

# What Was in Store at the



## WHY DOES THE CHURCH HAVE STOREHOUSES?

“The people of God always organize under the direction of the priesthood to care for the poor among them. The desire to reach out to those in need grows naturally from the effects of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As we live it, it creates in us feelings of charity and desires to be productive so that we can not only care for ourselves but share the fruits of our labors with others.”

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, as quoted in Glen L. Rudd, *Pure Religion* (1995), 388.**

# STOREHOUSE ?

**W**hen I was 14 years old, one Sunday in sacrament meeting, my parents heard about the need for volunteers at the bishops' storehouse in Slidell, Louisiana. They decided they would help, and, of course, this meant my younger brother and I would also help. Our family went so often, in fact, that my parents were called to be the assistant managers.

At first, I disliked helping out because I felt it took up my valuable homework time (well, OK, TV time). But the more we went, the more I grudgingly accepted this chore, especially after my parents made it clear that we were in it together.

Fortunately, as the months passed, I slowly began to focus less on myself and the earlier resentment I felt and more on what I could do to help. I helped fill food orders for needy families, bag and number them, and then place them on the truck that would deliver them to various cities nearby. Numbering bags was hard because I had to remember the order number as well as the number of bags I had put out on the counter for volunteers to place food in. Also, I had to number bags extremely fast because the other volunteers were depending on me.

Now, instead of trying to avoid work, I began stocking canned goods, dry foods, and produce on the shelves and mopping the floors once in a while. My favorite task, with adult supervision, was cooking meals



By Sara Boyack

*When my parents volunteered, I was reluctant. But soon I became a regular.*

## **NEMore**

For more information about the Church welfare program and how you can serve, go to [www.ProvidentLiving.org](http://www.ProvidentLiving.org).

for the other volunteers. We would prepare an array of magnificent culinary delights that consisted mostly of macaroni and cheese, hot dogs, spaghetti, sloppy joes, and chocolate cake. We usually added a vegetable salad and a fruit salad and considered it a fairly balanced meal. I also began trying to aid the other helpers by showing them where different items were located, and which items to place in each bag. I felt like the official item finder.

My attitude had completely changed from the first couple of months that I worked at the storehouse. There were still days when I felt a little lazy and tired, but mostly I viewed

## **WHAT ARE BISHOPS' STOREHOUSES?**

**T**he modern-day version of the storehouses began in 1936 as a way to help those affected by the Great Depression. Today the Church operates storehouses, employment and training centers, and other facilities designed to help Heavenly Father's children around the world.

"The Lord's storehouse includes the time, talents, skills, compassion, consecrated material, and financial means of faithful Church members. These resources are available to the bishop in assisting those in need" (President Thomas S. Monson, "Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare," *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 5).



### **WE ARE THE LORD'S HANDS**

"We are surrounded by those in need of our attention, our encouragement, our support, our comfort, our kindness—be they family members, friends, acquaintances, or strangers. We are the Lord's hands here upon the earth, with the mandate to serve and to lift His children. He is dependent upon each of us."

**President Thomas S. Monson, "What Have I Done for Someone Today?" *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 86.**

working at the storehouse as a blessing. I also counted myself lucky to have the opportunity to serve so many people (around 60 families a week) and make an impact, albeit a small one, on their lives. Best of all, I started to recognize the value of all the blessings I had received and how fortunate I truly am.

Though I may not have made a huge difference by helping at the storehouse, it has definitely influenced me. My experience has taught me to value all the blessings I have received throughout my life and that I am expected to use my abilities to help others. More than four years have passed since my first time at the storehouse, and now my parents are the managers. I still help out when I can, and when I do, I love it. **NE**

### **WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?**

**D**ennis Lifferth, former managing director of Welfare Services, said, "Consider ways you can help in your own sphere of influence. It doesn't have to be grand."

Some ideas:

- Call your local bishop's storehouse to find a time you can volunteer. They try to accommodate all who come with work, whether it be putting food boxes together, cleaning, stocking shelves, or something else that needs doing in the storehouse.
- Get involved with school, cultural, and community service events and projects.
- With other youth and adult leaders, volunteer at a local homeless shelter.
- Work with literacy programs.
- Ask your ward leaders if there is someone in the ward who needs help. Remember older members who may need help with their homes and yards or would like someone to visit with them.
- Volunteer to babysit for families or at ward events.
- Watch for opportunities to serve at school or around your neighborhood.
- For more ideas, see FYI: For Your Information, *New Era*, Mar. 1988, at [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).