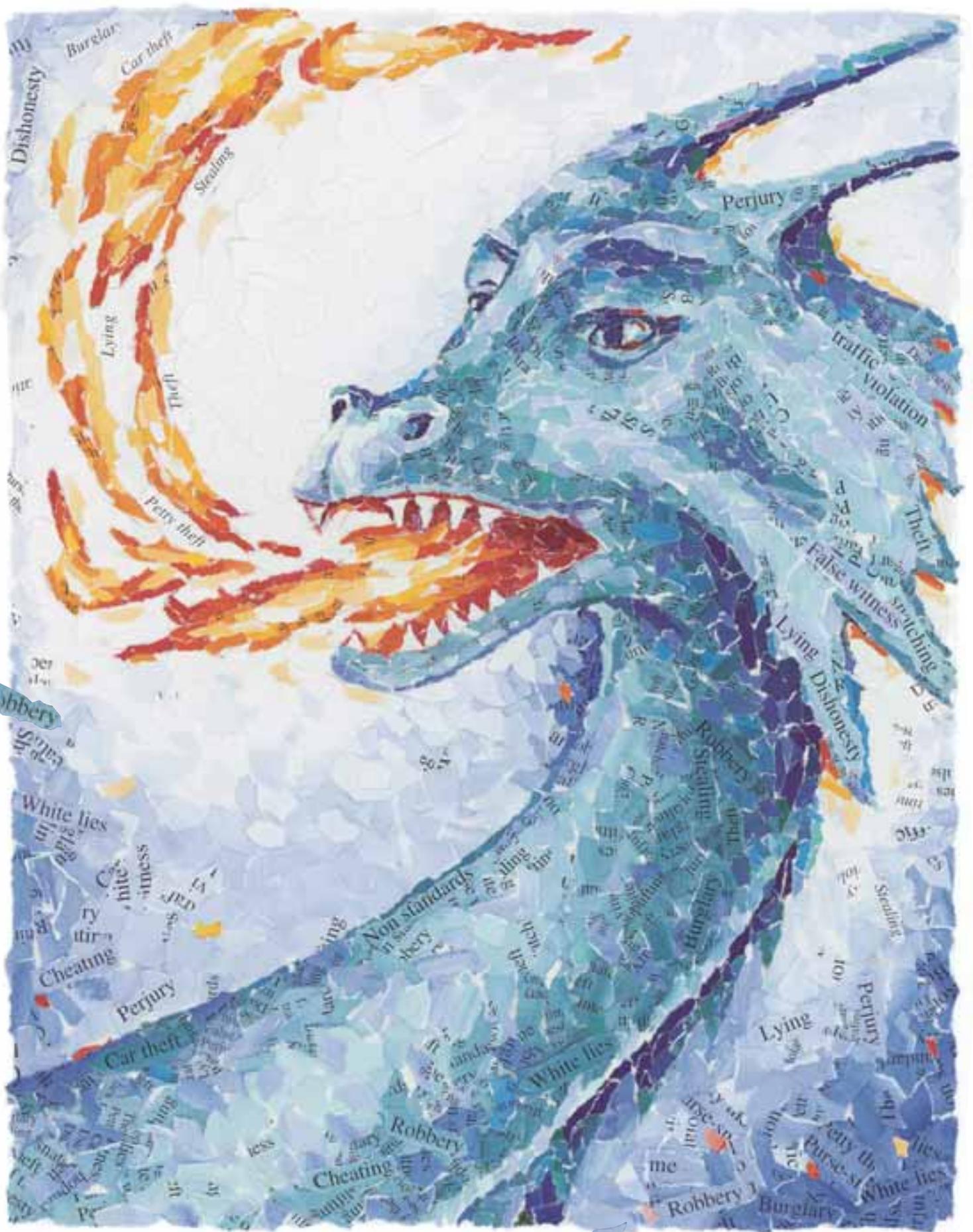
things of life. This is where the principle of honesty is cultivated.

The Truth about White Lies

There are some who will admit it is morally wrong to be dishonest in big things yet believe it is excusable if those things are of lesser importance. Is there really any difference between dishonesty involving a thousand dollars or that which involves only a dime? Is there any difference in principle between a little white lie and the perjury of a witness in a court of law or before a congressional investigation committee under oath? Are there really degrees of dishonesty, depending upon whether or not the subject is great or small?

I know our criminal codes distinguish between petty theft and grand theft. The penalty attached to grand theft is much more severe than in the case of petty theft. Consider for a moment, is there really any difference between the two, in basic principle?

How wonderful this world would be if everyone were strictly honest. There would be mutual trust and confidence, one for another.



Robbery

Perjury

When
deceit
falls
away, we emerge
into the light,
clean and
renewed. If we
are sensitive to
our relationship
to the Savior, we
must be honest in
the little things as
well as the big.

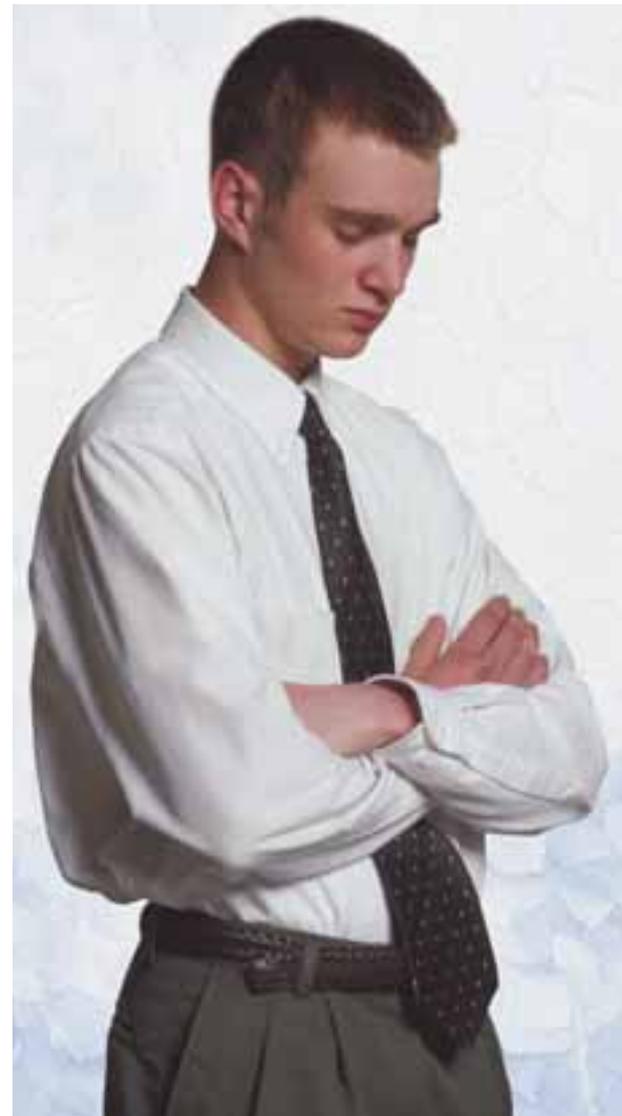
Scripture is replete with admonitions to be honest, and commandments are myriad to the effect that we should be honest. We think of them in bold type: THOU SHALT NOT—thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet.

One Boy's Great Change

I recall a young man who was in our stake when I served as a stake president. He traveled around with a crowd that thought it was smart to do things that were not right. On a few occasions he was caught in some minor violations. One day I got a call from the police station and was told he was being held because of a traffic violation. He had been caught speeding, as he had on a few other occasions prior to this time. Knowing the things he was doing might prevent him from going on a mission, he straightened up, and when he was 19 years of age, he received his call.

I shall never forget the talk we had when he returned. He told me that while he was in the mission field he had often thought of the trouble he had caused by the mistaken belief that the violation of little things was not important. But a great change had come into his life. He had come to the realization that there is no happiness or pleasure in violation of the law, whether it be God's law or the laws that society imposes upon us. He said to me, "When I drive a car now and the speed limit is 55 miles an hour, I feel it is morally wrong to drive a single mile faster."

I was impressed by the great change that had come over this young man while he served on his mission and studied moral principles. How unfortunate it is that he had to learn his lesson the hard way, but what a



great blessing comes when there is the realization that one cannot be in violation and feel good about that conduct.

Examples of Dishonesty

Some of the more common examples of dishonesty are these:

1. Stealing. I seldom read a newspaper without finding a number of reports of burglary,

Perjury

Lying
Dishonesty

Stealing

robbery, purse-snatching, shoplifting, car theft, and a thousand other things. Even in our chapels there are reports of petty theft.

2. Cheating. Newspapers carry similar accounts of fraudulent transactions in security dealings, in business transactions, cheating in investments, and other things that are called to public attention. There are some who would cheat their way through school and some who would cheat in examinations.
3. Violations of Word of Wisdom standards. These are Church standards. They are not violations of the standards of the world. But you have been given the word of the Lord on this subject.
4. Violation of traffic ordinances. One cannot be basically honest and violate laws formulated by society and government for the welfare of other persons.
5. Not making the best use of time. The more I think about this, the more impressed I become with this concept of dishonesty.

Think before You Act

We often speak of that scriptural reference, "Man is that he might have joy" (see 2 Nephi 2:25). There is a joy that comes to one from being honest. Let me tell you how. By this means you can have the companionship of the Master and you can have the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. Violations of the code of honesty will deprive you of these two great blessings. Could you believe that one who would lie or cheat or violate the Word of Wisdom could have the companionship of the Master or have the Spirit of the Holy Ghost?

If we are sensitive to our relationship to the Savior, we must be honest in the little things as well as the big. We should always remember that we are never alone. There is no act that is not observed; there is no word spoken that is not heard; there is no thought conceived in the mind of

man that is not known to God. There is no darkness that can conceal the things we do. We must think before we act.



No Real Secrets

Do you think you can be alone when you commit a dishonest act? Do you think you can be unobserved when you cheat in an examination, even though you are the only person in the room? We must be honest with ourselves. If we would have the companionship of the Master and the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, we must be honest with ourselves, honest with God, and with our fellowmen. This results in true joy.

Think of what an act of dishonesty will do to you. It does not make any difference whether it is great or small. First, it may affect your whole life. You will have a hard time living it down. It will be difficult for you to forget about it because it will be engraved upon your conscience. Secondly, it will affect others in many ways. The injury is far-reaching. Its malignancy extends to your friends, your relatives, your loved ones, and persons you may never see. Thirdly, it affects your relationship to the Savior. It closes the channel of communication and shuts out light from your life.

Leaven the World

How enjoyable it would be to live in a world of strict honesty.

I once heard a man talk of his native village high up in the Alps in Switzerland. He said his father was a shoemaker. After the day's work was done, he would close the door to his little shop but never lock the door. The door had never been fitted for a lock, nor were any of the other doors in the village locked. There was mutual trust and confidence, one for another. How wonderful this would be.

This Church is only a minority group in the world, but remember, the thinking of the world has been changed by minorities on many, many occasions. Through following the concepts of basic honesty as taught by the Savior and exemplified by his life, you can leaven the world. **NE**

Originally printed in the February 1978 New Era.

Graduating with

HONOR

Would it really matter if I took just one drink on this night of celebration? Yes, because I know what I stand for.

BY GABRIEL GONZÁLEZ

My friend Jorge reached across the table, offering me a sip from his glass of champagne. I was surprised by his offer. He knew I was a Latter-day Saint and drinking alcohol was against my beliefs. I politely shook my head, indicating that this time, like all previous times, I would pass.

He brought his hand to his forehead and exclaimed, “*¡Pero es nuestra graduación!*” (But it’s graduation night!)

Yes, it was graduation night. And in Ecuador, this was our night to celebrate. The evening had begun with a formal dinner for our entire families. A bottle of champagne

had been placed in the center of each table, and well-mannered waiters had served an excellent meal. After dinner, those of us who had just graduated danced a waltz with our father or mother.

Eventually all the parents left, and only the graduates and our friends remained. It was around midnight when Jorge



approached me and offered me some of his drink. Jorge felt that just this once wouldn't do me any harm, especially considering the event was a once-in-a-lifetime occasion and everyone was expected to have a drink.

I simply replied, "I know it's graduation night. That doesn't matter."

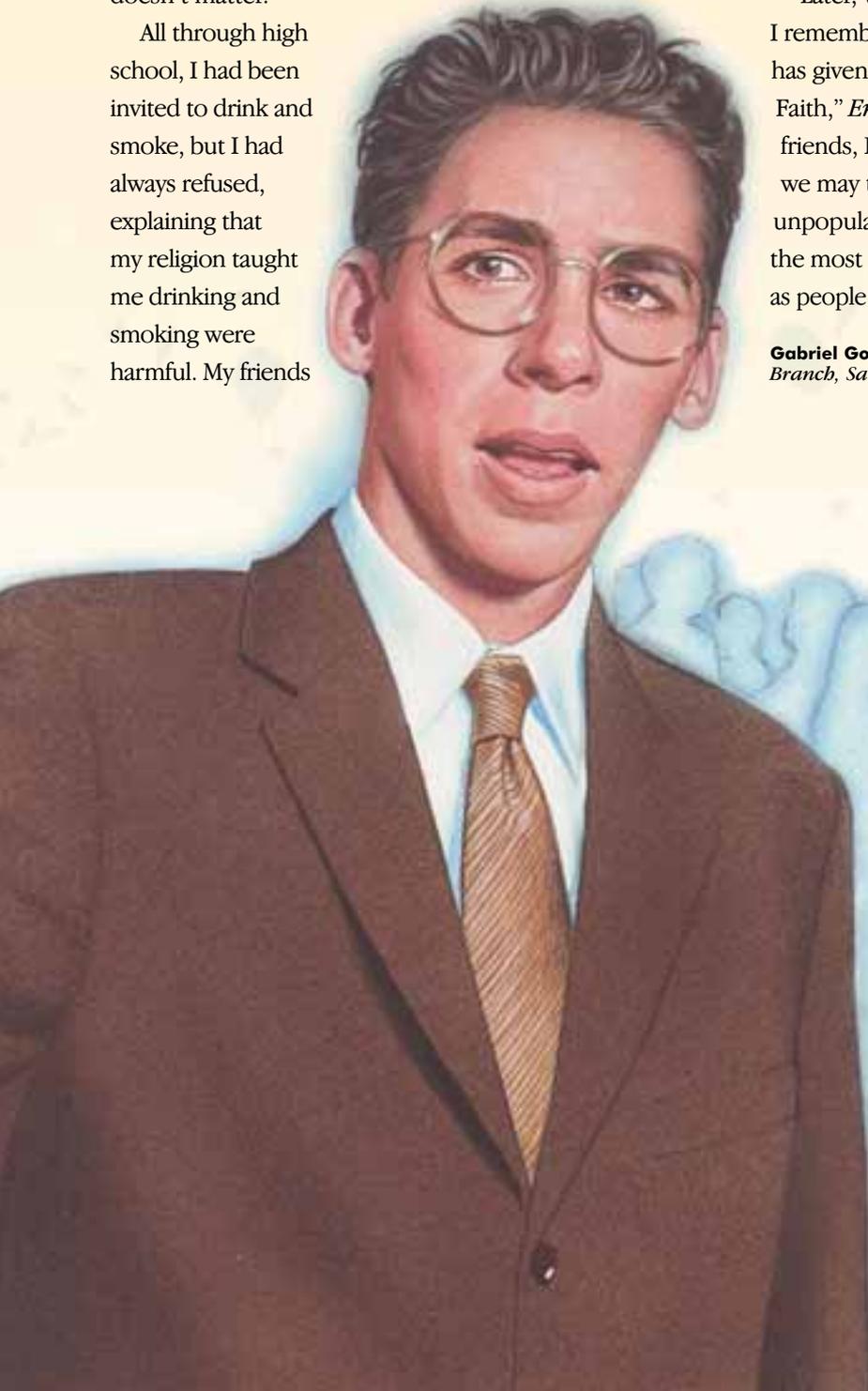
All through high school, I had been invited to drink and smoke, but I had always refused, explaining that my religion taught me drinking and smoking were harmful. My friends

usually did not persist after the explanation, but I never knew how they *really* felt about my turning them down.

To my surprise, Jorge smiled, extended his right hand, and shook mine. All he said was "I really admire this about you," and he walked away.

Later, while reflecting on what happened that night, I remembered the counsel President Gordon B. Hinckley has given us to "stand for something" (see "True to the Faith," *Ensign*, June 1996, 4). To Jorge and my other friends, I had stood for something. I realized that often we may think our efforts to do the right thing make us unpopular. While that may be true in some instances, for the most part, people take note and see Latter-day Saints as people who stand for something worthy of admiration. **NE**

Gabriel González is a member of the Mount Ensign Third (Spanish) Branch, Salt Lake Stake.



COMPOSE AWAY!

The *New Era* is looking for original hymns and songs that can be printed in the magazine. If you have a song about a gospel topic floating

around in your head, or you've already put it on paper, why not send it to us?

Send your submissions to

In Tune

New Era

50 East North Temple

Salt Lake City, UT

84150

If you have any questions, e-mail us at cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org



Like the pioneers of 1847 who ventured west along a trail that kept them relatively close to life-sustaining fresh water from rivers, . . . we need to follow and partake of the Living Water of Christ to refresh our faith and sustain our efforts as we travel the road through mortality.

(*Ensign*, May 1997, 61)

—Elder M. Russell Ballard
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



FRAMED WITH FAITH

After receiving a request from his ward in Winnemucca, Nevada, Eric Wirthlin gratefully accepted the challenge to create a visual aid to help the Primary children in his ward learn to follow the prophet.

It took talent, but mostly a lot of preparation and hard work, to complete this project for the Primary. Eric closely studied his subjects, and once he started his pastel drawing, it took him 10 days to complete it.

"I enjoyed working on this drawing," Eric says. "It felt good to use the talents I've been blessed with for our Primary." And the Primary children really appreciate the picture of the prophets done especially for them. It helps them learn to follow and love the prophets more.

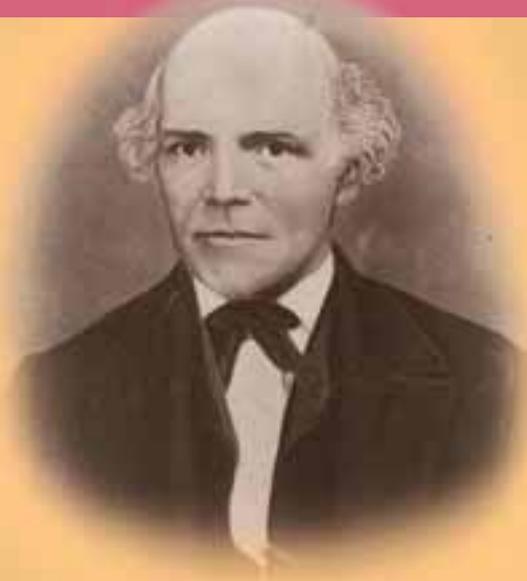
COME, COME, YE SAINTS

Most of us probably think of the hymn “Come, Come, Ye Saints” as an anthem for the pioneers. It was written in 1846 by William Clayton as he traveled from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Winter Quarters, Nebraska. The next year, he was part of the first company of pioneers to start the trek to Utah.

Before writing the words to the hymn, William had been worried about his wife, whom he had to leave behind in Nauvoo because she was pregnant and not able to travel. On the morning that he wrote “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” William had just received news of his son’s birth.

He actually wrote new words to an old hymn. Those new words quickly became popular with the traveling Saints, who needed uplifting music to help them through the trials of their journey.

Many of the pioneers died before their journey was through, but their faithfulness has brought us a happy day. It is our responsibility to carry on their legacy of faithfulness and to declare, “All is well! All is well!” (See *Hymns*, no. 30.)



NAUVOO BRASS BAND

The road to the Salt Lake Valley was not all tears and hardship. The Saints were a joyful people despite their conditions, and they managed to sing and dance on many occasions during the journey westward.

The Nauvoo Brass Band, led by William Pitt (shown above), was formed to accompany the Nauvoo Legion during its drills, and it also played for special occasions. When the Saints left Nauvoo, the band provided entertainment for the camps. As the pioneers journeyed through Iowa, the brass band also



performed for local settlers, earning money and supplies for the needy Saints.

During the westward journey, the band members began to go their separate ways, but the Nauvoo Brass Band later reunited in Utah and performed again for some time.

OF ALL THINGS

TEST YOUR LDS I.Q.

1. When the Saints left Nauvoo, Illinois, President Brigham Young organized them into companies of hundreds, fifties, and tens, with captains for each company. What was the name of the main body of Saints that Brigham Young was president of?

- a) Brigham’s Pioneers
- b) Zion’s Camp
- c) Camp of Israel

2. Which of the following men was the government explorer who provided reports and maps of the West that were valuable to the Saints in their settlement of the Salt Lake Valley?

- a) John C. Fremont
- b) Porter Rockwell
- c) William Clark

3. On modern highways, how long would it take you to drive a car from Winter Quarters, Nebraska, to the Salt Lake Valley?

- a) about 8 hours
- b) about 15 hours
- c) about 34 hours

4. How long did it take Brigham Young and his company to travel from Winter Quarters to the Salt Lake Valley?

- a) about three months
- b) about six months
- c) about eight months

5. In what order were the following states home to the headquarters of the Church?

- a) Vermont, New York, Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, Utah
- b) New York, Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, Utah
- c) New York, Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, Utah

Answers: 1c; 2a; 3b; 4a; 5c.

TIME *in*



a TUBE

BY ARIANNE B. COPE

This story began in 1987 with the Bennion First Ward's youth conference trip to the Manti Utah Temple and the time capsule that the youth buried afterward.

Hold on—1987? Isn't this article 16 years late for publication? Well, yes, if you're writing a story about burying a time capsule. But this one's about digging it up.

After three days of service and activities near the temple grounds, the teens and leaders from Taylorsville, Utah, drove home to wrap up the conference. Then in a corner of leader Brenda Jeppson's yard, they stood quietly in the warm July twilight and watched as a long, black time capsule was buried about three feet deep in the crumbly soil.

Sixteen-year-old Stacie Hankins wrote in her journal that night, "After we buried the time capsule, we promised we would return with our spouses and children in 15 years." Then she vowed, "I will return." Along with most of the youth and leaders at the conference, Stacie kept her promise.

Digging It Up

The crowd that gathered in the same corner of that yard 15 years later not only looks very different, it is three or four times

bigger than the original gathering. Children run around on the soft grass in the Jeppsons' backyard while their parents—the grown-up Bennion Ward teens—chat about what they included in the capsule.

The capsule is sealed so tightly they have to saw the ends off. Inside is quite a collection of 1980s memorabilia. Banana hair clips, tape recordings of popular music, newspaper articles, postage stamps, clothing ads, microwave popcorn, letters to themselves with their testimonies, and a *New Era* are all packed into the smooth black tube.

Sorting through the mementos gives a sense of how much time has passed. But a lot more than wardrobes, world news, and waistlines has changed.

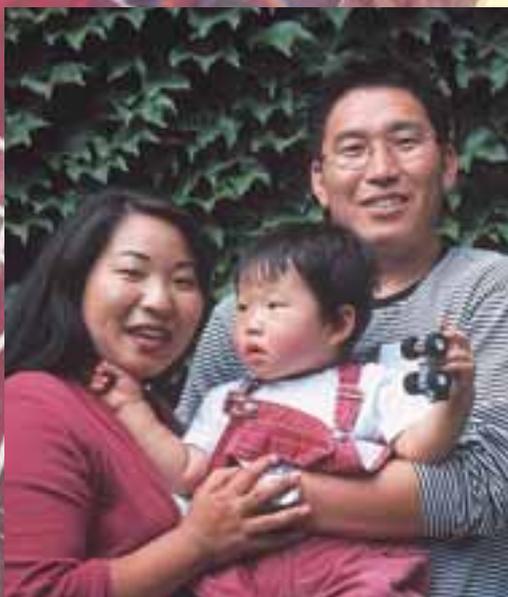
Imagine your life in 15 years. What will change? Where do you want to be?

Peek into the Future

Fifteen-year-old Jennifer Openshaw then, now 30-year-old Jennifer Bowden, thought about where she wanted to be in 15 years when the time capsule was buried.

Who do you want to be in 15 years? Take a trip back in time with the youth of the Bennion First Ward to find out about their hopes and dreams for the future.





Heidi Kim (right, with her family) realized that popularity and fashion weren't as important as she thought they were. Along with the rest of the reunion attendees (far right), she has found out that the real treasure is not the buried kind; it's the gospel and her family.

"I was hoping I'd be married and be a mom," she says.

Check. Her husband sends her a smile from a nearby table as her children, Samuel and Emma, giggle on the Jeppsons' swing set.

"I also knew I wanted an education," she continues.

Double check. Jennifer has a master's degree in dietetics from Utah State University.

What has stayed the same is her strong testimony of the gospel. She pauses thoughtfully to consider where the last 15 years have taken her. "If my younger self could see me, I think she'd be pleased," she says.

But Jennifer isn't the only one smiling. Nathan Cantonwine, now 29, whose 100-watt grin hasn't dimmed at all in 15 years, is happy with where he ended up too. More than serving a mission, going to college, and starting his own family, Nathan wanted to have a stronger testimony by the time the capsule was opened.

"Growing up, I had a tendency to rely on other people's testimonies," he says. "I knew the gospel was true because I could feel it when I was with my leaders and friends. But now, I have experienced things, in particular with prayer, tithing, and fasting, that have borne a strong witness to me that I cannot deny."

The Most Important Things

Fifteen years scattered the teens of the 1987 Bennion ward across 12 states, from Florida to Washington. They served missions in places as close as California and as far away as Italy. The more time goes by, the more they realize what's truly important. They say they don't worry about superficial things like popularity and fashion anymore.

Heidi Tuttle, now Heidi Kim, says her perspective has changed tremendously in 15 years.

"When I was 17, I didn't see the whole picture," she says as her toddler son, Kennan, dashes by in red overalls. She scoops him up and kisses the top of his head as he squirms away.

"After my mission to Korea and getting married, I realized the gospel and my family are what's most important," Heidi says, as she looks proudly at her husband who is singing Kennan a special song in Korean.

Stacie Hankins says the most important thing in her life is the scriptures. She remembers burying a letter in the time capsule that contains her feelings about the Book of Mormon. She says if she were to include something in a time capsule today, it would be a list of scriptures that have changed her life. She wants to use the scriptures to strengthen her future family.

Today is...
are at...
with our...
staying in...
are going...
My name...
is doing...
the party...
is doing...
all day...
our capsule...
to our time...
also been...
in our time...
at a state...
time and



11:30
and
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over
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her

Buried Treasure?

It's fun to see the crazy things they buried all those years ago. But the real treasure of the 1987 Bennion youth conference wasn't buried in the corner of the Jeppsons' yard. It's testimonies, families, friendships, and dreams—all things you can't bury in a time capsule. The ones in the group who seem the happiest now are those who envisioned what they wanted to be when they were young and then worked toward those goals, rather than simply going wherever life took them.

When the warm summer evening slips into night, the group of reunited friends is still talking under the light of a few bright lamps. They each read the testimonies they wrote and put in the time capsule—their testimonies are the only things that outlasted the constantly changing popular culture. "Today I recommit myself to the gospel of Jesus Christ," Brenda Jeppson reads from her tattered piece of paper. Tonight, through her tears, she repeats her commitment to Christ as she looks forward to a future with the people she loves. **NE**

Arianne B. Cope a member of the Church magazines staff.



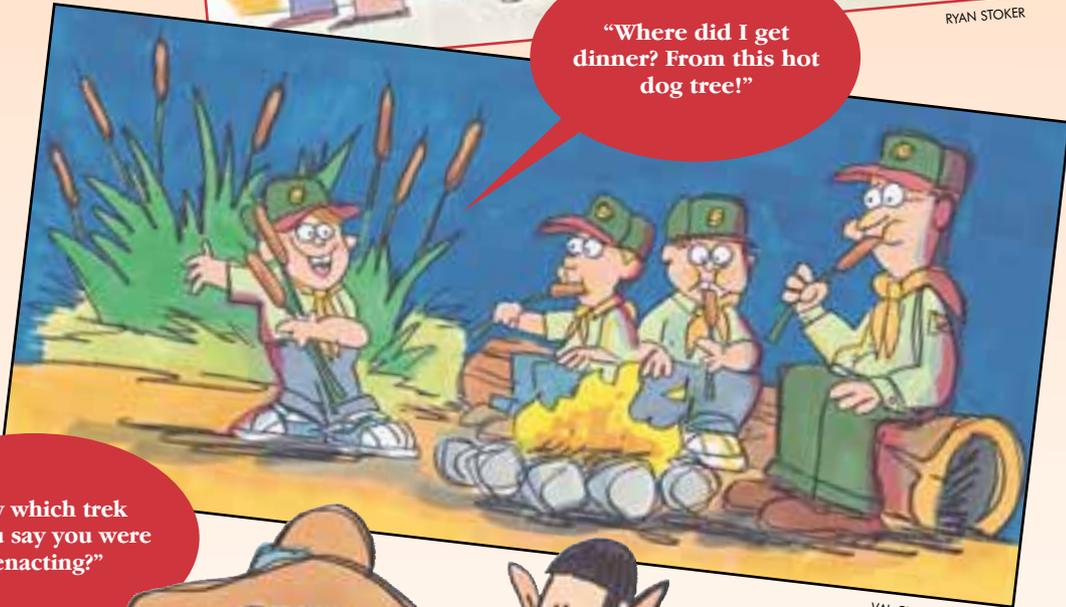
THE EXTRA SMILE

“Okay, I don’t mind giving a weekly allowance, but I’m drawing the line with the dog.”



RYAN STOKER

“Where did I get dinner? From this hot dog tree!”



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

“Now which trek did you say you were reenacting?”



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

Personal Improvement

- Are you struggling with a personal challenge or setback? Read Q&A (page 16) for some ideas about how to handle tragedy or adversity. Knowing that others face similar challenges may help you feel less alone.

- If you're feeling uncomfortable about defending your standards to your friends, read "Graduating with Honor" (page 40) for inspiration about ways you can graciously share your beliefs by making righteous choices.

- July is the month Church members reflect on the sacrifices the pioneers made to establish the restored gospel (see "Following in Faith," page 4). Learn about the first members of the Church in your own family, whether or not they crossed the plains 150 years ago. If they are still living, write them a letter of thanks for their sacrifices and courage.

Family Home Evening Ideas

- "Be Honest with Yourself" (page 36) discusses many different consequences of being untruthful. With your family, read a recent copy of the newspaper and cut out articles reporting tragedies that may have been the result of dishonesty. Discuss ways such disasters might have been avoided.

- As described in "Play Your Part" (page 30), the Howard family enjoys putting on plays together. If your family doesn't have an activity that everyone can do, spend several family nights trying new things together. Some ideas are sports, singing, service, board games, gourmet cooking, or home-improvement projects.

Young Men and Young Women Activity Ideas

- In "Locked Out" (page 26), a young woman is unable to attend a temple dedication because she is late. Prior to your next youth temple trip, spend a Mutual night going through a temple-preparedness checklist, discussing items like appropriate dress, reverence at the temple, procedures for obtaining a recommend, and so on.

- Where will you be 15 years from now? With your leaders' direction and help, make and bury a time capsule with your class or quorum (see "Time in a Tube" on page 44). In addition to items that will remind you of what's happening this year, include a written copy of your testimony and your goals for yourself.

Leadership Development

- In your next class or quorum presidency meeting, read "Light in the Land of Mystery" (page 20), and identify some leadership characteristics the youth in Nepal display. As a presidency, set a goal to develop at least one of these characteristics, and check your progress at your next meeting.

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OBEY AND STAY

I am an elder, serving a full-time mission. One day I picked up the *New Era* and read “Why Obey” (Nov. 2002) by Elder Athos M. Amorím. At that time, I wanted to return home, but I began to read this article with curiosity. When it mentioned the number of missionaries serving a mission and how they are sacrificing their time and money for the Lord, I thought about my selfishness. I read about how serving a mission is obeying our Father in Heaven and how sacrifice brings tremendous blessings. From reading this, I have decided to stay on my mission to help the Lord with this work. Thank you very much for this inspirational magazine.

*Name withheld
(an elder who now “loves his mission!”)*

UNDERSTANDING

I like reading the *New Era* magazine. As a new convert in the Church, it helps me to understand the real purpose of life. It helps me to understand the principles of the gospel. Thank you for the Q&A portion. It gives us a chance to tell our opinions and ideas.

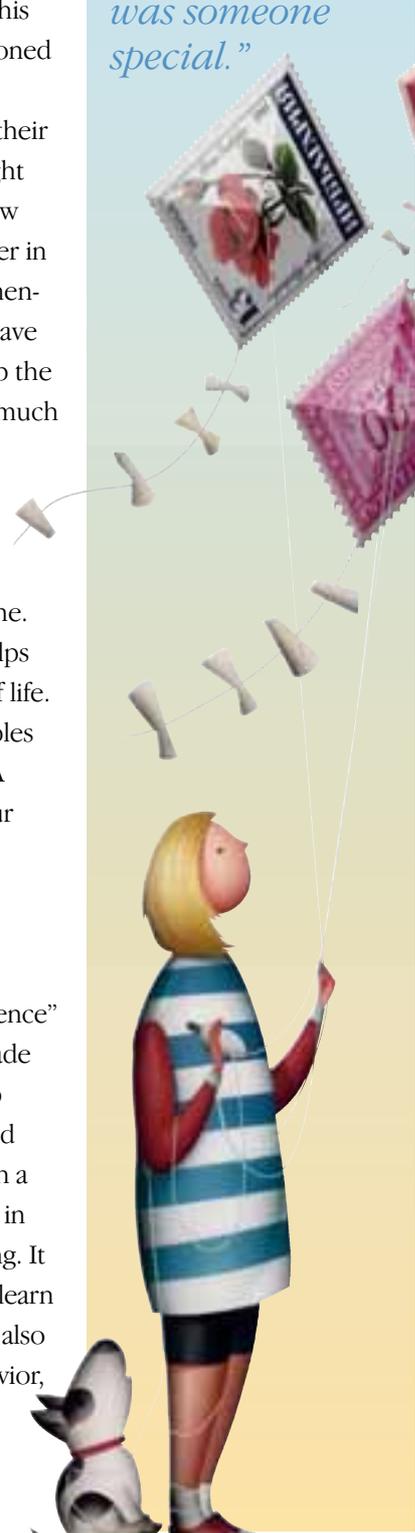
*Jerilyn Cales
Hong Kong, China*

BREAD OF LIFE

I loved the article, “Baking a Difference” in the November 2002 *New Era*. It made me realize how much I can do to help myself and others really appreciate and think about the sacrament. It was such a good idea that I’m getting the Laurels in my ward together to do the same thing. It will be a great experience to not only learn a valuable skill like making bread, but also to learn to love and appreciate our Savior, the Bread of Life, more too! Thanks.

*Kimberly Stevens
Eagle, Idaho*

“As I read, I was overwhelmed with the Spirit. I knew that I was someone special.”



A BOOST OF SELF-ESTEEM

I want to thank you for the story in the November 2002 issue of the *New Era* entitled, “I’m Worth It.” For the last few months I have been struggling a lot with my self-esteem and with my scripture reading. As I read “I’m Worth It,” I was overwhelmed with the Spirit, and I started to cry. I started to feel hope again and knew that I was someone special. I also knew that Heavenly Father could help me through anything if I but seek Him through prayer.

*Name withheld
Mesa, Arizona*

MAKING PROGRESS

I’m grateful for the article “Double Duty” (Nov. 2002). It made me think, “Hey, I need to get going. This girl did it twice, and I’ve finished only one Personal Progress value.”

*Corinne Sanderson
American Fork, Utah*

THANKS FOR “THE CHALLENGE TO BECOME”

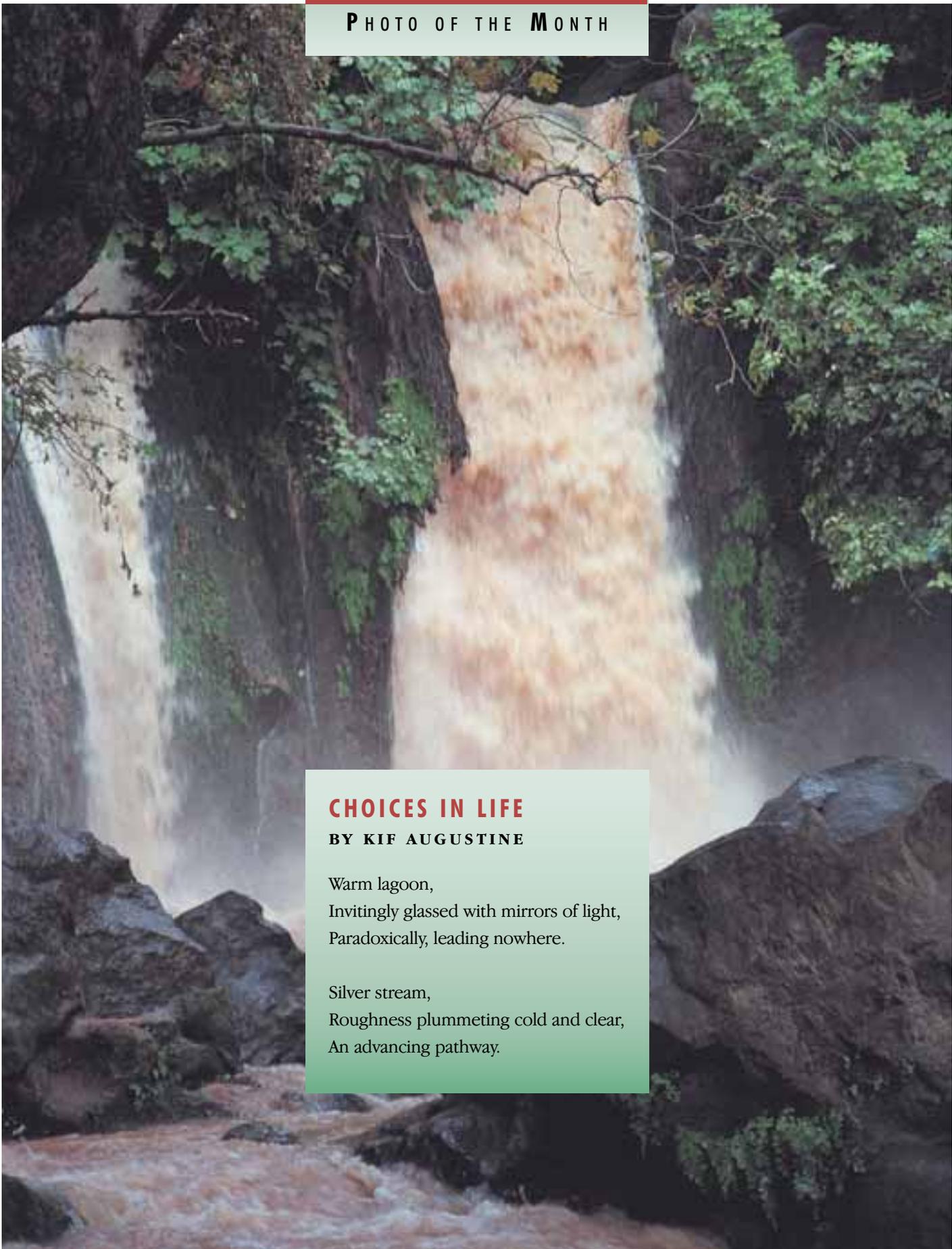
I’m so grateful for the *New Era*; it has really helped me a great deal in my life. I especially appreciated Elder Dallin H. Oaks’s message (Aug. 2002). The *New Era* always seems to have the answers to my problems and questions. It is as entertaining as it is helpful, especially to me, a new member of the Church.

*Nilo Isidro
Oras, Eastern Samar, Philippines*

Correction: In “Still a Sacred Place” (April 2003), the year Joseph Smith arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, was misstated as 1838. Joseph actually arrived in 1831.

*We love hearing from you. Write us at
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50 E. North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150*

*Or e-mail us at
cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org
Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.*



CHOICES IN LIFE

BY KIF AUGUSTINE

Warm lagoon,
Invitingly glassed with mirrors of light,
Paradoxically, leading nowhere.

Silver stream,
Roughness plummeting cold and clear,
An advancing pathway.



“Noise and chaos can still bring harmony, not always the musical variety, but the kind from which forever families are made.”

See “Play Your Part,” p. 30.