



# IT STARTS WITH A SMILE

By Sara N. Hall

**W**hen I was a Mia Maid, I noticed a less-active girl in the same class as I was. I sometimes saw her at school in the hallways, at Mutual activities, church, and even at girls' camp. It seemed no matter how often I would see her, she looked unhappy. I knelt down one night and prayed for the strength to somehow help her.

I remembered that I had once been in the same phase. I would smile with those closest to me, but on my way down the halls of the high school, I would be unaware of the frown on my face. One day a girl in school, who was walking past me, said, "Hi, Sara!" This made all the difference. Now I could greet people in the same manner and felt the desire to always speak to the girl who had helped me. Pondering this gave me a sudden thought. What if I said a pleasant word to the girl in Mia Maids?

The next day, I told myself I would greet her with a friendly "Hello!" But something inside held me back. So I passed her by and said nothing. As the days stretched on, the desire to help her increased. I knew I had to say something to her, and I wanted to do it soon.

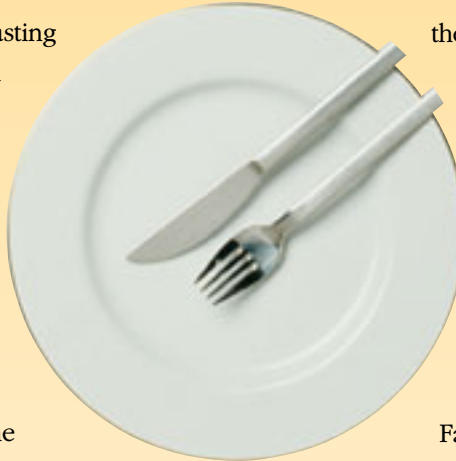
I prayed several times in the early morning to gain the courage I needed. As I saw her walking down the hallway one day, I knew I had

# I DIDN'T STARVE— I FASTED

By Matthew Yang

**I** first started fasting after my 11th birthday. My mum and dad had given me a brief explanation of it and how we do not eat our meals and then pay the Lord the equivalent of the food we did not eat, plus a generous offering. At first, I was confused. Why should I resist the temptation when I could just sneak to the kitchen and grab some cookies? At long last, I told my parents that I couldn't go on. They agreed and said I could break my short, two-hour fast.

I began preparing for the next fast. Reading scriptures like Alma 5:46 and Helaman 3:35 really helped. During my second fast, I was able to bear missing up to two meals. When I felt



the temptation, I resisted it by thinking of my Father above and how He sacrificed His Son for us. I reminded myself that I was showing my gratitude to Him by sacrificing, too.

Fasting built a stronger and more sure testimony for me. I was confident enough to stand at the pulpit, and bear my testimony. I learnt how to be humble, strong, faithful, and diligent. Fasting definitely helped me in my school and social life, making me aware of the world and Satan.

Now I have grown to love fasting, which helps me so much in my life. I love bearing my testimony on fast Sunday. The feeling is wonderful, and the Spirit is with me. I didn't starve—I fasted. **NE**

to act fast! I was afraid if I didn't say something now, I would not be able to later. With a turn of my head, I faced her and said, "Hi!"

The instant results surprised me. Her face immediately lit up like a candle. I decided that from then on, I would make an honest effort to say kind words to her. Months went by, and I found she became one of my best friends.

I know that Heavenly Father was sending me a message the day I got the courage to go up and say "Hi!" We need to reach out to others and forget ourselves. We can pause for a moment to offer a kind word. We can ask, "How can I help someone smile today?" Heavenly Father will help. Don't be afraid to ask. He will guide you and direct you in the path you should go. **NE**

# STANDING UP FOR MY STANDARDS

By Kelsey Felton

In a lesson taught a few weeks ago in seminary, something really touched me and had a huge effect on me and my life. My teacher read aloud the Entertainment and Media section from *For The Strength of Youth*. There was one passage she kept repeating over and over again. It said, “Do not attend, view, or participate in entertainment that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way. Do not participate in entertainment that in any way presents immorality or violent behavior as acceptable” ([2001], 17). As she said this over and over again, it started to sink into me.

Later that day at school, I was in my English lesson when my teacher said, “Today we are going to watch a film as a treat.” I really did not want to watch it because it was a scary and vulgar film. I knew that I would feel uncomfortable. I pulled my *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet out of my bag and explained to my teacher that I have standards and that this film was inappropriate for me to watch. I was scared and nervous about what my teacher’s reply would be and how she would react to me for sticking up for my standards and what I believed in. She paused for a moment and then said, “Kelsey, I fully understand that you have standards, and I admire you



for sticking up for your beliefs.” My teacher then told me that I could go to another room and get a head start on our next topic.

I appreciated my teacher for understanding, and I will always remember this experience. I now know that I can stick up for what I believe in and that the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet is a strong and powerful thing in my life and always will be. **NE**

## SCRIPTURE POWER

Name Withheld

A few months ago I was having troubles with the commandments and keeping them. I found this scripture one morning as I was reading 1 Nephi 10:18–22. Verse 18 says, “The way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto [Christ].” That verse stood out and gave me courage I needed to meet with my bishop. One of my closest friends who was also struggling spoke with her bishop as well. A few weeks ago we were able to go to the temple. I know Christ loves us and that He did atone for our sins. I love Him and I’m grateful for this knowledge. **NE**