

READY

TO GIVE A BLESSING?

Opportunities to serve came sooner than I expected.

By Karl Applegarth

A few weeks before leaving on my mission to Ecuador, I was ordained an elder and received all the responsibilities that come with the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Soon afterward, my mom and I were visiting some family members, and my uncle gave me a white missionary handbook, saying that



ILLUSTRATION BY GREG NEWBOLD

I would soon be needing it. I thought he was referring to my mission—only weeks away. But that night my uncle asked me to assist in giving a blessing to my aunt, who was sick. I was surprised at the invitation but knew I now had the authority to administer to the sick—and even more, to help my aunt who was in need.

I immediately read how to give a blessing in my newly acquired handbook and was able to carry out my first priesthood blessing, feeling truly grateful in this new capacity to serve others.

I assumed that was all I'd be needed for in giving blessings before my mission, but the next day came the most unexpected phone call of my life. It was my mom, who had been trimming some old tree branches at my grandma's house. She'd fallen, twisted her knee, and now could not get up because of the pain. Instantly I sprinted from my uncle's house to go help. When I got there, I helped my mom up

and we slowly walked inside my grandma's home so that Mom could sit down.

Then came the request I will never forget: my mom asked me for a blessing. I, being only an 18-year-old teenager, but also being a newly ordained elder, could accept that call to serve for the second time that week. The blessing finished with everyone in tears and my mom feeling much better.

I am forever grateful to know that I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and have received the priesthood authority to act in His name and bless others. I'm grateful I was worthy and ready to serve my family in a time of need. I know that as a holder of God's priesthood, I will continue to receive opportunities to serve and bless the lives of others with these new and sacred responsibilities that He has entrusted to me. **NE**

Elder Karl Applegarth is from Missouri, USA, and is currently serving a mission in Ecuador.



THE JOY OF SERVING

"Let us embrace and understand the wonder and privilege of the priesthood. Let us accept and love the responsibilities we are asked to fulfill—responsibilities in our homes and in our Church units, no matter how large or small they may be. Let us constantly increase in righteousness, dedication, and priesthood service. Let us find the joy of serving in the priesthood!"

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "The Joy of the Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 59.