

The Gospel News

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86,400 Reasons to Be Thankful Every Day

By Brother Chris Gehly

Who is the relative in your family that has everyone go around the table and say something they are thankful for at Thanksgiving? Mine is my mother. No matter where we are, no matter how many people there are, no matter how long we've been sitting at that table, we still have to mention something. As a kid, it was the moment I would groan inside (and sometimes outside) and begin to rack my brain and try to come up with something. I just wanted to get on to important things like pumpkin pie and second helpings! This year, as I began to think about that moment, I wondered what I might say. It is marvelous when we look back on the past year and examine what God has done. I know we could each generate a list miles and miles long of those things we are extremely thankful for. These things stand out in our minds. But what about each moment? Are we thankful for every moment that is given to us? The Apostle Paul constantly gave thanks for those around him and those he wrote to. He mentioned in I Thessalonians 5:16-18,

*"Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing
give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

Some of us are more aware of this than others. It is good that we stop and remember that the precious seconds of each day are a gift of God. It is up to us how we use them. We are all given 86,400 seconds every day. We spend roughly 33,000 of them working. We take 27,500 of them to sleep. We use 14,100 to take care of ourselves and others, cook, eat, clean, shop, or manage our lives. That leaves 11,800 seconds out of every day for other things. How many do we take and give back to God? How many do we thank Him for? King Benjamin said in his address to the Nephites that

"if ye should serve him with your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants"
(Mosiah 2:21)

I know what I am going to say this year. What about you?

Originally published on the Gospel Blog



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
October 2014 S M T W T F S 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	December 2014 S M T W T F S 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	28	29	30	31	1
				Fill in the blanks with things you are thankful for		Be thankful for The Church of Jesus Christ
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Be thankful for your family	I'm thankful today for _____	Be thankful for forgiveness of your sins	Be thankful for the restored Gospel	I'm thankful today for _____	Pray for the GMBA conference	GMBA Conference
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
GMBA Conference	Be thankful for your sisters and brothers in Christ	Be thankful for the ordinances	I'm thankful today for _____	Pray for the Erie Mission- pg 4	Be thankful for your job	Be thankful that you woke this morning
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
I'm thankful today for _____	Be thankful for your health	Be thankful for your home	Be thankful for your relationship with God	Be thankful for the gifts of the Spirit	I'm thankful today for _____	Be thankful for the freedom of religion
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Be thankful for this beautiful land	I'm thankful today for _____	Be thankful for the hope of salvation	Be thankful for the songs of praise	HAPPY THANKSGIVING	Be thankful for the love that we share	I'm thankful today for _____
30	1	2				
I'm thankful today for _____						

November 2014

"Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people"
(1 Chronicles 16:8)

Blast From The Past

Detroit Branch No. 2 Baptisms

It had been the fathers and mothers of a generation before who pioneered the Gospel from New York to California. But for many of their children throughout the Church, 1956 would prove to be the pivotal year in which they would come of age. For Detroit Branch No. 2, it was the November GMBA Conference in New Jersey that set in motion a handful of baptisms. Alex Gentile – whose struggle was witnessed throughout the Saturday services by the entire congregation – would finally ask for his baptism that night after the sixth time he received prayer from the ministry. A recent college graduate, Roseann Batalucco (Wood), would come to the point where she saw baptism as the next and necessary step leading into her marriage the following year. Upon returning home, both were baptized on Monday night, November 12th, in the Detroit River. For Frank Morle – who had ridden with Brother Alex to conference and back – it was not until Tuesday while taking a bath that the spirit of repentance fell upon him. Then, upon hearing of Frank's request for baptism, a young 14-year-old Jim Cotellesse – who had admired Frank like an older brother – recounts that *"the Holy Spirit came over me in such a way that all I wanted to do was find the telephone number of Brother Joe Bologna, my presiding elder, to tell him I wanted to be baptized, too."* Frank and Jim were baptized that Tuesday night. Years later it was explained by Apostle Paul Palmieri – also baptized during this period in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania – that *"(our) parents had gone into mighty fasting and prayer on behalf of their children, and it wasn't long before they began to reap a bountiful harvest."*



Roseann Batalucco (Wood)



Frank Morle, Jim Cotellesse, and Alex Gentile

Purpose • Mission • Vision

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

GOSPEL NEWS QUIZ

Search through this issue for answers to these questions:

- Who were some of the children of the saints baptized as a result of their parents going into mighty fasting and prayers on behalf of their children ? (page 2)
- What goal did Brother Timothy Mott challenge us to set? (page 5)
- What are the 6 reasons that we sing? (page 6)
- Why do we need to take a spiritual selfie? (page 9)
- At what age did many of the brothers and sisters first feel God's Spirit? (pages 7 & 11)

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"!*

"Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Luke 18:22).

Basketball was my sports challenge. I remember asking my high school coach what I needed to do to get more playing time and his answer was similar to the answer Christ gave the rich man (above), "You're only lacking one thing...talent!" Okay, maybe he wasn't that harsh, but I did face a similar situation in identifying what I needed in order to get what I wanted.

The wealthy man Jesus was addressing in the verse above had just asked how he might "inherit eternal life." Christ began by identifying some rules requiring obedience and the man immediately claimed compliance. He felt confident in his success, "All these have I kept from my youth up." As the man seemed ready to celebrate victory, Christ added one caveat, "Yet thou lackest one thing." I wonder if Jesus paused, providing a momentary sense of false hope for this arrogant man, before continuing, "Sell all that thou hast." The Word of God said the man left "sorrowful," knowing he couldn't fulfill this devastating requirement as he loved his money too much.

The man was unable to leverage this incredible opportunity. Imagine Christ supplying the single specific improvement you needed. "You're just one little correction short of reaching spiritual prosperity. All you have to do is..." What would He tell you to change? What "one thing" holds you back from reaching your potential spiritually?

The Word of God lists others who felt similar exposure to their fault(s), including David, as Nathan's indictment identified him as the guilty party to much sin, "Thou art the man!" (2 Samuel 12:7). Daniel's interpretation of the "handwriting on the wall" provided Prince Belshazzar terrible news, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" (Daniel 5:28). These three men had been unable to fairly assess their errors in advance and had to be told what they lacked. How about you?

F Christ's counsel to create urgency in identifying what you're lacking. This can be like turning the dial on a radio, as the tiniest calibration can clear up a station instantly. You may be that close to finding clarity in your spiritual life. My list of basketball improvements included too many for such a simple adjustment, but you may be spiritually lacking just "one thing." So, turn your spiritual dial and tune in for the clear voice of God in your life... while I keep working on my jump shot!

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

Meet the Branch

Domestic Church —Erie, PA Mission



In the early 1930s, after a visit to Erie by saints from Cleveland, Ohio, a sister was given a dream in which a tree was seen loaded with apples that were not yet ripe. It was not until the mid 1940s that a small contingency of saints was led from Monongahela to Erie for employment, with the hopes of establishing a mission. With evangelistic support from branches in Ohio, this little group began to grow and prosper. By 1956 a simple storeroom was purchased and converted into what has since been a place of ongoing blessing and worship for The Church of Jesus Christ in the City of Erie.

Over eighty years have passed away since the dream was given by God to our sister, but the changing faces are a living testimony of God's plan for a great work which continues to ripen and unfold in this part of His vineyard. Our goal is to love everyone, expecting nothing in return. We greatly appreciate that we sit under the sound of preaching and teaching firmly grounded in the hope of Jesus Christ and the Gospel restored in these the latter days. We have also been tremendously blessed to reap first-hand the good reports of the multiple evangelistic endeavors of brothers and sisters from our locale who are actively involved in spreading the Gospel among the Native Americans and throughout the world.

We meet weekly on Sundays and Wednesdays, and continue to enjoy activities through the MBA and Ladies' Circle. The photograph included with this article was taken in July 2014 at our annual Sunday School picnic. Whenever the saints and friends in Erie gather, our fellowship is sweet, and we invite everyone to come and taste what the Lord is doing in this wonderful place we call home.

Leaves *By Sister Theresa Bravo*

The leaves are falling from the trees,
They whirl and twirl so aimlessly.
Their lifespan is so very brief.
I do not want to be a leaf.
I would rather be a tree,
With roots so deep that no one sees.
To bend in troubled times but stand,
Supported by the Master's hands.
To grow and thrive and touch the sky,
To provide shelter for passersby,
To be a friend to man and beast,
To give my best and not my least.

As seasons pass the tree grows stronger,
Its mighty arms grow longer and longer.
A hundred years is but a day;
How many leaves have passed away?
Yet leaves have purpose in their prime,
Although they're here for a short time.
They grow and thrive and, like the grass,
Their glory fades, and soon is past.
I listen to the wind to hear,
The call of Zion in my ear.
For that great time will beckon me,
And I will age as the mighty tree.

Visiting With the Saints

By Evangelist Timothy Mott

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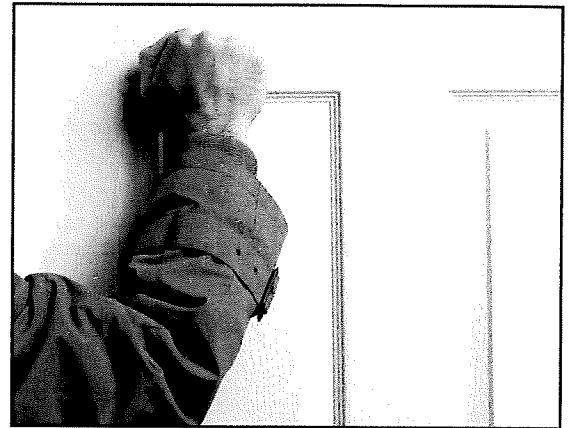
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As chilly winds overtake much of the United States and Canada, our human tendency can be to retreat to our homes and not venture out. A look at your local branch's calendar of events may show the same trend during winter months. Unfortunately, one important element of our service to God that can suffer during this time is our fellowship with the saints. The trend of our society to live increasingly isolated lives takes an even greater toll during this season as families stay close to home and spend less time with other believers.



To combat this trend, we challenge you to set a goal to visit at least one family or individual from your branch each month for the next six months. My family has traditionally used Sunday late afternoons as the perfect time to get out of the house and visit the homes of the saints. It is an activity that is part of my ministry, but we enjoy doing it together. Our daughter especially looks forward to these times as it affords her the opportunity to visit new homes and occasionally find a playmate for a time.

Why is this so important? you ask. God's Word tells us that we should esteem our fellow laborers highly: *"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you"* (I Corinthians 12:21). By spending time together, you are growing in understanding another member of Christ's body here on earth. Through gained understanding, we grow in the love of God together. With the love of God more fully inhabiting our lives, we grow in unity and in strength. This happens as we share God's goodness through conversation.

Secondly, our time together allows us to hold each other accountable in Christ's ways. Visiting the homes of the saints allows us hear how they are faring in life. It also gives them an opportunity to ask us how we are doing. Paul once said *"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"* (Hebrews 10:24-25). By spending time in fellowship together, we provoke each other to more love and good works. Areas where our belief may be wavering are shored up. We are able to confess our struggles one to another and receive Godly encouragement.

Don't be afraid to call someone this afternoon to set up a time to visit. My family has found that the best visits are often unplanned and unexpected. Be courteous by avoiding mealtimes – you don't want to force someone to cook for you unless they suggest it. However, you may consider bringing a treat or small snack to share. If you have children, also make sure that they clean up after themselves. You want the recipients of your visit to look forward to your return.

Finally, consider spiritual preparation through a moment of prayer that God would bless your visit and allow you to be a blessing. Also consider finding a verse of scripture of a hymn that you can share. This will be a blessing to the recipients, but also set a spiritual tone for your time together.

"How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation.

Let all things be done unto edifying"

(I Corinthian 14:26)

Sing Like No One's Listening *By Sister Erin Light*

"O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth" (Psalms 96:1)

WHAT'S IN A SONG?

It's hard to describe the joy of singing to the Lord, isn't it? Some say it's a stirring of the Spirit, while others liken it to a strong anthem that bursts from the heart. For me, singing is a way to communicate with the Lord. When my praying feels disheveled, I turn to singing. When my mind is worried or troubled, I find comfort in an old hymn. When I'm excited, I burst out into song. Just as we were created in His image, so was our voice created to glorify God through word and song. Inspirational lyrics can draw from the Word of God, testimonies, or personal experiences of trials and acts of faith.

THE POWER OF PRAISE

God's power can manifest through song. Imagine this is your day: you wake up and go to a local marketplace in Macedonia. To your dismay, you see a young woman possessed of an evil spirit. You and your traveling brother call upon the Lord and command the spirit to leave her. What a blessing! Unfortunately, the woman's masters complain that you have ruined their money-making scheme. You quickly find yourself with torn clothes, a beating, shackles on your feet, and the pungent odors of a prison cell. What would you do? Cry? Give up? When this happened to Paul and Silas, they started to pray and sing praises unto God! It was midnight, prisoners were probably sleeping, but did they care? No way, they sang **"like no one was listening"**. As their praises rang throughout the prison walls, *"...the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed"* (Acts 16:25-26). The power of God manifested through the praise of the saints.

Another example of the power of praise is found in the journey of the Jaredites to the Promised Land. The Jaredites sang praises day and night so that God would send wind to blow their barges, protect them from storms and bumbling whales, and maintain the light in the stones for 344 days (Ether 6:7-11). Sometimes, we have to **sing like no one's listening**; because even if we think we are alone, God hears all.

For me, singing to the Lord has become somewhat of a Liahona for my spirituality. (What does that mean?) I have realized that when I dive into the word of God more, God opens up my mind (as He promises) and creates new ideas of praise. If I am in tune with the Spirit of God within me, then the songs come with ease; if there are weeks when I don't have any inspiration, it is a good indication that something may be amiss in my life that I need to address.

WHY DO WE SING?

Singing changes us. Praising God through song has most likely already blessed you; I've heard so many testimonies about the Spirit of God falling upon many during a hymn and prompting that beautiful, contrite spirit of repentance. What are the other qualities of singing?

- Singing is a commandment (Colossians 3:16)
- Singing is contagious (III Nephi 4:31)
- Singing strengthens our spirits (Psalms 108:1)
- Singing glorifies God (II Samuel 22:50)
- Singing reinforces righteousness (Mormon 7:7-8)
- Singing gives thanks (Exodus 15:1-2)

A WORD OF TESTIMONY

Some of my most vivid childhood memories were praising God. Whether Mom and I were learning the harmony to Rich Mullens' *"Hold Me Jesus,"* or belting out Acappella's *"John The Revelator"* on family road trips, the joy of praising God was always a fundamental part of my life. Four months after I was baptized, God began to multiply His Spirit within me in such a way that I was inspired with the words to my first song, *"On Solid Ground"*. Such personal lyrics about how my relationship with the Lord developed, I often reflect on that moment where God handed me such a cherished gift with a simple, *"Here, this is for you"*. There was no light from heaven that shone down, no finger that touched the paper and made words appear. I simply felt my heart pounding and sensed a new song in my heart and I needed to write it down. At that moment, I had been given a choice (like those persons in the parable of the talents): use it or lose it. Thank God, now 13 years later, God continues to inspire me with songs and I continue to desire to share them solely for His honor and glory.

Inspirational lyrics can draw from the Word of God, testimonies, or personal experiences of trials and acts of faith. The beauty of inspiration is that God can procure His one-of-a-kind, "lightbulb" moments whenever He wants, which is why some of my song lyrics are chicken-scratch on the back of envelopes, napkins, or any variety of paper surface within reach. I truly believe that God inspires our minds for our benefit first; the song lyrics He inspires continue to remind and teach me to follow His ways.

(Continued on Page 8)

Colombia Missionary Trip *By Evangelist Richard Scaglione, Sr.*

Brothers Nestor Gomez and Richard Scaglione, Sr. traveled to Colombia on a 19 day trip from July 25 to August 12, 2014. Visits were made to Bogotá, Armenia, La Mesa, and Santander de Quilichao. Our main priority was to visit families, relatives, and other individuals we had met on our November 2013 visit and seek out new individuals. This "Outreach Ministry," as we called it, proved to be very successful.

We had the opportunity to meet about 16 families, including many children, and more than 25 individuals. We met in various homes to share the Gospel message, pray with them for their needs, anoint those with afflictions, and share testimonies and experiences of God's goodness. God's love and uplifting fellowship was evident in all of the visits. The appreciation of old and young was shown as they joined us in thanking God and praising His name. Handouts were given out explaining the basic beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ. Our desire was to stir up a greater interest and curiosity. We exhorted everyone to search the scriptures, both the Bible and Book of Mormon, to support our doctrine. It was emphasized that our "religion" is our way of life and not just words on paper.

Sunday meetings were held in Armenia and Santander. God's Spirit was felt as we shared the word of God and offered words of encouragement to those in attendance. Their desire to serve God and seek His will was evident. Their attention, interest, and responses to our words reflected their desire to know more about The Church of Jesus Christ. They were very receptive and sincere at all times, even when the subject of baptism was discussed.

Brother Pedro Cuellar, our resident minister in Armenia, accompanied us when we thought it worthwhile to take a one-day trip to La Mesa to see our friend Pochito and his family. A visit was also made to Brother Pedro's sister and her family. We also visited Diana Cruz, who had held Vacation Bible School on previous visits. A quick decision was made to hold a one-day "impromptu Bible School activity class." Sixteen children were quickly gathered for a lesson on the goodness of God. The children were each given a sheet of construction paper and asked to draw their concept of what God is like. Works of art soon appeared and the artists explained the details and meanings of their pictures. This was a humble blessing for us. Of course, it ended with snacks and refreshments for everyone.

Training sessions occurred regularly to reinforce the duties of our minister and those who may be potential instruments in God's work. Copies of Church articles and lessons were given as reference tools to help them understand our beliefs. We were most impressed to see the willingness of Brothers Pedro and Carlos Madero and Juan Carlos Dagua to be active and involved in their respective locations. Suggestions were made and seriously received to continue with follow-up activity and outreach. Bible School lessons and craft materials were given to Sister Blanca Cuellar for future use. One highlight was our visit to the homeless section of Bogotá. We joined a group of volunteers who take sandwiches and hot chocolate to about 90 homeless men each week.

Prayers, testimonies, and words of encouragement and appreciation were shared in this very humble environment. Tears were shed by many from both groups as God's love and our concern for them prevailed.

As we finished our visits, the usual question was asked: "When are you coming back?"

We are thankful for our early spiritual experiences...Here are a few more answers to our question of the month, "When did you first understand and feel God's love? Does a specific memory stand out from your childhood?"

I was 16 when I found The Church of Jesus Christ. I first understood and felt God's Love when a couple of brothers from Muncie, Canada were visiting the Kinsman Branch for a night meeting. They sang "There's Just Something About That Name" with the piano and I knew for certain God was real and that He Loved me more than I had ever known!—*Sister Brianne Gehly, Erie, PA Mission*

I'm not sure how old I was, probably around 5, but knew if I had an earache that my mom would put a drop of blessed oil in it and it would be better in no time, and that God made it better.—*Sister Terri Nath, Monongahela, PA Branch*

At the age of 51 had my tonsils taken out. Something went wrong during the surgery and they could not stop my bleeding. I was passed out most of the time, but the few times I did open my eyes I always saw my dad sitting in a chair by my crib. He would be rubbing my leg, and he would always say "hi", but I was too weak to respond. I would just close my eyes and pass out again. One time when I opened my eyes he wasn't there. I was able to gather enough strength to ask my mom where he was. She said that he was in Church. I felt a wonderful, warm peace envelop me, and this time I didn't pass out, I went to sleep peaceably.—*Sister Linda Timms-Walton, Forest Hills, FL Branch*

I was 13 years old and unexpectedly felt the Spirit of God for the first time. I felt like I had swallowed the sun and that I was glowing. Much to everyone's surprise, I asked for my baptism. When we returned back to the branch, Brother Frank Mazzeo laid hands on me for the reception of the Holy Ghost. Sister Stella Arcuri stood up and in her testimony said that she had vision and saw an angel give me flowers, a bouquet, as I was being prayed for.—*Sister Mary Ann Van Bree Pasko, Metuchen, NJ Branch*

I remember being about 13 years old and traveling with my family to Florida. There were seven of us altogether, including five kids ranging from 1 year old to 15 years old. I thought it was amazing that several of the saints who didn't know us at all welcomed us into their homes and gave us a place to stay for the night, fed us, and generally treated us just like family. My friends at home couldn't believe that when I told them about our trip. Hospitality is still a wonderful expression of God's love.—*Sister Kathie Perkins, Detroit, MI Branch #1*

I was 10 years old and we were at the GMBA campout in Kansas. It was after the evening meeting and everyone was standing around outside. I don't remember why but everyone joined hands and formed a circle, and everyone began testifying and singing. Someone had a vision and I began to cry, feeling God's touch for the first time.—*Sister Kathy Golling Monongahela, PA Branch*

The first time I truly felt the love of God and He became real to me was probably two events which happened around the same time: The first is the cause and the second is the effect. To start, my parents got divorced when I was young, which made a really huge impact on me as a kid. My family was extremely close, so having to grasp the idea was hard. The first time I can remember feeling God's love was when my mom would write these songs for kids' choir and my brother and me. They carried me and showed me how God was truly real and my best friend. One of the songs was, "First in my heart, first in my soul, He's all that really matters..." You see, God had a plan for me, and I believe that it's only through God that I made it through those times. God loves you; remember that!! No matter how tough the times are, "He's everything to me," and most of all, the love He shows is endless.—*Brother Joshua Benyola, Treasure Coast, FL Branch*

(Continued on Page 11)

Great Lakes Area MBA Campout: A Call to Remembrance

By Brother Daniel Mora, Jr.

It is a privilege to know that when The Church of Jesus Christ gathers together for one purpose—be it for fellowship, worshiping together, or learning of the Word of God together, we can expect to receive a blessing and an uplift to our souls as we spend this time together. Of course, this is a privilege because these blessings don't come about of our own doing. True, we put forth an effort to meet together as a Church, but it is the Holy Spirit given to us, present among us, blessing our minds, seasoning our speech, and touching our hearts, that makes all the difference.

We are thankful that all this and more was true of our Area's gathering together, the last weekend in August, for our Area MBA Campout. The brothers who took on the responsibility of organizing the Campout felt to direct our thoughts towards a concept we often speak of in the Church: Remembrance. More specifically, the scripture used in reference to the camp theme was Hebrews 10:32, "*But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions.*" This verse can evoke numerous thoughts in each of us, according to our own memories and experiences of when we first decided to answer the call of our Savior and undertake the journey along the narrow way, to the strait gate.

We often talk about the act of remembrance because this is one of the most important concepts in regard to the

way we conduct our affairs. What are we remembering? A past and a history that remains lively in our personal and collective present can, and often does, influence our decisions and modes of thought. This principle is true for many people in the world today, but especially in our Spiritual lives, as the manner in which we worship and maintain the principles and tenets that we live by are influenced by our heritage, our personal experiences, and the scriptures—timeless testimonies, as well as the experiences and testimonies of our brothers and sisters in our time. Now, if I may pose this question, paraphrasing, what does it mean to call to remembrance our past afflictions from before we received the light? Whoever we are, we each have a unique conversion experience, reason for deciding to give ourselves over to Christ, and significance for what our life was like after we started on this path following Christ.

As this key verse (Hebrews 10:32) as well as the following verses describe, some brothers and sisters will say that they faced opposition from various sources after they started on their walk with the Lord. This opposition can take different forms and can be received in different ways by the person who experiences it. The epistle to the Hebrews describes how believers suffered physical hardship. Why? If we read on, we will see that if we exercise patience and trust, we will experience greater things, far greater than the temporal things we have in this world. That whatever hardship we go through at first will pass as we learn what it means

to leave our troubles at the feet of Christ. Now I speak for myself, but even this seemingly straightforward act can require practice and more effort than one would think. However, as I continue in my walk, trying to follow the Lord, I gain more understanding of what it means to trust in Him.

When the time comes when we can look back on whatever hardship and opposition we have faced, why would we want to remember them continually? Yes, it's true that 'hardship' implies something negative, not very pleasant to dwell upon, but it's not necessarily on these troubles that we focus. Instead, let us think on this: Why is it that we willingly took on the name of Christ, and in so doing, undertook this struggle against our own flesh? The flesh itself can be opposition enough! Not only our own flesh, but often, the world in which we need to function and live presents us, and more often that we would like, involves us in situations that cause distress and difficulty while we try to follow the commandments of Christ. What is asked of us, is to continually remember why we decided to fight this fight, what it took for us to decide to take on the name of Christ. Among all the things that we are called to remember, first and foremost should be the sacrifice that was made for all of us, so that we would be able to win with Christ on our side. As it says in the scripture, it is also asked of us to be patient, trusting that greater things will come, and that if we remember to always do this, trust in Him, and endure to the end, there will be great cause for rejoicing at the last day.

(Continued on page 11)

Sing Like No One's Listening *continued from Page 6*

HAVE THE DESIRE?

He's taught me that you don't have to be a talented musician or even a "great" singer to praise the Lord. God provides the increase, and just like the parable of the talents, God will increase your gifts and talents as a blessing for someone else. You see, we don't sing to lift ourselves up, we sing to praise the Lord. He doesn't care whether you can sing on key or not. He gave you the voice and placed His Spirit within you, so if you have a desire to sing, then sing!

The best thing about singing to the Lord "*like no one's listening*" is that there are no rules. Your praise is your own. Perhaps you enjoy listening to others sing, perhaps you enjoy singing in groups or humming along from your seat. Maybe you like to sing songs that other brothers and sisters have written, or feel inspired to write one of your own. No matter which way you chose to praise God, the purpose is the same; to sing for His honor and His glory, "*like no one's listening*".

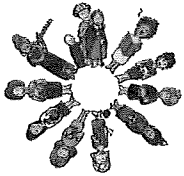
5 Amazing Facts

The Kingdom of Heaven *By Brother Kerry Carlini*

It was after John the Baptist was imprisoned that Jesus began his ministry, saying, *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."* In reference to John's imprisonment, he told his disciples, *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."* As Jesus would later instruct both His 12 and 70 other disciples to go out – preaching that *"the Kingdom of heaven is at hand"* – they would upon their return exclaim, *"[E]ven the devils are subject unto us through thy name."* Then, referring to heaven above, Jesus' response was, *"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."* Here are five amazing facts referring to the Kingdom of Heaven:

- 1 The Kingdom of Heaven exists both in heaven and on earth, as Jesus prayed, *"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*
- 2 The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its followers – as first established, then later re-stored as The Church of Jesus Christ.
- 3 Peter was given the keys to the Kingdom – as gloriously illustrated in power – when he preached repentance and baptism on the Day of Pentecost.
- 4 In regard to this authority, Jesus pronounced, *"[W]hatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*
- 5 Amazingly, God affirmed His authority upon the Church when – on July 8, 1862, the day following its organization – Brother George Barnes spoke the Word of the Lord, saying, *"Hear ye the Word of the Lord. Ye are My Sons and Daughters, and I have committed unto you the Keys to the Kingdom, therefore be faithful."*

Matthew 6:10; 10:1-7; 11:12, 16:18,19; Mark 1:14,15; Luke 10:1-18; Acts 2: 14-41; *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ, Vol. 2, p. 38.*



Ladies' Uplift Circle News

Let Me Take a Selfie

By Sister Angela Yoder, General Ladies' Uplift Circle Editor

Today was a day of self-reflection; a day spent deep in thought about my character and behavior; a day of self-examination. The day started like any other day. I jumped out of bed, got the kids off to school, and started on my list of things that needed to be accomplished before everyone returned home. At some point during the day, I decided to sit down and relax for a few minutes. Rather than turning on the television or radio, I chose to just close my eyes for a minute to refocus on the tasks at hand. Instead of mentally reviewing the mountain of things that I was expected to have completed that day, I began to evaluate my life. Was I focused on the things that were *really* important? Have I been spending enough time doing things for the Lord? Have I been reading and studying the scriptures enough? Praying enough? Was I being a good example to my family, children, and neighbors? Was I reflecting the face of God? My knee-jerk reaction was, "Yeah, I'm doing all right. I'm doing everything that God expects me to do." But if I'm honest, I know that I often fall short. That's when I decided to 'take a selfie.' I needed to look at a true picture of myself. As I was reflecting upon my spiritual life, I began humming one of the *Songs of Zion*, "Checking on Me." Within that hymn, eleven questions are posed. After carefully reviewing each one, I instantly realized that I need to refocus my priorities so that when I 'take a selfie,' I see a reflection of God. I immediately understood that God is constantly 'checking on me,' and that I need to spend more time checking on myself. Today, I took the first step toward enhancing my 'selfie.'

"Do I look in the mirror to check ev'ry day, Then quickly forget it and go on my way? Does the Spirit still caution me when I need shown, Or get weary trying and leave me alone? Is my lamp trimmed or has it gone out, And is my mind stable, or tossing about? Would I feel some shame if God knew where I went? Did I do the task unto which I was sent? Have these hands planted but only good seed, And have I been quick, then, to see ev'ry need? Among God's dear people do I have a seat, And say, can a weaker one follow my feet? Are my hands lifting up one that is lost, And do I stop often for counting the cost? Are my intentions just what they should be, And is there a weaker one looking to me? Are my eyes viewing the things that they should, And are my ears hearing but only the good? Do I walk daily without any strife, Or say, could I possibly better my life?"—Songs of Zion #55, "Checking on Me"





Have A Thankful Heart

What are you thankful for? Do you live in a safe place? Do you have food to eat every day?

Does someone show you or tell you that they love you? Do you thank them? Do you know Jesus does care for you and God knows your heartaches? Has anyone taught you how to pray and talk to God when you are scared or worried and then leave those scared feelings with God and go on with a good day and good life?

The night the electricity flickered and went out, I sat quietly in the dark with a flashlight on the table. I listened to the wind, praying everything would be all right and thinking about all the many wonderful inventions God has given to mankind.

I remembered visiting my great Aunt Eva who lived in a big old dusty country house without electricity. That meant, no TV, no radio, no refrigerator, and no lights when it got dark. Of course video games had not been invented yet so mostly what we did was play outside during the day and at night go to bed early. We'd brought our dolls and some toys, but like most kids, we had tons of toys that we left behind at home.

They would buy a huge chunk of ice that they kept in a special cabinet built to hold it and keep food cold. They did not want us opening the door a lot because it made the ice melt. I was so hot all the during our visit without a fan or cool basement. At night, we went to bed when it got dark. We would lie in the moonlight and talk, sing, and ask my aunt and uncle to tell us their stories of their "old" days.

I asked my dear old aunt what she was happy about. She said "You children, of course." I was thankful they loved us, even if I wanted to go home. She also said she was glad they had invented elastic. When she was a child boys wore suspenders to keep their clothes from falling off and there were drawstrings around the waists of all their clothes to tie them on and keep them up! Now we had nice stretchy elastic in our clothes. I tried to imagine running and having to hold your clothes up!

She had a pump in her kitchen you had to push up and down to get water from the well. She was happy to have a nice water supply inside her big house instead of having to walk outside in cold, freezing winter weather and carry buckets of water into the house.

Do you have water in your house, and electricity? Be thankful. All around the world our brothers and sisters and friends even in this Church live their lives without all the riches some of us have. Lights, electricity, cars, cell phones, heat, and air conditioning are actually recent inventions by mankind in the last one hundred years or so. Not everyone has them. Our ancestors did not. They survived, and we were born!

People were brave, kind, loving, healthy, strong, and joyful without all the luxuries and toys and things we all take for granted. Be smart. Be thankful you can go to school and learn to read and understand math. Be grateful. Tell God thank you for anyone who loves you. Thank God for your food. Ask the Lord how to be stronger, braver, kinder, and more thankful.

I like starlight, but being cozy inside a warm, safe home during winter is so much better. I am thankful for all these blessings in my life. The Bible says "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (See 1 Thessalonians 5:18 in the Bible.) When

you are praying and talking to God, He hears you. He loves you. He will help you through every part of your life, the happy and the sad.

What are you thankful for? Be thankful that you know there is a God who sent us our friend Jesus to get through life. Thank those around you.

With love,

Your friend, who has a lot to be thankful for,

Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

DO	THANKS
YOU	FOR
HAVE	THIS
LOVE	IS
FOOD	THE
A	WILL
GOOD	OF
HEART	GOD
TOWARDS	IN
OTHERS	CHRIST
IN	JESUS
EVERYTHING	CONCERNING
GIVE	YOU

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

A Call to Remembrance *Continued from page 8*

I heard many testimonies over time, from when I began paying closer attention to the lives of my brothers and sisters around me, up to where I've come thus far. These testimonies are a form of calling to remembrance different happenings in one's life, which can include things that cause joy and also things that cause sorrow, both serving a purpose. We remember our sorrows so that when the time comes that a brother or sister faces difficulty in their own lives, we may be able to better adapt to their needs, as much as we can, and have compassion for them in their bonds. We must remember that even in our difficulties and our struggles, we must rejoice, because of what we're fighting for, and why we chose to take part.

Throughout the time that we spent together in our Area Campout, we heard a great deal from our brothers and sisters regarding where we as a Church have been and also where we're headed. As the Body of Christ, gathered together, we learned from the Word of God and from each other to gain strength and become unified. We look forward to greater things in the future. For the time being, we remember the past and strive to continue to move forward towards the Lord.

We are thankful for our early spiritual experiences... *Continued from page 7*

I was about 12 years old and my mother, Sister Marie McGuire, and I were talking. I was asking her questions about the Creation in comparison to the Bible, and God creating man. I pondered upon my conversation for a moment as I went outside, thinking about her answer. I found myself in the middle of our garden, which we had planted. Looking around, I said to myself this is as good a place as any. So I started talking to God just as I talked to my mother. I told Him about the question on my mind; everything that my mother and I went over. I asked if He would let me know there is a God and that He was the creator of Man. As I continued talking I felt a hand on my right shoulder. I know it was a hand—I could feel the fingers and the palm sitting on top of my shoulder. I turned around quickly, startled, and I didn't see anyone, I ran to the house. My mother said to me "Mickey, what happened to you? You are as white as a ghost!" I told her I was talking to God asking Him about the creation and I felt a hand on my shoulder. I didn't see anyone behind me so I ran to the house. She said to me that God had answered my question; He touched me to prove there is a God. —*Brother Michael R. McGuire, Dedham, MA Mission*

I was 10 years old and we were at the GMBA campout in Kansas. It was after the evening meeting and everyone was standing around outside. I don't remember why but everyone joined hands and formed a circle, and everyone began testifying and singing. Someone had a vision and I began to cry, feeling God's touch for the first time. —*Sister Kathy Walling Monongahela, PA Branch*

I was always surrounded by the love of God, but the first time I remember feeling the love of God, I was 8 years old at a regional Ladies' Circle Fellowship Weekend. That was the moment I realized not only the love of God, but the love of the saints! —*Sister Rachel Cotellesse Lakeside, AZ Branch*

I have always felt His love. But I don't think I understood it fully as a small child. I think I fully understood it on the day of my baptism at the age of 16. —*Sister Carla King, Lorain, OH Branch*

Growing up in this Gospel, I always felt God's love surrounding my entire family. A specific memory was when my sister, Virginia, asked for her baptism. I remember wanting that too, but had learned that we ask for our baptism when the Lord calls us to His fold, and we answer that calling. A few months after I turned 13, I first really understood and really felt God's love. I got up to testify and the words, "I want to be baptized" just came out without my realizing it. That was my testimony that the Lord gave me on that glorious day. The following week, February 21, 1960, I was led into the waters of regeneration and baptized with the Love and Spirit of my Lord. He has never left me and I praise Him daily. —*Sister Lorraine Rose, Leesburg, FL Mission*

I had just turned 17 and was in the process of moving to New Brunswick, New Jersey where there were many young people that I could hang out with who had the same mindset as mine. Unknown to me, there were several who had for their baptism the prior Sunday. We were attending Friday night services and I was touched by the Spirit to ask for my baptism, raising the number of people to be baptized to 20. I can still visualize the beautiful circle of 20 and the two elders that did the baptizing; what a beautiful sight to behold! —*Sister Josie Jasmin, Lake Worth, FL Branch*

The day that Sister Cathy Gentile asked for her baptism I was sitting on her lap when she began to weep while the elders were passing communion. I remember going to get my mother because I knew something was happening. The first time I felt the Spirit of God was at the 1967 GMBA Campout in Arlington, Kansas. I was 13 years old and I remember my father explaining what I was feeling and telling me to enjoy the Lord's Spirit. I was baptized the next year at the 1968 GMBA Campout in Nauvoo, Illinois at the age of 14. —*Sister Karen Jo Pandone, Detroit, MI Branch #2*

When I was very young, I was at a park with my family. It was at the very end of a picnic and everyone was getting ready to go home. The food had been cleaned up and all of the ice had been dumped out. While I was playing with my cousin, I fell down and broke my right arm. I remember everyone being frantic. We didn't have any ice to put on my arm and I was crying. My parents rushed me into a car. My dad was in the driver's seat and my mom was sitting in the back seat with me. Suddenly, as we were backing out of the parking space and getting ready to head to the hospital, a woman knocked on the window. My mom rolled down the window and the woman asked, "Do you need this?" She held up a bag of ice. My mom thanked her, took the ice, and put it on my arm. As we were driving away, I looked out the window and saw that woman disappear. It's been more than 20 years since this memory, but I still remember her disappearing and I am confident that she was an angel sent to help us. —*Sister Christine Martorana, Quincy, FL Branch*

If your response is missing, you may have forgotten to include your name or we may be using it as a future Blessing Bit.



and He took their little children one by one and blessed them. —*III Nephi 17:21*

Blessing Bits

BB "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet"

In April 1991, our son Mark was shot in the leg with a 20-gauge shotgun. There were many blessings during that terrible time in our life. During the surgery all went well, but as the day progressed, Mark was not doing well. At the same time a funeral was being held for a brother who had passed away, and every elder that I thought to call to anoint him was at that funeral. I went into the bathroom at the hospital and prayed with all my heart that the Lord would send an elder. I not only wanted an elder but I needed a sister in Christ for my own comfort. There is nothing like the comfort of a sister. I walked out of the restroom and I heard the elevator ding and soon I saw Brother Gary and Sister Judy Coppa from Detroit Branch #3. I praise God for this blessing. Mark was anointed and started to improve, and I received the best hug I had ever had.—Sister Joann Cotellesse, Side, AZ Branch (formerly from Detroit, MI Branch #2)

BB "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another"

A few months ago, I had the opportunity to visit someone in the hospital. He had

been in a car accident and was hospitalized for a few weeks. I was nervous about the visit because I wasn't sure what to expect or if I would know what to say or do. I considered not going and instead calling his room on the phone, but I knew that I would be disappointed in myself if I did this. I knew that an in-person visit would be more meaningful. When I went into his hospital room, I felt a peace come over me and I held his hand as we thanked God for sparing his life. Weeks later, he told me how much that visit meant to him and how uplifted his spirit felt because of it. I know that God used us to encourage one another.—Sister Christine Martorana, Quincy, FL Branch

BB The Lord is My Protector

I went to Walmart late one evening to buy bags of compost. I parked near the garden center. I had no trouble lifting the bags onto the cart but needed help to load them in my car. After waiting about ten minutes, I considered leaving, but waited another five minutes. A man finally came and helped me load the bags into my car.

That night I dreamed I was at Walmart about to load the bags into my car when a man with a weapon approached me. I

tried to get in my car and lock the doors but couldn't move quickly enough, and I knew he was about to get in my car. Another man approached and yelled, "Get away from that car. Leave her alone!" The man with the weapon walked away. I thought I woke up from the dream. I was shaking and afraid. Then I saw the man who had shouted. He said to me, "This is what I saved you from last night."—Sister LuAnn Carson, Monongahela, PA 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: Of course we should all be so grateful to know this Gospel and The Church of Jesus Christ. In addition to that, what of God's creation are you most grateful for because it brings beauty, peace, or ease to your daily life?



Answer from last month: Life can bring many struggles. Share with us what works best for you to stay focused on the Lord and rise above your challenges. "What keeps me focused on the Lord (during the challenging times) is the fear of facing my struggles alone. Life is hard and I make way too many mistakes to walk this road alone."—Sister Kathleen Pastorelli, Lake Worth, FL Branch



A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. Luke 2:32