

The Gospel News

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GO

By Brother Brian Alessio

Recently I was having a discussion with a friend about the terrible things that are happening around us. While I advocated a proactive response, my friend's reply was, to paraphrase, "I just pray about it and go on and live my life." While on the surface, that may seem to display a mature faith in God, it is actually a naive response that even the one who uttered it doesn't really subscribe to. To prove my point, I submit that anyone who locks their doors, takes their car keys with them once they park, buys groceries, eats healthy, or saves for retirement doesn't just pray about things and go on and live their lives. All of us take reasonable, prudent, wise steps in our personal lives to be good stewards of all that God has blessed us with and provide for our loved ones. No one expects God to be at their beck and call, granting every whim and desire (even the noble ones). We all recognize that God has gifted us with the intellect and strength to take care of ourselves as best we are capable, while remaining completely dependent upon (and eternally grateful to) Him.

I make this distinction, because I see a danger where that type of thinking becomes an excuse for inaction, a justification for pulling back from the things we find difficult or distasteful, from our responsibilities as representatives of God on earth. When Israel was lined up against the Philistine giant as he stood mocking their nation, none were found among the host of Israel who would stand for their God and His chosen people. Enter a small shepherd boy who, observing the situation, immediately knew what had to be done. David's response was not to just pray about it and go back to his sheep. David said "...let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine" (I Samuel 17:32). David was a friend of God. He knew what God was capable of, having witnessed His power manifested in his young life. David knew that God could have easily removed Goliath if that had been His desire. But God wanted more. Someone had to stand in the strength of the Lord and face the giant. So, little David undoubtedly uttered a prayer to his God and then got up and ran to meet the challenge before him. You know the rest of the story. You see, there is tremendous power in the example of a man, armored with the Spirit of God, publicly taking a stand against the seemingly greater power of the enemy. It is something that cannot be achieved from the comfort of a closet.

The danger exists for this type of thinking to affect our ability to spread the Gospel. While fasting and prayer is God-ordained, and therefore a fundamental discipline of the Church, there is no amount of it that can void the command of Christ to "Go"! When Ammon and his brethren experienced the redemptive power of Christ in their lives, their hearts overflowed with love toward their enemies. After striving to repair the damage they had caused amongst their own people, they began to be burdened for the souls of the Lamanites. They did not resolve to just pray that God would bring willing souls to them to hear the Gospel.

They assembled a group of like-minded brothers and petitioned their father, the king, many days for his blessing to go and take the Gospel to them in their own land. Mosiah, concerned for the safety of

(Continued on page 11)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 Praise God for sending His Son giving us hope for salvation	2	3 Do not worry about the future, trust God and His plan	4	5	6 Pray for the Lake Worth Branch-see page 4
7 Pray for your Region	8	9 Pray for the young people and the Church as we support them	10	11	12 You know someone who is lonely, reach out to them today	13
14	15 Reflect on the day of your baptism	16	17	18 Pray for the work in the Himalayas-see page 4	19	20
21 Invite a friend or coworker to Church today	22	23	24 Forgive others so that you too will be forgiven	25	26	27
28	29 Bring your cares to the Lord. He will ease your burden	30 Support your local MBA and Ladies' Circle this month	1	2	3	4

March 2013
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May 2013
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April 2013

"Behold, they will crucify him; and after he is laid in a sepulchre for the space of three days he shall rise from the dead, with healing in his wings; and all those who shall believe on his name shall be saved in the kingdom of God" (II Nephi 25:13-14).

BTF Blast From The Past

The Restoration

One hundred eighty-three years ago this month, under the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Joseph Smith organized The Church of Christ on April 6, 1830. It had been nearly a year since he and Oliver Cowdery had baptized each other on May 15, 1829, and just a few weeks after The Book of Mormon was published in Palmyra, New York. Recording six elders and about 70 members to date, David Whitmer would write, *"On this account we met at my father's house in Fayette, New York. . . to attend to the matter of organizing according to the laws of the land."*

David Whitmer ►





Purpose Statement

- To fulfill the plan of God by bringing salvation through Christ to all people.

Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ.
- To draw Israel to Christ through an effort focused on the Native Americans of North and South America.

Vision Statement

- The full manifestations of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, resulting from living and worshipping in unity and righteousness, stimulate continuous growth of the Domestic Church—even at a rate of doubling over a five year period—while strengthening the International Church.

THE CHURCH OF
Jesus Christ

Word Up



The Case For Christ: Holding The "Word Up"

By Elder Doug Obradovich

Is reading scripture difficult for you?
Do the "thees" and "thous" make Christ's words seem irrelevant, even losing their potency in translation?
Let's take a deeper dive into Jesus' message and see if we can make sense of it all.
If successful, let's agree to hold the "Word Up"!

*"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?
Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour"* (John 12:27)

We are shown a tremendously vulnerable and courageous Christ as He returned to Jerusalem for the last time, knowing certain death awaited Him. He must have felt so alone. He had just told His disciples, the hour had come for Him to return to His father. While they may not have understood, Jesus certainly did. He was at an emotional crossroad.

In that moment, He expresses honest, real feelings. He painfully ponders His impending crucifixion, *"Now is my soul troubled."* Once, visiting a friend to bear difficult news, I carried the burden of our discussion. He was oblivious when I arrived and until I explained the situation, I was the only one in the house tormented by this knowledge. While the pain I held within myself was no comparison to all Christ was suppressing, I understand His reaction better, given my own experience. In His reflection, He shared how troubling this moment was.

Immediately following this pain-filled confession, the words of a courageous warrior, *"...and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour."* Without knowing how troubled His Spirit was, this may not have the same impact. Immediately after opening up in His pain, He asked rhetorically, *"What do I do now?"* He realized He possessed the power and authority to call to His father and demand His rescue. He could easily choose between sword-bearing angels or chariots of fire to provide a means of painless departure from earth by simply crying, *"Father, I can't go through with this. Send down the chariot and return me to you without the pain of the crucifixion. This is mankind's mess; let them get out of this on their own."* But He never requested saving "from this hour" but instead staying for His hour (the crucifixion).

Many may have believed His true purpose was teaching a new, loving philosophy to His followers. He had always known His calling was much more. He was His Father's choice to save mankind. This impending "moment" was the very reason He was. *"For this cause came I unto this hour,"* was His refusal to be rescued by His father and His commitment to provide rescue for each of us. He faced His moment and because He did, we have opportunity to face ours, too. So, what shall we say? Say this, *"Don't save me from this hour, Lord, save me in this hour."*

Do you have a favorite verse you'd like us to dissect? Please send it in to: "Word Up" 500

Domestic Church — Lake Worth, Florida Branch



In May of 1946, Brother Frank and Sister Rose Sirangelo and Sister Faragasso held meetings for a short time in West Palm Beach, Florida and then moved them to Brother Ernie Schultz's home with Brother Sirangelo presiding. The West Palm Beach Mission was established in July 1947 and for the next 17 years meetings were held on Brother Sirangelo's non-air conditioned front porch every Sunday. In July 1965 a building was purchased in the city of Lake Worth and we became the Lake Worth Branch. That little building was sold in 1980 and we built and dedicated our current building.

We have approximately 45 members and many regular visitors. The demographics of our congregation are widely varied, and include a nice group of young people which has grown since our recent GMBA Campout. We also have about 10 children under the age of 13 and four baptized teenagers, along with a few others who we are hoping will soon take that step.

Every week we hold Sunday School and our Sunday service. On Wednesdays we rotate between our fasting and prayer service, MBA, and Ladies' Circle meetings. We enjoy a well-attended Vacation Bible School every summer, a Sunday School picnic in the fall, and a Christmas Dinner in December hosted by our Ladies' Circle. We recently hosted an outreach event where we collected gently used clothes and opened our doors to the community. Each visitor received a bag of clothes and lunch. God was quick to reward our efforts: On the following day, 15 people who had attended our outreach event returned to join us for our Sunday service!

Presently our Ladies' Circle has taken on the task of keeping a stocked Food Pantry and keep Baby Layettes on hand so that we are prepared to help when we are visited by those in need.

While we are distant from the main body of the Church, God has blessed us much and we solicit the prayers of our brothers and sisters that we may continue to follow His direction.

International Church — Himalayas



The Himalayan work, formerly referred to as Nepal, originally began with Brother Ram Baral who was the first member of the Kathmandu Mission. Brothers Phil Jackson and Joel Gehly made the initial trip that began the official work. The Church was organized on August 1, 2003 and has since grown to four missions—two in Nepal and two in neighboring northern India—with a total membership of approximately 50.

The mission in West Sikkim, India has approximately 20 children and 15 young adults. They meet in a temporary building, which they built, nestled in the side of a mountain high above a beautiful valley. At night, the houses below appear to be lit up like stars on the mountain. The Kathmandu Mission, in the capital city of Nepal, has ten teenagers and six adults that meet in a rented room. The Budhare Mission, also in Nepal, is the smallest of the four with two adults who currently rent a house to meet in, and the Siliguri Mission in the Darjeeling district, West Bengal, India, has about six adults and four children that meet in the saints' homes.

Each mission is in need of Sunday School supplies for children, sacrament sets and baskets, bibles, hymnals, new edition Books of Mormon, coloring books, and other supplies. Please pray that the work will flourish and grow in this area of the world.

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By Elder Anthony Sclaro

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30:5).

The psalmist's inspired words can carry us through trials of any duration—a night, a week, even a lifetime of adversity.

Last month this page contained an article about the crucible of life. Without a doubt, many could write chapters on this subject, with examples from personal experience. Many can also testify of what "joy cometh in the morning" feels like. But sometimes we're not delivered as quickly, or in the manner, that we would like. Do we still have joy when deliverance doesn't come, or do we allow our joy to fade?

The resurrection of Jesus Christ brought joy that Easter morning to the women who went to His tomb. It brought joy to His apostles and to the believers who heard the news that day. Just prior to that they had seen things go terribly wrong (to their thinking) as Jesus was captured and crucified. Though He had told them He would be going, and even alluded to the death He was going to suffer, the Lord's disciples were shaken by the events that unfolded, and their mourning must have been great. Against this backdrop, the resurrection morning must have shone more brilliantly than any before it.

Of course, Christ's resurrection brought joy beyond what was felt that day at Jerusalem. It restored the eternal joy that death and the grave had taken from mankind. The finality of those events suddenly vanished when our earthly death became a mere transition to a realm that our mortal eyes cannot see. When Christ arose, the grave was vanquished, and death was forever conquered. Joy truly came that morning to believers of every generation.

Do we allow this wonderful event to sustain our joy, regardless of our circumstances? No matter what happens, no matter what we're going through, we can remind ourselves that Jesus died and resurrected, and realize that joy came into our lives on the morning that Christ arose from the grave. We can steal a moment alone with Him, like Mary in the graveyard, and allow ourselves to experience the joy that she felt. In the midst of life's trials, when our already-defeated enemy would have us forget, we can be uplifted and transformed by the joy that came that morning. The victory was won, over whatever we're facing, by the resurrection that took place over two thousand years ago.

Our ability to abide in this joy is more important than we may realize. We're not the only ones who benefit from staying focused on Christ and renewing ourselves in the joy of His resurrection. There are people around us who don't know about this joy and have no idea about this victory. When these people face the same kind of trials we do, they have nowhere and no one to turn to when their burdens become more than they can bear. We need to reflect the resurrected Christ into every life we touch—irrespective of who or where. Take hold of this joy, and allow it to shine through your life, despite any circumstances you may be facing, and *"be ready always to give an answer"* (1 Peter 3:15) to anyone who asks the reason for the hope that is in you.

Why Now?

Enjoy these three testimonies from our new members

In recent years I had felt an enormous and urgent need to be delivered from the bondage of the sins of my past, to feel clean inside, and to walk in newness of life with God, my Savior. This overwhelming need led me to seek out churches in the Erie area for nearly five years, but to no avail. Finally I found my home and my family, aptly named The Church of Jesus Christ.

I had been baptized six other times in various denominations, each time making a commitment to follow Christ, but eventually I always became a backslider. Something was missing. This time I know it is FOR REAL and IT WILL last.

I had wanted desperately to go into the waters, when to my surprise and delight I discovered that the Church baptizes in an outside open body of water the way our Lord Jesus Christ, His disciples, and the ancient church did. The Holy Spirit made the ministers aware of my desire, and after the sermon, one of them spontaneously offered to baptize me on the spot, just like in New Testament times.

It was such an ecstatic spiritual experience for me to be out in the lake looking up to the sky with awe and reverence toward God, and then to be submerged, only to finally come out with my heart and soul clean and pure. Moreover, I finally felt that God is my Father and that I am truly His child.

After I came up from the waters, the brother who baptized me pointed to the shore and exclaimed with authority, "See those people over there? There is your family now!" Nothing could have touched me more. It brought such tears of joy to my heart as in all of my 51 years, next to wanting God Himself in my life, above all else I wanted a family, as I had never had one.

I never thought after my sordid existence of abuse, traumatic life events, severe and chronic mental illness, suicide attempts, addiction, spiritual oppression by the enemy, and much more, that I would ever say that I truly want to live again and I truly believe God has something good for me to look forward to in the future, both in this present life and the hereafter. Praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ! —**Brother June McGuire, Erie, Pennsylvania Branch**

I have been a part of this Church for my entire life. I knew one day I was going to get baptized but what I didn't know was the personal struggle I would go through in actually making that commitment. For a solid year and a half God was calling me (I'm glad He never stopped!), but I would constantly make up excuses as to why NOT to get baptized. They included things like I'm too young, what if I move when I get older, what will my brothers think of me, etc. God gave me different dreams that made it clear that I needed to get baptized.

It wasn't until GMBA Campout 2012 that I really tried to listen to His callings. We were at the water on July 4th and one of the brothers said something along the lines of, "If you're feeling a knocking in your heart, God is calling you to get baptized." My heart was POUNDING, but I immediately made an excuse as to why I couldn't get baptized at that time. I actually began to get angry, not at God, but at myself for being too scared to do what I knew God wanted me to do. I was letting the devil get to my head. The next day, we had our last seminar, lunch, night meeting, etc. At the night meeting Brother Ike Smith said that God had told him 13 people would be baptized at camp. Six or seven already had been. That meant there were still six or seven of us who were being called. I knew I was one of them, I felt the knocking on my heart.

He said that if you felt the feeling, to stand up and ask, but I was definitely not going to stand up in front of everyone!

We went into the closing meeting after that, where we re-capped the week and watched videos that my seminar class had made. I received a text message from a sister that I had just met that week about baptism. (I had never spoken to her about baptism). It basically said to listen to what your heart says and that God is doing this for a reason. It said, "I know you've been struggling with this, but just do it." I knew then that I had to ask. I somehow worked up the courage to tell a sister, "I think I'm ready." It felt SO GOOD to finally say those words. I had been afraid for a year and a half, all for four words! One of the excuses I had made up in my head a few days before this was that my brothers would look down on me or something. But it turned out that it was quite the opposite. After I asked, the night of July 5th, my brother Sean Monaghan asked as well. That was definitely a blessing. That week changed my life forever and I'm so glad I decided to make Jesus my choice. —**Sister Sara Monaghan, Lake Worth, Florida Branch**

I was at Campout with the expectations I have every year: feel the Spirit, then when it's over go home and go back to my usual self. I found that this year I was more focused and I was drawn to go to my seminar. As the week went on I was happier and more outgoing. When we were watching the videos we made I felt something different—I felt as though I needed to ask at that point in time. I felt as though if I didn't ask then, I never would. So, I broke out of my comfort zone (which I NEVER usually do at church functions) and asked. I can honestly say that it was the best decision I have ever made. —**Brother Sean Monaghan, Lake Worth, Florida Branch**

Atlantic Coast Regional Conference *By Brother Michael Zaino*

The Atlantic Coast held its Region Conference on September 30, 2012. We had many brothers and sisters gathered from our branches, including some that traveled great distances such as Apostles Peter Scolaro and Tom Liberto. Brother Jerry Valenti, our Region President, encouraged us that our purpose in gathering together was to praise the Lord and to look forward to a blessed day!

Apostle Peter Scolaro was the opening speaker and he asked us if we understood what the table that was set before us means. He said that it meant Salvation! He encouraged us to let our thoughts be on the table, not on what was going to happen later on. He read from Mathew 14:22-23 where Peter walked on the water without fear until the wind came. He said that we could fear like Peter did but that with Jesus we don't have to. He shared that the enemy wants to put doubt in our mind that when the storms of life come and the winds blow we should fear, but God wants us to trust in Him and be like Peter was before the wind came. He told us to take the time to read the Word of God – soak it in, so we can really understand what the Lord is saying to us, and so that we can really believe and trust in Him and focus so much on the Lord that we can feel it. He read Revelations 21:7, *"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."* Brother Peter said that when we come to Jesus and hunger and thirst, He fills us with righteousness.

Apostle Tom Liberto continued the meeting. He said that we all have unbelief in our life about something, but God comes to us in our time of need. He told us to pray to Him for big things or small things. Brother Tom encouraged us to be as little children and come unto Jesus asking Him to help us with our unbelief, and accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative because when we doubt no more, we can be used by God.

There was a season of anointing following. When one of our children was being anointed, two sisters had the same experience that Brother Carl Huttenberger was going to pray over Maria Valenti.

Brother Jerry asked all those who were baptized under a year to express themselves. There were eight in the congregation at the conference who came forward. After the testimonies, Brother Jerry pointed out that they had all come from different walks of life but the one thing that they have in common is that God loves them. He continued, saying that the only way to "get out of the boat" is by faith in God. He told us to take opportunities to "walk on the water" in our lives, being used by God to help others, and that while it can be scary to walk on the water, if we leave our doubts behind and have faith, He will help us so that we won't fall.

We had a very blessed conference all weekend. Please pray for the Atlantic Coast Region that we will grow spiritually and get stronger in the Lord. God bless each of you.

Experiences and Blessings in 2012

By Evangelist Jim Huttenberger

Last year was another wonderful year in the Irvine, California Branch. God blessed us with many beautiful experiences throughout the year. In fact, every month in 2012 the Lord blessed our congregation with an experience. We'd like to share a few with you.

At our feet washing service in February, one of our sisters saw the Lord walking among us, first among the sisters and then among the brothers. He touched everyone, saying, *"Do this with all of your heart."* Now, whenever we have feet washing, our ministry frequently reminds us of this beautiful experience so we remember that the Lord is pleased with this ordinance.

During a meeting, the young people were singing "If You Would Labor in Zion" and our sister saw the building become a ship, and she could feel it rock and move as it would in water. On another Sunday in April, one of our ministers opened the meeting, and our sister saw the arm of the Lord made bare. She saw His robe hanging from His wrist, and He was holding a cup of wine. He offered it to the congrega-

tion to partake. That same day, as we took the cover off the sacrament table, she saw both cups illuminated a brilliant gold.

At the beginning of the year, one of our brothers began cancer treatment that resulted in a four-month hospitalization and many complications. In May, we offered a special prayer for this brother, and a sister who was unaware at the time of who we were praying for (because she speaks very little English), saw a vision of the saints of the branch surrounding someone. As she moved through the crowd, she saw our brother lying on a bed, and he had a beautiful white blanket covering him to his chest. Then she saw a personage standing next to him who was Christ. Even though it was a long road to recovery, our brother is now cancer-free and back to his normal life.

A brother from another branch of the Church had a vision. While he was praying for branches of the Church, he saw Irvine. He had never been to Irvine, but in his vision he saw the front of the building and the name of

(Continued on Page 11)

Revolutionary Ground

By Elder Tom D'Orazio

*"...Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference."*

—Robert Frost

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is with tremendous humility and joy that we write to the Church regarding something revolutionary in the MBA. We first recognize that the last 100 years of love extended to the youth of The Church of Jesus Christ has built the ground upon which we now stand. All the work, all the prayers, all the sacrifice has led us to such times as these.

While we are still uncertain what will ultimately become of our efforts, an idea that was born decades ago has finally materialized. We are happy to announce that, due to the generosity and vision of many, and for the first time ever, we are offering GMBA 2013 Campout registration for FREE to all the young people of the Church. Yes, that is correct, and let me state it again, our Church is giving up to our youth!

In 2011, the General Church ministry accepted a dream as a revelation from the Lord Himself. Contained therein was a simple and direct message: our youth have been targeted, are in grave danger, and we are sometimes too disconnected to react in time. It was at that conference that the GMBA officers were tasked with this problem and we have worked diligently to respond to the warning given by our Lord. We immediately recognized that GMBA Campout was one of the most important spiritually "strengthening" events in the lives of our young people, and we wanted more of them there. One need only look at their faces to know how precious camp is for their souls. I myself was called and tasted of that precious fruit at a GMBA Campout. I still remember my young eyes witnessing the loving embrace of Christ in a communion service. He snatched me and changed my life. How many of you have that same testimony?

How marvelous the thought that all our "young eyes" will witness such great

blessings! What a victory for our Lord to have them together, in one place, under His watchful eye, with an unbroken opportunity to bless them! We thank the Lord to have a part in what could change the MBA forevermore.

We are certain that there are still questions to be answered, issues that will be raised, and lessons to be learned. We will learn those lessons and answer those questions and hopefully find a way that we can build something sustainable for the perpetual future. However, for GMBA Campout 2013,

this just might be the most well-attended youth camp of all time, and that in itself is worth it all. We choose to take the road less traveled and stand on revolutionary ground.

(We need your help! The 2013 camp theme is "Living Sacrifice." Please "sacrifice" some vacation time and come to camp. Please "sacrifice" some money and donate to the cause. Checks earmarked for "Camp Scholarship Fund" may be sent to our financial secretary, Brother Bryan Champine, at 2730 Nick-elby Drive, Shelby Twp., MI 48316.)

TIME TO SIGN-UP !!! — 2013 Youth In Action Tours

- *Albuquerque, New Mexico* – June 28 through July 7
- *Harrison, Michigan* – July 19 through July 28
- *Forest Hills, Florida* – July 26 through August 4

Please register today at the following link :

<http://www.gmbayouthinaction.org/via.asp>

Any questions can be directed to *Brother Mario Zaccagnini*



Many Wonders and Signs

By Brother Kerry Carlini

In the Acts of the Apostles we read that the Holy Ghost descended upon the saints at the day of Pentecost as "a rushing mighty wind" that filled the house where they sat and appeared as "cloven tongues like as of fire" upon them. Here are five amazing facts regarding the "many wonders and signs" that were done in that day:

- 1 As the apostles spoke the interpretation of tongues allowed all the visiting Jews, *"devout men, out of every nation under heaven,"* to understand that which was spoken.
- 2 After Peter spoke, 3,000 souls repented of their sins and were baptized that same day.
- 3 These new believers *"had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."*
- 4 When at the temple gate a lame man asked Peter and John for alms, Peter's reply was *"Silver and gold have I none,"* then taking the man's hand he commanded in the name of Christ to rise up and walk, and immediately the man was made whole!
- 5 And, 450 years later, it was after the "land of Mormon" that a prophet was named—who would abridge the Nephite record that would bear his name, the Book of Mormon.

Acts Chapters 2:1-45; 3:6-7; 5:15-16

Ladies' Uplift Circle News



Are YOU a Visiting Sister?

By Sister Angela Yoder

Ten years ago, a group of sisters gathered together at the Penn Mid-Atlantic Area Ladies' Uplift Circle Fellowship Weekend, and as is traditional during our business meetings, we were discussing ideas of how we can work together to improve the Circle. One of the aims of the Ladies' Uplift Circle is "to promote a close fellowship among sisters throughout the Church by praying and sharing their problems and joys with one another." We agreed that our aim was a very important part of our auxiliary. It was then that we made a commitment to visit more often so we would grow closer together spiritually and become a closer knit family of sisters. That concept blossomed into our Visiting Sisters program and is still active today.

In the beginning, we visited local Ladies' Circle meetings in the different branches of our area. As a group, we enjoyed short lessons, followed

by fellowship and food. After we visited all of the Circles within our immediate area, we had the desire to visit with the sisters in Herndon, Virginia. While they are members of our area, it required a short six-hour drive for most of us. We spent the weekend enjoying the warmth of the area encompassed by the love of our sisters.

Not long after our trip to Herndon, we received an invitation to visit with the sisters in the Levittown, Pennsylvania Branch. Even though the program was intended to promote and support the local Ladies' Circles in our area, it didn't take us long to agree that we wanted to visit with our sisters in the Atlantic Coast Area as well. After all, God has no borders, right? That thought was confirmed while we were in Levittown. The Lord gave a brother the following experience: "I saw the Northeastern part of the United States. It was as a topical map, green and brown hills and valleys. Pennsylvania was centered and the other states were around it, including Ohio, then Maine and some of Canada, howev-

er, I saw no borders between the states at all. I knew it was from the Lord although I knew not why. 'Perhaps,' my wife told me, 'it was because this is the first time the Penn Mid-Atlantic Area Ladies' Uplift Circle Visiting Sisters went to visit outside of their area.' In the Sunday meeting, when the Visiting Circle was in the Levittown Branch, I knew the dream was a confirmation of the Lord's approval of their travels." What a wonderful confirmation of the little work that has brought such a blessing to so many!

We have also traveled to nursing homes, visited shut-ins, and taken our widowed sisters out to lunch. We have learned that it doesn't matter if we have five or twenty-five sisters in attendance because God's blessings are always present. *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"* (Matthew 18:20).

So come on! Get out there! Let's all become a Visiting Sister!



How Can We Fight Fear? *Follow the Word of God*

Do you realize how that makes us more of the family of God? We don't just share the worry and crying, but we share the happiness of others too.

"Well, okay," you say, "I hear the scriptures, but what can I do? I'm just a kid!"

So, I ask you, are most of your friends the same age as you are? Now, are all of your parents' and grandparents' friends the exact same age as they are? We know the answer is no, because as we get older we are not separated in classes by age groups and we start developing our own interests where we meet others that have the same interests. Adults make friends of all ages. At some point their thinking about what they should do changed.

This means that you too can change the way you think. You too can and should say a prayer for the people you hear of with problems. There is great power in prayer. God hears and answers prayers.

I was also so surprised when I got a big envelope from a class of kids at Detroit Branch #1 filled with bright, designed, unusual get well cards made by hand. I read over their messages wishing me health many times. And their teacher included a pair of soft slippers and cute little pack of tissues. Wow! Was I surprised! Did it ever cheer me up to know that in this busy world today, children from our Church cared enough to send me kind messages and make great cards! They were sharing my burdens. My heart was lifted up. I did not feel so sad and afraid. They were comforting the sick just like the great men of the Bible and Book of Mormon say to do.

It made me want to reach out and help someone else. It reminded me that even if I was stuck at home alone, people in our wonderful

Church were praying for me. It helped me when I was feeling fear to remember the love of the brothers and sisters and friends in The Church of Jesus Christ! I can do a better job letting others know they are not alone. So can you. Try it. You will help bring comfort and peace to those who are suffering. Pray for them that their fear and worry will go away.

With much love,
Your friend,
Sister Jan Bork

WORD SEARCH (James 5:16)

WE	YOU	OF
WILL	MAY	A
PRAY	BE	RIGHTEOUS
TO	HEALED	GOOD
GOD	THE	MAN
FOR	EFFECTUAL	AVAILETH
ONE	STRONG	MUCH
ANOTHER	FERVENT	IT
THAT	PRAYER	WORKS

P	L	H	E	A	L	E	D	M
A	A	F	S	K	R	O	W	U
V	U	A	W	I	L	L	F	C
A	T	N	R	D	O	O	G	H
I	C	O	E	F	R	O	N	E
L	E	T	Y	G	O	D	O	F
E	F	H	A	T	Y	A	R	P
T	F	E	R	V	E	N	T	B
H	E	R	P	Y	O	U	S	E
R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S
Y	A	M	A	N	T	H	A	T

Many times bad things happen in our lives or the lives of people we care about. Sometimes it is scary to see what someone has to go through. Even when I've gone to a hospital to visit someone, I have sat in my car and prayed to the Lord that I will be able to help. I want to know what to say. But recently when I was in the hospital and people visited me, just seeing their kind faces or having them hold my hand was a tremendous comfort. I did not feel so scared and alone. God sent loving saints to cheer me up. At night, when many people would be saying their prayers and going to sleep, I also felt a deep calmness and acceptance coming over me as they remembered me in prayer. Then there were phone calls, cards, and elders who came to anoint me. I was blessed and got well.

This is one of the things that both the Bible and Book of Mormon tell us to do. In the Book of Mormon (See Mosiah 18: 8-9), the church was being formed in the Americas and Mosiah told the new members to bear one another's burdens so that they would be light. It truly is easier to go through hard times when you can tell someone you trust who will pray with you and ask the Lord to solve the burden, or trouble. Whether you are burdened by bullies at school, adults who are mean, hard things to study, sickness in your family, or being sick yourself, you can ask someone to pray for you.

The Apostle Paul taught us in Romans 15 how to share life and love with others. He said, "*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*"

his sons as any father would be, inquired of the Lord what he should do. The answer he received was to let them go. Almost without exception, it has been and will be God's plan that the Gospel be taken to men by men, and not by Divine enlightenment. Praying, as Mosiah did, is wise. But at some point, someone needs to leave the building and go out into the world.

Moroni lived in a time when the world he knew and loved was crumbling around him. He was faced with an enemy bent on the destruction of his church and the God-given liberty of his people. Filled with righteous passion, he knew what had to be done. Moroni girded himself in his armor and bowed himself to the earth in mighty prayer, asking *"God for the blessings of liberty to rest upon his brethren, so long as there should a band of Christians remain to possess the land."* Then, he got up from his knees and went through the countryside waving the Title of Liberty. As he went, like-minded individuals rushed to join his cause, covenanting with him to stand for righteousness. The assembling of this righteous army could not have been accomplished from his closet. Moroni had to "GO".

Is it so different today? We live in a nation where Christians are ridiculed as a matter of daily life. We're told we have to accept vile, sacrilegious insults to our faith under the banner of toler-

ance while every other religion must be respected without question under that same banner. We live in a nation where perversions offensive to God are exalted as virtues in our schools and by the media. We live in a nation where our children are under attack emotionally, spiritually, and physically. We are told that the solution for all this is for good people to surrender the liberties granted us by God and recognized by our nation's Constitution. Some might suggest that we need to withdraw to our buildings and pray more. While there is nothing wrong with uniting more in fasting and prayer, it must be with purpose, and cannot be all that we do. Where are the Moronis of our day? It's time for action.

I could go on for pages talking about Moses, Gideon, Joshua, Elijah, Nephi, Peter, Paul, Helaman's two thousand stripling warriors, and many others to make the case that God never intended us to JUST pray. Even though the victory belongs to God, someone has to show up to the battle. Go to your place of prayer and pour out your heart to God. Ask Him what work He has for you. Ask Him for the wisdom and strength to accomplish it. Ask for the same blessing to rest upon those He has called to labor with you. Then, after you say "amen," stand, take your place on the front lines of the Army of God, and "GO"!

Experiences and Blessings in 2012

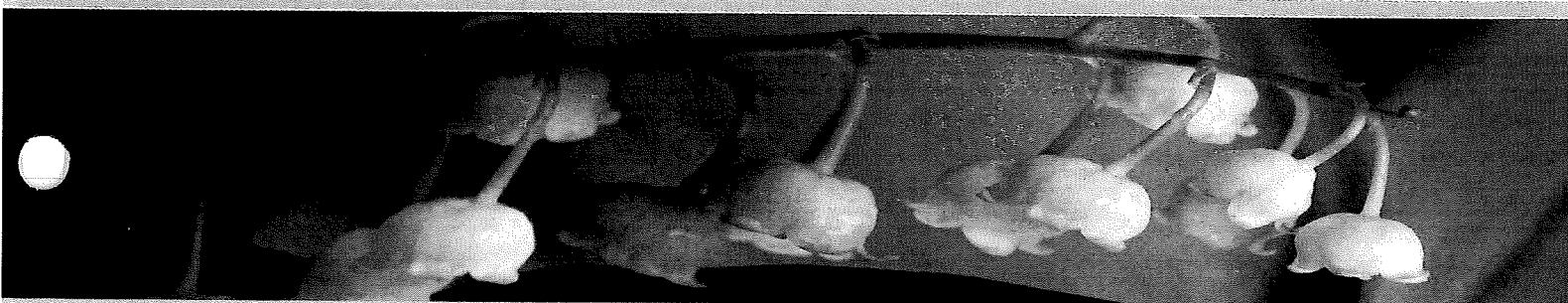
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the Church on the outside. He then saw a tall angel standing at the door wearing a beautiful robe and a golden rope sash around his waist. He raised a sword and a flame of fire came out of it. The power of heaven then came down and the whole building was enveloped in a pure white mist. He then heard the voice of God say, *"Tell them they are mine. I am there always. I am that I am."* This experience has become a motto of sorts for our branch, and we relate this experience often when we gather together.

One of our dear sisters was diagnosed with cancer this year. She was testifying about her impending surgery, and a vision was had of her entering the surgeon's office with two angels accompanying her on either side. Later, our sister told us that her tests and scans had indicated a very small amount of cancer, but when she had her surgery, "something" told the doctor to remove more from the affected area, even though there was no reason to. When pathology was done on the removed mass, they found much more cancer than the scans originally indicated—but since the doctor removed more than necessary during surgery, they got it all, and our sister is cancer-free.

In December, one of our members was praying at home for the children killed in the Connecticut school shooting. As she prayed, she saw a personage appear, and she knew it was Jesus. He held out His two hands and within them, she saw 20 little children.

These experiences are only a few we recorded. During the year, there were numerous times God answered prayers when the saints were anointed for affliction. We thank God for the power of healing, along with the many gifts of the Holy Spirit in our meetings.



I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. Song of Solomon 2:1

Blessing Bits

BB God Always Provides

I had to assist my mother with an unexpected expense of \$350 on her home and I was penniless until payday. God saw fit to provide what I needed. I was recently showing my nephew Johnny his late grandfather's wallet because they have the same name. I took all the credit cards and driver's license out and examined the wallet. When I got home from Church Sunday, something told me to take out the wallet and look at his pictures. As I examined the wallet and took everything out once again, I noticed something very hard in the middle of the wallet. I couldn't believe my eyes, there was \$350, all in \$50 bills. I was so happy. Praise God! —**Sister Nancy Catalano Camarda, Modesto, California Branch**

BB God Catches Us Before We Fall

At the back of our yard we have a 16-foot retaining wall. One day last summer, I was up on the wall spraying for weeds. The wind was blowing toward me and so was I. I was a weed killer. I turned and walked backwards against the wind so the spray would blow away from me.

I continued spraying and walking on the wall for about 10 or 15 feet, when the garden sprayer needed to be pumped again. After I did so, I turned to see where I was going and saw that my right heel was half-

way off the retaining wall. One more step and I would have fallen backwards down a 16-foot drop and I would have been seriously injured or much worse.

I have no doubt that God made the sprayer stop to make me aware of where I was. I am so thankful to Him! —**Brother Greg Perri, Mesa, Arizona Branch**

BB The Lord Knows Our Needs

When I was a young wife and mother, my husband was in charge of the Muncey Mission in Canada. Every Sunday he would attend their service, and as he would pull out of the driveway at 6:00 am, I would pray for his trip and the brothers and sisters in Muncey. As a child, I had loved visiting Muncey with my dad, Brother Reno Bologna, along with Brothers Joe Milantoni and Dominic Thomas. As I prayed, I also told the Lord how sad I was that I could not go with my husband.

One morning I went back to bed and set the alarm so we could attend Sunday School. When the radio alarm went off I heard a beautiful choir singing "My Jesus I Love Thee, I Know Thou Art Mine." I was excited to hear the song and thanked God for blessing me.

As the weeks went by, I remembered the song but began to question if God really made it happen. Again, when Sunday

morning came I went through the steps of praying for the trip, telling God how sad I was that I was not going, and set the alarm to get up for Sunday School.

When the radio alarm went off I again heard the song "My Jesus I Love Thee, I Know Thou Art Mine" being sung, but it was not a choir, it was Brother Joe Milantoni singing.

Never again did I doubt that the Lord heard my sadness. —**Sister Cathy Gentile, Detroit #2 Branch**

Send us your Blessing Bits [in approximately 150 words] and answer the Question of the Month by contacting us at gospelnewsinfo@gmail.com



Question for this month: Have you had the opportunity to share the Gospel with a friend or co-worker? How did it come about and/or what was their response?

Answer from last month: Do you have a favorite hymn or Church song that speaks of God's love? Are there certain song lyrics that especially touch your heart in describing the love of God? "First Love", two words in a beautiful hymn that constantly remind me of where I should be. —**Brother Panfilo DiCenzo**



I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. Song of Solomon 2:1